

**STATEMENT FROM CCLLR BILL BENDYSHE-BROWN TO BCC CABINET ON 7<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2019 CONCERNING BLEDLOW HOUSEHOLD RECYCLING CENTRE**

Although I profoundly disagree with the Cabinet Member's decision to close Bledlow HRC I have had to accept, after lengthy discussions with both himself and the Cabinet Member for Resources, that there is no alternative to its closure if the financial targets set for the Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment are to be met.

With this in mind I have been in detailed negotiations over the past months with BCC officers and several local commercial companies to assess an alternative option for keeping this site open as a commercial enterprise. We are now in a position to agree Heads of Terms for the future operation of the Bledlow Household Recycling Centre after its proposed closure on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 and hope to have these finalised within the next 2 to 3 weeks for presentation to BCC Property Management Board and Members.

If these Heads of Terms are accepted this will require a detailed planning application to be drawn up and submitted to BCC Development Control Committee to meet the proposal for operating the site not only as a Household Recycling Centre but also as a trade and commercial waste site. This planning application is likely to take a minimum of 13 weeks, and more likely up to 6 to 8 months, for determination after submission.

As this timescale will take us well past the planned opening date of 1<sup>st</sup> April for operating the site as a commercial enterprise, the Cabinet Member for Planning and Environment is seeking legal advice on whether the existing planning authorisation which BCC has for this site can be used to keep this site open from 1<sup>st</sup> April to enable a commercial company to operate until their planning determination is received.

As Cabinet Members will know, there is enormous local political pressure to keep Bledlow HRC open. Having had a petition of nearly 4,500 signatures to support this opposition for closure, I do urge Cabinet and particularly both the Cabinet Members for Planning and Environment and Resources to support me in this new, novel and exciting proposal to keep Bledlow HRC open and to operate as a commercial enterprise.