

BUSINESS EYE

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Let's look to the future with hope

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The big local news this week is that FINALLY the abhorrent, unbelievable waste from the internecine fighting between the five local councils in Bucks, that has cost you and me so much, has been placed on the tracks to oblivion. Yippee!

This battle for common sense has taken more than a decade and looks to have been won by the Rebellion forces overcoming the forces of the Empire of the Dark Side, which kept fighting back.

Although no longer involved myself, I did put my heart and soul for many years as an unpaid volunteer into trying to see this necessary idea through.

When the news landed last week that there is to be a brand new, single Local Authority for Buckinghamshire to replace the five we now pay for, I was expecting to feel elated.

However, the truth is, it simply acted as a reminder of those sad days battling with entrenched, small-minded, protectionist, fearful, petty politics which marred my personal experience of trying to help our community.

There are some truly great local politicians and officers, but there are also some who are far from great and, in my direct experience, are self-serving and who seem to set out to destroy our community and not build it up.

How some of those who stand for election to serve us,

gain our trust and get placed into positions of leadership can then, in full sight, be so blind to the huge damage their failure to move with the times and collaborate honourably with partners does to local individuals and businesses is beyond me.

A lot of what has gone on at AVDC in recent years has been an utter disgrace, with unchecked egos at some senior levels causing untold waste and damage.

It is probably best exemplified by the broadband fiasco, in which not only did AVDC waste our money in lorry loads, but also lost national support of another £1 million of funding, because AVDC simply refused to work together in an integrated way with local businesses and the county council.

It didn't stop there.

In my direct personal experience, many millions of pounds of much-needed national investment were



diverted away from Aylesbury because of AVDC's insistence on avoiding a genuine close and positive collaboration with the county council, preferring, instead, to work with Corby and Daventry for political reasons.

They even set up in direct competition with the businesses who generated the taxes that paid for them.

You couldn't make it up.

If it were up to me, I'd now go after those councillors and executives involved and seek to confiscate their assets as recompense for the unnecessary and totally avoidable costs they have caused.

The cabinet approach to local government in the hands of leaders looking to do the right things for our community can be really effective, but place it in the hands of those hard

to unseat, unwilling to listen and hell bent on looking after themselves and their institution above doing what's right for residents and the businesses who employ them, and serious untold damage can be done.

It has been.

Let's hope that what comes next is fit for purpose and focussed on doing the right things for our community.