

LINDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

12.09.18

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

1. Rail Developments

In July, I mentioned our aspirations for further developments in our rail network. I was able to pursue these at a meeting at the House of Commons last Thursday, courtesy of GWR. The MD of Network Rail's Midland Region, Mark Langman, was lobbied in detail by Harriett Baldwin, Tenbury's MP, and by me, as a member of the North Cotswold Line Task Force.

We are hopeful that we will see dualling of the North Cotswold Line in the near future, complementing the opening of the Worcestershire Parkway station next year. It is crucial in our arguments with the Department for Transport, Network Rail and Midlands Connect that these rail improvements will help move some traffic off our motorway and major roads that are already experiencing congestion.

2. The Financial Position

Councillors will be aware of the extensive and detailed examination of all county expenditure necessary because of our financial position. One area under examination is supporting bus services and councillors will be aware of the reduction of some commercial services that have been announced recently.

The Tenbury area has the advantage of the excellent service provided by Tenbury Transport Trust and I am hopeful that the DfT will amend legislation to combat the impact of a recent court case that threatened the continued use of volunteer drivers.

There are notices of motion at tomorrow's full Council meeting calling for more support for bus services and, while we are all aware of their value, any public subsidy needs to be justified. If there is insufficient demand, it is hard to argue that the public sector should intervene when many isolated communities have not been able to avail themselves of such services for many years.

At Cabinet on the 27th September, a detailed examination of our library services across the county will be presented. While it would be premature to go into detail, it is noted that Tenbury is recognised as having the third highest need in the county behind Redditch and Evesham. This should indicate it is secure, although visits have declined by 6% in the last year.

Stourport library lies 10th in the table for greatest need, and its recent relocation has resulted in a 28% increase in visits. Martley library is run as a community resource, a pattern that may be copied elsewhere in the county.

3. Tenbury Public Realm works

We will all be aware of various small items of work needed to complete the second phase of the Public Realm work on Teme Street, and I am assured that these problems will be tackled starting today. The work will include the following:

- Permanent repairs to the footway areas outside the Vaults and Smarty Pants
- Installation of bollards at discrete locations to protect against further vehicle loading
- Replacement of the 'wobbly' service covers outside the old post office.
- Repairs to the vent to the cellar beneath Smarty Pants

I would be grateful for any information from residents as to further work that needs correction. I am aware of the drainage problems outside the Bridge Hotel and I trust these will be sorted soon. We await certain works to be paid for by Tesco's that are still not finished, including the seat to be positioned outside the Regal.

4. Local issues

Your clerk has informed me that a request for a grit bin on Featherbed Lane has been turned down. As yet, I have not had a reply as to why this was not considered suitable. Should I not be able to get the decision reversed you may wish to consider buying a green bin that will be in the control of the parish and used accordingly when needed. This would cost in the region of £175, including two fillings of salt, if memory serves.

Various measures have been accepted to seek to reduce vehicle speeds through Eardiston but most do not yet seem to have been installed. I hope they prove more effective than the white gates at the village limits.

The application for approval of a glamping site at Lindridge Priory was deferred last week, because of a lack of clarity over drainage issues. The safety of the turning was also cited by the county highway's officer, although it is accepted that the turning has been used for decades for access to the church and school without any problems. I am considering applying to the county for maximum advisory speed signs to be erected at either end of that stretch, to reinforce the many signs already indicating the dangers inherent in the layout.

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12.09.18**