

LINDRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

09.05.18

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

- **County Council affairs**

We now have a new team running the County Councillor, led by the Chief Executive, Paul Robinson, fresh from running Derby City Council. He is joined by Michael Hudson, the new Chief Finance Officer, Andrew Spice, the new Director of Commissioning, and Avril Wilson, the interim Director of Adult Services.

All four are replacing officers who have gone on to bigger and better jobs elsewhere, and we wish the new team well as they seek to lead the Council and the county on to greater prosperity, stability and improvement.

Despite the financial difficulties that all councils are facing, Worcestershire has set a budget for the coming year, based on a 1.94% increase in council tax, supplemented by a 3% increase to be devoted to Adult Social Care.

Roughly 70% of all our income is dedicated to Children's Services and Adult Social Care, work that is concentrated on about 7,000 of the County's 560,000 residents. Essential work, but it means that most spending makes little impact on the majority of residents.

Of the rest, we are keen to reach the upper quartile in the quality of our roads and we are close to achieving that. Pavements also come in for special attention at present.

We have a number of major infrastructure projects in progress or planned. The new Battenhall rail bridge will be installed later in the month allowing dualling of the Southern Link Road from the M5 to the Ketch roundabout. Then the new project to dual the Carrington Bridge and the causeway to Powick has been approved and will be starting soon.

The new railway station, Worcestershire Parkway at Norton, is under construction and will be open by this time next year. In addition there are plans for a new station at Kidderminster and improvements to the A38 through Bromsgrove.

- **Public Realm in Tenbury**

We are approaching the end of the long and drawn out process of improving the Public Realm in Tenbury. There is no need to rehearse here the detail of this project. Suffice to say that virtually all of the work to be conducted by the County council is now complete, with the new red tarmac in place on the raised tables.

There has been general approval for the new paving slabs on the footways, and the 20 mph limit on the central shopping area. What remains is some work that was to be paid for by Tesco's under a section 278 agreement. That is the reason for the raised table outside their entrance not having been completed yet, and also for the absence of a couple of items of street furniture in their section.

While the overall development has been very satisfactory, it is disappointing that this last commitment has been shirked, leading to the need for legal action, to recover the cost from the Tesco bond lodged at the start of the process.

I can only hope that trade will pick up over the coming months, particularly attracting holiday visitors to what is now even more a very attractive rural town, with great retailers, services and public spaces.

- **Local matters**

There is a continual concern about road safety in Eardiston and indeed along the A443 in general. A meeting with County highways officers is scheduled for earlier in the day of your meeting and I cannot report on it at this time.

The main concern will be speeding and I hope some remedies might be found. In the meantime, you will know that an earlier visit has resulted in plans for several dropped kerbs along the south side of the A443, to assist pedestrians and in particular those in mobility scooters and with buggies. Footways will also be improved, by widening and tarmacking where necessary.

I hope these and other remedies will improve the lot of villagers over the coming months.

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