

LINDRIDGE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

10th May 2017

COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT

- **Elections, 4th May 2017**

I am very gratified to have been re-elected last Thursday for a third term as your County Councillor. There are serious challenges ahead for the organisation during a period of financial stringency. I will endeavour to continue to represent all residents and businesses in the Division over the next four years, and would welcome any enquiries or requests over that period, where I might be able to help solve problems and offer advice.

Unfortunately, I cannot be with you for this important Parish Council meeting, as I need to attend a Northern Area Planning Committee meeting in Malvern, where a major housing development in Tenbury and a broiler unit in Bockleton will be discussed. Both of these applications are contentious and I feel it necessary to be present.

Overall the election results were encouraging for the administration, as we now have 40 Conservative councillors and a majority of 23 over all other parties, the largest being Labour with 10.

It was good to see four other candidates in the local contest and I pay tribute to Tenbury Town Councillor Jonathan Morgan for his standing for Labour. It was pleased to note that he agrees with our (former) MP Harriett Baldwin and me about the importance of keeping open the Tenbury Hospital. The plans to re-organise the balance between hospitals, run by the NHS, and social care, run by the local authority, originate with the NHS itself, and are not a policy coming from Jeremy Hunt's government or the local authority.

One of the first matters WCC needs to decide is the process of replacing our Chief Executive, Clare Marchant, who has accepted the job of running the university admissions service, UCAS. She will be leaving next month and we will need an interim CEO in the period before a new permanent person can be appointed.

Clare Marchant has been an excellent leader during her time with WCC over the last 8 years and has done a great job of piloting the Council through a period of financial stringency and huge demands in the three key areas of adult social care, children's services and road maintenance.

- **Tesco's in Tenbury**

It was good to see Tesco's opening in Tenbury two weeks ago, with large crowds attending on the first few days. The general opinion seems to be that the store is well designed and an enjoyable place to shop. The crucial matter will be how it affects patterns of trade and I am confident that fair and open competition in the area of groceries will be good for the town overall.

We now have a period of four months with no public realm disruption and I trust this will help trade recover in the whole of the town, prior to the last phase in the autumn. This is the principal period

for tourist visits and I hope we can all be proud of the quality of the work done so far and the improvement it has brought to the town.

We were unfortunate in that the construction of the overflow car park has coincided with one of the driest winter and spring periods. I am sure the grass will establish itself well, but watering, either natural or artificial, would be a great help at this point.

- **Eastham Bridge**

Eastham Bridge is now open again, 11 months after the unfortunate collapse. This is a major project for the county to manage and it has been done quickly and efficiently by the contractor Griffiths. No-one should underestimate the seriousness of this sort of undertaking, and I am confident that the final bridge will be a credit to the Council and the County as a whole.

I am pleased to note that there will be party on Sunday, May 21st organised by Eastham Parish Hall Committee to celebrate the new bridge.

Of course, this is not part of the £12 million programme of highway repairs that is underway under the Driving Home banner. That programme and the £6 million work on pavements is also progressing, largely in urban estates and will continue through the summer and into next year. In addition, £5 million has been allocated to solve congestion hot spots.

- **Speeding on the A443 and A456**

I note that the new arrangements to alter the signage in the region of the Cutmill road T junction have not yet been implemented. The safety of traffic turning into and out of side turnings is a major issue, and I appreciate the strong feelings about the problems faced by people living in Broombank, caused by the speed of traffic on the A456.

Similarly, I am aware of your Council's concern for the proposed glamping enterprise that would need to use the turn to Lindridge Primary School. I share the concern about safety, but feel it should not mean that traffic should be limited where junctions can be characterised as difficult,

There are many such junctions and private entrances across the division and the county, and it seems to me that we should seek to make them as safe as possible, rather than wishing to limit further expansion of traffic. I am holding a meeting with our traffic officers on Friday and will suggest to them that they would be faced with a similar problem if, for instance, the church found an expansion in its congregation, which is not, however, something they would wish to, or have any power to, discourage.

- **Road works at Frith Common**

It is disappointing to see further delay to the repair work on the Frith Common road. I am sure you all appreciate that this has been caused in part by the need to dig into the bank away from the drop, and this requires negotiation with the landowner. I hope that can be completed satisfactorily in the near future and that the road can be restored to its proper width and stability.

**Cllr Ken Pollock,
Martley,
Worcester,**

WR6 6QA
10.05.17