

LITTLE WITLEY COUNCIL MEETING

08.01.18

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

1. Happy New Year

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all Little Witley councillors and residents in and around the parish a very Happy and Prosperous New Year. We can expect there to be great challenges facing us at the town, district and county level, without considering national negotiations re Brexit.

Worcestershire starts the year in good shape, as indicated in the annual conference of the Local Enterprise Partnership last month. Over 400 local business people, local authority officers and councillors attended the Chateau Impney Hotel to hear of some of the many good things that are happening in the county, and of the major challenges ahead.

Some of the latter dealt with the way technology offers new possibilities in transport and manufacturing, as well as the handling of big data – a positive factor, but one open to misuse. Cyber security is a constant concern, but Worcestershire is well placed to benefit from the need, with several top flight companies operating in this area.

It was also good to hear from the three recent top county apprentices, who have gone on to succeed in their chosen fields, after the benefit of their apprenticeships. They demonstrated how important it is to choose the right path for the individual, rather than believing the only route to success is via university. Indeed, one winner left her course after two years, when she realised that a better future lay with taking up an apprenticeship.

Overall, a very positive conference, with many lessons learnt and encouraging enthusiasm for the tasks ahead.

2. County Council affairs

At the County level, I am pleased to report that we have recruited a new Chief Executive, who will start work in the Spring. He is Paul Robinson, currently the Chief Executive of Derby City Council, where he runs a unitary authority with a large budget and staff, comparable to this county.

Sitting on the appointments panel, I was impressed in particular by his vigour and keenness, qualities we will need as a new senior team is being recruited over the coming months. While we have lost some senior people recently, they have all gone on to more significant posts, indicating that our personnel are recognised as being highly effective and worth employing.

I will forward a note from Jon Fraser with other county matters of relevance and also a link to the latest bulletin re superfast broadband, some of which may be relevant to some residents of Little Witley.

3. Tenbury Public Realm

It is good to note that the Public Realm work in Tenbury is nearing completion. There are still several items of street furniture to be installed, in particular the planters, and the black bollards are still to be replaced by ones in stainless steel. Red tarmac will be applied to the raised tables in the warmer weather in the Spring.

It is good to note that the 20 mph zone is now in force. You will recall that the average speed of traffic on Teme Street was 22mph. While this is not fast, it means that many cars were travelling much faster than that, and we have to hope that motorists will now observe 20 mph as a maximum.

This is reinforced by the raised tables, where pedestrians should feel more secure in crossing the road, because of the lower speeds. The zone extends from the Teme bridge as far as the Kyre brook and then as far as Cross Street beyond Bowketts. The roads around the church are also 20 mph, but that is an area where higher speeds are very unlikely anyway.

The new 20 minute parking restriction for three car lengths outside Tenbury News will be applied next month. We must all trust that trade will now start return, to bring more prosperity to all retailers and residents in and around Tenbury.

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