

Good Morning Karen and Parish Councillors,

Herefordshire Councillor's Report

My apologies for missing the meeting as I am away for a few days .

Highways England

We continue to await Richard Timothy's report on studies carried out for several months concerning road safety at the Salwey Arms junction. The results have been much delayed and Richard Timothy apologised in a Zoom call last month. We all (Karen, Nigel Monk, me) emphasised how dangerous the junction is, the need to keep us informed and continuing public concern. RT told us he would give us any news about their studies, good or bad. It was clear that there had been no formal discussions with the landowner over a possible offer of land towards a roundabout. Last year when the clocks changed there was a spate of collisions at or near the junction, one fatal. The road markings at the junction are fading fast and confusing in the half light and they should be improved even if nothing else is done. I am keeping in touch with my neighbouring councillors Vivienne Parry and Sebastian Bowen. This saga goes on and on.

Other Local Matters.

Dog waste bins. I am pleased that the Parish Council is investing in a second bin. The siting is important. There has been concern during warmer weather over the emptying of the Wyson Lane bin. It is being very well used and so fills quickly. Is it possible to empty once a month and what would be the cost ?

SIDS. I have been pleased to see the SIDS operating in two different locations and their deployment has my full support. Traffic speeds are an issue in almost every village and we still await the outcome of the TRO scheme for Wyson Lane.

Potholes. Repairs have been carried out in various locations but please continue to report them. Do not assume that someone else will report them. They can be reported on the Council website or by phoning Balfour Beatty on 01432 261 800. As a last resort please phone me !

Footbridge over River Teme. The work to fasten the planks was not carried out as we requested.

Both Boris and me inspected and have been in touch with Lee our locality steward.

Lengthsman. Boris continues to do an excellent job in both parishes and I am very grateful. I am sure he will be keeping an eye on drains and gullies during the winter months.

Covid Update

Cases continue to be high in Herefordshire with the latest figure 313 per 100,000. Cases in England 332 per 100,000. Patients treated at Wye Valley NHS Trust hospitals were at a six month high as of 31st August. 19 patients compared with 12 the previous week. Similar situation in Shropshire. This was not a surprise following the lifting of many restrictions.

Vaccinations. Herefordshire vaccination levels are almost the same as the national figures. Over 80% of adults have received both jabs. Walk-in clinics are available in Hereford for anyone aged 16 or over. People can drop in to Elgar House or Saxon Hall in Hereford during the week. Home testing kits can be easily obtained from council buildings, libraries or some pharmacies.

Jabs being offered to 12 to 15 year olds should help reduce some of the disruption in schools which harmed so many children's education last academic year. I agree there should be parental consent but vaccinations have been carried out in schools for a range of diseases for many years. I can remember flu and polio jabs at school as well as tetanus injections.

Covid Booster Vaccinations and Flu vaccinations

Please can I urge everyone who is offered either or both of these over the next few months to take up the offer following yesterday's Government announcement. This is the best way to relieve the pressure on the NHS this autumn and winter to save imposing further restrictions.

West Midlands Ambulance Service

An example of the pressure the NHS is under is shown by the figures below. July broke all records as follows.

The busiest day for 999 calls - 6,418

The busiest month for 999 calls 162,574

17 of 20 of the busiest days ever came in July

Most hours lost outside hospital in a single day - 875

Largest number of over hour-long delays in a day - 389

We are so grateful to our ambulance drivers, paramedics and of course the Air Ambulance.

Budget Consultation 2022 – 2023

The annual budget consultation is currently taking place and Parish Councils and residents are encouraged to send in their views. Efficiency savings can always be found but the real issues are the geographical spread of the county with the high cost of delivering services and our older than average population rightly requiring an increasing amount of social care. Recruiting and retaining a workforce to help look after people in their own homes and in Care Homes has not been given the priority it deserves. The population of Herefordshire is now 193,000. (latest ONS figures)
Covid Recovery Plan.

Better news is that the Council is spending £ 6m on Covid recovery measures to help encourage economic activity and improve wellbeing. Children benefitted in the summer holidays with a programme of activities and free swimming lessons at the 4 HALO leisure centres. Now adults can learn to swim for free. Any adult unable to swim the length of a pool is being offered free swimming lessons.

Details can be obtained through HALO.

Finally,

Congratulations to all involved in the recent Community Weekend in Brimfield, with the Village Show, Fun Run, Bingo and Coffee Morning it was good to see so many people joining in village activities again. Well done too to the very well attended Little Hereford Fete, back after three years and better than ever. Please support the Macmillan Coffee Morning at The Roebuck on Friday September 24th for Cancer Relief. These events are good for everyone's morale after months of isolation and " bubbles" as well as raising money for good causes. We need to take reasonable precautions, be sensible and do as much as possible outdoors.

John 01584711227

September 2021