

Herefordshire Councillor's Report

Planning Committee September 29th

I attended the recent Planning Committee meeting where the 14 Affordable Houses application was determined. The outcome was that the application was approved by 13 votes to 1. I raised the following concerns.

1. The site was outside the settlement boundary. The Group Parish Council opposed it.
2. The site was not the one recommended in the Neighbourhood Development Plan, which had general support
3. The extra traffic would make Wyson Lane even busier and more dangerous
4. The road through The Coppice was not adopted and any damage will not be dealt with by the Council or Balfour Beatty.
5. Local families will not have preference for the new affordable houses .
6. Responsibility for the Open Space and play area had not been clarified.

Please help me to keep a careful eye on this development as it gets under way. My remarks at the committee meeting are all on the public record.

Balfour Beatty update

1. The grit bins were all filled in both parishes recently. Please let me know of any empty bins and let's hope for a mild winter !
2. Potholes have been filled on a number of local roads including Westbrook lane beyond the Caravan Park, Wyson Lane, the C1054 and on the A456. Please report any potholes either on the Council website, by phoning BBLP on 01432261 800 or phone me as a last resort. Boris continues to monitor the gullies and is clearing blockages when they occur. He keeps us well informed.

Traffic matters

1. No news yet about the 30mph extension scheme for Wyson Lane.
2. Very good to see the SID in action near Brimfield Church all through October and looking forward to its next outing on the Tenbury Road.
3. National Highways. Nothing further to report since the zoom meeting with Richard Timothy. I hope we do not have a repeat of the spate of collisions when the clocks change that we suffered last year at the Salwey Arms junction.
4. The letters from residents about speeding on the Bleathwood road and Tenbury road are not surprising and both locations have been reported before. As we know, any traffic calming takes a long time to implement and there is always a long queue of TROs. I have suggested to Karen we ask Ray Wallace from Balfour Beatty or one of his colleagues to meet us on site and advise.

Covid-19 report and vaccinations

Cases have continued to be high in Herefordshire since September especially among younger age groups and in schools.

There were 410 cases per 100,000 in the week up to October 10th compared with the national figure of 385. This was a decrease on the previous week but numbers fluctuate. Schools continue to be disrupted and some have had to close for a time. Teachers and other staff are under a lot of pressure and one Hereford senior teacher said this was the worst term so far since the pandemic started.

12 – 15 year olds are being offered one dose of the Pfizer/BioNtech vaccine. It is a school based programme with parental consent necessary. It seems to have made a slow start nationally but should speed up after half term. The outcome should be less transmission to older age groups but this may take time. Shropshire however is enjoying one of the highest vaccination rates for teenagers in the country.

Meanwhile flu vaccinations are free to everyone over 50, pregnant women and carers. Vaccinations are particularly important this winter because there was much more social distancing and self-isolation a year ago with flu not circulating. Flu jabs can be booked at local pharmacies. It is equally important for those eligible to take up their third Covid vaccinations when offered. The best way of protecting the NHS.

Free swimming and gym membership

The Council's Covid recovery grants continue to benefit particular groups and help towards health and wellbeing. These include:

1. Free Gym membership for this academic year for Years 11, 12, 13. Proving very popular with 850 school and college students signing up in the first 4 days.
2. Free swimming lessons for young children and families at the Halo pools. 600 families took part during the summer holidays and adults can have free lessons now.

3. Free bus travel anywhere in Herefordshire at the weekends. I realise that there are not many buses north of Leominster !

4. Grants from £5,000 upwards to assist festivals and events across the county as they try to get back on track after three expensive lockdowns.

Remembrance Sunday November 14th

It is good that people will be able to gather at our churches this November to pay their respects to those who gave their lives in two World Wars and subsequent conflicts. Last November most services were held outside with very limited attendance. The service at St Michael's Brimfield will take place at 3pm. There will be a short wreath laying ceremony at 2.30pm by the Memorial bench outside The Roebuck and parish councillors are very welcome at both venues. This year is the 100th anniversary of the Royal British Legion who do so much to look after veterans and will be prominent in all the parades and services on Remembrance Sunday. Chris St Clair will be leading the service of Remembrance in Brimfield.

LEST WE FORGET

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