

Broadwas and Cotheridge Parish Council

Chair's report for meeting of the Parish Council 17.7.2024

Item 24/35

Since our last meeting on the 19.6.24, councillors and the Clerk have responded to a number of communications from parishioners and regular matters such as planning applications.

As can be noted from the Clerk's report, the play equipment on Berryfields has been serviced and updated. This is a welcome achievement and demonstrates our commitment to continue to support this valuable community asset.

The Clerk in conjunction with myself has continued to liaise with the new contractors who cut the grass, and also with the school. There has been some feedback from parishioners about the amount of cuttings left on the main field. Discussions continue with the contractor as to whether this can be addressed within the terms of the contract, given the same specification was used, as was in place for the previous arrangements. An additional cut and collection of cuttings was requested for the school sports day, but the contractors were unable to provide this. Fortunately the school stepped in.

The Parish Council will most likely want to continue to monitor this situation closely and continue to try and build a positive relationship with the new contractor.

A Parishioner has requested if we are able to improve the width of safe space on the footpath running from Church Lane to the school in Broadwas. The Clerk will be asked to discuss with the Lengthsman and liaise with the landowner in respect of the hedge.

This has highlighted the need to continue to press for a response from the Local Authority and the Police in respect of road safety and speeding on the A44 as it passes through the parish. Formal letters to the relevant agencies and their senior officers are being prepared, as a precursor to a parish wide petition. In addition the

Parish Council is being asked to consider funding deployment of speed monitoring strips (through the Local Authority) in order to collect some data. This will help inform any discussions that result from our letters and or the petition.

We have started the process to review our Neighbourhood Development Plan, and will be working out in the next month a clear plan and timetable for this. The Parish Council will be publishing a clear statement intended to reinforce the importance and strength of our NDP whilst this review and completion of the SW Development plan review.

It is possible as a result of the election and the delays in the completion of the SWDP, that there will be some uncertainties during the coming year, as people adjust to changes. It is therefore important that when responding to consultations the Parish Council is able to draw on and apply the NDP to ensure that the Planning Authority fully take this into account when making decisions.

Planning consultations are itemised on the agenda, however as a result of timings it was not possible to include the Appeal in respect of Upper Howsen Farm, Cotheridge, against the refusal by the Planning Authority for the erection of 3 log style cabin holiday lodges. Councillors have had sight of this and any response by the Parish Council will be discussed as a part of the Chairs report.

A number of parishioners have raised their concerns about the potential cost to local taxpayers, resulting from the provision through a Private Members Bill to change the terms of governance of the Malvern Hills Trust. There is a public consultation which closes on the 22nd July <https://www.malvern hills.org.uk/latest-news/20240709-consultation/>

Whilst many would agree the preservation of this important part of the District is important, there has been some unhappiness as to the way in which the Trust has gone about achieving changes, and what would be the end result.

Given that ultimately the Trust relies on a significant contribution from the public purse and changes often result in additional costs, it is understandable why many are concerned.

Our District Councillor is most likely in a good position to answer any questions.

Last Saturday saw the Cotheridge Fete, which as usual was a well attended and enjoyable affair.

Richard Burrows

Chair
Broadwas and Cotheridge Parish Council