

Broadwas and Cotheridge Parish Council

8.10.24

Report for item 24/67 Chairs Report to also include updates re items

24/70 - NDP Review

24/72 - Road Safety and Speeding

Since the last meeting held in September, Councillors, the Clerk and myself have continued to work on our present priorities, actions agreed at meetings and responded to enquires from parishioners.

A number of parishioners have brought to my attention their concerns re the recent Planning in Principle application for Tack Farm, some issues about signage in Broadwas, and enquiries regarding the response to our current dialogue with the County Council and West Mercia Police. At least one parishioner has also raised concerns as to the MHDC position in respect of the SWDPR, and the effectiveness of how MHDC undertakes its planning responsibilities.

There has also been some social media activity about whether dogs can be exercised on Berryfields and those taking part in this conversation were encouraged to raise the matter directly with the Council. Notwithstanding this, Councillors will recall that this issue could be a consultation point, when we engage with the NDP review process. (NB Parishioners were last asked about this in 2018/19 and the majority of those who responded were not in favour of allowing dogs and their owners to use Berryfields at the same time.)

24/70 NDP review

Contact has been made with the designated officer at MHDC who has confirmed that they can carry out a Housing Needs Assessment/Survey free of charge, and we have a contact name.

Considerable efforts have been made by some members of the working group to obtain 3 quotations for consultancy support to undertake the review, which would assistance in applying for grant funding.

This has resulted in the 2 quotations set before the Council tonight, a 3rd provider Kirkwall's, was slow in responding and then did not follow through as they promised. In addition helpful discussions took place with Dr Stuart Cumilla from Martley who has offered to provide informal advice and support should we need it.

I was unable to attend the NALC training event due to a diary clash.

The position in regard to the agreement of the SWDPR has not improved with in effect the Inspectors asking MHDC and its partner councils to either withdraw or offer some tangible and reliable evidence that they can provide the information and assurance requested by Inspectors.

There are no doubt some genuine challenges in this process for the Local Authority and the Council may wish to ask the District Councillor to further expand on the present position and the reasons for this.

This additional and possibly indefinite delay, further complicates an already difficult and sensitive process. On balance and subject to the advice offered by any consultants we appoint, the advice thus far is that it is sensible to proceed as far as we can, with the NDP review.

In addition to support in applying for funding any appointed consultant can help the working group and the Council to navigate this process.

The discussions thus far with possible constants and others has been helpful and informative, and gives some steer to matters the working group needs to address and for further decisions by the Council. For example the Housing Needs Assessment can be conducted in a number of ways, and there are different levels of consultation and process.

Hopefully the Council will feel able to appoint a consultant to support this process.

24/72 - Road Safety and Speeding

As agreed at the last meeting letters were sent to the relevant and appropriate officers of the respective organisations who hold responsibility.

West Mercia Police have responded with further explanation and sharing of information as to how they are exercising their role in terms of enforcement re speeding. Whilst this is encouraging, it does appear to be the case that their influence of the Local Authority is limited.

We wrote to the Local Authority but at the time of writing this report , I am not aware of a response.

In summary, it appears to remain the case that the Local Authority is either unable or unwilling to come forward to discuss local concerns and to present parishioners with some proposals that would demonstrate an integrated and a strategic approach.

The Parish Council has articulated its thoughts as to what may constitute a reasonable approach from the County Council and its partners, which are as follows

1. The stretch of the A44 as it runs from Hilltop to the Laylocks Garden Centre:
 - Improved signage and road markings linked to
 - Phased and staged speed limit variations with buffer zones
 - Speed activated signs and or APNR cameras

- Any other measures to reduce risk and speed

2. Broadwas including east and west approaches

- introduction of reduced speed zones on east and west approaches to stage reduction from national speed limit to 30 mph limit
- Replacement VAS signs and or APNR cameras
- New signage and road markings
- Infrastructure measures such as re locating white lines to “narrow” the road.

The Parish Council supports the efforts of the Police in terms of their enforcement activity and focus on road safety, but recognises that this has a limited effect for a number of reasons. The Parish Council believes that this would be more effective if it was supported by the measures suggested above, and continues to hope that the County Council will start to take the concerns of parishioners seriously.

Other matters

The Parish Council is continuing with its efforts to progress the following

- Completion of registering its land interests with the Land Registry
- Continued review of the Parish Council role in respect to the Broad Green common land and SSSI
- Entering into a renewed right of way agreement with the County Council in respect of the main entrance to Berryfields, and subject to this a further review of the future use and how any improvements could be funded.

Richard Burrows (Chair)

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