

Broadwas and Cotheridge Parish Council

Chairs report - agenda item 26/111 8.7.26

Since the last meeting I along with the Clerk and other councillors have been busy with a range of Parish Council matters.

It is important to remember and to thank Councillors for giving up so much of their time and sharing their experience and insight. We are also fortunate to have a Clerk who works within her hours and delivers high standards of work.

In addition to attending to the actions agreed at the last meeting, as Chair I have:

- received and responded to enquires from parishioners
- Liaised with the Clerk and our County Councillor on a regular basis
- Attended (along with other councillors and the Clerk) a number of site meetings
- I attended on behalf of the Parish Council Broadwas Village Hall AGM
- I have researched and considered along with the Clerk and the Vice Chair a number of matters relating to the overall aims and objectives of the Parish Council.

In terms of detail I would bring the following to the attention of councillors

- Berryfields Legacy Grant - work progresses and the final stages of the project need to be followed through. Whilst the re surfacing of the car park is the biggest element of the project, experience has taught us that delivery and (design) is time consuming, so we will need to be mindful of this as we move towards completion.

- The response to requests for suggestions and help from parishioners regarding the new seating area was disappointing. This means it is likely that we will need to appoint someone to help with design.
- Legal and Shared use agreement between the Parish Council and Worcester Diocesan Academy Trust/Broadwas Primary school. Further meetings are planned in order to ensure that all parties work within the recognised standard for shared use of resources and facilities, of their being a Legal Agreement. It remains disappointing that some 3 years after the Parish Council formally made the other parties aware of the expiry of the previous agreement (2024), we are still not in a position where a new agreement is in place.
- Discussions continue with some Berryfield residents regarding their intention to replaced their fencing and to establish where respective borders may sit.
- Our Contractor (Adrian Bullock) has confirmed he will proceed with the cut of Broad Green within the period prescribed by the contract with Natural England.
- We are undertaking some initial work in respect of trying to see if we can improve the work of the respective parties (including home and land owners) in regard to the verges and hedges in Broadwas and other parts of the Parish.
- We are also starting to look at the role Parish based organisations and groups might be able to play in response to natural and national emergencies.
- We continue to work with our District and County Councillors to bring about improvements in road safety.
- The Village Hall AGM was well attended and there were lots of positive achievements reported, and new members of their committee were elected. We will maintain conversations about the temporary problem we have in identifying a councillor to attend the management committee and we have made some suggestions. As Custodian Trustees the Parish Council will continue to seek to provide an appropriate and proportionate level of support and oversight. We are fortunate as a Parish that

the dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers make such a good job of running the village hall.

- Councillors will recall some years ago that as a Parish Council we took part in a Government scheme to bring full fibre to the parish. This was resulted in an inward investment in the parish of c £200k and meant that Cotheridge, Little Green and some other parts of the parish are now able to benefit from full fibre broadband. Worcestershire County Council has maintained its commitment to work with Government to bring full fibre or gigabit broad band to rural areas and has recently re launched its efforts.
<https://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/business/digital-connectivity/guides-and-information>
- Although last time there was not a sufficient number of Broadwas residents who were willing to sign up to the scheme, work as quietly progressed and it is worth Broadwas residents checking with Openreach as full fibre may now be available to them
<https://www.openreach.com/fibre-broadband/ultrafast-full-fibre-broadband>

Finally

In September Councillors will be asked to reflect on and review present objectives and priorities with a view to making sure we are finding the right balance between what we are required to do and what we would like to do, given limited resources. It remains the case that carrying as we do 4 councillor vacancies, we have to be realistic about what we can achieve.

Richard Burrows

Chair