



Wyre Forest Rural District Councillors

Cllr Marcus J Hart

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my ref: LJJ

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Date : 29 October 2021

Mrs Yvonne Scriven
Clerk to Chaddesley
Corbett Parish Council

Dear Yvonne

Chaddesley Parish Council Meeting – 1 November 2021

Please find our enclosed report as follows:-

Local Issues

We have been dealing with the usual routine casework reporting fly tipping and litter along the A Roads.

There are a number of outstanding planning enforcement issues in the Parish at present of which we are regularly chasing.

Firstly, in respect of the Adam Hewitt site at Harvington, the owners should have decamped by the beginning of October. They have clearly not done so. You may be aware that the same owners were applying for a site just off the A442 in Rushock. This application has been refused by WFDC and we understand that this refusal is being appealed to the Planning Inspector. Clearly it will be some months before this is determined. We have had the opportunity to speak about this matter with WFDC's development manager.

He has confirmed that the enforcement notice required compliance at the beginning of October.

He has however, received a request to vary the notice to allow additional time for compliance once the appeal at Rushock has been determined. He has this week, however, written to say that the LPA (WFDC) is not willing to vary the notice and the following points are worthy of note:-

No reduction in the operations has taken place to date.

Any variation of the notice needs to be specific, it cannot be fluid, such as until the determination of an appeal.

The appeal submitted for Rushock has requested a public inquiry which may be 12 months until it is heard.

Additional time beyond the appeal will be require to re-locate if allowed, or if it is dismissed even longer to find an alternative site.

Should a phased plan for removal of the operations from Harvington be submitted, the LPA will consider this but it would need to be reasonable.

Continued

Local Issues - Continued

He is keen to stress that the Council is working with the owner to achieve compliance of the notice. We are aware of planning decisions that may have impacted on this timescale, and we are trying to arrive at a reasonable timescale to allow the re-location of the business. However, there will be an insistence that this is not prolonged.

Secondly, regarding the Gypsy and Traveller encampment at Curslow Lane (technically in Stone Parish) the update is as per our Facebook update on 28th October. The enforcement notice has now been served and they have until 1st December to appeal this. If they do, then likely this appeal will be dealt with at the same time as the appeal in respect of the refusal of planning consent. Again, likely to be many months before these matters are dealt with and so if WFDC are successful still going to be sometime before site re-instated and caravans move. Indeed, WFDC may have to take enforcement action through the Magistrates' Court if the enforcement notice and planning decision for refusal are upheld but not complied with.

Thirdly, regarding the Grove Bungalow matter, WFDC have done all that they can and this matter is with the Magistrates' Court. A warrant has previously been issued by the Court but the defendant has not yet surrendered to the warrant nor has he been produced before the Court. As a result, until such time, this case cannot progress, indeed no formal plea has been entered by the defendant. Clearly when the defendant is before the Court, the timeline of the case will then depend upon the plea entered.

Wyre Forest District Issues

Wyre Forest House is still closed to the public as is the Green Street Hub save for dealing with housing and homelessness applications.

The District Council are carrying out a consultation on the main modifications to the Local Plan. There will be a drop in session at Wyre Forest House on Wednesday 3 November from 10am-12pm and 4pm till 6pm for residents requiring further information.

Following the Chancellor's Autumn Statement 2021 and Comprehensive Spending Review announcements, please see below some key points.

The £17.9m **levelling up fund** bid for Kidderminster has been approved in full.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund worth over £2.6 billion over the next three years. Successor to the EU Structural Funds. This will rise to £1.5 billion a year by 2024-25.

£1.6bn a year new grant funding for English councils in addition to social care funding, there is no information on what this is for or how it will be distributed. There is no guarantee how much or any of it will come to district councils.

Increase of 3% a year in core spending power – there was no separate figure given for district councils.

There is no mention of **local government funding reform**. There is no confirmation that business rates will be reset or would be delayed beyond 1 April 2022.

Continued

Wyre Forest District Issues - Continued

The **referendum threshold for increases in council tax is expected to remain at 2% per year**. In addition, local authorities with social care responsibilities are expected to be able to increase the adult social care precept by up to 1% per year. Police and crime commissioners proposed to have a £10 threshold.

NB the usual “or £5, whichever is the greater” flexibility for district councils was not announced as part of the Chancellor’s speech but hopefully will be confirmed in due course. Also, please note that this policy proposal applies across three years, so no hint of letting councils have genuine freedom on council tax. The County Council will have much tighter criterion for the social care precept. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities “will set out full details of the council tax referendum principles and proposed approach to allocating grant funding through the Local Government Finance Settlement”.

Business Rates multiplier is frozen for 2022-23. The government has also announced a range of other measures, including a new, one year 50% Retail, Hospitality and Leisure relief up to a cap of £100k per business, and support for investment in property improvements and green technology.

More than £300 million has been awarded to implement **free, separate food waste collections** in every local authority in England from 2025. However, this seems unlikely to cover the full costs. There was no mention of funding for free garden waste collections.

The **public sector pay** freeze will not continue: ‘fair and affordable’ pay rises over the whole Spending Review period. Local government will make its own decisions on pay and were not bound by the pay freeze in 2021. However, the near 7% increase in the minimum wage and projected CPI of 4% over the coming year will fuel pressure on local government pay in 2022.

If you have any issues you would like us to deal with, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Cllr. Marcus J Hart
Cllr. Ian D Hardiman
Cllr. Lisa J Jones
Wyre Forest Rural Ward Councillors