

ERCALL MAGNA PARISH COUNCIL

Ward Member Report – 15th April 2024

Surprisingly, 12 months have quickly passed since my last report as your Ward Councillor. Therefore, once again, my thanks to everyone for their continued support, especially to the Parish Council (of which I am proud to be a Member).

My role, as your Ward Councillor, would be so much more difficult without their support and the knowledge each one brings to the table, which is so useful in many ways and aids to enable me to represent the local community. Collectively, we seek to have input into all matters and attempt to ensure your concerns and wishes are addressed, and any successes that have prevailed have happened with the support, and often patience – which is very much needed as I share your frustrations when trying to get responses and actions.

Whilst Covid has now been left behind us, consequences of it remain and linger on, especially financially.

This brings me on to the Council Tax rise this year, recognising that so many families not only in this Ward, but across the Borough are still recovering and struggling with their budgets and requiring assistance to offset the demands due to energy price increases, inflation, mortgage interest, rates – the list is endless. Therefore, at the TWC budget meeting, I, along with colleagues, opposed the increase.

Your Parish Council also recognised this and with excellent prudent budgeting once more, resolved not to increase the precept.

So what, you may ask, has been achieved and what is currently outstanding as priorities?

Public transport – albeit not perfect, we do now have a service.

Speed of traffic – the installation of Speed Indicator devices, not only show the speed but record important data which will be used to substantiate our arguments to the police and highways authority as evidence that they need to take action.

Your Neighbourhood Plan, eventually, was adopted – a document written on behalf of residents taking your views into account and will now form part of the TW Local Planning Policies.

Bus Shelters in Ellerdine and High Ercall and some smaller community projects completed with partnership financial contributions from my Councillors Pride Funding.

Improvements to the road surface and road width at Cotwall Bend, with new signs and a SID socket will all hopefully contribute to keeping this location safer for road users and the residents – it took a long time, but will be worth the wait.

The Roundabout at Crudgington – a much needed improvement for safety reasons – is entering its final phase of construction. I have been in regular contact with the contractors and they have recognised the need for manual intervention at the traffic control lights to keep traffic flowing.

We have been informed that the long-awaited and, in our opinion, urgent work on Shrewsbury Road will be done this financial year, but is unlikely to start before the completion of the work at Crudgington.

There is more to be done following the recent storms and continued heavy rainfall. This has resulted in many areas of flooding which have highlighted how inefficient our drainage infrastructure is and needs to be improved. However, flooding can be found across the Borough in areas that have not seen such levels of flooding previously and the Highways & Drainage teams are having to prioritise where the work will be of most benefit.

Potholes, of course, are always a concern and merely filling them with temporary tarmac is not, in my opinion, the answer – I continue to press for permanent repairs before more serious accidents are witnessed.

Finally the village eye-sore, known as the Cleveland Arms, remains the subject of much debate. It is good to hear that there are at least three companies interested in purchasing the property to bring it back to use as a Community Asset, in accordance with the outcome of the Appeal undertaken by the Planning Inspectorate. The Parish Council remains committed to supporting any of the interested parties, but has made it clear that it (as a minor local authority) is not in a position to undertake the project itself. Telford & Wrekin Council planning and legal departments are also in support of any business that can bring forward the provision of a community asset that will be enjoyed by all.

Once again, thank you to the Parish Councillors and thank you, as local residents, for your continued support and for keeping me informed on local issues – I remain committed to supporting you all.

Stephen Bentley

Councillor for the Ercall Magna Ward

Telford & Wrekin Council

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