

BORDER GROUP PC WARD COUNCILLOR REPORT JULY 2023

Firstly, I apologise for being unable to attend the meeting but I have a longstanding engagement with Rag N Bone Man!

I have arranged at the end of July for all Mortimer ward clerks to meet with the planners for the area as a number have changed and I thought it useful to do so as clerks often deal with queries.

You will have received a consultation on the closure of Kinsham Church and the amalgamation of Kinsham with Lingen. It is important that as many church goers are aware of this consultation as possible. The consultation ends on the 4th September which will be before your next meeting. It affects Kinsham more than Lingen and would appear that Kinsham PC will not be expected to take over the maintenance of the building. The clerk is checking whether it will become a closed church yard. I think that Stapleton PC would like it to become a Festival Church but I will support the views of the residents

I sent the clerk an email advising that the Bishop of Bristol had got approval through the Commons for parish councils and local authorities to support their local churches. At present there is no detail and it may just mean regularising the cutting of the church yard but if it includes maintenance that could cause a problem for some parish councils.

The council is having ongoing discussions with Airband with a view to some buildings used as village halls being offered free internet connection for a period. The two identified in Mortimer ward are Brampton Bryan village hall and Adforton Church and Leintwardine. This has not yet been confirmed but I will keep you posted.

I have pressed for the rotavating of the triangle. Apparently, Balfour Beatty do not own one. The clerk says he does and I have asked whether his rotavator could be used. What a shambles!

Since the election there are 28 new councillors, 3 of whom are returning but this along with so many new officers will make life quite challenging for the first few months.

As no coalition could be agreed the Conservatives are the minority administration but will require at least 6 members of the opposition in order to get any major policies agreed by Council. This is not the most satisfactory situation to be in and tends to lead to only minor changes in direction being possible. Since the election unfortunately one of the Independent Councillor's has died and therefore at some time in the future there will be a by-election.

At Full Council Cllr Roger Phillips was elected Chair and Cllr Lester Leader of the Council. I was fortunate to be given a cabinet position and am now Portfolio Holder for Adults, Health & Wellbeing which is an area I have some knowledge of having worked in the NHS for almost 25 years. The Portfolio Holder for Highways is Barry Durkin and for Planning is Elissa Swinglehurst. They are the two you are most likely to require to contact.