

## BODDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

### CHAIR'S REPORT – May 2023

This year started with the bare minimum of Councillors following Mike Harrison and Rob Hewlett standing down at the May annual meeting. Fortunately, we were able to co-opt 2 new councillors, Julie Jackson and Andrew Walters, which brought the members numbers back to full strength.

The Council continues to work closely with our Borough and County Councillors and is grateful for the fact that both regularly attend our Council meetings, however it is with great sadness that Councillor Philip Awford passed away earlier this year, his support to the council will be greatly missed.

The Council Budget for the next year has been agreed and, as a result, there has been an increase in the Parish precept of 5% to £3413.00p, the first increase in several years, to partially keep pace with the current rise in inflation but remaining considerate of financial pressure on parishioner's finances.

#### **Clerk to the Parish.**

Congratulations to Shelley and her family on the birth of her son on 26<sup>th</sup> April.

Despite much effort from Shelly to find a temporary replacement Clerk to cover her maternity leave, She was unsuccessful but thankfully, Rebecca Metcalfe nobly stepped up to fill the breach. Thankyou Rebecca and to Shelley for the comprehensive handover assistance.

#### **Gloucestershire CC Highways:**

- The Council agreed to remove the contentious “fox” signs from the newly fitted village gates following conversations with many parishioners, the majority of whom found them undesirable and not in keeping with the area. The gates seem to have aided the slowing of traffic through the village.
- Traffic along Boddington Lane has reduced following the completion of works on the Old Gloucester Road Motorway bridge but the poor state of the road has yet to be addressed by Highways. We believe that resurfacing will take place this June on the entire length from Hazlewoods in Staverton to the Tewkesbury Road, fingers crossed.
- Boddington Lane drainage problem - it is hoped that the drainage in Boddington Lane will be improved during the overall refurbishment of the Lane's road surface. Hopefully, this will take place prior to the next Annual Report....

#### **Joint Core Strategy (JCS):**

The JCS involving Cheltenham, Gloucester and Tewkesbury was approved in 2018 and continues to make gradual progress through the stages of its development.

**M5 Junction 10** – whilst the decision has been made to make this a 4-way junction, it is uncertain as to when this work will start. As part of this scheme the A4019 will be improved and upgraded from Coombe Hill to the Kingsditch /Gallagher area of Cheltenham and a new road will be created running from the A 4019 towards the new proposed development at Hayden.

**West Cheltenham development.** It is intended to build approximately 1300 houses at Hayden with the majority being within Boddington Parish as I understand it. This entire development will undoubtedly have a major impact on our Parish.

**Litter on Parish roads and verges.** – The problem of littering from passing vehicles continues to be a problem so litter picks will continue to be needed as carried out last week, 07/05, by a dozen or so volunteers, probably twice a year maybe October and April when the verges and hedges are trimmed back. The litter around the Parish has been greatly reduced as a result of this effort.

**Fly tipping** – continues to be a major irritation with ‘popular’ locations being regularly used by fly tippers. The offences are always reported to Tewkesbury Borough Council by individual Councillors and, generally, the collection by TBC’s contractors (Ubico) has been very good.

**Parish Council website** – The Parish website is updated regularly with current news, plus Agendas and Minutes of each Parish Council meeting.

**Parish footpaths** – Councillor Lang continued to survey the footpaths within the Parish and he has done an excellent job of liaising with GCC and local land owners to ensure the Parish footpaths are well signposted, accessible and in good repair.

**Planning applications** – all applications within the Parish have been carefully considered and there have been no objections by the Council.

**Hedge cutting and drainage ditch clearance** – the Council would once again like to place on record our thanks to Boddington Estates for their efforts on both these works and to other land owners with roadside hedges and ditches.

**PCSO** - In Barrow, our Police Community Support Officer has not been seen this year as far as I’m aware, I’m sure we’ll meet at a Parish Council meeting when commitments allow.

**Neighbourhood Watch** scheme – Nikki is doing a great job of looking after the scheme with the inception of a Whatapp group we are all kept informed of any issues or events taking place in the Parish. This has been demonstrated very successfully during the recent Coronation celebrations. Well done Nikki.

#### **MOD Boddington**

There has been no response from the MOD following an email to them in November.

#### **And lastly:**

This is my final act as Chair and as a Parish Councillor as I shall be standing down from the Parish Council at the end of this meeting. Having joined the Council in July 2015, the time has come to handover the baton to others with alternative ideas and energies. I leave it in good hands.

Thanks for your support.

**Geof Robins.**