

Charlton Cllr ELIZABETH EYRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT January 2022

County Issues

Dear councillors and residents, may I wish you a better New Year than last.

County Issues

Budget: News on the County front is promising.

We have received more grant than expected in the form of a one-off Services Grant as well as a higher than expected children's & adults social care grant. This means we can fund all the demand-led adults & children's pressures alongside the new economy, highways and infrastructure spend (as planned)

Additionally, we can also fund another year of our capital programme, including the following capital programme allocations per annum for two years 2022-24:-

- £6 million extra for resurfacing roads
- £4 million more for improving the condition of pavements
- £3 million to accelerate the roll-out of LED street lights
- £1 million for highway drainage & flood mitigation
- £1.25 million for the Local Members Highways Fund
- £500k for small scale cutting congestion projects and new pedestrian crossings

- Rail station upgrades \ parking including a new Redditch Station
- Funding for new school places to meet demand

In addition, the revenue budget will be increased to deliver on an ongoing basis:

- More highway liaison officers to help progress member concerns

Extra highway response teams to tackle local issues
An uplift in the budget for the Parish Lengthsman
Enhanced public transport budget
Highway & Transport contact centre open 7am-7pm weekdays
Increased resources for economic development & sustainability

The above is what we will propose in our budget this year.

This should be a budget to enable us to crack on and deliver those investments on the ground over the next two years, giving you an even stronger service.

Local Issues

New pedestrian and cycling bridge in Evesham: Formal Response to Hampton Bridge Project and LCWIP, in particular the Evesham to Fladbury Cycleway, Cllr Eyre Broadway Division.

Hampton Bridge

Following the extensive modelling of journeys around Evesham, a few years ago, which identified the number of short car journeys around Evesham, potential traffic from the new housing in Evesham and Evesham's congestion I fully understand the drivers behind the new Hampton Bridge proposal. It will facilitate residents' easier access, particularly those in Hampton, to the centre of Evesham, schools, retail and using other walking and cycling routes to other facilities and sites of employment. I now appreciate that many of the Hampton S106 monies were specifically ring-fenced to this project. The developer costs I understand will be roughly in the region of £5-6 million.

I am in principle supportive of this project which should also benefit residents living in the area of my Division: Charlton, Cropthorne, Fladbury.

LCWIP: Evesham to Fladbury Cycleway Despite an indication in the paperwork that this was a medium-term priority, I think we have bottomed out that this project is not funded and there is still no clarity about its deliverability. As always, the pinch point is the area of Porter's Path, in Fladbury which is not 5m wide (3m plus 1 m on either side.) Work was done by Phil Goddard and his team to see if the Church Drive alternative (14/15 feasibility study) could be pursued and I note that the agricultural use around the depot and the number of large vehicles using Salters Lane ruled out this route. Whilst historic routes suggest the 3m rule might be able to be overcome, I see any funding would come with the requirement that the new standards were used. I, therefore, have asked the major projects team, irrespective of the lack of funding currently for the ECWIP, to ascertain if additional land could be purchased for the Evesham to Pershore Cycling Project. My villages Charlton, Cropthorne, Fladbury deserve clarity on the deliverability of the scheme as soon as possible. Should the long-standing identified route not be deliverable I ask the WCC infrastructure team to work in partnership with me and parish leaders to

1. identify circular leisure, route, bringing together all three villages and their many facilities: Hampton, Charlton, Gardiners Arms, Cropthorne and Charlton Village Hall Facilities including outdoor space, Holland House facilities, Clive's of Cropthorne, Fladbury, its shops, recreational facilities, and two public houses and back to Hampton. There would, if done well, links to other cycling routes within Evesham connecting to economic and travel centres such as the Vale Business Park and the Railway station. More locally the routes may facilitate access to some local schools. I ask you to note that some of my divisional highway funding, around 5k, is being allocated to the B4084 to improve accessibility to Evesham from Cropthorne.
2. Prepare a suitable business case for such a route, linking to hooks in LTP4 and the Evesham LCWIP to achieve funding.

My understanding is that currently the details in the LCWIP are unfunded but there is a small pot of 30k for the Hampton Cycle route. Local members have small amounts of designated funds and that some parish councils hold small pockets of locally parish-designated community infrastructure funds. These small sums should not be overlooked.

Minerals Local Plan: When the final report is received, it will be put to Cabinet and Full Council for a decision as to whether to adopt the plan.

Broadband my understanding is

- project is now formally in delivery – so FTTP is expected by 14 Dec 22 (subject to any issues of course).

- Robert awaiting funding summary from Chris, has top up funding but vouchers should be used first
- Asked - Enough signed up for fibre to premises – no more voucher needed ?, What is the timescale? Will those not signed up with vouchers still be included.
- Boston Lane and Haselor Lane scheme seems to be installed.

I add my own rider , the state/age/updates of the equipment will still link to outcomes

Bight

Water leaking on road after new house changes, in cold wether ice 20mm thick, Barry and Mark Morris resolution and timescale? BB 31/12/2021 I've attended the site and not found any issues with water across the road. Could this be field run off during heavy rain? **Is there someone I can call on to at The Bight to discuss please?**

Boston Lane (714)The hedges along Boston Lane will be cut back in the winter cut JAN FEB 2022. BB 31/12 Dec:"As an interim report the private hedges on the east side of Boston Lane have all been cut back".

U44206 Yessell Lane and U44206 Canada Bank, Charlton) (Temporary Closure) Order 2021 Proposed Order - Sewer Works by Soma Service Ltd **Maximum duration:** 18 Months. Anticipated duration: **40 days** Commencing: **8 November 2021**

Parish queries for Severn Trent

- why others not asked to connect – email to Steven King ST– no response yet
- capacity bubbling over brook lane – email to Steven King ST

Query Caravan park and a different route for the bridleway – ROW team need more information to progress.

Yessell Lane cut back hedges

- identifying ownership – if local will contact riparian owners if WCC will say when to be done. BB 31st Dec: " I've inspected along Yessell Lane again today. All hedges are cut back and no safety issues."

On the Green

Yew Tree Cottage on the Green to Cemetery why did WCC not claim for damage as across road and work needs doing. Advisory Aug 2018. Barry has found out that a request to try and claim damages was raised but abandoned through lack of information. Driver or vehicle details not supplied? RD has supplied information. WCC may be too late? If claim cannot be pursued then repair will have to be paid for by WCC. Can WCC follow up on claim if not what is the timescale for repair – question not yet sent to BB.

Canada Bank road bridge Clearing grit under the bridge – WCC 262 Nov following visit the engineer confirmed that there is little or no silt under the bridge but there is some bed gravel that appears to have been washed over from one side to the other, at the downstream end, leaving a small area of scour on one side and a corresponding deposit on the other. This will be reprofiled as soon as consent can be gained from the E.A. However, it is not a cause for concern in the meantime. The County are only responsible for removing silt from the section of stream directly under the bridge, not the upstream approach of downstream section.

There is an amount of silt and debris deposited in the river channel downstream the Parish are arranging silt removal from the open section of the stream. My comments about flood risk have been added as a note to the bridge file.

Merry fields I

BB attended the site December and inspected the gullies at Merryfields. They were all clear apart from one at the junction with Brook Lane which was full of silt. He raised a work order to clean/jet it. There are five gullies at the location in total. I note that properties 1 to 3 are lower than the other properties and the road slopes towards them. The each have dropped kerbs so I wonder if when there is a heavy downpour the water is crossing over the dropped kerbs rather than the gullies not working. **It would be useful if anyone has any video of photos of water entering garages to see if this is the issue?** I will monitor in the future. If it is the issue then I can raise an advisory to raise the kerb level to the maximum allowed for dropped kerbs to try and prevent water ingress. I've attached a plan showing the position of the blocked gully. **Plan sent to Parish Chairman and clerk**

New Footway discussion – Dovecote to the Church – member enquiry #107 and 474

Dovecote Footway joining up with the footway outside the Church some years ago was not acceptable to WCC as they could only fit full-width footways and to do so would leave the road too narrow. Cars parking, car doors hitting the wall, the narrowness of the road are all issues. KH visited the site 7/10 listed wall between the Dovecote and the Church. There appears to be a missing old verge, now worn away. Parish Chairman and residents discussed with KH.

Request to Highways

- Who does verge belong to?
- Can there be a betterment of the verge either as a footway to the same width as the existing verge or with grass and appropriate reflective posts?

BB 31/12/2021 I've spoken with Kieran Hemstock who informs me that consideration was being given to parking restrictions at this location. These were not fully supported or desired. A suggestion of bollards was also not supported. I've raised a service request with the TIC Team to survey the possibility of a short section of new footway from The Dovecote to the church. The will carry out a survey from MARCH 2022 Service request number 1175296

Footway and road Maintenance - Tree roots also causing damage to the road and footway in 3 areas

- **The Dovecote**
- **Footway between Ryden Lane and The Dovecote** WCC 259 incl. the crescent shape.
- **Footway from Yew Tree Cottage, on The Green to Cemetery**

BB has been in contact with the WCC Footway Team who are beginning to list footway and siding out works for the future.

Given these areas are in the vicinity of the areas where the tree root work needs to be undertaken in Ryden Lane it would make sense if it was done at the same time.

The footway team has prepared a plan for footway resurfacing at The Green which will include the section near Ryden Lane that has been affected by tree roots. As soon as he has a quote he will let us know.

Footway, B4084, siding out Hampton to Brook Lane about 2700 metres. Member enquiry # 49

WCC is also looking at the best way to approach /include in their program.

Grass cut back. 24/6/2021 advised machine for siding out work was not suitable, footway needs to be in quite a good condition for siding out work. B4084 is not suitable for siding out due to its condition and would benefit from some reconstruction. and there will inevitably be some sections that will require resurfacing and thus increase the cost.

There are five advisories raised at various points Engineers have not allocated resources so far.

Note **RB - 24/6** Siding out budget whole county circa £200k per annum, work is usually carried out during the warmer summer months. Before committing to this work, we need to assess the area and carry out trial holes to understand the footway condition. There are also the traffic management costs and tipping charges to bear in mind, significantly increasing the cost of work. When costs are obtained parish may need to prioritise and perhaps add funds to the project?

Haselor Lane Weight limit request not supported: Based on the data, Heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) accounted for 1.29% of total traffic. (HGVs are those vehicles over 7.5 tonnes). County Council policy for the consideration of weight limits is that HGV traffic must make up at least 5%+ of total traffic as this figure potentially indicates a significant 'rat running' issue. The average daily volume of vehicles using Haselor Lane was 1858. As a comparison, the average daily volume on 'C' classified roads in Worcestershire is 2829. **Based on the results a weight limit would not be considered appropriate.**

Automated traffic count 21-28 June 2021. Average daily data:

	Total Volume	HGVs	Mean Speed
Northbound	1066	13	47.8mph
Southbound	792	11	45.5mph
Total	1858	24 (1.29%)	-

Poplar tree outstanding BB 31st December 2021: I've revisited the site and inspected all trees in the locality. None have any safety issues so no further work required at this time.

Accidents, safety on the A46 - Hinton Cross to the Worcestershire border

It may seem a distance from Charlton but many of the residents of Charlton/Crophorne and Fladbury use this section of the A46 to access Cheltenham, the Cotswolds, Tewkesbury, and the M5.

You may or may not be aware of an A46 petition started by Lucy Fletcher on <https://www.change.org/p/worcestershire-county-council-make-A46-less-dangerous>.

Lucy was clear. Her petition says, “There have been too many accidents and deaths on the A46 bypass between Cheltenham Road roundabout and Teddington Hands roundabout. Something MUST be done. How many more crashes must there be before the council do something to slow the traffic, making the Hinton, Childswickham, Aston Somerville, and Sedgeberrow turns safer? I am starting this petition due to yet another incident this evening (about 4 months ago) that will leave another family in turmoil. This HAS to be sorted as a matter of priority. Whether we have to wait for a certain number of accidents or deaths on this road before action is taken is I hope not the case. I was involved in a serious crash 6 years ago outside the truck stop and even years later I still have driving anxiety.”

The petition now has 6095 signatures as of the 12th of January. At the time of writing the petition Lucy was not aware the A46 is part of the National Highways (previously Highways England) network, not the responsibility of Worcestershire County Council but regardless of I have engaged with the issue, as it impacts so many of my residents from Childswickham to Sedgeberrow and back to Charlton, if not the wider area.

On 13th January I am presenting the petition to WCC and asking for their partnership support /assistance to National Highways to effect change on this road. To ask the County Council to partner in these efforts to make a difference on the A46.

[You may be aware of yet another significant accident, further up the A46, towards Ashton under Hill, involving a school bus and a motorist. 12 were injured (school children) and one was critical. This was within a month of two November accidents at Hinton Cross (both of which happened on the same day]

Progress to date

Earlier this year I obtained a list of the accidents (31) in the last 2 years between Hinton Cross and the Sedgeberrow stretch. Turns out in last 5 years there have been 47 accidents including fatalities. Discounting a person walking across the road without looking, a drug incident, an

alcohol incident, tiredness, an animal on the road, I narrowed down the issues in this stretch to several issues which seem to need an engineering or practical solution:

- A hedge at Hinton Cross – now rectified,
- A BT box at Hinton Cross – I asked if it could be moved- work in progress,
- Speeding vehicles are coming from Evesham where there is a bend just before the Hinton Cross, and signage of the is inadequate Broadway/Childswickham turn is not adequate.
- A National Highways sign (used for A46 closures) obscuring in part the 2nd left turn to Sedgeberrow – going towards Cheltenham,

Others came up with thoughts about a second splitter lane at the first Sedgeberrow junction going towards Cheltenham, a good suggestion.

National Highways are awaiting the formal analysis by the police, of these accidents, before going further, which is a necessary next step and the verdicts from the coroner courts

- The three MP's Nigel Huddleston, Childswickham and Charlton /Haselor Lane residents and Hinton Cross, Harriett Baldwin – the Aston Somerville and Sedgeberrow section, and Laurence Robertson further down toward Tewkesbury are all engaged.

Nigel Huddleston MP has a response from National Highways giving a lead officer name and suggesting a way forward

- The police report analysing the incidents.
- Possible speed changes at Hinton Cross

Harriett Baldwin MP visited the site, has asked a question in the house, and has had virtually the same letter from National Highways saying:

“I would like to assure you that we are continuing to work with the police to fully understand the underlying causes of the recent collisions on this stretch of the network, and assess what action we can take to reduce risks to the safety of both pedestrians and the travelling public.

We are currently awaiting the results of the investigations into the fatalities on 26 August and 10 November, which occurred in the Hinton Cross area. We are supporting these investigations in any way we can, and once they have concluded we will carefully review the findings provided by the police.

We are also in discussion with the police about the possibility of reducing the speed limit on this section of the A46, with the view to improving safety. Further speed surveys are required to understand whether any changes to the speed limit may be appropriate. Once these surveys are complete, we will be consulting with the police on our findings before any scheme design work to implement the suggestions is carried out.

Following a meeting of Councillors and with residents and two site visits, I have contacted the lead officer and have agreed to prepare a summary of all the resident's suggestions, as to the possible changes which could increase safety on this stretch of road.

I attended a meeting with the lead officer from National Highways, her senior manager, and the Police and Crime Commissioner on-site on 7th January. It was very positive and we now have a couple of quick wins to present to National Highways. Everyone seems to be pulling in the right direction but of course, all improvement works on the network must undergo rigorous design and safety standards and will need to be carefully balanced against the needs of the network as a whole in this region.

Next step, this weekend, is to pull together suggestions from residents, and parishes and send to Highways England. I am hoping we could install before Hinton Cross, in the Evesham to Cheltenham direction, a Vehicle Activated camera, in the right position, giving enough slowing time for cars and HGVs before the junction to the left. This might be a proposal that could be implemented reasonably quickly, given the lack of good signage warning of the up and coming junction after the bend. It could highlight the junction and speeds.

We did tease out additionally we need to address the hold up for drivers approaching Hinton Cross and wanting to turn left and a roundabout there would be unlikely. I grossly underestimated their costs which can run to a staggering 20 million!