

## **West Harptree Parish Council Report**

Dave Wood, 12/11/22

### **West Harptree Road Resurfacing**

As you know this was completed on Thursday. I inspected the works at the end and flagged that the 20mph roundels still need to be painted. They are due to return in the next week (weather depending) to complete. Peter flagged me down whilst I was there to say there were fewer central road markings than before. Highways told me this was a recommendation from Stefan, I'm waiting on more information.

### **West Harptree Speeding**

Thank you for the public meeting last month. I look forward to the next one. I will keep pushing as hard as possible for inclusion in the Transport Improvement Programme in the coming year's budget or the year after. But ideally in the budget set in February 2023.

Our PC is on leave at the moment but I'm following up on speed patrols on his return.

### **Speeding and Moving Vehicle Offences**

As we know the Police are responsible for enforcing speed limits but as the fines go to government they cannot make the service cost neutral and therefore it is always limited. One person for the whole of B&NES, in our case.

A London Council is using powers available to them to give the Police more firepower by doing most of the issuing of speeding fines for them. As these are PCN fines rather than Police fines the London Council keeps the fine income and can therefore invest in a greater level of speeding enforcement which will be broadly cost neutral.

National regulations don't allow Councils outside of London to use this power, but I will be following Wandsworth with interest with a view to lobbying our MPs about changing national regulations.

### **LPPU**

This is due to final adoption by Full Council in January. We seem broadly safe until the LPPU is adopted. A large speculative development was submitted elsewhere in Mendip Ward and has been scheduled for decision in late January, after the LPPU adoption, so the LPPU will be in force.

### **Widcombe Planning Application**

A broadly similar planning application to the previous one that was turned down was recently submitted. I have objected for the same reasons.

### **Emptying Drains**

Gulley emptying came into my Cabinet portfolio at the start of 19/20 so I have been consistently working on improving this service as flooding will increase in the coming years.

In 2021/22 we instituted a strict supervision regime of the external contractors to improve numbers.

In 2022/23 we brought in an additional tanker crew and set about the task of cleaning the 'harder' gulleys that are often left in the past.

The current numbers for gulley emptying are:

2019/20: 10,923  
2020/21: 14,852  
2021/22: 21,251  
2022/23: 14,246 to October (full year projection: 24,422)

### **Main road litter pick**

At the end of October the regular B&NES stop/go litter pick of all A and B roads picked the A368. This was a service I doubled last year.

### **B&NES Council finance pressures**

Following the unprecedented £54m income loss caused by Covid and the cuts required over the last three years - inflation levels, the prospect of reduced national funding and increased pressures on childrens' services means £12m needs to be found this year and £19m next year.

This is a common picture with all Councils. The LGA estimate that such spiralling costs have added £2.4 billion to Council budgets set earlier this year.

We're working through the difficult decisions now but my mission is to protect frontline services.

### **Nearby on-demand transport trial**

There is an interested trial taking place in Bristol of on-demand public transport for everyone. The service is mainly app-based (great for most but a concern for older people) and costs the same as the regular bus service.

We're watching this with interest to see if this could be a suitable model for rural areas.

### **Bristol CAZ this month**

As a reminder the Bristol CAZ charges older cars and comes in on 28/11/22. As reported previously the exemptions for blue badge holders, lower income workers and hospital visitors now only applies until the end of March 2023.

### **North East Somerset Boundary Review update**

The 'nearly final' boundaries were announced this week. Our area would be named 'North East Somerset and Hanham'.

We lose: Midsomer Norton, Radstock, Bathavon North, Bathavon South, Peasedown

We gain: Hanham, Bitton and Oldfield Common, Longwell Green, Parwall and Warmley.