



## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT MAY 2023**

### **Report on the activities of the Parish Council over the past 12 months**

**The 7 Members of the Parish Council are:**

**Cllrs Sue Jones, Mark Thorn, Elaine Parton and Malcolm Corrie are from Leighton.**

**Cllrs Sue Dawes and Mark Budgen are from Eaton Constantine**

**Cllr Alan Bain is from Garmston**

- The Annual Parish Meeting and the Annual Parish Council meeting were held on Tuesday May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2022 at Eaton Constantine Village Hall.
- Full Council Meetings were also held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2022, Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2022, Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2022, Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023.
- Cllr Sue Jones was elected Chair and Cllr Mark Thorn was elected Vice-Chair at the May meeting.
- An Extraordinary Council Meeting was held on Tuesday May 31<sup>st</sup> 2023 to discuss the employment of a locum Clerk during the absence of the permanent Clerk.
- Cllr Sue Jones represents the Parish Council on the Ironbridge Power station Re-development Liaison Group. There have been 3 meetings: 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022, 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022 and 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023. Minutes of the first 2 meetings are on the Parish Council website [:www.leightonandeatonconstantineparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.leightonandeatonconstantineparishcouncil.org.uk) under Buildwas Power station. The Minutes of the third meeting will be available once approved at the next meeting of the Liaison Group.

### **PLANNING MATTERS**

#### **Planning Decisions in the Parish**

The Parish Council is a Statutory Consultee in planning matters within the Parish. The Parish Council gives comments on all planning applications and the comments are taken into account in any decision making. The final decision is taken by the Planning officer or the Planning Committee at Shropshire Council.

For details of all planning decisions and applications in our Parish please visit the Shropshire Council Planning Portal at: [www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning) and view the planning register or visit the Planning Tracker on our Parish Council website at : [www.leightonandeatonconstantineparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.leightonandeatonconstantineparishcouncil.org.uk)

#### **Buildwas Leisure Park Planning Application**

In 2022, both Cllr Sue Jones and Cllr Mark Thorn have spoken on separate occasions on behalf of the Parish Council at the Shropshire Council's Southern Planning Committee meetings regarding the Planning Application **21/03090/FUL** to create a caravan site at Buildwas Leisure Park, Buildwas. Our

concerns with this application were the increase of traffic along the B4380 and safety of the current and future road junctions near the Site. For details of this application please view the Shropshire Council Planning Portal: [www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/planning). Permission has been granted for this application with planning conditions. We have been advised that no construction traffic will be allowed to use the B4380 as part of the routing of traffic condition (Condition 8).

### **Development of the former Ironbridge Power Station**

Two planning applications have been granted to the developer Harworth Plc by Shropshire Council. One is for sand and gravel extraction and one for outline planning for up to 1000 homes on the former Ironbridge Power Station site.

Applications and supporting documents plus Parish Council responses can be found on the Shropshire Council Planning Portal.

We have major concerns as a Parish about the possible impact that up to 1000 homes on the former Ironbridge Power Station site will have on traffic within our Parish. Thanks to the hard work of the Parish Council and Shropshire Councillor Claire Wild, there is now a legal agreement from Harworth Plc to implement Traffic Calming Measures in the village of Leighton. The planning conditions require the implementation of the Traffic Calming measures before the occupation of the 50<sup>th</sup> home. Construction HGV vehicles and HGV vehicles used in the sand and gravel extraction work will not be allowed to use the B4380 under a legal agreement. Good news for our Parish. We will have to watch carefully to make sure the agreement is adhered to once work commences. We will be watching!

A Liaison group has been set up consisting of Shropshire Council officers, Parish Councils, representatives of Harworth Plc and Shropshire Councillor Claire Wild, to look at the impact of the development on the local areas and in particular the road networks. Cllr Wild is Chair with Cllr Sue Jones acting secretary at these meetings. Minutes are on our website under 'Buildwas Power Station', at: [www.leightonanddeatonconstantineparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.leightonanddeatonconstantineparishcouncil.org.uk)

**The good news** is that Harworth Plc has agreed to fund VAS (Vehicle Activated Signs) all along the B4380 as soon as possible and before construction starts. A meeting with Leighton Councillors, Shropshire Cllr Claire Wild and Shropshire Council Highways department took place in March to look at siting two extra VAS signs for Leighton Village. These signs will be implemented ASAP, with further Traffic Calming Measures to be implemented at a later date. As soon as we have details from Shropshire Council we will inform residents. Unfortunately, the 'Build-Outs' which were originally planned for either end of Leighton, cannot be considered due to safety reasons.

Regarding the Sand and Gravel extraction which is due to start later this year, there have been issues with the rail transport. Unfortunately, the repair to the Albert Edward Bridge, on the Ironbridge site, due to be completed by Network Rail will not take place in the short term. This means that the product from the sand and gravel extraction cannot be transported by rail in the near future. There is a limit, however, on the amount of sand and gravel that can be removed via road of 100,000 tonnes / year. Harworth plc are looking at using some of the sand on site to negate taking it on the road and also may use the JPE Quarry site, which they have recently purchased, to place some of the product. There is a planning condition routing the HGVs up the Buildwas By-pass towards Telford, avoiding the B4380 through Leighton and Much Wenlock Road A4169.

Hopefully, Harworth plc will be producing a newsletter soon to inform local residents as to what is happening on site and future phasing of the development. They are keen to increase communication with local residents.

### **Highways**

We have a list of Highways and Drainage issues that need attention and will carry on pushing Shropshire Council Highways department to get them completed.

The re-surfacing of Kynnersley Lane cul-de-sac is due to be completed by the Capital Works Team and numerous pothole repairs are now a priority. No definite timescales are available; however, they are to be pushed into the works programme ASAP.

Cllr Bain has asked to look at suitable traffic calming measures for Garmston. We have asked Shropshire Council to investigate possible measures. Serious potholes in Garmston have also been reported to Shropshire Council.

An increase in fly-tipping around the meanders has also been reported.

If you wish to report issues such as potholes, please use 'Fix my Street' at [www.fixmystreet.com](http://www.fixmystreet.com) . Here you can report and follow up work reported or if you prefer, please telephone Highways customer services 0345 6789006.

### **Police**

West Mercia Police provide local alerts; information about crime in local areas etc through their Neighbourhood Matters website: <https://www.westmercia.police.uk/police-forces/west-mercia-police/areas/west-mercia/campaigns/campaigns/neighbourhood-matters/>. This is open to all residents to join and receive.

In response to a request from West Mercia Police, the Parish Council confirmed the three policing priorities in our area are:

- Speeding
- Anti-Social Behaviour including fly-tipping
- Theft from outbuildings

In relation to speeding, we are pleased to see that speed checking is carried out fairly frequently in Leighton as a result of our lobbying.

### **Litter Picking**

Residents are regularly out litter picking; however, it is a continuing problem particularly along the B4380 and around the pull-ins overlooking the Meanders. Fly tipping is also a big problem here.

I would like to thank all those lovely residents who give up their spare time to pick up litter in our Parish. It is much appreciated.

### **Financial**

The Council has increased the Precept for 2023-24 to £9,500 (from £8,900). This is a rise of 17p / month for a Band D property. We are using this extra money to pay for additional grass cutting within the Parish, as well as helping towards replacing the Parish Council laptop.

### **Communication**

We would like to increase communication with residents in the Parish about the activities of the Parish Council. We already put articles in 'Under the Wrekin' and have recently delivered a newsletter in Leighton. We hope to make this a regular way of communicating. Any ideas would be gratefully received and everyone is welcome to attend any of our meetings. If you would like to speak at a meeting please contact our Clerk, Lorna Pardoe, at 01894 234004 or email [lecparrishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:lecparrishcouncil@gmail.com). Agendas for our meetings will be on the Parish Noticeboard at least 3

days in advance and on our Parish website. All minutes of the Council meetings are available also on our website: [www.leightonanddeatonconstantineparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.leightonanddeatonconstantineparishcouncil.org.uk)

Finally, I would like to thank all our 7 councillors who give their time freely and work hard for our Parish. I would like to thank Ian Cruise Taylor our Locum clerk who kindly stepped in to help us in the absence of our regular Clerk Lorna Pardoe. Lorna is now back with us and we welcome her back and wish her all the best. Many thanks also go to Shropshire Councillor Claire Wild for her commitment and hard work helping us with any issues that may arise in our Parish. Your efforts are much appreciated. Thank you.

Councillor Sue Jones