**County Councillor Report – 14/02/2022**

The last month has been rather busy at County Hall with preparations for the annual budget which is set to come forward at the next full County Council meeting later in February. I am pleased that WCC will still have one of the lowest council tax precepts in the country going forward into 2022/23. I am also pleased to see that Alvechurch will directly benefit from the Capital Works programme, and I look forward to informing the Parish Council of this project in due course.

At the most recent meeting of the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel, we approved the PCC’s budget moving into 2022/23. It was noted that the budget is a considerable sum but recognised the pressures the police have been facing as a result of the pandemic and comes with a guarantee of more visible and investigative policing.

I have hosted a number of meetings over the last month with residents on individual matters. Most recently, I met with residents of Ash Lane in Hopwood to discuss the junction with the A441.

I met with Head of Highways liaison on Thursday to gather verbal updates on a number of local issues across my division. I have provided a brief outline of a couple of pressing matters below.

* Swan Street Railings – WCC recognise that these are now taking too long. I have asked to be given a date of instillation and the reasoning for the delay (aside from them being bespoke). I will update APC in due course.
* Hopwood White Gates – WCC have taken on the request by APC for moving the existing gates to Weatheroak and installing bigger gates in Hopwood. They are currently just assessing the practicality of this (spacing on the verge in Weatheroak and also the maximum size we can have in Hopwood, according to the verge size). I will update APC once they come back to me.
* 20mph Roundels – I have allocated a proportion of my divisional fund next year to fund additional signs and roundels for the 20mph in Alvechurch village.
* Bordesley White Gates and Villages signs – these should be installed imminently. I have confirmation they are all ready to go and are with the team for instillation.
* Roadworks Bordesley – I am awaiting information on these Severn Trent works that have been alluded to in Bordesley. As soon as I have information on these, I will provide them to APC. It will also enable us to get a date for the crossing instillation.
* Community Transport – I have been working with APC to establish a community bus service as an interim measure while we await the release of the new bus scheme. This is looking promising and WCC have contacted a number of providers who are interested in providing the service. I am awaiting final costs and routes. I will keep APC up to date with developments.

I am pleased that John Campion, Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia would like to attend one of our meetings and I would be pleased for APC to extend an invite to him. This will be an important opportunity to put our questions to him directly around community speed watch, speed cameras, ASB and police engagement.

I am happy to take questions and follow up points via email.