

Ledbury Town Council: Thursday 19th June 2014

Herefordshire Councillors' Reports – Elizabeth Harvey

Economic Development in Ledbury & Heineken Bombshell

I met with Heineken on 11th June to discuss their plans for implementing their investment programme in Hereford and their disinvestment programme here in Ledbury.

Present at the meeting were Council Leader and Cabinet member responsible for Economic Development, Tony Johnson; Deputy Council Leader and ward councillor for Frome, Patricia Morgan, Cllrs Barnes and Hadley from Ledbury Town Council, me, Planning Development Manager, Kevin Bishop; Economic Development Manager, Nick Webster; Heineken Corporate Affairs Manager and Assistant, David Patterson & Nicola Heath.

Heineken confirm that 97 jobs will be permanently lost from the Ledbury site, retaining 16 purely for the dedicated site purpose of milling fruit and storing juice concentrate for the Hereford production facility. Efforts are being made to find alternative posts for existing staff at the Hereford site, but there is no intention presently to bring other company functions on-site at Ledbury. Although, as a result of the meeting it was agreed that Heineken will look again at this.

During discussions it also became clear that the company had no intention to sub-let the existing site to other producers, or to allow an access road through the site to enable the proposed core strategy employment site to be brought forward.

Councillors may wish to consider these points alongside other concerns already raised regarding aspects of the proposals for Ledbury in the Core Strategy.

Public Loos in Ledbury

Following the successful launch of the 'Love Ledbury' community charity last week. The group has received permission to take out a licence to operate the Bye St loos. Quotations are awaited for the fitting of electronic locks. The terms of a cleaning contract are being drafted for advertising to local businesses and consideration is being given to the economic case for taking on the loos in Church Lane at the same time.

Road Surfacing

Confirmation was received this week that, following my lobbying, the High St and some portion of the Homend will be scheduled for resurfacing in the near future. Taking a strategic overview of the whole Streetscene Contract with Balfour Beatty, the picture is a sobering one. I hope councillors took the trouble to read the press release included in April's report. On that subject ...

... Grass Cutting

Since my last report the effect of Herefordshire Council's failure to implement an appropriate approach to the reduced grass cutting schedule has become apparent. I have managed to bring forward the proposed cut in Ledbury. However, I would like to discuss the detail of the situation with town councillors to ensure what remains of the season's maintenance is agreed locally.

I have already provided maps to Cllr Eager which indicate the town's grass areas listed on the Balfour Beatty database and the frequency of the cuts currently assigned to each.

It would be helpful to use these to identify the standard of grass maintenance which represents the minimum acceptable to the town, and to explore the options councillors are prepared to entertain to achieve this standard.

I am suggesting to the cabinet member responsible, Cllr Paul Rone, that he consider whether the budget for grass cutting should be withdrawn from the Streetscene contract and used to engage local contractors in each Locality to undertake the necessary maintenance.

I continue to recommend the town council revisits its earlier decision not to engage in the Lengthsman scheme.

Individual Electronic Registration

I have circulated to councillors the briefing material provided to ward members on the government's plans to change voter registration from whole household registration to individual voter registration between now and 2015.

This is a significant change and will require every voter to be re-registered. Herefordshire Council will be responsible for implementing this change, but councillors should be aware of the initiative and the approach being taken. This, along with the splitting of the parish into 3 separate wards for the 2015 elections will create significant change for voters in the town at the next full election.

I would like to suggest that the town council begins to promote awareness of these changes – perhaps including links to the boundary commission's website relating to the ward changes and including a map of the ward boundaries on the council's website.

Summary from Bus Consultation responses

Q9 The current policy suggests that priority should be given to core services during the main daytime period. These cost about £0.8 million a year. Do you agree that these services should be treated as a priority? **1315 Yes 298 No**

Q10. The consultation in 2011 concluded that the highest priority should be given to the following types of service (in descending order):

1. Monday to Friday (daytime)
2. Monday to Friday (early morning)
3. Saturday daytime
4. Market day services into Hereford or Herefordshire market towns
5. Evenings and Sundays (which cost the council £0.2 million a year) were seen as a
6. lower priority.

Do you agree with the above priorities? **1231 Yes 344 No**

Q11 Faced with making significant savings, which types of services do you consider should be reduced or withdrawn?

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| 1. Monday - Friday daytime | 42 | 5. Sunday | 837 |
| 2. Monday - Friday evening | 389 | 6. Market day services | 351 |
| 3. Saturday daytime | 64 | 7. Town / city services | 326 |
| 4. Saturday evening | 569 | 8. Rural / village services | 57 |

Councillor Liz Harvey