

TGPC Chairman's Report , May 2022

I would like to begin by restating that Temple Guiting Parish Council is the local council for all the communities in what is the largest civil parish in Gloucestershire, including Ford, Kineton, Barton, Farmcote and Bemborough. It is a pity that that this is not always perceived to be the case.

The Parish Council has met on five occasions since last May. While most Councillors have attended most meetings, public attendance has been minimal. There have been several 'site meetings' relating to some more complex or possibly contentious Planning Applications.

Apart from routine matters such as maintaining appropriate policies and procedures, the Council's main business has focussed on the following areas:

Highways: The Council continues to lobby for repairs and improvements to local roads. The Chairman and Clerk managed to avert proposed diversions of traffic from the B4077 and Buckle street (when the later was closed for maintenance) through Temple Guiting, Kineton and Barton on four separate occasions.!

The Quarry Working Party

During the past year this Working Party, led by Councillor Stephen Gower, has continued to raise concerns of residents across the wider area including the need for a more formalised assessment of cumulative impacts from the cluster of quarries as well as specific issues requiring enforcement visits by the GCC Minerals Planning Authority. The Working Party has proactively worked with and has been supported by Parish Councils from across the area as well as the CPRE and the Cotswold National Landscape Board. We anticipate that challenges will continue until such time as the GCC Minerals Planning Authority take a more proactive approach and has the resources to properly assess the impact of quarries in the area. We welcome the recent supporting comments from CDC

and their Environmental Health Officers as well as the continuing support of District Councillor Richard Keeling and County Councillor Mark Mackenzie-Charrington..

Local maintenance

.There has been little enthusiasm for organised litter picking but we are appreciative of the efforts of local residents who help keep our roads and paths clear of litter. I am optimistic that the new village signs will be installed shortly after a series of problems relating to the ordering and/or supplying appropriate signs. The Council has 'adopted' the old BT phone box in Ford. The Council owns a device for showing heat-loss areas on buildings which is available for the use of residents free of charge.

Road safety

A special word of thanks is due to Rob Graves, the Parish's erstwhile Speedwatch Coordinator (not a Councillor), who manages the VAS - charging and replacing the batteries as well as moving the unit around the four sites in Ford, Kineton and Temple Guiting. The Council has agreed in principle to purchase a solar powered VAS with ANP facility acceptable to the police when this is available. Bizarrely, both Police and Gloucestershire Highway are reluctant to take the necessary measures to help reduce the speed of traffic through Ford.

Although it is difficult to access data from traffic counts on the B4077, local residents continue to report an increase in HGV movements (not all quarry related).

Trees

The continuing spread of 'Ash die-back' (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*) across the Cotswolds will result in significant change to the local landscape. Gloucestershire Highways is clearing diseased trees from roadsides (the B4077 between Trafalgar Crossroads and Stumps Cross will be closed in the summer for this purpose). However, current advice to landowners is to remove only potentially

dangerous dead limbs and branches so as not to destroy the habitats associated with ash trees. In my capacity as Parish Tree warden, I have planted some Beech and Sweet Chestnut trees in the hedge along the Winchcombe Way between Temple Guiting and Ford. It is proposed to plant a Sweet Chestnut to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on the Village Green. There are regrettably few 'public areas' for tree planting in the Parish.

Planning Applications

There has been a steady flow of Planning Applications in the Parish including for Tree Works in the Ford and Temple Guiting Conservation Areas . Unfortunately the District Council's Planning department continues to be under a lot of pressure, which has led to difficulties in contacting Planning Officers and delays in processing some applications.

I anticipate that there will be, in the near future, a new and well-considered application for residential development at New Barn Farm. The Council did not support the application for another 'temporary' building at Temple Guiting Primary School, but welcomes the proposal for a new well-designed permanent building.

Corpus Christi College Oxford has disposed of its smaller land holdings and vacant properties in the village but retains the Village Green and the area of woodland adjoining The Sherry.

Income and Expenditure

The Council Finances are sound with appropriate reserves to meet the foreseeable needs of the Council. (including possible election costs). For a third year running, Councillors have not increased the local Precept which means that the Parish Council's portion of residents' Council Tax has been reduced further.

The Council continues to offer financial support to local organisations, for example to the school for maintaining the Recreation Field, as well as contributing towards mowing the Burial Ground and Village Hall maintenance .

Governance

The Clerk continues to advise the Council with regard to policies and procedures and comply with the annual Audit requirements.

So I'm sure all Councillors will join me in thanking Maxi Freeman our Clerk for her hard work in ensuring that all procedures are followed correctly and for maintaining the Parish Council's website where all agendas, minutes and other documentation, including an occasional Newsletter, are available to the public.

I thank my fellow councillors for their participation, in particular the Vice Chairman for her advice and support and Councillor Stephen Gower for leading the Council's Quarry Working Party.

Finally, **Looking Ahead**

At this time next year there will be elections for most Councils in Gloucestershire - including this Parish Council. I hope that some other residents might consider standing for election to help further the Council's worthwhile role in serving the local community..

Michael Krier.