

Tysoe ward Parish Council Report

June 2024

1. General Election

Since the General Election was announced, all Councils have been in a period of 'Purdah'. This means that political decisions and some council functions are limited. As a consequence some of the day to day work of councillors has been curtailed.

2. Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC)

As a member of this committee, I am pleased to report that work has been successfully completed in a number of important areas of concern.

- 1. Public Houses.** The number of public houses in the community has been shrinking. A number have been sold off to be converted into dwellings to the detriment of communities, especially in rural settlements that rely on them as social centres. The NPPF and SDC Core Strategy recognise Public Houses as Valuable Community Assets. The work of the OSC has produced a new Planning Guidance document that draws Planning Officers' attention to the need to show strong arguments regarding viability and extends the marketing review period to up to 24 months. In addition looking forward, OSC recommended to Council that Post Offices and Community Stores be included when the draft South Warwickshire Local Plan (SWLP) is written.
- 2. Housing associations.** Stratford on Avon District Council has an area of predominantly old housing stock managed by Housing Associations (HA). Issues of damp, condensation and associated mould are an increasing problem. Whereas the majority of the districts social housing is old, there is an increasing number of new builds also suffering from issues despite the relative young age of some housing stock. In addition the issue of Ant-social behaviour, petty crime and 'county lines' drug dealing is seemingly becoming an increasing problem even in rural communities. OSC recently completed work by 'calling in' the Housing Association to describe their efforts to combat these very real issues and to identify the need for HA's to check on and hold to account contractors who should complete maintenance in a professional and timely manner. I think that the work has been successful in holding HA's to account, building relationships with them and getting them to recognise and act on their duty of care to residents and the community at large. This remain a 'work in progress'.

3. Severn Trent

Recently I attended a meeting at Severn Trent Stoneleigh. A presentation was given by ST to up-date Councillors from across the region on planned investment of infrastructure. Since water companies have been forced to install monitoring equipment since the Conservatives were elected in May 2010, it has become clear

how badly water companies have been performing. They presented the arguments that:

1. the sewerage infrastructure is very often Victorian or significantly older,
2. the historic design mixes sewerage with 'grey' water and ground water runoff. Increased rainfall due to climate change, increased hard surfaces from housing development have all contributed to a 'surge' in volume at treatment plants which just cannot be accommodated by the present infrastructure.

At the meeting, ST announced that they have programmed an infrastructure investment of £12.9 billion of which £5billion is for maintenance. In Warwickshire and Coventry they are budgeted to spend £300m.

4. Planning

As ever, Planning remains the majority part of the work of a District Councillor. The major application in the Ward is of course the AD plant in Tysoe. This remains subject to consideration but we are all getting tired of waiting. The present delay is a need to refer certain points back to the independent consultants for clarification and this has now taken another three weeks. Clarification of these points and some recent case law hopefully will not delay a decision much longer. I will keep you all up-to-date.

Cllr Malcolm Littlewood,
Tysoe Ward
Stratford on Avon District Council

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