Borough Councillor’s Report 03.04.17 – JH

It's good to see spring colour all around Upton heralding, hopefully a gradual change in the weather.

The Egerton Arms has applied for permission to licence an outside area for eating and drinking. As there are no conditions on the current premises licence restricting the licensable activities outside the public house is applying for a variation to the existing licence to include the sale of alcohol and late night refreshment in the new external area until 1.00 am. Many residents have objected to this application, as have I, because we are very worried about the impact the noise and disturbance will have not only on the residents living nearest but also on the area generally and on the nearest wards of the of the hospital. We will be required to appear at licensing when this comes before the committee but I do not yet have a date for this.

The planning application for apartments on the Plush Spice site on Newhall Road is still under discussion with the developer. I met with the planning officer to discuss the details and both of us are unhappy with certain aspects of the design. If changes are not made then I have given notice of calling in the application.

Members are aware that I have already called in the application for demolition and a new build on Heath Road. The application is causing consternation with many residents.

Its pleasing that the resurfacing of Gatesheath Drive is now complete but I am disappointed that the dropped kerbs I was assured would be installed at the same time have not happened. The reason for this is being is being investigated and hopefully resolved. However it is good to know that both Acres Lane and Greenfields will be resurfaced as both streets have been on the repair list for some years. The white lines on Greenfields have been invisible for a while!

I'm already planning how I will invest some of the 2017 Ward Budget in Upton. I have committed to improving the green space on Dunham Way where the grass is used as a parking space and it is being spoilt. I have also been contacted by residents of Cotebrook Drive as the green space there is similarly suffering. Hopefully surrounding the areas with low fencing, planting and encouraging residents to take some responsibility for the area prevent the misuse.

I am also working with our Locality Officer to introduce a memory cafe in Upton. Memory cafes are meeting spaces which enable people mainly suffering with dementia and their carers to get together informally for coffee, cake and a chat. The cafes provide a reason for going out, socialising and a little respite for carers. The plans are at a very early stage but I hope this is something Parish Councillors will want to support.

Having been asked to further investigate how in Upton we can engage with West Cheshire Foodbank I have made several useful contacts both locally and within the borough. Upton United Reformed Church is looking to see how the congregation can offer support within Upton and I have a meeting arranged with the minister and in addition I have arranged to meet with Alec Spencer the Development Officer for West Cheshire Foodbank. I'm sure I will have more useful information and details for members for our next meeting.

FriendsAgainstScams is an excellent organisation which gives advice and support to people who have been victims of scammers, advice on how to avoid becoming a victim and advice to individuals and organisations concerned about themselves or others. It is especially focused on vulnerable residents and as scams are on the increase I would like to propose a link to FriendsAgainstScams is added to the Parish Council website.

The introduction of some 20mph zones in parts of Upton continues to raise queries from residents who are puzzled by the piecemeal application. The majority of the concerns are around whether or not the 20mph is enforceable and whether The Police can issue points for drivers breaking the speed limit. It is my understanding that drivers can be advised only, however thank you to our PCSO Jenna Tapley who continues to give advice to me and residents alike.

Parking around the schools in Upton, albeit during term time only and for about 30 minutes in the morning and afternoon, continues to be the source of complaints. I'm therefore in the process of investigating with The Police, a pupil driven scheme, to highlight the problems caused by inconsiderate parking, which has been introduced in Crewe. Once I have more detailed information I will be contacting all our schools and I will update members of the Parish Council.

I am pleased to have been able to help Upton High School resolve the problem with the boiler at the school. An urgent repair is needed and when I met with the relevant CWaC officer on Friday I was reassured to learn that authorisation had just been given for the work to be undertaken and that it will take place during the Easter break.

Recently I met on site, with a Highways engineer to discuss the double yellow lining on Egerton and Bache Drives. We looked at how best we can accommodate residents wishes while complying with the usual constraints. Residents of Bache Drive have requested that the lines laid on the outside of the bend rather than the inside as they now. To maximise safety this will be possible but residents will be asked their views before the work goes ahead.

Finally it's really gratifying to see the new car park at the Spar on Long Lane complete and being used. However it's also disappointing to see some drivers ignoring the free parking and leaving their vehicles on the double yellow lines on Marina Drive. I have asked the Parking Enforcement team to visit the area.

Jill Houlbrook

April 2nd 2017