

Councillor's Monthly Report November2021

1. The Youth Partnership continues to look for a new Chair. The main roles of the Partnership are: to ensure information important to the youth of the area is distributed; to work with youth groups on grant applications ie to increase the likelihood of success; and to work together on events for young people. There is a bank balance of approx. £2,400-. Since the Partnership was established the 'youth scene' has inevitably changed and the grant funding available has reduced. If you know anyone that wants to help coordinate opportunities for young people that live in and around Cleobury please get in touch with Madge Shingleton: madge.shingleton1@gmail.com

2. Cleobury's Covid outbreak. It is extremely disappointing that the school has had to shut recently or at the very least children had to be sent home and, once again, have their education disrupted. The Medical Centre continues to do an excellent job offering vaccinations and boosters – though there have been supply issues when it comes to boosters. While nearly all of the 60+age group, and most vulnerable patients, have taken the opportunity to protect themselves and reduce the likelihood of transmission there remains a residual approx. 20% among the 30-40s and the 40-50s that have not. Why ignore the advice of the NHS in these circumstances?

The Economist (16OCT21) noted that 80-90% of those hospitalised with Covid in Britain were unvaccinated – and Covid is a leading cause (37%) of death among unvaccinated Britons. No doubt someone will say that vaccinated Britons die of Covid as well, as if this is somehow a reason not to get vaccinated – apparently those that do die have an average age of 85 and 5 underlying health conditions.

The Medical Centre can still offer the first and second vaccinations. Just call them.

3. Highways. Since 19th April Shropshire Council, and our partners Kier, have filled in over 15,000 potholes, that's the equivalent to 2,500 per month, and reduced the total number of reported potholes on the system to below 4,500 for the first time in a long time. 96% of these repairs are permanent repairs meaning the days of pot hole repairs failing after a matter of days or weeks are hopefully a thing of the past.

At a recent Audit Committee it became clear that the Council and Keir now had a better working relationship and it was encouraging to discover that they now share a common computer platform – possibly not before time.

The FixMyStreet App, while currently in use, does seem to be very much a work in progress – it is still being tested. But I do believe that it is worth reporting anything from potholes to graffiti. Shropshire has won a prize for 'Net Zero Innovation Project of the Year' for its carbon neutral highways maintenance project with Miles McAdams. Climate change issues do remain relevant to our highways.

While this may not seem very relevant to Cleobury (though the town did witness a small poster campaign back in May21) the Shrewsbury North West Relief Road project has been revised reducing the estimated build cost by £7m and reducing the carbon footprint by 22,000t of CO2 to a total of 48,000t. A recent survey by BBC Radio Shropshire of businesses in the area had found overwhelming support for building the road from the business community.

4. The Hub – St Mary's Youth Project – although I am a trustee I can take no credit whatsoever for the success of St Mary's Youth Project over the last very difficult year. Mark Greaves take a bow. I'd like to sum up what 'success' actually means. In April20 Climb61 was opened. There is a group that meets to help manage bereavement; another that assists stroke sufferers and their carers; there are plans for an autism

support group; a connection has been made with the food bank, which hopefully will help some of the more isolated in our community; there is a new youth worker now involved at the Hub and events have been attended by 30+ young people. The finances are in good shape from the point of view of grants received and so is the monthly cash flow. The coffee is very good and I get to enjoy my 'millionaires shortbread'. There is a system where coffee/cake can be 'banked' ie you simply pay for someone else to enjoy the drink/food. If you are in Cleobury drop in.

Simon Harris : Councillor Cleobury Mortimer Division 29October2021