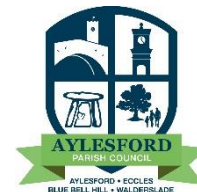


2022 Annual Report, Environmental Services Committee



Councillors,

First of all, I wish to thank fellow councillors and the Clerk for your continued support over the last year. I started life as Chair of this committee with little to no experience a couple of years ago, and although I am still a little wet behind the ears (so to speak), I'm grateful to have had the opportunity again, over the last 12 months to be Chair of this committee.

The last year has been challenging for many as we learn to live with COVID, but we can all start to see the light at the end of a very long tunnel.

The environmental service committee is broad and covers many important topics; here are some of the items that have come up a lot over the last 12 months.

- Lorry Parking on the Upper Bell Slip Road

This issue seems to be taking about as long as it took to get the lights fixed on the upper bell junction - forever!

Whilst I appreciate that there isn't an easy solution to the problem, at the very least we need some signage and the police to enforce the parking restrictions.

This slip road is designed for emergency vehicle access only, and I hope it doesn't take an emergency incident to get something sorted.

It's now planned to be done this summer and we must watch closely to ensure it is done on time.

- 155 Bus Route

For me, one of the most critical issues from this committee.

Over the last 12 months, not only has our service decreased dramatically, but we also lost our weekly Tesco bus service! This has meant that villagers have felt like they are back in lockdown due to the lack of public transportation.

To rub salt in the wound, Trenport contractually promised funding for a new bus service to go through the local villages, due in 2019 (pre-COVID). However, it seems like Trenport, Arriva, and KCC seem to be all blaming each other and stating 'legal issues' for the delay.

Whilst this continues, parents of the local secondary schools do not know how their kids will get to school from September, when the current school service ends.

This is a situation that we all hope is solved over the summer.

- Small works programmer & Highway improvement plans

Both the SMP and HIP seem to be having some success.

The list continues to be actioned on, and we hope to work our way through more items over the next 12 months.

In other news, the Clerk continues to do a great job helping manage the allotments and bringing any resident questions to the committee and the Chairman continues to campaign for a Salt bin within Eccles (the only part of Aylesford parish without a non-private Salt Bin).

Finally, it is great to see the Queens Platinum Jubilee Celebration requests we have received, and I wish them all a happy and successful Platinum Jubilee Celebration.

I hope everyone has a safe and healthy summer and the rest of 2022!

Aaron Ludlow