# Droitwich Spa Town Council

# **TOWN MEETING 13TH MARCH 2023**

**Report of the Chairman of Planning Committee**

Droitwich Spa Town Council maintains an advisory position for planning consultations, within the town development boundary, which are submitted to Wychavon District Council as the Local Planning Authority. The Council endeavours to give fair and impartial consideration for all applications with care given to the opinions and needs of our town and residents.

The Town Council Planning Committee comprises nine Elected Members including the Mayor and myself. Town Council Officers provide administrative support and guidance for the process including the previewing, scheduling, response submissions & tracking for all applications received. This ensures that the Committee are able to make informed decisions. I would like to thank the members both on and off the Committee who help bring local knowledge to the proceedings. The Planning Committee has met 10 times since the last Town Meeting Annual Report provided in May 2022. For the intervening period to March 2023 the Planning Committee has consulted on 76 applications in total. Of these 53 were recommended for support, 6 were of comments only, 8 recommended for refusal and 9 had already been approved by WDC. Our submission responses mainly accorded with the decisions made by the Local Planning Authority. We have also heard from developers and Utility Service providers in updates and public presentations outside of the formal Planning Committee Meetings, including hosting and facilitating a public consultation for the Impney Estate proposals in May. The Committee have reported on 36 Worcestershire County Council Road Traffic Regulation Orders and connected matters received for the Town infrastructure in the period since May 2022.

Another important Planning initiative taken forward by the Town Council last year included hosting and facilitating a Public Consultation (Regulation 19) evening as part of the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR) in November. This SWDPR public forum was organised in collaboration with Wychavon and Worcestershire County Councils. A Full Corporate opinion response was later drafted, considered, resolved and submitted by the Town Council for the SWDPR – Regulation 19 Consultation in December. This response was comprehensive and incorporated details of many of the comments, issues and matters raised by residents of the Town and the surrounding rural area who had attended the public consultation evening in November.

The Town Council has been a key stakeholder in the development and launch of the Wychavon District Council - Town Centre Prospectus. This document was officially rolled out in May 2022. The Town Centre prospectus and the emerging SWDPR have enabled a focused and coordinated approach to be taken for the Town Council to resurrect the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) project from July 2022. This is anticipated to take approximately two years to complete and the NDP term of validity is expected to fully align and coordinate with the 2041 date for the SWDPR. The initial public launch for the NDP is todays date and I express my thanks to our Professional Consultant- Dr David Nicholson, Mr Andy Ford from Wychavon Planning Department and the volunteer Community Working Group for all of their input, support, hard work and guidance in taking this project forward. We are making good progress to schedule since August 2022 and the Town Council has successfully applied for and secured professional fees funding and Technical Support work stream packages from Central Government (Locality and AECOM) for the project.

Councillor GR Brookes

Chairman of the Planning Committee & Leader of the Town Council