Droitwich Spa Town Council

# **TOWN MEETING 11th March 2024**

**Report of the Chairman of Planning Committee**

The Droitwich Spa Town Council maintains an advisory position for consultations, within the town development boundary, which are submitted to Wychavon District Council - the Local Planning Authority. The Town Council always endeavours to give a fair and balanced consideration for all applications with due attention towards the opinions and needs of the town residents.

We do this through our Town Planning Committee which consists of nine members including the Mayor and myself. I would like to express appreciation to the Officers for their guidance in interpreting and tracking the planning applications which helps ensure that the Committee makes informed decisions and recommendations. I would also like to thank my Vice Chairman – Councillor Bob Brookes and my fellow Elected Members on the Planning Committee for their contributions, knowledge and support during the past year.

The planning committee has met 11 times since the last Town Meeting and has consulted on 65 applications. Of these 51 were recommended for approval, 3 were of comments only, 6 recommended for refusal and 5 had already been granted approval by WDC. For the main part the Town Council consultation responses have accorded with the Planning decisions made by the Local Planning Authority (WDC). The Committee has received representations from members of the Public and Developers Agents on occasions through the year, and has also informed on many Road Traffic Orders for the Town area received from Worcestershire County Council. Other information presented through the Town Council Planning Committee includes updates on Planning Appeals, Licencing matters, provision for road safety (such as acquisitions and maintaining vehicle activated speed awareness signs) and updates on the Town Council led Neighbourhood Plan (NDP) Project.

This year we have seen plans to improve various different parts of the town. Footpath works have included improvements to the canal footbridges, creating greater accessibility for people with mobility needs. Improvements have been made to the Lido Park toilets and facilities by Wychavon District Council. Great work continues at the Westlands Farmhouse, bringing history back to life in the heart of a community. At the former Ravenstone Care Home there are plans to establish a multi occupancy residence and this supports the opportunity to create more housing. A stipulation has been raised that this proposal should include suitable provision for off road car parking at the location. Recently there has been a proposal for improvements to the St Andrews Shopping Centre which has been supported to align with economic growth and investment opportunities for the Town Centre.

Through the year, we have discussed a variety of large and small applications affecting single houses, businesses, protected buildings, entire estates and the Town Centre. I am pleased to have had the opportunity to lead on and work towards a considered consultation opinion for all of these proposals.

Councillor George Duffy

Chairman of the Planning Committee