Borough Councillor’s Report – JH 24.02.20

It’s been a wet and windy February but fortunately Upton has not been too heavily affected. Part of a tree was blown down on Flag Lane North but no one was injured and no damage was caused. However I have yet again asked that the trees on the Lane are checked. Some of them are very tall and residents are concerned about their safety especially when it’s windy.

There have been the usual pothole issues. Many of these are because the ‘blobbing’ as it was described to me by a member of the team, of last year’s potholes has washed out in the rain. An example is the pothole on Wealstone Lane near the war memorial but I’ve been assured that this will be securely patched.

The state of the road surface on Weston Grove between Westlea School and Tesco has been inspected. It’s not in good condition but is not dangerous. Our Highways officer has recommended Weston Grove to be included for substantial repair in next financial year. This will hopefully also include the area at the junction with Dukesway. I am rather disappointed that Upton footways and road surfaces are not included for repair in this financial year. There are many areas I have been consistently reporting over the years. Endsleigh Gardens, Newhall Road, parts of Caughall Road, Flag Lane North and Halton Road are just a few examples.

Friends of Countess of Chester Park have tree planting event - 14th March - please save the date and come along.

I would like to thank our StreetScene Officer for working closely with me to deal with the appalling state of Liverpool Road. The mud on the road is in great part due to the contractors who take their tractor loads onto the fields via the bridleway and onto the fields at Moston. Although following an investigation appears the slurry isn’t toxic it’s absolutely not acceptable that the huge tractors trundle up and down Liverpool Road spreading mud and detritus in their wake. I’m continuing to see what action can be taken. This problem occurs in the summer months too.

During last week part of the clean up has taken place and this will be completed shortly. It includes a litter pick on the central grass reservation and in the underpass. However this wouldn’t be necessary if people stopped dropping litter.

Just a reminder of how to report a fallen tree should we have more windy weather.

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/contact-us/report-it/tree-problems.aspx>

The Council Emergency out of hours number is 0300 123 7036. I like to ask that residents use this rather than contacting me as I simply have to ring the same number too.

Another reminder for residents is that although our local PCSO and Chester Police use social media the accounts are not monitored and should not be used for reporting. To report any incidents please use 101 or 999 if it’s an emergency.

A section 73 planning application, 20/00440/S73 has been received for White Gables. It is from a small local family developer Archway Homes. I recently went to meet with the developers and to

chat about their plans. Residents in The Beeches and those affected on St James Avenue will be contacted by Archway Homes and I am in the process of arranging a further residents’ meeting. I have called the application in to committee.

VE Day commemorations

On the 8 May the City of Chester will be marking the VE day commemorations with:

• The last post

• Battle’s over

• Cry for peace

• Bells.

These will be take place from 2.45pm-3.15pm on the town hall steps. Arrangements are progressing to have some WW2 military vehicles on display and a sing along with a choir at around 3.15pm.

On Sunday 10th

There will be a cathedral service and parade. Details will be circulated in the next week or so.

If residents or any Upton organisation is planning anything please let me know so I may pass on the details to the CWaC civic team to be included in the list of events across the borough.

I do ask yet again that drivers consider the impact of where they park. Last week there was a near miss on Upton Lane when someone parked opposite the skip which is on the carriageway, meaning the road was narrowed and the bus had to be guided through the gap. It’s impossible to legislate for such incidents but some common sense goes a long way.

Drivers very often park in front of the bus stop on Upton Lane forcing the bus to stop opposite the school entrance. This is neither sensible nor safe so I’ve asked that consideration is given to road marking the stop.

Parking on Caughall Road near Cedar House and further up the road continues to be a problem and the source of concerned complaints from local people. Following interventions from me and our Highways team The Zoo authorities are in the process taking action and are making a planning application to reuse the field which many years ago was their car park. This is on the green belt so the process will not be straight forward and very special circumstances will have to be shown. I will keep you updated.

The wet weather has added to the unsightly mess on many grass verges caused by drivers parking on the verges rather than on the street or indeed in some cases on their own property. This is particularly a problem on Halton Road and Tewkesbury Close. Some residents feel the verges should be replaced by hard standing. However I would not want to see the verges, which are very much part of the Upton scene, removed. It would only encourage more pavement parking and more importantly such action is not environmentally or bee and insect friendly.

My personal preference is for our verges to be left to encourage wildlife but I am very aware that not everyone feels this way. I have discovered that if residents really want their verges trimmed this can be arranged although they won’t be cut short. I’m happy to liaise with street scene over this.

I’ve also received many complaints about weed spraying on the grass verges and I shall mention this at the meeting on Monday when Mr Mark Brazil attends. Once the weed killer gets into the soil it affects planting for several years.

I recently took one of our officers on a site visit to Dutton’s Lane, Acres Lane and round the Gorsey to show him the litter that is being left particularly in gateways. One of our Upton residents is doing regular litter picks and indeed leaves a bag for litter which she then collects. The thought was to install bins, but we don’t want to encourage litter so it’s been decided that the assist team will make regular visits to the sites to remove the bags and litter and to judge how effective it would be to install bins.

Residents of Deans Close are still plagued by inconsiderate parking. As many of them are elderly and or disabled this is unacceptable. I’ve arranged for a meeting with Parking Services, the Police, Highways and Sanctuary Housing to resolve this problem.

Reconciliation field is in need some care and attention. The hedges are overgrown and it’s lost it’s looked after appearance. I am holding a site visit with our Localities Team so we can get a plan in place to revitalise the area. It should be part of green Upton and attract more wildlife.