

AYMESTREY PC WARD COUNCILLOR REPORT OCTOBER 2025

Relatively recently we procured a new contract for bus services in Herefordshire. This contract was won by Yeomans who also ran as a separate company Lugg Transport. The new contract contained a number of KPIs. From the start of the contract I have received complaints about the condition of the 498 bus which is the previous Lugg Transport bus and now am receiving numerous complaints about it being late, breaking down or not turning up at all. This is totally unacceptable as the majority of people using the service are elderly and there is no seating or shelter. Following a meeting with Yeomans they have agreed that now they have taken delivery of all their new fleet they will put newer buses on the route and with prioritise this rural route during sickness and annual leave. I hope the service will now improve.

The drainage grant is very much over subscribed and so parishes may not be able to do as much as they had hoped to do, I believe the Cabinet member is or has written to parish councils.

The continuing creep of the oxbow which was mentioned at the previous meeting was measured very recently and found to have moved closer to the highway by quite a significant amount recently. This issue has now been escalated.

Residents have expressed concern about the work that Welsh Water is doing which when making good has resulted in black tarmac being put down. I have been assured that when they have completed their works tarmac will be laid to match the existing .

We are busy at the moment going through the Capital Programme to see what could be removed and not impact on local residents. This process is to try to reduce the interest on capital projects which is funded from the revenue account. We are also going through the revenue budget as well. As I mentioned at the last meeting we are predicting a possible £27 million shortfall in our government funding for 26/27 due to the formula being changed along with it being a multi year settlement. It would seem that the new formula benefits urban areas and penalises rural ones. We will not have the exact figures until about December but some difficult decisions will have to be made. Although not confirmed I expect the Council Tax to be increased by 4.99% which is not something we wanted to do and will not solve the problem but only slightly improve it.

You will have seen the stance we have taken on flags and painted flags. We are concerned and will remove those that pose a safety issue and in particular on pedestrian crossings as the painted markings impact on those who are partially sighted or guide dogs.

Since the last meeting the CQC have inspected our Adult Social Care and Housing. They were with us for 4 days. We should received a draft report by mid November.

You will have read that our Chief Executive is leaving in March 2026. He is almost 65 and his family live in the North of England. He has been offered the opportunity of a career move which is more flexible and will improve his work life balance. This has obviously come at a difficult time for the authority but in these uncertain times I suspect no time going forward would be the best.