

Annual report to the town

Cllr Roger Coleman

2021

I continue to be an active member of Bewdley Town Council but for the last year to give newer and younger councillors experience I have stood back from committee membership following a request by the town clerk for less people on committees. Despite no formal memberships I have where allowed been an active contributor to all committees. I've written various decision papers for consideration by both committees and full council itself. In particular I'm pleased that the Planning Committee has taken on board the considerable officer time savings I promoted through a recommendation as to how planning proposals should be presented to committee members. I was not formally a member of the budget planning group this year and was fairly horrified when the small panel put forward its proposals to the Finance and General Purposes Committee and with some help from two other councillors put forward a revised budget which would have meant a 0% increase in council tax for residents to BTC's precept. If it had been accepted in full however my suggestions were only partially accepted and so with some amendments it was carried with a 10% increase. A named vote was requested so that residents could see which councillors seemed to think that the extremes of the Nations annus horribilis could be ignored when it came to council spending.

During the year I have been pleased and proud to support my wife as the Mayor acting as her Consort. Cllr Anna Coleman and therefore I have been unable to attend the normal string of supportive and promotional events expected of the Mayor which has been sad both for those organisations unable to fund raise etc. and for us to meet new contacts and network the proud status our town holds in its position as the foremost town in Worcestershire.

As a District Councillor for Bewdley I have aimed to promote and protect Bewdley and its residents which has been important as all the WFDC cabinet members are from either Kidderminster or Stourport. This has been particularly important where Localism has been concerned. As a daily walker round the town and in to West Ward I am always available for resident's comments about issues of importance to them and their community as a councillor who actually lives in the town it's heartening to meet our residents without having to travel to Bewdley to meet them and of course as a resident it allows me a greater understanding of their issues too. On my travels I see many issues too and report them for action through the WFDC and WCC hubs from blocked drains to failed street lights. I'm pleased to have helped residents with issues whether they be noise, planning or licencing concerns, it's pleasing to be able to draw on the wealth of knowledge gained from having been a councillor for over 10 years now and the background knowledge of which council has authority on the subject and which officer can help. During the year I contributed from my district councillors allowance to the civic planters on SSS and helped the Mayor buy compost and plants which we set up earlier last summer. Since then some replacement bollards arrived from WCC and I've taken them under my wing to re-install them and fix the padlocks in place.

It has given me great pleasure to serve the community over the last 12 months.