

Martley Parish Council report

February 2019

1. Latest indications of the Business Rates Retention Pilot, which was approved by government prior to Christmas show a potential increase from the original £4.5m to £4.9m. It has been agreed by the six District Council leaders that all monies will be made available to the County Council but ring fenced for Adult Social Care and Children's Services. District Council leaders and their Chief Executives/Section 151 officers will approve allocations.
2. Following the recent deaths of two rough sleepers in Malvern, the District Council has referred both deaths to the Worcestershire Adults Safeguarding Board and have met with them to insist that a full Adult Safeguarding Review takes place.

We are seeking support from the government's national Rough Sleeping Unit and have convened an expert panel with vast experience within the housing, health and voluntary sectors which will take place on Wednesday 27th February.

The District Council has done, is doing and will continue to do all it can to for the homeless and rough sleepers in the District.

3. On 29th January Council approved that from 1st April 2019, properties which have been empty for 2 years or more will be charged a Council Tax Long Term Empty Homes Premium equivalent to 100% of the Council Tax. This is to help reduce the number of empty properties in the district and bring them back into housing stock.

4. South Worcestershire Development Plan review

Nearly 5,000 representations were made on the Issues and Options document. Officers have been looking at the planning merits of these as well as assessing the 1000+ land parcels that have been submitted to us as being available for either housing or employment development. Some of these will be put forward as proposed allocations in the forthcoming Preferred

Options, which is likely to be considered by the South Worcestershire Councils in November.

5. Rural funding

The Prince's Countryside Fund has opened up its grant funding, and rural communities have the opportunity to apply for up to £50,000 of funding towards projects affecting areas of greatest need in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Applications for funding must show how they clearly contribute towards one or more of The Prince's Countryside Fund's objectives:

- To sustain rural communities and drive economic vibrancy.
- To improve the prospects of viability for family farm businesses.
- To support aid delivery in emergency and building resilience.

The funding should have a long-term positive impact on rural communities, helping those that live and work there to sustain the countryside, by tackling key rural issues. closing date is 21st February

All out Malvern Hills District Council elections will take place on Thursday 2nd May 2019 Therefore Chairman I will be standing again.

Cllr Barbara Williams