Report for Tenbury Division Parish Councils November 2026

Worcestershire County Council Matters

Local Government Reorganisation

On Thursday 29th October, Worcestershire County Council was informed by the Government that Local Government Reorganisation in Worcestershire will continue and has indicated it is minded to proceed with the previously announced two-unitary model. However, the changes will take place later than originally planned.

Under the original timetable, shadow elections were expected in May 2027, with the new councils taking responsibility for services on 1 April 2028.

The Government is currently proposing a revised timetable, with shadow elections in May 2028 and a vesting day of 1 April 2029. Councils will have an opportunity to make representations on the proposed timetable and implementation arrangements before final decisions are taken.

I remain of the view that the proposal to split Worcestershire into two separate authorities will have a hugely damaging impact on Children's Social Services and Adult Social Care, both financially and in service delivery. Given that these two directorates account for over 75% of Worcestershire County Council's total budget, it is hard to understand the rationale for the decision.

Tenbury Division Matters

Rochford Landslip

Despite previous assurances from Highways that communication would be improved, neither I nor residents have been provided with any new information since the beginning of September. I requested a meeting with officers and the Cabinet Member for Highways but have yet to receive a response. I will continue to pursue this issue, including at forthcoming Council and Cabinet meetings.

Speeding Traffic

Worcestershire County Council policy in respect of addressing the issue of speeding traffic continues to be focussed on data, rather than quality of life. As a result, Speed Surveys continue to be the starting point for addressing speeding traffic on our rural roads. Once we have the data that these provide, Highways will then review signage alongside the data being shared with the police for further enforcement.

I have, over the last couple of months, requested Speed Surveys in Stockton, Abberley, Clifton upon Teme, Newnham Bridge, Little Witley, Great Witley, Pensax and Eastham. Once the results of the surveys are known, I then liaise with Highways and Town &

Parish Councils to explore options for reducing traffic speeds through our area. Improvements are currently being considered in a number of places throughout the area.

Natural Flood Management

On October 2nd, I attended the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting and asked for an update on funding for Natural Flood Management in our area. The Cabinet Member for the Environment and officers confirmed that applications have been made for government funding for Natural Flood Management work to continue locally through 2027 into 2028. A decision on this is expected early next year, and I'll provide an update once it is known.

Supporting Tenbury Wells trade

Work to support trade in Tenbury Wells is continuing. This month has seen two projects designed to improve the experience of visitors to the town coming to fruition.

Firstly, Teme Bridge was cleaned for the first time in a number of years. This was funded jointly through my Divisional Fund and Burford Parish Council; an excellent example of collaboration to get something done for the town.

Secondly, new unique, crafted, pedestrian signs have been completed by local artist Hanah-Beth Bailey. I am now working on having them installed at the end of Teme Street and along Market Street. Funding for the signs was allocated from my divisional fund, with the commissioning being a joint effort alongside Teme Valley Artisans. Again it shows the value of collaborative working for the benefit of Tenbury and our rural area.

Justin Bowen **30th October 2026**

Worcestershire County Councillor for Tenbury Division