

Cllr Barbara Williams – Malvern Hills District Council

2018/19 APM Report

Dear Chairman and Members,

This is my annual report although I report to you on a regular basis at your Parish Council meetings during the year.

I have now completed my 24th year as your MDHC Councillor for the Martley Ward and am happy to say that I have been successfully re-elected thanks to my residents for supporting me.

I have had yet another very busy year as your ward member for MHDC, partially with regard to planning issues, and general enquiries etc

I am still on Sport Martley management committee, representing MHDC, Sport Martley continues to flourish.

I have been Rural Champion for Malvern Hills District supporting local farmers, businesses and our rural way of life, we held a successful event at the Royal Three Counties Show ground “Protect your Farm, protect yourself” to which we hope to do again next year 2020.

My Ward budget of £500 last year, I awarded it to St Peters Church to help with the roof restoration and Martley Village hall to go towards refurbishing the wooden floor.

This has been another crucial year for Malvern Hills District Council, with further cuts from central government funding. I am pleased to report however, that unlike many councils across the country, Malvern Hills District Council has been able to continue to make savings, increase its services to residents, build on its reserves, work to a balanced budget at the same time maintain one of the lowest Council Tax rates in the country.

- Our financial position is strong and stable. Despite having to make savings of £1.45 million between 2017/22, due to central government cuts, we are building our reserves, investing in land and property, which will not only deliver us appreciating assets but also an annual income return.

- Council tax is increasing by just £5.00 on a band D property again this year (that’s £5.00 for the whole year). Less than 10% of the amount you pay for

your overall council tax stays with Malvern Hills District Council – the remaining 90%+ goes to the County Council, West Mercia Police, Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority and to Parish Councils

- The new extension to the Council House will open in May this year. We will be bringing all our telephony back in house and for the first time in over 10 years the Council House will have a reception to welcome residents and visitors to the Council. This will save the Council in excess of £100,000 each year.

- Led by Malvern Hills District Council, the six District Councils in Worcestershire have secured a government Business Rates Retention pilot for one year. This will generate an estimated £4.9 million pounds which we are allocating to help the County Council's budget deficit. The money will be ring fenced for specific projects to help with Adult Social Care and Children's Services

- Our 5 Year Strategic Plan and 5 Year Business Plans are now well established and enable Councillors, officers, residents, businesses and partner organisations to have a clear understanding of the Council's priorities for the five years ahead, at any one time.

- The review of the SWDP is underway which will be extended to 2041.

- We implemented the "Alternative Weekly Waste Collections" in April last year which seems to have been a huge success. With general waste being collected one week and recycling waste the following week, we have seen the amount of general waste reduces and a substantial increase in recycling waste.

- This year we have engaged with more residents, business, partners and schools than ever before, to help us ensure our priorities are the same priorities of the people we serve.

- And there is so much more: We are delivering affordable homes, bringing empty homes back into use, working with partners to help those with mental health issues, loneliness and rough sleeping; provide £50,000 each year to

help with Community Transport; have set up a £30,000 fund to help with food banks; are working closely with our schools, colleges and business to provide skills training, apprenticeships and creating job opportunities; promoting healthier communities for the young and not so young alike.

Finally, I would like to say how much I enjoy working with your parish council, Chairman and members alike, also my close working relationship with your County Councillor, Phil Grove.

Cllr Barbara Williams