

REPORT OF BOROUGH COUNCILLOR – STEVE STUART

TO WATER ORTON PARISH COUNCIL – JUNE 2026

North Warwickshire Borough Council Committee involvement

Since the last Parish Council meeting I have represented the village at meetings of the following North Warwickshire Council Committees:

Shop Front Improvement Board. (3/6)

Executive Board (9/6)

North Warwickshire Prosperity Fund (11/6)

Special Sub-Group (15/6)

Full Council (18/5)

The meeting of the sustainability action group scheduled for 22/6 was postponed.

Other Representative attendance

Planning Friday meeting (12/6) – This body meets every Friday to discuss significant matters relating to Planning. I attended the meeting along with representatives of the Planning and Development Committee and Officers as the matter of the Old School Site was under consideration. This meeting allowed me to brief Parish Council Colleagues and residents. It was considered whether the matter would be delegated to officers, I made the case that the matter should be considered by the full committee. However whilst I had previously advocated and received a commitment for a site visit when the proposal was focussed around the entry on Attleboro Lane – I am not sure of the usefulness of this with the present plan.

Flooding (16/6) – A follow up meeting relating to HS2 / WCC and flooding matters within Water Orton was arranged by the offices of our MP Rachel Taylor.

Local Government Association (17/6) – As a representative of the Independent Group of Councillors I attended a meeting of the LGA Resources Board at Smith Square in London.

SMZ – M42 Overnight Closure (19/6) – The Special Management Zone is a committee set up to represent the interests of the villages most affected by HS2. I attended this meeting to discuss mitigating activities relating to the forthcoming weekend closures of the M42.

North Warwickshire Area Committee (24/6)

Mark Wild, Chief Executive HS2. (2/6) As a follow up to Mark Wild's visit to Water Orton earlier this year I travelled to Westminster for a follow up meeting arranged by our MP, Rachel Taylor.

North Warwickshire Prosperity Fund (NWSPF)

The first meeting of the awarding committee happened this month. Many projects were considered and many were rejected out of hand. I managed to get one item relating to the village deferred rather than rejected outright whilst further information is sought about sustainability and a further project received a commitment of 50% of the monies if this can be matched by the applicant.

Work is ongoing with village organisations to make bids for this funding.

Surgeries

Since the last Parish Council Meeting I delivered in person surgeries on the following dates:

29th May – Water Orton Library (WOL)

2nd June – Robert Lloyd Room (RLR)

5th June – WOL

9th June – RLR

12th June – WOL

16th June – RLR

23rd June – RLR

Further to this I was available for online appointments in the evening on 4th / 11th and 18th June.

SMZ – Air Quality Review

Further to my report last month I was somewhat surprised at the report given by Cllr David Reilly in the Coleshill Post Last month. Residents will be undoubtedly relieved to read that their health has not been affected by any increase in dust levels and that the independent air quality survey is fit for purpose.

During the meeting with HS2 Chief Executive the matter of the scope of the quality evaluation was raised and will be considered with an update expected shortly.

Local Plan

It was interesting to read in Cllr Reilly's piece in the Coleshill Post the point being made in relation to the reclassification of Green Belt Land. This rang alarm bells ahead of the release of the draft plan for consultation in the coming weeks.

It is also slightly concerning that Cllr Reilly made reference to requests for individuals to make their representations to the powers that be. It should be hoped that our representatives are making significant interventions themselves to our villages benefit and not acting in the interest of political expediency.

The draft plan will likely be presented across the summer. As detailed in this report previously there may be a need for a co-ordinated response from our village.

The North Warwickshire Independent Representatives (NWIR) are looking at raising a motion at a forthcoming council meeting relating to the identification of required infrastructure ahead of the approval of any local plan.

Flooding

Further to the report last month the follow up meeting has taken place. It is reported that the amount of water disposal from the site of the Bromford tunnel works exceeded the agreed amount and Severn Trent have worked with HS2 / BBV on this matter. This seems to have alleviated the issue but ongoing monitoring has been requested.

A new fund which I requested and advocated for in relation to NWBC taking action relating to flooding has been created. I have bid for monies for action in relation to the vulnerabilities on Plank Lane.

Local Government Reorganisation

There is no update on the matter of LGR. A decision is expected from Government shortly with the smart money on this being very close to the rising of parliament in the summer. (16th July)

The NWIR will be seeking to raise an urgent question over the matter of elections in May 2027 should any clarity be required.

It was a pleasure and delight to be able to support this initiative both directly by providing funding and also identifying and supporting the writing of bids from borough and county council sources.

Steve Stuart

23.06.26