

View from the House: October 2016

Welcome to my latest View from the House covering October in Parliament, and also what I have been up to back in Tamworth and the surrounding villages.

Now that the House is back in session I tend to use Fridays and some Saturdays to get around the constituency, so if you do have any issues or would like to discuss anything please do get in touch with my office to arrange an appointment on Christopher.pincher.mp@parliament.uk or 01827 312778.

In addition to my regular surgeries around the constituency, every month I have a meeting with Staffordshire County Council where we discuss a series of issues. If you have anything which you would like to raise with the County Council, or more widely, then please do contact me.

Best regards,

Chris

October in Parliament

For me, October started in Birmingham where Theresa May announced that Article 50, the process by which the United Kingdom will leave the EU, will begin no later than March 2017.

I also met many organisations which would otherwise take weeks, if not months, to organise in Westminster.

Representing Tamworth

During my time in Birmingham I met the Chief Executive of the National Autistic Society (NAS) and was able to discuss with him examples of issues in Tamworth, and how local councils, schools and employers can help people with autism reach their full potential.

I was able to follow up this meeting at another reception in London designed to help people with autism into work.

I also met Councillor Bob Sleight, Chairman of the West Midlands Combined Authority, where I discussed how they can pursue the best deal from Government for both the West Midlands and Tamworth specifically.

Discussions with the Government are on-going, however further devolution to the region can only help the West Midlands become an economic and cultural powerhouse.

I always enjoy meeting the vast number of charities that are present at the conferences I attend. This time I met the British Heart Foundation and Macmillan Cancer Support, and heard about the vital work they do in both caring for those affected by devastating diseases, but also fundamental research in to preventative measures.

Macmillan informed me that by 2020 it is estimated that one in two people will be affected by some form of cancer – a worrying statistic I am sure you will agree. However there is some very good news in that the survival rates are increasing thanks in part due to the work that charities such as Macmillan undertake.

Starfish Project

On 1st October I visited the Starfish Project in Tamworth, led by John Larkin, which focusses on supporting to the homeless and vulnerable, offering a kind ear in a friendly surrounding. I was very grateful to have been invited to see first-hand the vital work that the Project does and how they are helping Tamworth's most vulnerable. The Project meets in the Sacred Heart Church on Saturday mornings between 10am and 12am however there are three other Starfish projects in churches around the area during the week if you would like to volunteer some time. Please contact me and I can put you in touch with the Project, otherwise Google "Starfish Project Tamworth" to find their details.

Representing Local Farmers

I recently joined local farmers and NFU members to hear what they would like to see the Government create or negotiate on their behalf during the Brexit process. They raised a series of concerns that exist at present which we now have the opportunity to address, such as the complicated processes farmers had to undertake in order to receive their subsidy from the EU. In future months I shall be raising the concerns of the local NFU members to the relevant Ministers. If you have any viewpoints please do not hesitate to contact me.

Tamworth Battle of Britain Remembrance Parade

Since September there have been several celebration and remembrance events focusing on our Armed Forces and the brave men and women who are our veterans. September saw the Battle of Britain service whilst this month we have been remembering the dead of both world wars and conflicts since. I was very pleased to joined the Mayor of Tamworth and representatives of many local villages in the Macgregor Tithe Hall of Memory to mark the 98th anniversary of the November 11th Armistice. Thanks to David Biggs and the Tamworth Civic Society for bringing this important old hall back into use and life. And just last Sunday I was honoured to lay a wreath at St Editha's on Remembrance Sunday. Over 4000 people packed into the Square demonstrating that time has not diminished the importance of this annual service and ceremony. I founds the same at Wilnecote WMC for the Two Gates service. We must and will continue to remember the sacrifices made to keep us free.

Little Aston Recreation Ground

Little Aston Recreation Ground was been nominated in the Fields in Trust United Kingdom's Best Park awards and I got behind the campaign to, hopefully, secure a successful entry. Unfortunately it was not shortlisted for the award however I would like to commend the work which all the volunteers undertake to make the Recreation Ground such a treasure for our community.

Hardwick Road

You may have noticed a number of changes to Hardwick Road. David Smith and the County Council have been working to improve the junction at Little Aston Park Road and Hardwick Road. A series of sleeping policeman have been implemented to slow the traffic, and a fence and hedge cut back in order to give greater visibility to drivers pulling out at the

junction. Although it is still early days, I would be interested to hear your thoughts on the changes. Please do let me know how you find the changed layout and I will make sure your thoughts are provided to the county leadership.

Summing up

Now that we are back in Parliament a series of key events and debates will take place, most of which will be linked to Brexit. In fact, as I type the first draft of this bulletin the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union is appearing before Parliament in his third statement in a matter of weeks.

Over the coming months I will be closely involved with the Homelessness Reduction Bill, a bill brought forward by Bob Blackman MP to reduce just that. It has already received support from many charities, the Opposition and Government. If you have any thoughts on this Bill as it progresses through Parliament then I would greatly welcome them.

Additionally the eagerly anticipated Autumn Statement will take place on 23rd November where the Chancellor is expected to outline a number of national infrastructure projects and help mitigate any economic woes over the next few months in light of Article 50 being triggered.

November Events (it is not exhaustive. If you would like me to advertise events do let me know)

17th November - Elford - All I Want for Christmas Market

19th November - St Giles Hospice - Christmas Fayre

19th November - Edingale - Medieval Banquet

20th November - Tamworth - Christmas Lights Switch On

26th November - Edingale Village Hall - Christmas Bazaar

26th November - Stonnall - Coffee and Cakes Morning at 1 Lazy Hill