

Cllr Christopher's E-mailed Report – 25 April 2022

A very brief interim report.

Since my last report I have dealt with residents' concerns.

These ranged from VAT treatment of empty residential buildings where the property has been unoccupied for more than 2 years and the requirement to obtain Dorset Council proof for reduced rate VAT to apply on renovation costs to concerns about waste bins.

Clearly there are continuing concerns re the high incidence of Covid and pressure on GP practices on local hospitals. Your MP is aware of the strains placed on all parts of the NHS locally, not least due to recruitment issues and caseloads.

Following disappointing news in respect of the claim for HMG funding of the Dorset Council Bus Service Improvement Plan Bid i.e. BSIP portfolio holder Councillor Ray Bryan has secured a meeting with relevant Government Minister Baroness Vere to press for release of funds in the second tranche of funding.

I attended the relevant Committee of Dorset Council, dealing with the Councils Air Quality Plan prior to any referral of the Plan to Dorset Council. This will be discussed further at face-to-face meeting with Chideock Parish Council.

I believe that our discussions prior to the Dorset Council Committee meeting on 21 April was constructive and the submission by Chideock PC was well received by the Dorset Council Committee .

I look forward to A35 working group meeting on 29 April with your MP.
I am pleased that the proposed meeting with our Police and Crime Commissioner is now in the diary .

Clearly cost push price inflation is problematic .For Dorset Council this is also problematic not just rising input costs but also concern re financial viability of the suppliers to Dorset Council , whether goods or services, within the supply chain.
I continue to liaise with the Head of Enforcement who informs me that he has been involved in recruiting additional staff , which is welcome given residents' concerns about the level of planning breaches.

The LGA i.e. The Local Government Association is urging people to engage in positive, constructive debates.

There are growing concerns about levels of public intimidation and toxicity of debate in local politics both online and in person.

This behaviour not only risks the personal safety and well-being of councillors, but also undermines the fabric of local democracy the LGA has warned ,

LGA chair Cllr James Jamieson and the LGAs group leaders said:

"Councillors play a unique role in representing the need of residents ,often working together cross party to tackle important local issues and to improve the quality of life of local people."

"Differences of opinion ,and the defence of those opinions through councillors arguments and public debate are an essential part of the cut and thrust of political life."

"But we hear too many harrowing stories from councillors and officers about the harassment and intimidation they face . This is unacceptable and damages our democracy by forcing people from public service."

I look forward to the Annual Village meeting on the evening of Tuesday 10 May.
However, I would likely to pass on some thoughts from a local farmer as we approach the silage making season and that is in relation to dogs on footpaths."

"There is continuing concern that dog mess is not picked up by the dog owner. The main issue with dog faeces in silage is neosporosis which causes abortion in cattle.

The problem is that the organism that cause the condition can survive the fermentation process and so cattle fed contaminated silage in winter are still vulnerable."

Best regards

Simon

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