

AGENDA ITEM 11b

WBDC report to Tavistock Town Council from Cllr Spettigue.

Waste/recycling collection

There were disruptions to collection of food waste/recycling during the week commencing 16th August and I had several residents get in touch with their concerns over this. This disruption was due to covid related sick leave amongst drivers and operators.

The situation is being monitored through weekly meetings with FCC management and daily updates on completion of rounds. Through working closely with FCC in recent weeks, numbers of missed collections reported have reduced and are now closer to expected levels.

There is still a backlog of recycling container and garden waste sack deliveries. FCC are commissioning external resources to help resolve this and we will also be utilising localities and parking staff to help clear the backlog.

Currently, 25% of full time driver positions are vacant on the West Devon contract and are being backfilled with agency workers. Agency staff are also being used to back fill sickness and annual leave. The BBC reported on 02/09/2021 that an ongoing driver shortage has led to three Devon authorities writing to the home secretary to ask for a temporary change to visa rules to grant temporary visa for European HGV drivers in order to fill the existing vacancies as quickly as possible.

They are also working towards taking on suitable agency workers as full time employees wherever possible to aid retention of staff for the longer term.

A Plan for West Devon

WBDC is currently working on a strategic plan that will drive West Devon firmly forward in response to global and local issues. It will ensure that Council resources are used efficiently and effectively to deliver the priorities identified by Members and through the wider public consultation. Looking to take every opportunity to support businesses and local people, the plan outlines eight core focus areas that will underpin the Council's work over the next 20 years.

The plan will be based on the corporate themes of WBDC and will focus on:

- Strengthening our communities
- Enhancing community wellbeing
- Improving homes
- Stimulating a thriving economy
- Growing our natural environment
- Adapting our built environment
- Maximising Council resources
- Delivering inclusive and accessible services

Spring Hill

As you will be aware, plans have been submitted by WDBC for the proposed works to the Spring Hill emergency homeless accommodation. I note that TTC DM&L have supported this application and am excited that at the prospect of Tavistock having a purpose-built facility to offer accommodation to those who need it the most.

Food festival

As an attendee to the food festival I must say it was great fun and the turnout was excellent. After the 18 months we have endured, to see the town centre bustling with energy was a real joy. I have also noticed in general that the town feels busy and I hope that is translating to good fortune for the traders of the town.

Tavistock Community Speedwatch

A some of you may already be aware, Cllr Ginnie Parker and myself have formed a Speedwatch group for Tavistock. The plan to do so was first discussed almost 2 years ago however Covid has delayed things as Police resources were restructured to meet the emerging challenges of Covid.

The group has now been formed and the co-ordinators (Ginnie and myself), trained. Initially, we will have one location where we can check speed (Anderton lane). As things move forward, PCSO Kevin Williams who is our link to local Policing will risk assess more sites where speed is known to be an issue.

If you are aware of any locations within the town where you feel that excessive vehicle speed is a problem, then please let us know. Unfortunately, not every site will be a suitable location due to the required risk assessments relating to volunteer safety but Kevin will undertake those risk assessments and make those determinations. Possible future sites include Whitchurch road (in the area of the livestock market/Market Inn and Parkwood road. If you yourselves are interested in volunteering or know of any residents who would like to be involved, then please don't hesitate to get in touch with Ginnie or myself. We are very much hoping that, as things get up and running, the Speedwatch groups presence can help to reduce excessive vehicle speeds within our town and reduce the likely hood of serious accidents/injuries.