

Key Issues

Green Travel Plan for Totnes & Environ

A Totnes Travel Partnership has now been formed under the auspices of SHDC to take forward the Green Travel Plan that is being supported with s106 monies from Baltic Wharf and Follaton Oak. The new group includes a group of DCC, SHDC and TC officers and Councillors, and Transition Town Totnes rep. Tracey Cheeseman from TTT will continue to be the Green Travel Coordinator under this partnership. James Kershaw Environmental Health Officer (SHDC) is one of the officers in the partnership as the remit will include seeking to support and implement measures to improve air quality along the Totnes Air Quality Management Area. The partnership will also monitor the s106 monies coming forward (i.e. as the phasing of these housing developments proceed). The first action agreed at the inaugural meeting was to review and recommend updates and revisions to the Totnes TC Transport Policy 2014 which includes a list of improvement schemes (proposed by Totnes on The Move). This coordinates well with the same review proposed for Totnes & District Transport Forum's next meeting (Sept. 26th). It is hoped that recommendations coming from what will be a comprehensive review will be ready for consideration and further recommendation of approval by Totnes TC at the November Full Council. This new partnership is potentially highly significant as it has the potential to take forward and implement a number of important transport improvement schemes that have been sitting on a list for almost 5 years. It also has implications for adjacent rural parishes who are affected by key routes in and out of Totnes.

HIGHWAYS MATTERS:

Collapsed wall in Maudlin Rd: update. The liability wrangle has been moved forward and it looks like a compromise will be reached whereby the wall will not be rebuilt but the land terraced to avoid further collapses and the high expense of rebuilding. The Council is likely to pick up the cost of finally clearing the debris from the road. The lifting of the road closure has still not been confirmed. This has implications for the many old walls adjacent to the highways throughout Devon, as with more erratic weather patterns giving rise to increased likelihood of flooding, yet with severe constraints on Council funds and many homeowners unable to afford major repairs such long-winded legal wrangles and compromises may become more commonplace.

Collapsed Pavement in Castle Street. Two months on and the public footpath remains dangerous. I am increasingly concerned about the apparent lack of any progress in Castle Street. I know that the neighbouring residents are rightly worried and concerned that little has happened to render the footpath safe since the incident that caused it to collapse took place over two months ago, and that the building site with its deep trenches, which have now filled with water are worrying many people concerned about flooding. I have complained to DCC Highways officers that the public footpath continues to be unsafe and partially closed off with temporary barriers that seem very insubstantial against the three meter drop that now runs alongside the footpath and poorly signposted (home-made signage). With the weather having returned to our more usual showers and less heat, the closure of the path requires the public to either try and walk on a fairly steep slope which is increasingly muddy and slippery, or are forced into crossing the road in a rather dangerous place. Difficult and dangerous for able bodied pedestrians, very difficult and dangerous for the less able or those with wheelchairs, buggies or walking sticks.

DCC has formally requested the landowner to provide a construction management plan for the site development and footpath repairs; this is awaited and will need to be approved by officers prior to any further works on the site which has therefore been formally shut down. In the meantime, the landowner is required to make the fence stronger and more secure.

I have also been in contact with Devon Building Control and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE); both parties have made several site visits. Devon Building Control are satisfied that "all works accord with the applicable Building Regulations. Furthermore, for the avoidance of any doubt, the neighbours' concerns are completely unfounded and will not be responded any more by this department". The HSE has informed me that they have written to the landowner "he has a responsibility under the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations to ensure that any excavation is safe. I have written to him to make the site safe"

I am extremely concerned about the ongoing legal situation of this as well as the extended time with nothing apparently being done to improve the situation that would lead to the footpath being reopened safely. I have dropped letters to nearby residents to keep them updated of the situation and I will continue to press for the works to the public footpath to be prioritised and carried out as soon as possible.

South Hams HATOC 6th July 2018: Items I requested to be on the agenda

1. Totnes - Littlehempston cycle path update and progress report:

This was taken forward and a meeting with SWW and the Steam railway with Officers and County Cllrs will be requested. Monies to develop the path (est. £30-40,000) were reported to potentially be available via the A385 Traffic Management plan funding.

2. Dartington Village Centre – 106 monies, speed limits and safety. Plus site visit to include Parish Councillors:

A Site visit has been set up for the end of July with Parish Councillors and County Councillor with Highways Officers. This will inform a site visit of all the HATOC committee in advance of the next SH HATOC (Nov'18). The 106 monies are being looked into by SHDC Monitoring Officer.

3. Maudlin Road collapsed wall– update on progress. The legal wrangle continues, but it was agreed the Road Closure Notice will be lifted.

4. (I also requested that the outcomes of the SHDC Clear Air Strategy Review and public consultation be on the next SH HATOC agenda – this was agreed)

OTHER ITEMS

DCC (Former Leader), Lead Councillor Breach of Code of Conduct. Leaders of all four political groups at Devon County Council issued a joint statement to staff in July, following a serious breach of the Council's Code of Conduct by a senior

councillor. "The Council's cross-party Standards Committee issued a notice of public censure to Councillor Brian Greenslade this week, following a formal complaint made against him, regarding alleged sexual harassment and abuse of a number of female employees over a number of years.

The joint statement reads:

- i) We must ensure that our staff enjoy a safe and welcoming environment.
- ii) They work hard to provide vital services for the people of Devon and we firmly believe that they are fully entitled to go about their business in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.
- iii) We will not tolerate any actions that leave them feeling threatened, fearful or intimidated, or to be treated with disrespect.
- iv) As councillors and political leaders, we have even more of a duty to ensure that our own personal behaviour is exemplary and seen to be exemplary.
- v) The Council has established policies and guidelines on what is, and what is not, acceptable behaviour and robust procedures for ensuring that all complaints are dealt with thoroughly and fairly, and anyone who feels they have been treated inappropriately in any way can feel confident in using this process.
- vi) This serves as a timely reminder that all of us involved in public life must be prepared to uphold the highest standards of behaviour and integrity in our dealings with staff and the communities we serve."

Cllr Greenslade has also been stripped of his Committee seats and other responsibilities and has been dropped as Group Leader by the Liberal Democrats party he represented.

Gypsy & other Traveller sites. I have written to Sophie Hoskins CEO at SHDC and the Gypsy and Traveller Officer at DCC to request that a more creative approach is taken to accommodating the wider community of people now living as travellers. I have proposed that a Gypsy and Traveller Forum as established (and very productive in Teignbridge) is established in SHDC. While I am aware that SHDC and DCC officers have been meeting to discuss these issues, and I have not received my requested updates there remains a large number of concerned settled and traveller residents living with great uncertainty.

Seagulls. In response to continued public and environmental health concerns raised by local residents, I arranged with SHDC Dai Antil Neighbourhood Officer for some bin stickers and posters to be produced that could be posted around Totnes asking people to avoid leaving food waste that can attract seagulls. I went with Dai on August 8th to put these out. I have been following up complaints raised at Totnes TC meeting in May, further to which I have also sent requests to SHDC Street Scene officer asking for improvements to quicker and more thorough cleaning up after markets. I have also personally purchased two bird scarer birds and hologram tape to stick onto bins deter the birds (I am awaiting permission to apply these latter items). I think we need to do more especially in terms of how waste is collected to reduce and where possible eliminate food waste being available to wildlife in public areas.

Meeting with Victoria Booty, representative of Crime Commissioner's Office re Drug problems in Totnes and District. This was a highly successful meeting in terms of bringing a growing local issue to the attention of a wider agency who have powers to address this serious matter. A number of actions were identified that Ms Booty took away and will be followed up.

This past month I have made formal submissions on:

Marine Conservation Zones public consultation: This June, the Government announced it's ambition to create 41 more Marine Conservation Zones in the seas around England, adding to the 50 that have already been designated. I joined the Wave of Support campaign which received over 20,000 responses calling for better protection of our seas including that these sites are managed correctly, to give our ocean wildlife the best possible chance of recovery.

Cross Country Franchise public consultation on their rail services. Based on the submission by Totnes Rail Partnership group which I fully endorsed and circulated to the DCC Devon & Exeter Rail working group I'm a member of.

My submissions are available for public viewing and information (and recycling) on a website blog I have set up: **You are welcome to reiterate points and issues I raise in my responses:** www.jacqihodgson.org

Attendance at meetings etc. as elected public representative:

Thurs July 12th	Meeting with Westwood Support Services to discuss their therapeutic projects.
Fri July 13th	DCC Devon & Exeter Rail Project working party meeting. An update on progress with upgrades from GWR was provided and discussed. A response to the Cross Country Franchise public consultation was agreed.
Mon July 16th	DALC County Committee meeting.
Thurs 19th July	DCC Full Council Meeting. Reports were circulated further to questions raised by members: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School funding and child poverty• 20 mph zones around schools• Childhood obesity
Weds 25th July	DCC Development Management Committee.
Thurs 26th July	Totnes & District Traffic & Transport Forum - discussed Air Quality Management Strategy & Action Plan (the group adopted and supported the submission I had made).
Fri 27th July	DCC Highways Officers, Dartington P.Cllrs and Neighbourhood Plan reps and myself met to discuss the Village Centre issues that I raised at South Hams HATOC in April. This was very productive and will inform the wider site visit by all HATOC Members in November.
Mon 30th July	Meeting with Representative of Police & Crime Commissioner's Office and Totnes Community and Church reps to discuss drug problems (see more in key issues)
Thurs 2nd August	Berry Pomeroy PC meeting
Weds 8th August	Meeting with SHDC Dai Antil Neighbourhood Officer to post bin stickers and posters around Totnes asking people to avoid leaving food waste that can attract seagulls. Totnes Rural Area Youth Engagement (TRAYE) project meeting with youth workers
Sat 11th August	Public Meeting on hazards of mobile phone masts and new G5 masts. Very worrying.
Tues 14th Aug	Meeting with resident regarding School transport issues
Weds 15th Aug	Meeting with resident regarding mobile phone mast issues
Thurs 16th Aug	Meeting with resident regarding School matters
Fri. 17th August	Totnes Travel Partnership meeting - establishing group and remit (see above discussion) Landworks Annual Open Day – very inspiring.
Mon 3rd Sept.	DCC School Transport Appeal with resident Totnes TC Meeting
Weds 5th Sept.	Staverton PC Meeting
Thurs 6th Sept.	Meeting with resident and Housing officer
Friday 7th Sept.	Totnes Rural Area Youth Engagement (TRAYE) project Steering Group meeting
Mon 10th Sept.	Meeting with Proud2be group to discuss rainbow crossing proposal

Diary Dates

Thurs 4th Oct.

2.15pm

DCC Full Council**

**** Further to many local residents contacting me I have requested that the following two motions are placed on the agenda for DCC Full Council meetings:**

****Devon County Council objects to Fracking**

Motion (3 parts): **Devon County Council**

1. Will write to the Secretary of State to object to applications for fracking having permitted development rights such that applicants can avoid the usual planning system.
2. Supports a national ban on fracking in the UK on public safety and climate change grounds.

(Back ground Info: I am aware that South Devon has little if any shale reserves that could attract potential fracking exploration or would be economically viable to extract. However as part of a national support to prevent controversial planning matters being able to avoid public consultation and protest and also to support a permanent ban on fracking in the UK, I am requesting this item on the Council agenda regarding permitted development rights that have now been allowed for Fracking planning applications. This means that applications can by-pass the usual public consultation and objection processes and publicly represented decision making bodies such as SHDC DM Committee. France, Ireland, Bulgaria, Germany, Victoria, in NSW Australia, four provinces in Canada New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Quebec) have all banned fracking and Germany has placed an indefinite moratorium, Netherlands has placed a temporary moratorium on fracking. This also supports this Council's agreement in principle to support initiatives that will prevent or mitigate climate change).

**** Devon County Council Calls for a People's Vote on Brexit.**

This Council notes:

A recent Local Business Survey showed that confidence among SMEs in the West of England in the government to deliver a Brexit that works for business is on the wane, with only 11.69% of 230 businesses polled being confident or very confident that there will be a good deal.

Polling in July 2018 found that 71% of British people disapprove of how the Brexit negotiations are being handled.

Polling in August 2018 found that voters in the South West of England back a second referendum on the Brexit deal by a margin of 42% to 35%.

This Council believes:

That the EU referendum on 23rd June 2016 should be considered the beginning of a democratic process, not the end of one.

That the conclusion by the Electoral Commission that the Leave campaign committed serious offences by breaking electoral law casts doubt on the legitimacy of the result of the 2016 referendum.

That new information on the way the referendum campaign was conducted and the economic, environmental and social impacts of Brexit, which have come to light since the referendum, may have altered some voters' preferences regarding desired outcomes of the Brexit negotiations.

That giving the British people a final say on the Brexit negotiations will help to rebuild trust and engagement in the political process.

This Council resolves:

To express our support publicly for a People's Vote on the final terms of any Brexit deal.

To write to our local MPs and the Prime Minister, Theresa May, informing them that South Hams District Council/Devon County Council has passed this motion in support of a People's Vote.

(n.b. all local authorities including parish councils could propose and vote on these motions too)