

**Diptford PC Minutes**  
**App. 3 Parish Councils update from South Hams Cllrs. Pannell & Smerdon**  
**OCTOBER 2020**

**COVID 19**

There has been a marked increase in local lockdown announcements over the last week and it is apparent that a second wave of COVID-19 is now upon us. Rates of infection in the South Hams are still low but numbers are increasing in the region and there has been well publicised local outbreaks in Cornwall and Exeter. You can find the latest figures [here](#).

We are taking steps to prepare for a range of scenarios by updating our Business Continuity Plans and using lessons learnt from the first wave of the pandemic. These include making sure we have measures in place to minimise the disruption to services caused by as yet to be known impacts.

Whilst there are obvious comparisons with the first wave it would appear that lockdown measures may vary and hence the challenges we face may need a different response. It is clear that alongside national measures there will need to be a local response and therefore potentially a greater demand on, for example, our Environmental Health and Communications Teams.

We are working with the Police and Devon County regarding enforcement strategies and carrying out multi-agency exercises to refine our response to outbreaks in a number of different settings.

To date we have only dealt with sporadic cases but it is highly likely that an outbreak will occur and be linked to a premises in the Council area which we will have responsibility to investigate.

**Track and Trace Hardship Payment Scheme**

The Government has launched its Track and Trace Hardship Payment Scheme. This is when people who have been advised they need to isolate for 14 days and are unable to work are eligible for a £500 payment. This launched on the 28 September and the Council needs to have its scheme up and running by the 12 October (with backdating to the 28 September where required). This date is mandated by Central Government. Our work will include designing the application form and process, including how to get the money to the people who need it most. We are confident that we can deliver this in time.

Whilst the criteria is clear as to who is eligible for the scheme, there is an additional discretionary scheme which allows local authorities to make payments for people who are not in receipt of benefits, but are unable to work from home, if their employer is not able to pay them sick pay and self-isolation will cause them hardship. We are working with our colleagues in the other Devon authorities to ensure our scheme is joined up, robust and will help those that need it the most without creating a postcode lottery

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- **Finance.** Officers have calculated that SHDC is facing a shortfall of £1.3million in its budget for the current year as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic – caused by extra expenditure on emergency measures and loss of income from sources such as car parks, leisure centres etc .Members approved a revised budget at the Full Council meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> September, taking money from some budgets and also from carefully calculated reserves, using money from a Budget underspend last year and deferring some maintenance projects.
- **Leisure Centres.** At the same meeting Members agreed further financial support for SHDC Leisure partner Fusion. This will allow all the four leisure centres in Totnes, Dartmouth, Kingsbridge and Ivybridge to open fully, including swimming pools. This was a difficult decision, and we would encourage all residents who can to make use of these excellent facilities.
- **Planning. FOR THOSE NOT IN DNPA AREA.**  
New applications are being accepted. Less controversial plans are being decided, as in the past, by officer delegation, with local Ward Member consent. Development Management meetings have resumed by video conferencing.

**DNP Planning** Park Members recently visited Buckfast Abbey for a site visit prior to debating a major application in November. This is for a 250 resident Extra Care retirement home on the site of the former Axminster Carpets spinning mill.

- **Waste services.** The introduction of the new recycling system with plastic boxes replacing bags has been delayed until March, because the crisis has halted construction of the specialised lorries needed, in Ireland, and the building of the new waste transfer station at Ivybridge. The new plastic recycling containers and leaflets will be going out to householders in January/February.
- **COLLECTION ROUND CHANGES** are being introduced from the week beginning **5<sup>th</sup> October** to prepare for the introduction of the new service. Some areas will see no change, some a combination of day and time of collection. Everyone affected should have received a letter of notification by now.
- **You can find your collection day here**  
[www.southhams.gov.uk/findmycollectionday](http://www.southhams.gov.uk/findmycollectionday)  
SHDC is offering an officer to attend (virtual) Parish Council meetings to brief members on the proposed new collection system, how it will operate, and the changes it will bring.
- **Covid heroes.** If you would like to thank someone for going above and beyond in the past few months, you can nominate them for a local Honour. The Leaders of South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council have been so moved by the extraordinary acts of kindness and support that they have seen in their communities, that they have create a special award scheme. The scheme would see residents, communities and businesses nominated to receive an award under

specific categories. Everyone nominated will be recognised on a special web page, so send in your photos and images, showing what they did. The Councils will each hold an award ceremony to personally thank the award recipients.

Please nominate online: [www.southhams.gov.uk/covid-heroes](http://www.southhams.gov.uk/covid-heroes) You may also be interested to know that the National Honours this year are also recognising the great work that individuals have done through the pandemic, and a special category has been created for contribution to the response to the coronavirus crisis. **Nominate individuals for the National Honours Award** - [www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-honours-nomination-form](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-honours-nomination-form)

- **Regular meetings with Totnes Police.** Totnes police are considering setting up a virtual meeting to involve parish councils and District and County Councillors and other interested parties, to be held monthly, to discuss matters of note or issues they may like to raise. They are very aware these days they no longer have the capacity to regularly attend parish council meetings (but can do so if you give them some notice or there is something you want to quiz Sgt. Perrin or one of his staff on).
- **Alcohol and Entertainment licensing policy.** SHDC is inviting residents and businesses to have their say on the new Alcohol and Entertainment Licensing Policy. An eight week consultation runs until Friday 16 October. The renewed policy will decide how the Council makes decisions on alcohol and entertainment licensing issues over the next five years. To read the new policy visit: [www.engagement.southhams.gov.uk/licensing](http://www.engagement.southhams.gov.uk/licensing)  
Comments can be made by emailing: [licensing@southhams.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@southhams.gov.uk) or writing to: Licensing Department, South Hams District Council by 16<sup>th</sup> October.

**The Planning White Paper** calls for comments by the end of October. The Prime Minister says the planning system 'is a bar to development' and 'needs to be torn down and start again'. All land would fall into one of three zones - 1) Growth Area, suitable for building, where there will be automatic outline consent, 2) Renewal Area, where planning will have a 'lighter touch' on infill and replacement buildings, with greater density of development, and 3) Protected Area, where development is not seen as appropriate because of the harm to National Parks, AONBs, wildlife, and the risk from floods etc. This doesn't rule out all development. Section 106 agreements and Community Infrastructure Levies (CIL) would be replaced with a nationally set infrastructure charge. Development Management Policies would be set at national

level, although there would be local input into traditional architectural styles etc. The process for delivering Local Plans would be streamlined.

**Devon's householders have the chance to help the country become net-zero by joining Devon Climate Emergency's solar panel group buying scheme.**

DCE's latest project is Solar Together and they are offering homeowners the chance to buy high quality solar PV more cheaply than by simply buying alone.

Led by Devon County Council, the scheme is partnered by 10 of Devon's planning authorities, who are all members of DCE's Response Group.

If you are interested, the first step is to register with [www.solartogether.co.uk](http://www.solartogether.co.uk)

**A helping hand for cold homes**

Eligible residents, who are living without gas heating, are being offered the chance to benefit from free gas central heating from SHDC and WDBC

The Councils are targeting residents of households who are struggling to pay heating bills and living in a cold home with no gas supply. The project is part of the wider council target of reducing the areas carbon emissions by replacing old and inefficient heating systems.

South Dartmoor Community Energy will be able to give advice to households on energy suppliers and energy efficiency.

To find out more go to [www.southhams.gov.uk/ReduceFuelBills](http://www.southhams.gov.uk/ReduceFuelBills)

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