

Annual Report for Diptford Parish Council

- Covid – clearly, the last year has been very difficult for us all. It is great to be meeting in person again and I look forward to supporting the Parish, where possible, in ensuring it remains connected and resilient – one of the principal heads of the new County Corporate Strategy.
- Vaccination Programme - I must praise the NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group for their sterling work, disseminating information on Covid vaccines as well as the excellent publicity campaigns that they ran. It is gratifying that so many arms were vaccinated and boosted as a direct result of their efforts. The figures I provided to you on a monthly basis in 2021 are indicative of their keenness to keep the message going.
- Finance. This year's budget sees a significant amount of money pumped into adult care and health, with an extra investment of £29.6million. Children's Services are also well supported with an extra £17.1million investment. It is unfortunate that this money will have to be paid primarily out of County reserves, as the money supplied by central government dwindles still further. As a direct result, the Council has had no alternative other than to raise Council Tax by 2.99% (£45.18 for a Band D property) towards meeting the shortfall.
- Locality Budgets. I was very happy to support Diptford Parish with £800 towards road sweeping for flood prevention purposes and a contribution towards your Platinum Jubilee event. It is regrettable that Councillor budgets are being reduced next year from £10 000 to £8 000 as part of the Council's drive to cut costs. I will be able to support the Parish again next year, but clearly money will be tighter.
- 20mph limits – much of my time as a County Councillor has been frustrating when it has come to requests for speeding reductions. I was therefore very happy to learn that the Newton Abbot trial had been dropped. County have now decided that Parishes can apply to be considered for 20mph zones.
- Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education. As part of my County responsibilities, I sit on SACRE. I have attended a number of meetings this year where we have examined, amongst other topics, the Devon Agreed Syllabus and mechanisms for supporting teachers in the delivery of faiths other than Christianity.
- Highways. As a local team, Nick Colton and I continue to respond to complaints and requests for help from individual parishioners regarding the state of the highway. We are very lucky to have Nick in this division and I am both grateful for, and salute, his proactivity.
- Finally, I would say that I am always happy to be contacted via phone or email if I can assist in any way and am glad to have been able to support the Council over the last year with information from County as required.

Dan Thomas
April 22