

Report from your District Councillors

MAY 2023

NEW COUNCIL



As a result of the Local Elections on 4th May, the Liberal Democrats are now the majority party for the first time since South Hams District Council was formed in the 1970s. There are 19 LibDem Members, 7 Conservatives, 3 Greens, 1 Labour and 1 Independent. The two Members for South Brent Ward are David Hancock and Guy Pannell.

WASTE



At a Special Council meeting on 13th April SHDC Members debated and unanimously approved a report from Officers detailing how the Waste and Recycling service will be updated to ensure all SHDC residents receive the full **Devon Aligned Service** (DAS) including glass and food waste collection from the doorstep. We have been waiting for the

Governments delayed Environment Bill to be published which should detail improvements to waste collection particularly around food waste, however for reasons of expediency the Council has decided to put underway changes now ahead of this. Currently approximately 22,500 households receive the full DAS, 15,000 are on a weekly co-mingled collection which allows all materials to be recycled at Chelson Meadow, Plymouth, except food waste, and a further 8000 (**including most of the South Brent Ward**) are still on the old blue and clear sacks. These households have to recycle glass using bottle banks (if they have them) and have to put food waste in the black bin for incineration.

Following extensive research and modelling by our Officers aided by industry experts, plans have been drawn up to ensure that the waste and recycling service both remains **within** the revenue budget 23/24 and provides the full DAS to **all South Hams residents by October 2023.**

This will involve two main strands:

- (1) The purchase of additional vehicles (8x 7.5 tonne narrow access and 2x 12tonne kerbside sort trucks) £2.16million funded from earmarked Vehicle and Plant reserves.

- (2) The use and upgrade of SHDCs site at Torr Quarry, Kingsbridge as an additional offload site for the Kingsbridge/Salcombe/Dartmouth area to relieve pressure on Ivybridge and ensure faster turnaround of trucks, £0.5 million funded from internal borrowing.

The Torr Quarry site will need upgrading to meet new Environment Agency rules around the bulk storage of waste and recyclates, mainly relating to access and additional new fire protection measures such as a massive water tank etc. With significant lead times for the procurement and implementation of 1 and 2 above the earliest operational window is October 2023, hence the need for the Special Council to put these measures underway.

Street Cleaning, a key priority, has been remodelled to ensure that all key areas are covered by a large mechanical sweeper on a 6 weekly schedule while the small mechanical sweepers are used in the main towns and close areas. Frequent emptying and unreliability mean use of these small vehicles are being reviewed against newer technology.

The Garden Waste service continues to operate smoothly, by March 2023 11,356 house holds had signed up, totalling 12,000 subscriptions and achieving the budgeted income target of £575,000.