

REPORT PROVIDED BY

WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCILLOR STEVE HIPSEY (TAVISTOCK NORTH WARD)

My first few weeks in office have been something of a steep learning curve, exacerbated somewhat by teething problems concerning the role-out of new IT facilities.

A comprehensive training and induction programme has helped me to become more familiar with the work of the council, particularly in the matters of waste management, planning, development and licensing. WDBC officers have been very helpful in broadening this knowledge by offering additional sessions and advice specific to current case work.

Also a small group of like-minded Independent WDBC councillors were elected to WDBC Tavistock wards in May of which I was one. This has allowed a great deal of mutual support. This was always intended and has been something of a life saver in some instances. I believe that it will continue to be a great benefit even as time goes on and we all become more experienced in our roles.

I began dealing with case work in my second week in office, the variety and volume of which has increased dramatically more recently.

This has allowed a rapid understanding of the concepts involved by experiencing live issues first hand. In an effort to better understand the interface between WDBC and the general public at ground level, I have arranged to work alongside Localities Officers and Waste Disposal Operatives in the near future.

I believe that this will give me a better idea of the general public's perception of the council and vice versa. As a member for Tavistock North, I also hope to liaise closely with members of the Town Council with a specific focus on issues around the town that are of concern to both councils.