

West Devon Councillor Report – Cllr Jeff Moody WDBC Ward Member Tavistock North (June 2023)

Elections

Following the recent local elections on the 4th May, the composition of the West Devon Borough Council has changed with the Alliance group of 17 councillors, consisting of 10 Independents, 4 Green Party members, 2 Liberal Democrats, and 1 Labour party member, taking control of the council and the Conservative Group with 11 councillors. The election resulted in some surprise results, with some longstanding and experienced councillors losing their seats. There are still three seats to be decided.

The Tavistock North Ward by-election will be held on June 22nd to replace Cllr Terry Wheeler, a Green Party member following his unexpected eviction from his rented home of 20 years and the Burrator Ward election, initially scheduled for 4th May, was postponed until the 15th June following the sad death of one of the candidates, Neil Jameson. This election will elect two councillors.

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of WDBC took place on May 30th, during which Cllr Mandy Ewings, the Ward Member for Tavistock South West, was named as the new Leader of the Council. Cllr Mark Renders, the Ward Member for Dartmoor, was elected as the Deputy Leader.

Additionally, Cllr Lynn Daniel, the Ward Member for South Tawton, was chosen as the Mayor for the coming year, taking over from the outgoing Mayor, Cllr Caroline Mott, who held the position for the past two years. Cllr Debo Sellis, Ward Member for Tavistock South East was elected as Deputy Mayor.

Although the committee structure was agreed upon at the Annual Meeting, the appointments to the individual committees and Hub were delayed until the results of the two outstanding elections are decided. The allocation of committee membership numbers will then be determined by political balance and will be finalized at a special Full Council meeting on June 27th.

As well as the council committees, there are a number of outside bodies which are independent from the council but have an impact on its service areas. In order for the council to maintain effective partnerships with these organisations, members of the council also sit on committees and forums of outside bodies that are responsible for them. This will also be addressed at the Special Council meeting.

Meanwhile, members including the 10 newly elected members of the West Devon Borough Council are currently undergoing training to familiarize themselves with their new roles and responsibilities.

Homelessness

A planning application has been submitted by West Devon Borough Council to convert council owned no 20 Plymouth Road beside the town bus station into flats for homeless people. Currently it is used as offices conversion to flats allow the borough council to fulfil its statutory responsibilities for housing people who find themselves homeless. The plans for demolition and rebuilding of new accommodation for homeless at Springhill have been put on hold with building costs being cited for the delay.

As ward member, I continue to receive regular contact from the public. Top of the list is Potholes in Tavistock!!!!!! And the associated cost of car repairs caused by driving into the potholes. I was notified by one resident that her quote for repairs after hitting a pothole in Gulworthy was £3k!

I have had several enquiries from residents regarding planning issues in Tavistock North, one resident regarding homelessness and another regarding dogs off leads in the Meadows.

I have also had a number of enquiries from residents enquiring about the work being done by TTC in Market Road and have been able to bring them up to date following the very helpful recent tour of the area and update by the Works Manager.

Apologies for such a short report at this stage, however, once the WDBC committees are fully functioning, work programmes set and normal council business resumed following the Special Council meeting on the 27th June subsequent WD Councillor reports will contain more information.