

Brief update for Braunton Rural April 2020 from County Councillor Mrs Caroline Chugg

The Covid-19 pandemic has been a huge challenge to our society, with local government playing an incredibly important role in protecting people and co-ordinating support for the vulnerable.

DCC staff are really working hard and through the weekends to make sure the elderly and vulnerable in our society are being cared for.

There have been many issues to deal with a small but significant example e.g. is the fact that a key worker needs a key workers placement in a school for her special needs child, their normal school was closed so a new special needs placement had to be found which took some considerable amount of time. After being told to get child care in (at this social distancing time) a place was found for the child.

We have been really pleased that over the Easter weekend in the main the vast majority of residents are sticking to the Government guidelines and have stayed at home, other than for essential reasons.

The main issue in the news at the present time is the availability of PPE equipment to the NHS and care homes.

While a PPE plan by central government that focuses on guidance, delivery and future supply, we at DCC will continue to work alongside our public sector colleagues to lobby for a sustainable supply of PPE. this will help to insure that vital services can continue, and all frontline staff and residents are kept safe.

Testing for "everyone who needs one" in social care settings has been announced by the government. This means that all symptomatic care home residents will be tested before going into care homes as a matter of course and social care staff who need a test will have access to one.

Symptomatic social care workers and anyone in their household with symptoms will be prioritised, and we understand that the Care Quality Commission CQC will contact care providers in the coming days to offer tests.

This is a positive development along with the Drive through testing station at Plymouth.

You may also of heard of the new Nightingale Hospital being built at Westpoint in Exeter this is to provide beds for 200 Covid-19 patients across the Region to recover and take the pressure off beds in the local hospitals.

There is a great deal happening and decisions being made at a national level which change rapidly and have a profound effect on the delivery of local services and how we all keep safe and well.

Alongside all of the councillors, and through engagement with Devon MP's and Government, we are doing all we can at County to make sure the region's voice is heard and that our concerns are discussed at the highest level.

Highways.

As reported last time only certain jobs and safety defects on the roads are being carried out.

From Coril Head to Knowle a number of large potholes have been filled.

If you have any other large potholes that are a safety issue please report it in through the online site or to myself.

For those of you that take the Journal the Investment Plan to keep Devon moving up to 2030 has been published this week.

A total of £95.192 million of investment will be made in the next two financial years. Just over half is being spent on the Link Road improvement scheme.

The cycle link from Knowle to Willingcott has a £6m Tarka Trail cycle link award.

An A3123 safer roads scheme to improve the alternative route from Aller cross off the Link Road to avoid traffic build up in Barnstaple and Braunton.

Many others are listed.

I have also been informed that you will receive through your Parish councils a update on bus time tables including the temporary changes.

www.traveldevon.info/bus/latest-news-service-updates. **

Keep safe and well, three more weeks at least but make the most of the time you have and stay positive. Keep in touch with family and friends with any means you have look out for residents isolating on their own.

Caroline Chugg
County Councillor

** For information, Up-to-date bus timetables, including temporary changes, are here:

<https://www.traveldevon.info/bus/latest-news-service-updates/>