

2018/19 Annual Report – Derbyshire County Council

This is the second year of the Conservatives being in control of Derbyshire County Council. We decided at the outset that we wanted to make changes, become more efficient and obtain better value for money. As I stated in my last year's report we decided on a new structure which meant deleting the post of Chief Executive, instead we have 4 Strategic Directors, and the 4 main departments are Commissioning, Communities and Policy, Children's Services, Adult Care and Economy, Transport and Environment and they manage over 30,000 employees.

I don't need to remind you that all councils are under pressure to save money and where it was relatively easy to start with each year it does come harder, however, Derbyshire is 'Financially well placed' compared to some other councils, that was the view of the Local Government Association when they were invited to look at the way the county council is run.

We are constantly looking at ways of reducing costs but at the same time delivering a good service, one of the big projects we are looking at delivering in a different way is the Library service. We are committed to keep all of our libraries open but we are looking at encouraging local volunteers to take on the running of some of our smaller establishments. We have recently asked for expressions of interest but rest assured even if voluntary groups take over they will be given help for a number of years to establish themselves, libraries over the years have changed and they are now more community hubs and we realise they are valued by our residents.

As you can imagine improving our roads is a major responsibility and currently Derbyshire tops the list of county councils nationally for customer satisfaction in roads and has just been given an extra £8.4m to help repair them. We have repaired some 66,000 pot holes this year, nearly triple the normal amount but we realise there is still some way to go but you can always report a pothole if you see one or any other problems on the pavements or highways by reporting it on Derbyshire.gov.uk/doitnow.

We have or are commissioning new care homes, work has already started on a new care home with library combined in Belper, a new care facility and extra care centre in Buxton has recently opened and plans are already drawn up for a new care home in Cotmanhay. These homes are to replace very old

established care homes, they are sometimes well loved but the facilities are dated and residents have a right to expect new modern en suite facilities when they do have to use a care home.

We have this year introduced some new grant Action Grant schemes, these can cover youth activity, community activity, physical activity and sport and community safety.

Trusted Trader celebrated its 10 year anniversary recently, this scheme can give residents confidence they need any jobs doing, all the Trusted Traders are vetted by the DCC team.

I could go on but just a few facts and figures so that you can see the breadth of services we have to deliver, over 3.500 miles of roads and pavements, subsidised bus fares for 187,000 pensioners and 64,000 teenagers, looking after 80 countryside sites, helping 13.500 older and disabled people live independently at home, supporting 20,000 carers, providing foster home or residential care for 770 children, running 21 children's centres and helping 30,000 under-fives get the best start in life.

This year we have kept the Council Tax rise as low as we could with an increase of 3.99%, lower than the maximum allowed by Government and we are looking at how we can achieve a council tax freeze for two years from 2021.

Locally both wards, Stanley and Stanley common still have the same major problems, too much traffic, speeding traffic and Stanley have the added problem of heavy goods vehicles ignoring the weight limit signs. If there was an easy way to deal with excessive and speeding traffic through the many rural villages across Derbyshire it would be wonderful but as it is it has to be managed as best as possible, it is good that common sense has prevailed and the police are once again getting involved with the Community Speed Watch schemes, more of these groups are being set up around Derbyshire and although nobody can be prosecuted if they are caught speeding they will get a warning letter and visits if they are caught more than once, it is good to see that both Stanley and Stanley Common are looking to proceed with this scheme, a group in Little Eaton have been carrying out these Community Speed Watches for some time and although it does not entirely solve the problem it does make motorists think,

The problem of the verge adjacent to the recreation ground at Stanley Common is still a mess, this was due to a lorry churning the area up and

although DCC came and levelled it out and re-seeded it because they put some fencing around it they had so many complaints from residents because they could not park there they removed the fencing, it is now as bad as ever, I have asked for a scheme to be put together to try and get something permanently done here, a lay-bye possibly but as this is not considered a high priority it may take some time to get it onto the 'priority' list.

Unfortunately there was another accident recently at Kings Corner cross roads and I have raised this with officers and they are going to arrange a vehicle count and then see what can be done to make this junction safer, again many of the accidents are due to bad driving but also the amount of traffic at this cross roads has increased enormously since Oakwood was build and now we have two new developments in close proximity although classed as Derby City.

As always if there is anything I can help with please do not hesitate to contact me and I will always do my best to help