

**Derbyshire County Council**

**Annual Report 2020/2021**

**Cllr. Carol Hart**

As with every report on the last year's activities Covid-19 cannot be avoided. As I was still the Cabinet Member for Health & Communities you can imagine that I have been involved in the pandemic situation more than most members and it has been a privilege working alongside our Director of Public Health and his team. To say that life has been hectic is an understatement.

But to go back to the beginning of the Pandemic it was amazing to see how quick as an organisation we moved to provide the necessary equipment for many of our staff to work at home, then making sure that councillors had their IT equipment checked and sessions were set up to give guidance on using Zoom, Skype and Microsoft Teams, and I have to say that Mt's was the one we all found most suitable.

Other staff of course could not work at home so many measures were put in place for those who had to be out and about to help with social distancing and following the guidelines issued.

In Public Health one of the first things we did was to set up a Community Hub, our own staff were heavily involved but we also had so many volunteers which was incredible, this hub co-ordinated food deliveries to our vulnerable residents, fetching and delivering medication and many other tasks for people who were shielding and had not relatives there to help. We worked and continue to work closely with the NHS and the CCG's, setting up test and trace stations and now organising testing stations rights across Derbyshire with 2 in Erewash, one at West Park, Long Eaton and one at Hallam Fields, Ilkeston. During all of this happening we carried on with the day job helping people quit smoking, tackling obesity and those with drug or

alcohol problems, in fact some of these have been exacerbated by the lockdown situation so it is essential we can on doing this 'bread and butter' type of work for health.

Our Highways Department have been at full stretch this year, I am sure most of you will remember seeing the pictures of the Toddbrook Dam, only the swift action of the Rescue Services, Fire, Police, Army and DCC Emergency Planning Team prevented a major loss of life, but at a cost the helicopter delivering sandbags to shore the dam wall up was costing something like £17,500 an hour, but well worth it. Just recovering from the Dam incident there followed two major storms, Ciaria and then Dennis, this caused major flooding right across Derbyshire, locally we had floods in Cotmanhay, Breadsall, Borrowash and even West Hallam when I had calls for emergency sandbags. The storm caused major damage to roads, bridges and destroyed many trees, that plus Covid has meant that Highways are severely behind in delivering what would have been normal jobs and schemes, they are still trying to catch up, that is why the decision has been made to invest £120M over the next

On to Young People portfolio, we have offered career's advice and support over the phone or by video for those looking for a job, we have extended the Raising Aspirations programme to help young people in need to engage fully with education across the county, since 2015 the programme has reached in excess of 7.500 learners with all year 11 targeted participants moving onto positive Post -16 destinations in education, employment and training. We provided £30 vouchers over the Christmas period to families with children who are eligible for benefits related to free school meals and in fact we extended this voucher scheme over the half term and Easter holidays, Lots lots more but that gives flavour.

On Adult Care we have developed, published and commenced implementation of the Derbyshire Dementia Strategy, we have commenced refurbishment of three homes for older people

including one in Borrowash , the total cost being over £13M, and work has begun on a brand new care home in Cotmanhay. We have maintained our high performance in reducing delayed transfer of care from hospital and continue to progress the Better Lives programme supporting discharges and ensuring older people are fully supported to return home.

Over the last year we have allocated many hundreds of thousands of pounds to grants to organisations across the county to help them County Councils for 2020/2021, the increase was 2% compared to the national average of 3.87%, the Council Tax will be split at 1% for adult social care ( which will raise just over £3.4M) and 2% for general council expenditure, the net budget will be £572.4M, the Council Tax increase works out at just 65 pence per week on a Band D property.

There are so many things I could add to this report about our Trading Standards Team, Coroners and Registrars, our libraries and Records Office, new schools being built but hopefully you will have got a flavour of some of our work over the last year.