

County Councillor's Report, August 2020

Stop Line Way and Cycle routes at the County's AGM

County officers are continuing to work on the purchase of the land for the missing section of the Stop Line Way in Seaton Wetlands and I am in touch with them regularly about this. Funds for the purchase are in this year's budget and for the work in next year's.

As I have reported before, I am disappointed that the County is unable to press ahead with the remainder of the Stop Line Way in the Axe Valley, so as to link Seaton and Axminster. In this light it was interesting that a similar issue was under the spotlight at the County's delayed AGM, held by Zoom on 23 July. My Green colleague, Cllr Jacqi Hodgson, had proposed a cycle route between Totnes and Littlehempston so as to enable a through route from Totnes to Newton Abbot. The Cabinet proposed a negative amendment, and a protracted debate ensued in which local Lib Dem and Green members attempted to move the proposal forward. I supported them and was able to mention our own issues. Although, with a large Conservative majority in the Council, the Cabinet view prevailed, cycle routes are becoming a major issue at County.

Locality Budget

Most of my 2020-21 Locality Budget is still available for local community groups and parish/town councils to apply for. <https://www.devon.gov.uk/democracy/councillors-nav/locality-budgets/>

Traffic Group meeting

The first online meeting of the group was held on 6 July and it seemed helpful to participants that Steve Kelly was able to check issues instantly on his computer. The next meeting will be on Zoom on 7 September and I will send out invitations nearer the time.

Black Lives Matter

My Independent colleague Claire Wright, responding to 6th-formers at the King's School, has proposed a motion welcoming the protests which took place in several places in Devon around 'Black Lives Matter' and suggesting ways in which the Council could help address these. I have seconded her proposal, which will be debated in September.

Axe Valley Reminiscence Project

I attended a Zoom meeting on 20 July about this proposed new spin-off from the innovative 'Living Memories' project run by Brian Norris of Colyton (living-memories.net). This has potential for linking up individuals and groups in the area as well as combating isolation.

Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee

I have been re-appointed to this committee for 2020-21.

Community Hospitals

I am supporting a Colyford resident has launched a petition on the Government website to reopen community hospital beds: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/319223>