

County Councillor's Report November 2020

Free school meals during holidays

I asked the Leader of Devon County Council, Cllr John Hart, to provide school meals for children in need of them during the half-term holiday. Cllr Hart tells me that Devon has been given the smallest amount of new Covid funding of any County Council and that some Devon districts including East Devon have been given only the minimum amount. 'We were expecting a lot more money', he says. 'Our finances are already under pressure for the rest of this year with even more pressure for next year. Therefore with demands on funds I do not think it would be right to consider funding this scheme.'

I've replied urging him to reconsider. The cost of providing this support at half term and Christmas would not be huge, in the big scheme of things, but there are children in this area and in every area of Devon who really need this support. I've officers to give a figure for the cost.

In the meanwhile, since the Government and the County Council are not providing free school meals for Devon children who need them this half-term, Seaton community group Re:store Axe Valley has set up a scheme to provide them, with the aim of operating at Christmas too. A **crowdfunding page** has been set up, which is on course to raise £1,000 and I am urging every resident who can afford it to donate.

I have given the scheme £1,500 from my County Councillor's Locality Budget, as I can think of few things more important than ensuring that all children are properly fed during the current crisis.

Locality budget

I have also provided support this month for TRIP community transport, Offwell Playpark, and new noticeboards in Offwell.

Seaton Esplanade road closure

I have received complaints that the road has been closed for several weeks without any work being done, so I have asked the County Council to get the closure lifted unless work is started.

Coly Road traffic lights

I also took up this issue on behalf of Colyton Parish Council.

Covid situation

As County Councillor I receive reports when areas in the division have Covid cases. These reports are becoming more frequent.

Coastal erosion

I spoke at EDDC's Strategic Planning Committee about the implications of new research from Plymouth University which predicts a different pattern of erosion over the next 20/50/100 years, with mostly improved prospects for Branscombe, Beer and Seaton Hole, but worse for the Beer

Road area north of Highcliffe Close in Seaton, with a potential threat to Beer Road itself in the longer term. The matter is going to EDDC Cabinet.