

CORNWALL COUNCIL REPORT TO SALTASH TOWN COUNCIL **July 2020**



Covid-19

Saltash residents have been fantastic since the outset of Coronavirus, from following government's lockdown rules to supporting each other. The impact of the pandemic would have been far worse if residents had not acted in such a positive way. Cornwall Council's response would not have been possible without the kindness, resilience, energy and spirit shown by residents. Thank you, One and All.

Cornwall Council was reorganised to tackle the pandemic: council staff who were not frontline care workers or key workers in areas such as refuse collection were redeployed in ways as diverse as contacting people in the shielding programme, securing PPE for use in care homes, helping Volunteer Cornwall co-ordinate volunteer support and setting up a temporary mortuary. Care homes throughout Cornwall have been supported by Cornwall Council's Adult Care Service - the iPads Saltash care homes received from Cornwall Council, for example, have been very well received as they have enabled residents to keep in contact with loved ones. Education settings have received daily briefings from Cornwall Council's Education team, with the head of one Saltash primary school calling the Cornwall Council support 'amazing'.

Cornwall Council's IT teams managed to roll out the online platform MS Teams for use by councillors and staff. The virtual meetings have meant that as councillors we have actually been more connected even though we have been in isolation. We have been able to have meetings with a wider range of professionals, such as the Early Help Team who formulated Covid-19 care plans for all vulnerable children in Cornwall. We have also been in weekly meetings with Cabinet member Sally Hawken, who has responsibility for Children, Wellbeing and Public Health, as well as with Louise Woods, the Cornwall Council Director in charge of Planning and Sustainable Development. As Chairman of Cornwall Council, Cllr. Frank has been in regular meetings with Leader Julian German and Chief Executive Kate Kennally throughout lockdown.

The sudden shift to virtual meetings has also had the benefit of giving us a glimpse of a more eco-friendly way of life: some 4,000 Cornwall Council staff have worked from home, for example, leading to an overall reduction in staff commuting distance of 42,000 miles over the three-month period. And there has been a massive reduction in the amount of paper being used: from 2 million pages printed in March to just 200,000 in April. Cornwall Council recognises that this is a rare and important opportunity to accelerate the Council's work on its Climate Change Action Plan. Key schemes that will be promoted in this Plan include the 8,000-hectare Forest for Cornwall (with some planting having already taken place in Tincombe) and the Whole House Retrofit scheme to make Council homes more energy efficient. Learning from the lockdown experience, Cornwall Council has adopted a new policy of 'Growing not Mowing' where verges will be cut just 2 or 3 times a year after the flowers have finished and the seeds are set to allow wildflowers to flourish. Path edges will still be kept tidy and noxious weeds will still be removed, but we intend to leave verges undisturbed wherever possible. The ecological benefits align well with Cornwall Council's Climate Change targets and have been welcomed by partner organisations.

With meetings now being delivered using MS Teams, Cornwall Council is able to livestream an increasing number of meetings, and then post them to Cornwall Council's YouTube channel, meaning that members of the public will be able to watch a greater number of Cornwall Council meetings. Some of the YouTube recordings include:

Cabinet	17 th June
Audit Committee	25 th June
West Sub Area Planning Committee	29 th June

On Tuesday 7th July, Cornwall Council will hold its first ever virtual meeting of Full Council, which will also be livestreamed and then uploaded to YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/forCornwall/videos>

Looking forward

As a nation, we are now in the Test, Trace and Contain Phase, which has more of a focus on the local response, and is where the Public Health teams at Cornwall Council will play a key role. Cornwall Council already has systems in place for the control of infections such as Legionnaire's Disease, and we published our Local Outbreak Management Plan on 30th June. This sets out how any potential Covid-19 outbreak would be contained, and was developed in close cooperation with other local authorities in the South West to make sure it meets the needs of Cornwall's residents but also fits in with the work of neighbouring authorities.

Here is a link to Cornwall's 41-page Local Outbreak Management Plan:

<https://democracy.cornwall.gov.uk/documents/s136402/Cornwall%20and%20The%20Isles%20of%20Scilly%20COVID%2019%20Local%20Outbreak%20Management%20Plan%20-%20Appendix%201.pdf>

Cornwall Council's Director of Public Health has powers to control smaller outbreaks in particular institutions such as businesses and care homes, and the Public Health Act gives government powers to impose lockdown at the request of councils. In the current setup, though, it takes time for a lockdown request to work its way through the system, so Cornwall Council is joining other local authorities in calling on government to set up a quicker way of making decisions. It is important to ensure the correct balance and range of powers are embedded in the system before we head in to winter and the flu season.

Tamar Bridge

The work to replace the kerbs in the local traffic lane/northern cantilever on the bridge are expected to be completed within two or three weeks, the kerb work will then move onto the main deck. At this point, the pedestrian walkway/southern cantilever will be needed for vehicles and the shuttle service will be reintroduced to allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross the Bridge. Due to social distancing guidance, the service will be increased to include a double decker bus to carry pedestrians as well as cyclists, while the mini bus will be retained for mobility scooters.

Work to accept contactless payments has been completed on all toll lanes on the Bridge except for a single lane which is currently closed to install contactless payments.

Traffic volumes at both crossings have reduced significantly because of the lockdown and Covid-19, and have not yet recovered. This has had a significant and continuing effect on the budget of the crossings with lost income so far totalling over £2.5m. The crossings have always held £2m in emergency reserves, but this has already been used. The first of two workshops for the committee to discuss how to manage this budget deficit will be held on Friday 3rd July with the second being held later in the month.

Planning

Despite the pandemic, planning applications continue to be determined within the statutory deadline. The lockdown restrictions have so far prevented site visits, however if a site visit is seen as essential these applications are being delayed with the agreement of the applicant. This has affected some large-scale applications in Cornwall, but none in Saltash.

Since the refusal of the Treledan (Broadmoor) application in April no further planning decisions have been made, and the applicants have not submitted any new reserved matters applications. Local councillors were invited to observe a meeting of the "Design: South West" Review Panel for Treledan, comprising architects from across the South West. The meeting was arranged for Barretts to help them look for a new design for the first phase of development at Treledan. There were no plans presented at the meeting, the discussions centred around the original application from 2014 as the architects were looking to create a new design, taking the previously refused application into account.

The East Area Planning Committee held a virtual meeting on 22nd of June. Due to the pandemic and the cancellation of meetings, less applications have been determined by the committee than usual. Some applications have been determined through an emergency planning process involving senior planning officers, the local planning committee and the Cornwall Council divisional councillor for the application although this has not affected any applications in Saltash.

Councillor Hilary Frank
Councillor Derek Holley
Councillor Sheila Lennox-Boyd
Councillor Sam Tamlin