

NORTH DORSET DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL – 26 JANUARY 2018

REPORTS FROM MEMBERS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Citizens Advice Bureau – Councillors J and J Stayt

When moving forward the only certainties will be those of speed and scenery and that is certainly true for the newly constituted and expanded CAB that now serves Dorchester, Sherborne and District and North Dorset.

Change behoves us to operate more effectively to meet the many and varied demands that our clients seek our help to resolve and to adapt quickly to the changing demands of HMG; yet again benefits (Universal Credit) continues to be a serious issue that is far from a satisfactory resolution.

Change also has some constant elements and these include: benefits, debt, employment, relationships and housing. These five elements comprise 74% of all the issues handled by the CAB. And with minor variations, they accurately reflect the national profile.

Change is also about the CAB's staff and volunteers with the need to ensure that they are both technically and emotionally equipped and supported to deliver the results that will satisfy clients, and as far as is possible, society at large.

Change is not a buzz word nor is it about facile concepts. It is a constant that forms a golden thread linking every aspect of the CAB's purpose and endeavours so as to ensure, as far as it is possible to do so, that the work of the CAB remains a valued and trusted resource for the continued benefit of our society.

Change has been reflected in the diminishing funding stream from District Council, largely brought about by budgetary changes from HMG. CAB is very mindful of the difficult choices that had to be made and it is in the process of putting in hand a pro-active campaign to secure additional long term financial resources

More information about the CAB's work and related stats can be obtained from John Stayt

Cranborne Chase AONB - Councillor Langham

Cranborne Chase AONB will start to review its Management Plan at the end of February 2018. After consultation, the revised Plan will go to Local Authorities for adoption at the end of November 2018.

Current activities include the following:

A Consultant has been engaged to progress the International Dark Sky Reserve Status for the AONB. It is hoped that the nine Local Authority Partners within the AONB will put policies in place with regard to lighting conditions for new developments. A new Stargazers Leaflet has been produced and Stargazing events booked in various locations. The Communications Officer is working on raising the profile of the AONB and projects include the possibility of signs for up to 40 locations where vehicles enter the AONB, a new website, monthly e-bulletin, weekly BVM article and maintaining accounts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to raise awareness amongst the general public.

NDDC contributes 6.62% of the total annual income from Local Authorities. The grant remained the same in 2016/17 but it is hoped to increase the sum to £4111.41 in 2017/18 which is an increase of 1.179%. It is proposed that there will be a similar increase in 2018/19 and 2019/20.

Stour Valley and Poole Partnership Joint Scrutiny Panel - Councillor Somper
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In our meeting of 13th December, the committee approved the business plan for SVPP to work with Bournemouth Council in 2018, and that a report is to be presented to Dorset Chief Execs to recommend a Dorset wide for Revs & Bens under LGR. Scrutiny will receive a further update at its next meeting in February.

I can report that average processing times and collections rates for NDDC are all on target.

SVPP agree a budget next year recognising a reduction on overall service costs for the fourth year in a row, exceeding savings of £1M for that four year period. This year has seen a £350,000 underspend