

Housing, Health and Wellbeing

Our **CCTV** camera network is being upgraded to high definition cameras. Work has started on the cameras in the centre of Bridgwater. Two cameras which cover Pier Street car park in Burnham-on-Sea have been upgraded. It is hoped that the improved cameras will aid the Police with the recent spate of anti-social behaviour by boy racers in and around the car park.

Together Team goes International - A presentation on the innovative Together Team multi-agency partnership model was given by Kristy Blackwell, Community Safety Manager and Inspector Andy Pritchard from the Police at the International Institute of Restorative Practices in Toronto, Canada. With the focus of the conference on 'restoring communities', attendees were provided with detail on how the East Bridgwater project has been developed over the last three years and is now embedded into local practice and expanding into new Sedgemoor communities. There are now three Together Teams -

Supported Housing Funding - The current contracts for support in sheltered housing schemes expire during October 2018. Somerset County Council are proposing to stop the contribution of funding to sheltered housing providers, and look to invest in the Community Connect model, which will help to ensure the support is available to everyone and not just those living in sheltered housing. Somerset County Council has undertaken a consultation on the proposal and we await the results.

Home Improvement Agency - The Home Improvement Agency contract is also due to end in August 2018. Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) money (Better care funding) does not have to be spent on DFG's, but could be spent on prevention in housing. Sedgemoor, through the Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership, is looking at delivering the DFG element of a new Home Improvement Agency model for the county. This will include the TUPE of exiting Home Improvement Agency staff into the partnership. Discussions are continuing.

Customers and Efficiency

Sedgemoor Lifeline has passed its annual Telecare Services Association audit with flying colours. This audit is carried out annually to ensure that Sedgemoor continues to provide quality standards for service delivery to our customers, who in turn assure service-users, their families and carers that they are in receipt of a quality service they can rely on.

Primary Authority Status – We have gained an additional seven 'Primary Authority' status for food safety and hygiene for Cheddar Water Ltd, Arthur David Food with Service Ltd, Penny Lane Foods Ltd, Valley Smokehouse Ltd, DC Hotels, Host 2 Ltd and Bridgwater and Taunton College

Basically, this means that when a company, which has branches across several local authority areas, seeking services from Environmental Health, they use Sedgemoor as the Primary Authority for 'assured advice' and interpretation of the regulations. This would save the company having to comply with different standards in different geographical locations. It is all about supporting business and making regulation easier. Primary Authorities help businesses avoid inconsistent and confusing red tape.

Seaside Award - Berrow Beach has again been awarded a seaside award by the Tidy Britain Group which reflects the work that the resorts team put into the beach to make it a great place to visit. Burnham-on-Sea Beach was not eligible because of the 'poor' classification for its bathing water quality. However, the multi-agency group who have been working on improving bathing water quality have made significant progress and hope to improve the classification.

The Resorts Service is now fully staffed for the season at Burnham-on-Sea and Berrow beaches. We have and nine First Aid and water safety trained beach wardens who provide safety cover on a rota basis between March and 30 September and work from 0900 hrs until 1700 hrs. The wardens are backed up by four RNLI lifeguards (two at Berrow and two at Burnham) during the high season and work between 1000 hrs and 1800 hrs.

The RNLI are also undertaking a water safety school education programme. Last year they undertook school talks to over 3,000 pupils on water safety and are hoping to achieve similar results in 2018.

Air Quality - New Particulate Monitors - As from February 2018 Sedgemoor District Council has been monitoring very fine dust through the use of four new state-of-the-art air quality machines which report live data minute by minute. The equipment has been placed in locations around Bridgwater and the very fine dust is technically known as particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}). These very small dust particles are commonly associated with road dust caused by wear and tear of brakes and tyres on vehicles (PM₁₀) and also from vehicle engine emissions (PM_{2.5}).

To date there has only been one exceedance of the 24-hour mean for PM₁₀ at two sites being Quantock Road and at the junction between West Street and North Street. The 24-hour means objective should not be exceeded at each site more than 35 times a year. The results are well within the national air quality objectives.

Annual Air Quality Report - The Annual Air Quality Report for DEFRA (Annual Status Report) is nearing completion by the Environmental Health team. Once completed the report will be sent to DEFRA for final auditing and approval. The report includes details of air pollution monitoring and modelling that has been undertaken by the Environmental Health team in 2017. This draft report has not so far identified any breaches of Air Quality Standards in the Sedgemoor Area. Once the report has been approved by DEFRA it will be published on Sedgemoor District Council's website.

Licensing News – In line with legislation, both our Gambling Policy (Gambling Act 2005) and Licensing Policy (Licensing Act 2003) must be reviewed every three years and five years respectively. Both Policies are due to expire in January 2019 so we are currently undertaking the work as follows: -

Gambling Policy: The initial draft has been approved by Licensing & General Purposes Committee and is currently out to consultation until 6th July 2018. The draft Policy can currently be viewed on our website as part of this process. The plan is to bring the draft back to L & GP Committee on 11th July for consultation responses to be considered. The final version will then be agreed and subsequently referred to Full Council for adoption. Having previously remained relatively unaltered over the years, this time there is significant change in terms of our requirements for Operators to comply with the provision of Local Area Risk Assessments. We have also tightened up the requirements for those running unlicensed Family Entertainment Centres which relate, broadly speaking, to seaside arcades operating the lowest category of gaming machines and are regulated by permit.

Licensing Policy: The first re-draft is currently being undertaken by the Licensing & Fraud Manager with a view to bringing the matter before L & GP Committee on 11th July. The subsequent consultation process, second visit to L & GP Committee (October) and referral to Full Council will be similar to the Gambling Policy as above.

Planning Enforcement have been busy recently with a case load of around 170 on average - spread amongst 2.5 FTE Officers. We have a varied and interesting caseload! For instance we have seen a rise of unauthorised new HMO's (Houses in Multiple Occupancy) recently which has meant we are working closely with our Housing Officers looking at standards of living and the like. We also work closely with our Environmental Health team in terms of licensing and pollution and are getting good results as a coordinated team. In the future, we will be looking for further assistance from Parish Councils and hoping for their help in dealing with the more minor offences in the first instance.

Last year, we issued 98 Enforcement Notices (including planning contravention notices) and our fines against offenders totalled £6,000 but we would always rather negotiate and mediate where we can if possible. We have an enforcement protocol in place which is currently being updated which means that we can proceed to collect income for the Council under POCA (Proceeds of Crime Act) from persistent offenders in certain instances.

Growth and Infrastructure

Hinkley Point C – The project continues in implementation with over 3,300 people on site. The M5, Junction 23 Park and Ride site is now open as is the Cannington Park and Ride, which will have visitor parking. The team have now moved to Williton to start the Park and Ride facility.

There will be a significant number of new jobs through the new operator '**Host**' and will be working to support local people into these roles. HOST won the contract to deliver all the 'facilities' for HPC, such as letting the accommodation campuses.

HGV Caps - The associated S106 agreement was sealed on 13 March 2018 and the average quarterly caps have now been temporarily increased from 500 movements per day to 750 per day (from 250 deliveries to 375). This will run through to 30 September 2019 or until the

jetty is fully commissioned. The associated mitigation is now in the process of being delivered with the Transport Noise Insulation Scheme being rolled out in phases through Bridgwater on the HGV routes. Other mitigation is being directed to the Colley Lane scheme, the traffic control centre, air quality monitoring, small business support and travel demand schemes.

Combwich - The laydown area that was approved as part of the DCO is unlikely to be constructed. EDF Energy are currently proposing to create a layby adjacent to the Combwich Wharf Access Road. It is likely that this will be dealt with by a TCPA and pre-application discussions are ongoing.

Combwich Wharf – the start of refurbishing the jetty at Combwich is planned for 2019. Once constructed, this will help alleviate traffic on the road network.

Sedgemoor Campus - EDF Energy are making good progress on the works for the delivery of the access to the Sedgemoor Accommodation campus on the old Innovia site on Bath Road. The works will run in various phases to be completed by summer 2018. The majority of the works will be undertaken under narrow lane widths with two-way traffic for the bulk of the programme, however there will be short periods of traffic lights at the start and the end of the programme. Frederick Road has been permanently closed.

National Grid – there was a formal start on the project 6 June 2018 with work on the Churchill Substation. Grid have been meeting with Parishes. They have a web site dedicated to the project which provides information on the works planned, broken down into more local areas: www.hinkleyconnection.co.uk . This is worth a look. It includes detail of the community grants Grid provide.

Joint Councils – South Gloucestershire, Bristol City, North Somerset, Somerset County Council, West Somerset and Sedgemoor are working together closely with National Grid on the implementation of the DCO (Development Consent Order) discharge of Requirements (planning conditions) that are needed to progress the project. New Section 106 Agreement signed to provide for bat mitigation measure monitoring where the new line is underground in the Mendips AONB.

Hotels - New investment in the form of hotels will help to provide further accommodation capacity and provide a long-term legacy. The Bridgwater Mercure will be open this summer and the Holiday Inn Express is on site at Junction 24 at the Rural Business Centre. Other hotels are in the process of finalising contracts, securing finance.

Caravan Sites - we are monitoring the number of planning consents and the construction worker occupation levels at caravan sites.

Under Construction - our employment hub geared to supporting local employment and specifically helping adults into work and training. The service is driven by the Hinkley C project but also links into business as usual and our wider economic development strategy supporting existing businesses. During the first use from April 2017 over 2500 clients have visited, and 462 learners registered. 861 people have received information, advice and guidance, and 66 events have taken place. 26 long term unemployed people (more than five years) have been helped to return to work. The service has advertised over 400 jobs.

Economic Development – this summer will see the formal opening of Bridgwater Gateway site at junction 24, providing employment space for economic growth. Further consents are being built out including the next phases of the innovation centre near Junction 23. The market continues to respond to the wider demands of Hinkley Point C with enquiries and applications coming in for accommodation, food facilities and commercial developments.

Economic Development Refresh – a scope of the work to refresh the economic development strategy is underway with a view to completing the work by Autumn and the annual economic development conference. This will take into account material changes in Government policy and local strategies since the last refresh in 2015 and look to seize new opportunities in light of the industrial strategy and Brexit, the Productivity Challenge and other developments on the ground since that time.

Transport and Infrastructure - works are underway on the Leggar Link as an integral part of the new retail park expansion. The contractors are also on site the Colley Lane scheme. Both key schemes are long awaited and it has taken some effort to assist with the coordination of investment and developers to align finance and consents to get these works started. A transport strategy to 2050 is underway to consider the long term plan and priorities for future investment.

Local Labour agreements - are how we link new investment and developments to local people – ensuring local communities get access to the new training and job opportunities. There are currently 20 live projects with a value of over £80m. A further 23 projects are in the pipeline.

Local Plan - the Examination is now closed with the team working hard to support the Inspector and respond to the actions. A consultation on modifications will take place over the summer, with the aim of getting the new local plan adopted by Christmas.

Strategic Housing Sites - work is underway with developers and through the housing infrastructure fund, to work up proposals in more detail to deliver the new strategic housing sites in the local plan.

Bridgwater Tidal Barrier - the Environment Agency are progressing the design and feasibility of the tidal surge barrier which is a key part of the local plan to ensure the towns defenses are resilient and continues to enable growth and regeneration.

Development Management - Sedgemoor continues to top the Government's National Planning League tables for speed of decision-making on planning applications. This continues to be a busy front line service.