

Due to having a heart operation this week, I will not be able to attend, so please send my apologies:

Okehampton Hamlets Report November 23.

EV charging points policy:

The EV points that were planned in WD are all in position. These are run by a private provider, but WD now have staff that have enough experience in this field that they will be willing to help Town and Parishes should they want it. It was suggested that WD could now provide all the advice as well as the installations, but this is a way off yet.

Footpaths to the east of the town:

No change from last month, but there are issues boiling up within the residents of one area to the east, and I have suggested to WD that we do at least publish what we are trying to do, to try to ease the social pressures.

Long Stay parking review:

The parking review has concentrated on the long-stay elements of parking with the proposal that the costs rise in some car parks. This is to make sure that those using the car parks for short trips for local shopping are not put off and it is hoped that this will be more beneficial to local businesses.

Councils are not allowed to make a profit, over and above basic running costs and long-term maintenance. They are certainly not in a position financially to make a loss.

UK shared Prosperity Funding from Government:

WD was successful in gaining funding from central government and they have earmarked the money to cover three priorities:

- Active and inclusive travel, which includes the Okehampton Transport Hub
- Agri-tech and regenerative farming
- Business and Community Support

There are several projects for these that are coming forward, and too many for me to mention, but I believe that they can be found on the minutes of the last Hub meeting plus they will be coming up on future council meetings.

Social Housing and Private sector rented properties:

Following the government now taking an interest in the overall condition of rented properties in our country, WD and other LAs now must provide data on the condition of properties especially those that suffer with mold and damp.

WD now had to provide the secretary of state confirming how we are to approach this issue and was compliant by January 2023. WD now has a specific online form for people to be able to make their complaints/ concerns known with a much faster turn round time. Renters are concerned that if they do complain they could fall foul of the section 21 rules, where they can be given an eviction notice without any reason. Until the government closes this loophole, I will be difficult to get everyone on board.

More details can be found in the last Hub meeting minutes.

Fuel poverty:

We are urging people to check with WD to see if they are eligible for help with upgrading their properties. Advice is free now, so please spread the word.

Corporate / strategic Plan:

This may be renamed for public use as it does sound a bit too formal, so maybe the community plan or the old west Devon Plan may be better. I think that the public may well be asked what they think.

The first phase of this process has been completed, and after public consultation, it will move onto the implementation / putting meat on the bones of the work done so far. This will start in December and into next year.

This will be my last report for a while, as I am supposed to have open heart surgery this week. I will certainly not be available for face-to-face meetings for six weeks, but I will be home and can continue to run via Teams / Zoom and emails.

Regards

Cllr Tony Leech

