

This covers my April 2024 report.

I understand from the minutes of the last OHPC that the issues of mud on roads and the smells from Forthglade are being dealt with by another WDBC Member, so although I have not had any update on these issues so far from WDBC, I will leave it to the member to make a report.

Parcels 3 and 4a.

Having again had discussions with our Head of Planning and the Legal Officers involved with these sites, I am told that discussions were held last week, but I have not had any feedback as yet, and hopefully I will have some more positive answers next month.

Footpaths:

There has however been some movement on the possible footpath to the North of Crediton Road. The area has been surveyed and a report is now awaited on the feasibility of having a footpath along this stretch of road.

St James Primary School playing field:

Nothing further to add this month.

Cost of Living Crisis / Universal Credit: (UC)

Although this has been an ongoing issue, those left on the WD housing benefit lists will now be moved onto UC. There may well be an influx of people asking for help as this process gets underway. The program for this started last week and is as follows.

- DWP will notify claimants of their move date.
- If the claimant is receiving Housing Benefit only and living in temporary or supported accommodation they will continue to receive Housing Benefit.
- The claimant will have 3 months from the date of notification to make a claim for Universal Credit.
- Migration notices are being issued by benefit cohort rather than geographically.
- When a claimant does not make a claim to UC they will still be entitled to the two-week Transition to UC Housing Payment at the existing HB rate.

The timetable is as follows although DWP have advised LAs that this may be subject to change.

April	Income Support and Housing Benefit (may include Child Tax Credit) Tax Credit (Child Tax Credit and/or Working Tax Credit) and Housing Benefit
May	Income Support and Housing Benefit (may include Child Tax Credit) Tax Credit (Child Tax Credit and/or Working Tax Credit) and Housing Benefit
June	Income Support and Housing Benefit (may include Child Tax Credit) Tax Credit (Child Tax Credit and/or Working Tax Credit) and Housing Benefit Housing Benefit only
July	Housing Benefit only Employment and Support Allowance with Child Tax Credit (may include HB)

August	<p>Housing Benefit only</p> <p>Employment and Support Allowance with Child Tax Credit (may include HB)</p> <p>Pension Age Tax Credit including Mixed Age Couples</p>
September	<p>Employment and Support Allowance with Child Tax Credit (may include HB)</p> <p>Pension Age Tax Credit including Mixed Age Couples</p> <p>Jobseekers Allowance and Housing Benefit (can include Child Tax Credit)</p>

New Communities Development Team: (CDT)

At a recent Council meeting, this initiative was discussed, and we were told that community Health and Wellbeing issues would now come under the Communities Hub member. This would include the Health and Wellbeing Groups around the Borough and the Lead Officer will be Mrs. Susana Hunter. Exactly how this will all work is still being worked on. All other Health and Wellbeing issues that fall under Environment Health headings will continue to be under the Health and Wellbeing Hub lead. I have asked for a family tree to be provided to show who reports to whom, to stop any confusion.

Dog control orders:

The consultation period for these is over and WD has had 277 responses, which is a lot better than a lot of previous consultations in the recent years. The data is now being processed, but it looks like

the information will not provide any additional evidence to change the present regulations, but we will see what comes out of this piece of work. A report will be going to the WD Hub soon with the orders hopefully being renewed soon.

The West Devon Housing Offer:

This initiative has now gone through the Hub meeting and has been ratified and consultations are now ongoing. This will be led by the WD Members who have been tasked with looking for likely landlords that would be willing to put forward land for specifically social housing. I have already had a discussion with one local landowner who is very keen to get involved. This scheme is supposed to run in unison with Neighbourhood Plans, so it would be very useful if before the Okehampton / Hamlets Plan is concluded, that this is taken into consideration.

Regards

Tony Leech