

I've been away for a couple of weeks on annual leave and since I returned, I have picked up a few threads, that I believe will be most of interest.

My report this month is short due to a period of election 'purdah' which is in place until the election is completed and results announced on the 13th of December, but I am always happy to answer individual questions in the interim from councillors or residents as I am not a candidate in the election!

Health Meeting will Dorset/Devon CCG.

The meeting on 22th October went very well and we were set to do a press/parish release, but, due to Purdah we have been advised that we should wait until the end of the election.

Broadband.

A public consultation that is due to run until the 10th of December following what is termed an Open Market Review (OMR) that took place in the summer, following the cancellation of the contract between Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) and Gigaclear, due to a number of performance and other issues.

CDS, which is responsible for rolling out publicly-funded broadband across the two counties, is establishing the remaining area where there are no current or credible future plans to deliver Next Generation Access (NGA) broadband infrastructure capable of download speeds of at least 30Mbps.

Nearly one million homes and businesses in Devon and Somerset now have access to superfast broadband thanks to the Government supported CDS programme and stimulation of the commercial market which is an important element of CDS's role. Of these, over 300,000 homes and businesses have access to superfast broadband as a direct result of investment by CDS.

A link to the CDS news release is attached which provides more information and links to the consultation webpage.

<https://www.devonnewscentre.info/superfast-broadband-public-consultation-launched/>

A new company called Jurassic fibre [www https://jurassic-fibre.com/](https://jurassic-fibre.com/) now have an operations base established on Heathpark and will be working up the A30 towards Dorset and South Somerset after completing their first phase delivery, where I am of the understanding that their Ultrafast Broadband fibre offer (speeds of over 100Mbps), but I can't see this being for at least 18 months, probably longer.

DCC Highways.

We are fast approaching budget time and I will be as always keeping close contact with our Neighbourhood Highways Officer 'David Ashford' and over the next few weeks we will need to agree the future works in the Axminster Division, where clearly there are a number or remedial work that needs to be undertaken in the Division.

Project Funding.

We are all asked at some time or another about funding of projects and the Devon County Council Economy Team publishes a regular update of opportunities for a diverse range of interests and it is worthwhile signing up to it at <https://www.devon.gov.uk/fundingnews/>

A couple of current opportunities published recently that might apply locally are the Condition Improvement Fund which provides Capital funding for academies, sixth-form colleges and non-diocesan VA schools to improve the condition of school buildings, including health & safety issues and building compliance and the Rural Development Programme for England: Growth Programme which provides Funding for small rural businesses for capital investment in food processing, rural tourism infrastructure and business development. Most of East Devon outside of Exmouth and Sidmouth is classified as rural.

Best Regards

Ian