

## Yarty Ward Report – April 2020; Cllr. Paul Hayward

Dear Yarty Ward residents.

Sadly, very little to report on the District Council front as no meetings are being held, virtual or otherwise, at the moment and the vast majority of the officers time is being used to support our communities and ensure that front-line services continue, as far as possible, uninterrupted. It is hoped that “remotely held” meetings will resume shortly so that the business of Council can continue, albeit in a slightly different way.

Other Councils, both in Devon and elsewhere across the UK, have met in such a manner and – after a few teething troubles – it seems like the best way to maintain the democratic process and keep Councillors “in the loop”.

Some of my colleagues have advocated shelving all meetings until September, and leaving all decision making – including planning – to the officers. I do not share that view. It is imperative that Councillors meet – albeit safely – to continue to scrutinise, challenge and improve how we deliver services to the people of East Devon.

In other news, the District Council has responsibility for administering all of the financial schemes announced by HM Treasury in recent weeks and I would urge anyone who believes that they are eligible to make enquiries (if you haven't been contacted already) and avail yourself of these funds designed to soften the blow of CV-19 and its impact on our economy and community. This applies to businesses which could be eligible for the Small Business grants, pubs and shops which cannot open due to the current “lockdown” restrictions, but also to the many village halls in our area which may be able to obtain financial assistance at a time when their revenue stream has all but dried up. It just takes a phone call to find out more...

For residents, there is help too. If you are struggling with monthly bills, then please call the Council Tax helpline and explain your situation. They may be able to offer deferred payments. Most of our towns and villages have established “help-groups” to offer support – financial, logistical and emotional – to anyone in need.

I am delighted to be involved with ACER – Axminster Community Emergency Response – but I am heartened to know that, across Yarty ward, help is readily available to anyone who needs it. Our communities come into their own at times like this, when we look after our neighbours, care for strangers and offer support to those we didn't know before.

My colleagues and I are supporting these community schemes aimed to provide resilience and response to those in the greatest of need and, as always, I am just a phone call away (or contactable by email).

For further updates, please refer to the your Parish Council website, information page, social media feed etc.

Together, we will get through this; supporting one another, whatever the need.

As the incredible Captain Tom Moore recently said “ ***For those finding it difficult; the sun will shine on you again and the clouds will go away...***”

Kindest regards

*Paul*

Cllr. Paul Hayward, Yarty Ward Councillor (07711 929227)