

WINTERBORNE ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Firstly, I'd like to thank those who trusted me to serve them for another term as County Councillor for Winterborne last May. It was never my intention to do another term, but when it began to seem likely that Dorset's authorities might actually get the go ahead to reorganise, I wanted to be able to see it through. Since 1997 when I was first elected it has been clear to me that Dorset residents needed less bureaucracy and better governance; when you need help in future there will be one Council to contact and one Councillor to deal with all your queries. The exact boundaries are yet to be decided, but it seems likely that there will be an east/west split of the Winterborne division which will mean instead of the current 6 councillors, there will be 2. The finer details are yet to be worked out, but this year will be very busy for all of us ensuring we do our best for our residents, getting the economies of scale and cost-efficient services whilst balancing the budget.

On that note, let me try to explain our 5.99% increase in Council Tax for 2018/19. Central Government funding is now £38.6m, plus £9.8m Better Care fund. However, the majority of our revenue is raised by council tax, £214.7m of a total £283.3. Of this budget, £185.3 is spent on Adult and Children's social services, leaving less than £98m for everything else.....waste disposal £20m, Dorset Travel £14m and all the other services that we need to maintain Dorset as a desirable place to live. Our Corporate aims are that Dorset is a Safe Healthy Independent and Prosperous county, ensuring that everything we spend is aligned to these aims is increasingly difficult.

It came as rather a surprise at the first full Council meeting to find myself elected by DCC members as their Chairman. This has meant attending a wide variety of events representing the Council and being involved in various committees connected to the Future Dorset work. All very interesting! One that particularly stands out is the Best Kept Village competition run for many years by one of our local residents, Mrs Rita Burden. There are many different categories, but all engender good community cohesiveness and I'd like to encourage all the Winterborne villages to enterI'd really like to present an award to one of you! I continue as Chairman of the County Farm Estate, am still very involved in anything connected to the rural environment, but more and more involved in staffing and other work that comes with being Chairman

Within the Division, I have held two group meetings which were useful for those that attended. There have also been numerous other site visits, mainly concerning traffic/highways/transport issues which are always more challenging than at first appears to be the case. As ever I am always willing to help and am easily contactable via email or phone.

Hilary Cox

Chairman, Dorset County Council
County Councillor for Winterborne Division

☎ 01305 225067 (Bus) ☎ 01258 880376 (Home)

✉ h.a.cox@dorsetcc.gov.uk

