

## BOROUGH COUNCILLORS REPORT TO DORDON PARISH COUNCIL

DATE: JULY 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022

1. Cost of living crisis – response by NWBC
2. Maintenance of A5 + footpaths including path from Dukes Road to Dordon school
3. Noise concerns and delivery schedule - Dordon Coop , Whitehouse Road
4. Update on planning application NE Junction 10 - logistics and lorry park
5. Litter /dog bin replacement and additions

### 1 COST OF LIVING CRISIS

The impact of the “cost of living “crisis on local residents is already apparent.

Dordon Community Store reported that the numbers of people coming into the Store has tripled over the last 2 months. Many are new users - working families who are struggling to make their monthly earnings stretch to pay for food during the fourth week and people alarmed at the sudden rise in their electricity bills and coming for help.

The rise in energy and food prices is landing particularly hard on people on low incomes foundation and many more people have emerged from the COVID 19 with fewer savings and more debt.

About 5 weeks ago I wrote to the CE of NWBC to ask how the Borough Council intended to respond and support residents through this cost-of-living crisis. He referred me to the “ benefits and help “ section of our website which has many links to sources of help and the various new schemes and grants which have become available :-  
[.https://www.northwarks.gov.uk/info/20008/benefits\\_and\\_help](https://www.northwarks.gov.uk/info/20008/benefits_and_help)

I also contacted our financial inclusion team [ 2 wte - shared with Nuneaton and Bedworth] to find out more about the kind of direct support we offer, including for people who cannot access or find it difficult to navigate our website.

The list of initiatives with which this small team - and the County Council are involved is extensive [ see TABLE 1 APPENDIX A] but complex and difficult to navigate .

Many people [ including myself] are unaware of everything that is available to help households maximise their income.

Nationally around £15 billions of financial support remains unclaimed. The reasons why people don't take up the money to which they have a legitimate claim will include: -

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- People not aware or reluctant to apply [ eg pensioners entitled to pension credits]
  - People confused about their entitlements [ eg working age adults and entitlement to council tax support exemptions]
  - No “initiatives” are not targeted to their area [ eg Covid Benefit Support fund – Polesworth is a target area ]

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- no organisations which can provide face to face direct advice based in their area
  - completing 30-page application forms is too difficult – people need support
  - helping individuals and families in extreme financial difficulty not families who are just “struggling” has been the priority for the councils Financial Inclusion Team
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Full Council has now agreed to convene a cost of living engagement multiagency forum on 29<sup>th</sup> September to understand “what the cost of living crisis means for NW , how it affects local residents and how we can actively support people through it ”

Contact [sallyroberts@northwarks.gov.uk](mailto:sallyroberts@northwarks.gov.uk)

I have also passed on details of a new Household Support Fund grant available via the Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme [ WCC] to organisations which can provide direct family support to the PC

## **FOR CONSIDERATION**

Q What else should or can we be doing locally to support Dordon residents through the cost-of-living crisis and promote the take up of unclaimed benefits and other services ?

## **2. OVERGROWN VEGETATION - MAINTAINANCE OF A5 AND LOCAL FOOTPATHS**

Once again residents have expressed their concerns about overgrown vegetation and the state of local footpaths. One footpath in particular [ Dukes road to Dordon school] has been the subject of many posts and comment on FB not only about the overgrown vegetation but also the dangerous potholes and surface.

After spending some time trying to clarify with NWBC and Highways [ WCC] who had responsibility for this footpath, it became clear that the land and footpath belong to Dordon school and I emailed the executive headteacher.

On 20 th June I received a reply from the Head expressing her surprise that the path was their responsibility but acknowledging and committing the school to cut back the vegetation that week and repairing the surface of the footpath during the summer holidays when other works were being done. I forwarded this email to the PC and posted the news on FB

Recently the footpath has once again become overgrown [ or the job done wasn't thorough enough – and one resident took direct action, cut back the vegetation herself - and posted on FB . This post in turn led to a stream of negative comments about the Borough Council and questions about its responsibility.

The school has now dealt with the issue after being rung up by the resident

This recurring and annual saga about overgrown vegetations footpaths and the A5 raises 3 issues in my view

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- a) whether or not it would be worthwhile to actively pursue, with the schools CA Trust the adoption of this footpath as a public footpath so it becomes maintainable by Highways WCC. Highways sent me a map of those paths in the village which are not their responsibility – this path really is an anomaly
  - b) the need to clarify Councillors responsibilities for responding to residents comments about maintenance of the “ public realm “such as footpaths , parks and dog mess and otherwise avoid comment through social media
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c) whether the idea of one resident ie to organise a “cut and collect “[ similar to the community litter pick] and supported by Streetscape is feasible and desirable

Needless to say the commitment given by Highways England that they would provide a grass cutting schedule this year did not materialise!

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### **3 NOISE DISTURBANCE AND DELIVERY SCHEDULE Dordon Coop, Whitehouse Road**

I have joined 2 site visits with the planning enforcement officers, residents of Roman Way t, the manager of the Tamworth Coop and legal advisers to discuss residents’ concerns about noise disturbance and HGV vehicles arriving outside agreed hours.

As a result, the Coop have now submitted a planning application to install removable barriers at the vehicle entrance and this is currently under consideration.

The matter of noise disturbance within permitted hours from unloading and loading of full and empty trolleys is still under consideration. The Coop is looking at various options for matting and further monitoring of noise levels is underway.

NB one resident has also raised the problem of HGV vehicles parking on Whitehouse Road because the Coop car park is full.

### **4 PLANNING APPLICATION NE Junction 10 –Logistics and Lorry Park**

Highways England have asked for a further 3 months from the 22 nd June to consider the information submitted with the application. It therefore seems very unlikely therefore that this application will be considered before September 2022

### **5 REPLACEMENT AND ADDITION OF LITTER / DOG WASTE BINS**

In 2019, residents raised their concerns about dog mess in the village. I followed up these concerns and contacted Mark Kennell [ Assistant Streetscape Manager]

At that time, I asked if the PC might consider funding the replacement and possibly adding 2 more dogwaste/ litter bins at certain locations.

Currently Dordon PC owns one dog bin on Dunns Lane which NWBC empty.

Both the ground mounted bins in Long Street recreation ground are now heavily corroded at the base and in need of replacement.

The one-off costs of replacing or buying a heavy duty post mounted dog bin from this company [ recommended and used by NWBC] <https://www.broxap.com> would be around £ 175.

Installation of new bins would require permission from landowners [ eg WCC if footpath, pavement] or consultation with nearby residents; there would be installation costs + an additional weekly emptying charge payable to NWBC.

At the time the PC felt they could not afford to pay the additional revenue costs of having extra bins However post COVID pandemic there are now more dogs and more dog mess in the village and increasing number of calls to Streetscape to clear it up.

#### **FOR CONSIDERATION**

Please could the PC consider at one of its future meetings the need for replacement and additional bins – and whether to include this item of expenditure in next year’s budget.

Councillor Jacky Chambers

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18<sup>th</sup> July 2022

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**APPENDIX A TABLE 1 LIST OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT WHICH IS AVAILABLE**

Energy Rebate Information

[https://www.northwarks.gov.uk/info/20008/benefits\\_and\\_help/1588/energy\\_bills\\_rebate](https://www.northwarks.gov.uk/info/20008/benefits_and_help/1588/energy_bills_rebate)

Energy Advice and Information

[https://www.northwarks.gov.uk/info/20064/help\\_and\\_advice/1589/energy\\_advice\\_and\\_help](https://www.northwarks.gov.uk/info/20064/help_and_advice/1589/energy_advice_and_help)

Warm and Well Warwickshire

[Warm & Well in Warwickshire - inc Grants - Act On Energy](#)

Fuel Bank Foundation –

- fuel vouchers for customers facing disconnection who are on a pre-payment meter

Fuel Emergency Fund – (10k)

- for people not entitled to benefit and who have exhausted all other options for help

[Help and support from other places | Help with money and debt | North Warwickshire \(northwarks.gov.uk\)](#)

Discretionary Housing Fund (DHP) and Customer Referral Form (CRF), Foodbank, online Income Expenditure – .

[Food Bank, housing payments \(DHP\), income and expenditure | Help with money and debt | North Warwickshire \(northwarks.gov.uk\)](#)

‘Tenancy Ready Guide’ –

DWP Pension Credit Day of Action –

Further Government Support

[Overall government support for the cost of living: factsheet - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Household Support Fund – extended until Mar 23 but no news on how yet on amount to be dispersed or the criteria

- Currently 1//3 Families with children, 1/3 pensioners
- Will be identified using data and automatically issued (NB: paper vouchers for pensioners and electronic by email or text to families)

Warm and Well Warwickshire

[Warm & Well in Warwickshire - inc Grants - Act On Energy](#)

Breathing Space – Government Initiative

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810058/17June\\_CLEAN\\_response.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810058/17June_CLEAN_response.pdf)

Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme

[https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/localwelfarescheme?gclid=Cj0KCQjwidSWBhDdARIsAloT Vb1uf5ZfBitqe4s3WgEYwOa04lV-B0oxTY8uljfld9jD2x9uha6uxcQaAuvMEALw\\_wcB](https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/localwelfarescheme?gclid=Cj0KCQjwidSWBhDdARIsAloT Vb1uf5ZfBitqe4s3WgEYwOa04lV-B0oxTY8uljfld9jD2x9uha6uxcQaAuvMEALw_wcB)

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