

Report from District Councillor for Parish Council, November 2020

Again, there is little to report. Covid cases in the county are rising again, although Daventry and Corby districts both have lower incidences.

DDC is continuing to work through its conservation areas review, and occasional village design statements. Disquiet has been expressed by some councillors and residents (not in this ward) about Article 4 Directions, which follow conservation area orders, and which will apply to Crick. Article 4 Directions remove permitted development rights, meaning that householders have to seek planning permission, and pay for it, for works which otherwise would have had deemed consent. DDC Strategy Group has recommended to full Council that permitted development rights be removed for change of use from offices to dwellings in Daventry town and certain employment areas, including those in Crick. In other parts of the country, notably London, these conversions have resulted in some cases in scandalously poor housing, so this is unlikely to be opposed.

The government is consulting on how best to raise accessibility standards in new houses, recognising the need for suitable homes for disabled and older people, and DDC's Strategy Group has recommended its response to Council. This is a technical consultation on Building Regulations.

Business continues as usual otherwise at DDC, including work on its ongoing Treasury and budget functions. The Government has allocated £428,000 to DDC for Disabled Facilities Grants, £28,000 more than the Council had originally budgeted, so this is welcome news.

West Northamptonshire Shadow Authority projected budget for 2021/22 is also likely to be forthcoming by the New Year.

I attended (zooming) the DDC/ Parish and Town Councils Liaison meeting. Little of note to report. Potholes and general road maintenance were the two issues of concern to PCs present. Presentation from Highways (Ian Smith) dismal as usual – any specific roads maintenance seems to be a case of “as soon as money becomes available”. The Leader of DDC, Richard Auger, reminded PCs that, “you are the continuity”, i.e. when DDC has gone, we will still be here to carry on!

On potholes, the NCC Cabinet Member for Highways, in his weekly update on Highways matters, records that 345 potholes were repaired in the week ending 6.11.20 following inspections and reports from the public. In the same week 5 crews across the county inspected 3096 gullies and cleaned 3020. I was delighted to see that the road to Crick from the A5 has been resurfaced – I just hope that it does not encourage more rat-run traffic and speeding vehicles!

Catherine

