**REPORTS – FEBRUARY 2019**

**County Councillor Stuart Barker**

County Cllr Barker reported that the Police and Crime Panel have agreed that their share of precept would increase by £24 per year (band D property) to provide more police officers.

He will present his first County Council budget tomorrow, which stands at £494 million, an increase from2018/19’s budget of £479 million. This is mainly due to Children’s Services and Adult Services requiring additional funding (£11.5 million and £4.5 million respectively). The demand for these services is relentless, but DCC are committed to supporting the most vulnerable. DCC’s grant receipts is down £13.4 million on last year. It was NOTED that the Highways budget will receive a slight increase.

He reported that some Parish Councils had received a letter regarding climate change. DCC approved a resolution to declare a climate change emergency due to the country’s inability to meet its carbon neutral target. DCC is one of the few authorities who are on track to meet the IPC target, and have recently made a decision to exchange an additional 300 street lights for LEDs and will likely be ahead of its carbon neutral target by 2030. The hope is to be at 100% carbon neutral by 2050. It was requested that this issue be discussed at the March Council meeting.

**District Councillor Dennis Smith**

**Budget for 2019/20**

At the Overview and Scrutiny Meeting on 4th February the following was recommended for approval at full council on 28th Feb.

* An increase in council tax of £5 or 3.03% to £170.17
* The continuing reduction in new homes bonus
* Other central funding reductions especially revenue support grant
* Reserves at 12% of the net revenue budget or just over £1.9 million
* Continuing support for housing whilst backing business and bringing people and organisations together for local neighbourhood planning
* Infrastructure delivery plan investment funded by community infrastructure levy and external sources where available
* The two year pay agreement including increases linked to the national living wage for 2018/19 and 2019/20 and increases of 2% for all other staff with changes to the central spine from 1 April 2019
* Provisional assumptions for business rates income for future years with proposed reset of the baseline
* Rural aid continuing at £40,000

It was further agreed by Council to raise the premiums being charged on long term empty properties as follows:

 (1)          From April 2019 onwards to increase the premium up to the maximum of 100% for properties that have been empty for more than 2 years;

 (2)          From April 2020 onwards to increase this to 200% for properties that have been empty for more than 5 years; and

 (3)          From April 2021 onwards to increase this to 300% for properties that have been empty for more than 10 years.

**NA3 Wolborough**

Following lengthy debate at the meeting on the 11th there was also agreement on bringing forward a proposed Development Plan Document for NA3 Wolborough which will give Teignbridge greater control over how the reserved matters are delivered. I was somewhat surprised and disappointed that the debate ended in the way that it did as I thought it would have been more useful if the public could have heard the whole of the debate. As I understand it at present there is one application out to appeal at the end of March and a revised application which the planning committee were asked to determine at a special planning meeting held on 12th Feb when permission was refused. Both these applications relate to the Antony Rew’s land adjacent to Coach Road.

**Development in Teignbridge**

There has been a lot of questioning about why Teignbridge is seeing so much development.
There are two major reasons for this.
Because of the very low numbers built between 1990 and 2010 there is far greater demand for properties than suitable properties available. This has resulted in the area having one of the least affordable property prices in the country outside of London.
Secondly, the changing demographic structure (more single people, more elderly, smaller family number) means more homes are needed.
On the basis of these two factors, the government uses this data nationwide and issues targets to each council to deliver a minimum number of homes each year. For Teignbridge this number is currently 620 as set in 2013 but this increases to 777 in 2019.
So why is Newton Abbot seeing so much development?
The areas where development can take place are restricted by external factors, Dartmoor, the sea, the protected undeveloped coast, areas of National importance such as SSSIs, mineral zones, etc. and when these are put on a map there are only three areas where you can develop - South of Exeter, Dawlish and Newton Abbot.