# Dorset Council report July 2020

After the last few weekends of congestion and little social distancing on beaches and seafront, Weekend 11-12 July passed without any incidents at Durdle Door or Studland or Bournemouth. Dorset still has one of the lowest Covid19 rates in England. Dorset Council run sports centres should be opening on 25th July.

Planning has been streamlined with a fast track system for pubs and cafes wishing to cover outside areas to increase table space. The six different planning systems from the old District Councils are finally being built into one new system by mid -September.

Dorset Libraries are initially opening from 9 July on a click and collect system through the Library online system, which has been widely used for ebooks and downloads in the last 3 months. Bags of up to 10 books of selected criteria, to be collected from your local library at arranged times. Returned books can be posted through the letterbox of most libraries. Win on Waste is still in abeyance until they can sort how to work with minimising risk and keeping distance.

Dorset has negotiated advertising cheap deals on Facebook, websites and local radio and newspapers for local Dorset businesses in order to encourage the public to use local rather than multi-national business in order to save the high streets.

Dorset Technology centre has had a new high-tech Agri-business developer take up space.

Holiday homes, caravan parks, and campsites are now open, the Covi19 guidelines are a bit vague have caused some confusion.

I have attended teams meetings on:

Planning – The proposed Aldi supermarket on the old Upton Oil site was agreed unanimously. It is regrettable that a signalled crossing was not agreed necessary from the start though it might be in the future.

Sadly the plans for 28 (24 affordable)houses at Spyway in Langton Matravers (AONB) was agreed by majority vote , more worrying now that the developers of the Old St Marys School Swanage which had a quota of affordable houses is appealing to have that removed.

Farms panel, to agree policy on not selling but keeping small farms tenants. The land is the only part that Dorset that Council can directly influence.

We have started have monthly meeting with our MP and other constituency councillors. Reporting back on problems during lockdown.

Meetings about IT developments and rollout of better ways of working online. More than 1/3rd council officers are still working remotely from home office. This may mean less need for expensive offices but more reliance on good broadband and 4G.

We sat in on The Climate Change EAP has produced an exhaustive report The Climate and Ecological Strategy which details the Scale of the challenge ahead and how much change Dorset will need to accept to cope with the future. This will almost certainly involve better more efficient homes. More renewable energy production not just solar farms. Probably wind farms, certainly needs national legislation and support to changes to planning. This will be discussed on Thursday by the Place Scrutiny committee which Cllr Starr sits on.

Dorset council is keen to keep Councillor informed about all departments, recently on Children Services building a Childrens Home to prevent so many children. And Homelessness which was highlighted by having to put up the rough sleepers in hotels during the pandemic. There are now intentions to buy a suitable hostel property in Weymouth or Portland.