

Cllr Jess Bailey, Otter Valley (Devon County Council) and West Hill and Aylesbeare (East Devon District Council)

Report to West Hill Parish Council

5<sup>th</sup> July 2022

### **Strategic Planning Committee – 12<sup>th</sup> July**

Next week's strategic planning meeting anticipates a slightly revised timetable of the local plan preparation. The main towns' site assessments are now going to be considered at the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> August (not July), and the small towns and villages (including West Hill) on 6<sup>th</sup> September with the proposed new town and sites close to Exeter being considered on 4<sup>th</sup> October. It is envisaged that the draft plan will also come to committee on 4<sup>th</sup> October and the public consultation will run from mid October to mid December 2022.

### **Aggregate Industries Planning Appeal for 100 Acre quarry at Straitgate Farm**

As you are aware Aggregate Industries have lodged an appeal against the refusal for the 100 acre quarry at Straitgate Farm. The planning appeal documents have been uploaded here <https://planning.devon.gov.uk/AppealDisp.aspx?AppNo=DCC/3944/2017>. I fully intend to continue opposing this highly damaging proposal. The planning appeal will be heard by way of Inquiry which will start on 4<sup>th</sup> October and is anticipated to last for 6 days.

### **South West Water – investigation by Ofwat**

South West Water is now the sixth water company to be investigated by Ofwat in relation to sewage discharges. I am very concerned about discharges into the River Otter and appeared on ITV Westcountry on 28<sup>th</sup> June, setting out my concerns in relation to the discharges at Fluxton. An FOI I had submitted to SWW revealed that sewage was discharged at Fluxton for 723 hours in 2021, yet despite this SWW are not going to investigate until 2023! What is particularly concerning is that Fluxton is a new sewage treatment works, so I cannot understand why this is happening.

The ITV Westcountry report and my short interview can be found on facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/JessBaileyOtterValleyDevonCountyCouncillor>

### **John Humphreys**

I raised concerns with Devon County Council about their safeguarding response to John Humphreys who was a former Conservative District Councillor, Exmouth Mayor, and Exmouth Town Councillor convicted and sentenced to 21 years in prison in August 2021 for offences against two boys.

As a result of my question to Cllr Leadbetter Portfolio Holder for Children's Services at Devon County Council on 26<sup>th</sup> May, it emerged on 16<sup>th</sup> June that a referral had been made by the NSPCC to Devon County Council in 2014 about John Humphreys but the appropriate multi agency meeting had not been held by Devon County Council.

This failure has prompted Devon County Council to commission an independent review. It has been featured in the national and local press

<https://inews.co.uk/news/paedophile-tory-councillor-allowed-mix-children-nsppc-1694718>

<https://www.exmouthjournal.co.uk/news/council-admits-mistake-over-john-humphreys-warning-9050840>

### **Ambulance Spotlight Review**

You may recall that on the 11<sup>th</sup> November I put forward a proposal that the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee should carry out a Spotlight Review on ambulance response times. This has now been published and was discussed at the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> June.

<https://democracy.devon.gov.uk/documents/s40729/SWAST%20Final%20Report%2013%20June%202022.pdf>

NHS figures show that over the winter South West Ambulance Service Trust (SWAST) had slower average response times and longer wait times at acute hospitals than the national average.

Even in May 2022 the figures are slower than average. For category 1, the most urgent and serious cases the average response time across the country is 8 minutes 36 seconds whereas in the South West it is 10 minutes 44 seconds.

As part of the Spotlight Review leaders in the Integrated Care System, which includes Devon County Council, the NHS Devon Clinical Commissioning Group and SWAST, were invited to share their knowledge and expertise.

The Spotlight Review concluded that an urgent 'systemwide' commitment to improve average response times was needed, and that all of Devon's acute hospitals should adopt the Rapid Patient Assessment and Triage model used by the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital.

Another recommendation suggested a new campaign to inform people how and where to access urgent and non-urgent medical support and mental health support was needed.

The report also highlights the importance of Minor Injury Units (MIU) and recommends that MIUs with regular service hours and minimum standards should be available across Devon.

I agreed with all of the recommendations but I felt that a further recommendation should be added. I strongly believe that in patient beds should be re-instated in community hospitals such as Ottery St Mary as the key problem is the handover delays due to insufficient capacity. For example the report highlighted the fact that the RDE had 99 patients waiting to be released to an appropriate care home or domicillary care provider.

Unfortunately, my proposal was voted down by the Conservative controlled committee only being supported by my Lib Dem colleagues on the committee.