

Update from Councillor Malcom Prowse – North Devon District Council

Councillor MP provided an update on the recent strategy meeting that was held on Monday 4th of September 2023. A report had been reviewed on houses of multiple occupation and Air BnB, indicating that both are reducing the availability of housing for local people. New licensing is being introduced which it's hoped will help redress the balance.

There is a public consultation on dogs and bylaws, seeking opinions on professional dog walkers and the number of dogs each dog walker is permitted to walk at once, as it can pose an issue with safety, crowding and mess.

There is a public consultation on antisocial behaviour orders in Barnstaple and Ilfracombe. Improvements have been noted in both towns due to the increased presence and support of police and marshals. There is still an element of antisocial behaviour which is leading to public feeling unsafe and a level of homelessness. Councillor MP informed the meeting that the council had been able to secure funding for a six month extension of the marshal scheme.

Devon District Council are working with a private lottery firm to introduce a similar token scheme to those used in Tesco, so Devon residents can vote for the charities they wish DDC to support. The scheme is not to compete with existing charity donations, or the larger charities in the county, but it's hoped will help to plug the gaps in funding for smaller charities. More information will be provided when this is finalised.

Tenders have been received for the council owned properties on Boutport Street which require maintenance. This has taken some time to organise, partly due to the impact on the availability of skilled labour which has occurred since the start of the major construction project at Hinkley Point. Work will begin once contractors are appointed.

Councillor MP informed the meeting that plans are in place for the removal of the old Barnstaple Leisure Centre and the area will be redeveloped.

The Parish Councillors and Parishioners then raised questions on planning and enforcement activities.