

Borough Councillor Report to DMTC

Cllr Josie Ratcliffe

1 Nov 2020

Good evening Town Councillors and Clerk,

The footpath between the Civray Avenue development and Bexwell Road has been opened up, providing a safe and clean route to Downham Market Academy. I will ask residents in East Downham ward to be considerate when passing houses on the route.

Improvements to the A10 at West Winch are being discussed due to proposals for large-scale residential development. A relief road/by-pass is required to be built, but only after the first 500 houses have been completed, so congestion will get worse initially. However the ward councillor, Cllr Alex Kemp, is campaigning for this road to be built first, which would improve access to King's Lynn and the Hospital for Downham Market residents. Alex would be pleased to hear from anyone who can support this campaign. cllr.alexandra.kemp@west-norfolk.gov.uk

Some Borough Councillors attended a **Retrofit/Green Homes Grant workshop** hosted by King's Lynn Klimate Concern. The Borough Council is promoting the GHG scheme, but there are worryingly few tradespeople in West Norfolk who are registered with the scheme. We learned that the requirements set by government are a problem, so although there are local traders who are qualified and experienced in installing the various energy/insulation measures that can be funded, they can't qualify as a 'TrustMark-registered' tradesperson - so homeowners and landlords would have to use a firm from outside the area to do work here. James Wild MP attended the workshop and will take up this. However there are some simple and cheap steps that everyone, including tenants, can take to improve insulation and energy efficiency of their homes so I will share these in a ward leaflet.

To check if you're eligible for a Green Homes Grant: www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk/

Unfortunately Borough Councillors haven't been sent any updates about the Borough Council's responses to the **Coronavirus pandemic** since the last DMTC meeting (despite being told this would improve). However this weekend's news will prompt fresh activity. Cllr Stuart Dark led the previous Borough response, and he was recently re-appointed to Cabinet with responsibilities including "Public Emergencies, Emergency Planning and Emergency Management".

I'm impressed by the draft **Market Strategy document** which will support the future of the market. I'm aware that you're awaiting clarification of government guidelines/regulations for outdoor markets before deciding the short-term position.

The **Town Council website** has become much quicker to load; thank you for this improvement.

And finally, congratulations to Cllr Lightfoot and all the team for the council being named as a **Love West Norfolk Hero!** I regularly wear my Town Council-supplied face mask when visiting businesses in town.