



Area Board Report

The overriding view at the moment is continued disappointment and angst at the primary authority's inability or reluctance to address many of the problems affecting Westbury and surrounding areas and that is reflected in many of the current issues described below.

Planning and Development

Permission continues to be given for more development despite objections from the town and the continued complaint that no infrastructure improvements have been made despite the increase in size and population. Notwithstanding the through traffic there is major congestion and delays through the town. This is due to the large increase in population and vehicles trying to access schools, shops, trading estates and the railway station or leave the town to travel elsewhere.

Like many similar towns Westbury does not have the space available to adequately provide parking for all the extra vehicles and this frequently causes upset and disputes amongst residents and neighbours.

A350

Major works are taking place to repair the major road through the town where severe damage has been caused by the heavy weight of many of the vehicles allowed to pass through the narrow streets. Wiltshire have provided ample signage which has allowed most through vehicles to avoid the town whilst the work is taking place and to state that businesses are open as usual although most have said that trade is very much reduced. On the whole the disruption has been well managed although disappointing that it is taking place during the Westbury Festival.

Local Governance

Comments have been submitted to the local boundary review suggesting changes to some boundaries surrounding the town although it is recognised that this needs to be in consultation with neighbours and public to deliver a changed structure.

Westbury has been developed right up to its boundaries in most places and development outside but near those boundaries invariably impinge on the resources and infrastructure of the town.

Business Plan/Neighbourhood Plan

Work continues to deliver the business and neighbourhood plans and they are progressing within the set time scales.



Delegated Services

We continue to prepare for the discussions with Wiltshire council early next year with a view to taking on some of the services that the primary authority is unable or unwilling to continue. We are looking to slightly amend the internal structure of the council so that when services are possibly devolved, they can be managed in an efficient manner. There will be a very detailed investigation into whether the town can adequately finance extra services and responsibilities.

Finance

The town will very soon consider the precept for the coming year considering current liabilities and any forthcoming devolved services. The council recently received an audit report with no recommendations for improvement and the council stated that much was due to the Town Clerk and her team.

Christmas 2019

Preparations for the Christmas event including the lights 'switch on' have been taking place since the start of the year and will be finalised in the next few weeks. This year's event is Nov 30th and although it is the Westbury event all neighbours from surrounding towns and parishes would be most welcome.

Mike Sutton
Chair
Westbury Town Council