

Bridget Wayman Annual Report to Parish Councils

As everyone knows, this has been an extraordinary year. Wiltshire Council has worked very hard supporting businesses and people, including the distribution of grants to businesses and setting up the Wellbeing Hub to support vulnerable people. What has been particularly striking has been the enormous local volunteer response to Covid 19 where people came together in numerous different ways to support everyone in their communities, particularly vulnerable residents who were self-isolating. It has been a very welcome confirmation that our communities are caring and thriving.

At Wiltshire Council, I have congratulated the Waste team and contractor on managing to maintain all waste collection services, including garden waste collections. You may not recall, but the Council had just introduced the changes to the recycling collection rounds and changed the way recycling is collected (co-mingled blue bin, glass only in the black box). Coupled with lockdown producing significantly increased tonnages of waste, the vehicles filled quicker and this did cause some missed collections. Some of the crews were also self-isolating, but the contractor was able to use other crew members from the commercial collections (which stopped) to maintain crew numbers and keep the show on the road. I am sure we would all have been complaining about lockdown much more vociferously if our rubbish had not been collected.

Even though libraries were closed at the beginning of lockdown, the Council continued supporting communities, increasing the number of eBooks, eAudio and eMagazines to help with loneliness and home schooling. The Council set up and continues to deliver a non-contact Home Library Service for vulnerable residents.

This is just a snapshot of a couple of Council services. Suffice it to say, there has been an enormous amount of work by different Council services adapting to a continually changing environment throughout the year. Hopefully, we will begin returning to normal very soon, but we reflect on and continue to maintain the fantastic community support and cohesion the pandemic has fostered.

I was extremely pleased to have been re-elected in May to represent the slightly changed and newly named Nadder Valley Division (losing Barford St Martin and Burcombe, but gaining Wylde and Steeple Langford parishes). I am extremely sad at not being included in the new Leader's cabinet as I have loved my last four years as the member for Highways, Transport & Waste. All the officers in those teams were extremely diligent and hard working, while retaining a great sense of humor, and I have huge admiration for them.