

County Matters report by Cllr Ray Bloxham

A brief update as at 4th June.

- Throughout the County the number of new cases of Coronavirus is reducing as is the number of people in hospital, the number of those in intensive care and the number of deaths reported on a daily basis.
- The number Devon Care homes affected is now the lowest in the South West with the South West the lowest region in the country.
- The County Council has been given an extra £36.7 million to fight Covic-19 but have already spent well over £42million so far -The 8 District Councils have received just under £8million between them to be able to give support to people who find they have no money and no access to money before financial support like Universal credit comes through. Officers have calculated that the Devon Team of Devon County Council and 8 District Councils will need at least another £85million before this outbreak is over.
- Because the South West, particularly the 4 Counties of Devon, Cornwall, Somerset, and Dorset have not had the infection rates of the rest of the country there is still a fear that another spike of cases could occur after the tourist season gets under way. We have to be very mindful of this possibility and continue to protect the vulnerable and maintain social distancing measures.
- Car sales and shops are due to open in the next 2 weeks. It is thought that Self Catering accommodation will open next but Hotels, Pubs, Restaurants, and Clubs may be somewhat later.
- Devon is now one of 11 Beacon Authorities in England to have been asked to lead on the new Test, Track and Contain policy to control the spread. DCC will be working with Plymouth, Torbay and Cornwall and the Leader and Chief Exec will be serving on the national committees being coordinated by Government.
- The Government has announced £250million to improve Cycleways both temporary and more permanent measures. As yet we do not know just how much will come to Devon but will be looking to improve town centre locations and routes into the main conurbations to make cycling safer. The latest update on this is that this money is likely to be going to major cities first. More detailed guidance on this has been circulated.
- Last week the Govt. also announced the allocation of the Pothole and Challenge fund. Devon has the largest Road network of any local authority in the country. Our allocation is £28.8million. Substantially higher than any other County.

Ray Bloxham

County Councillor