

Neil Eysenck, Eggardon Ward, Dorset Councillor's report

Thursday, 10 July 2025

Household recycling centre (HRC) update

After extensive lobbying by a number of Lib Dem Councillors, me included. It has been announced that the roll out will only be partial and will not at this stage include Bridport.

The key reason for this proposed change is not to reduce queuing, which is what much of the messaging to date seems to imply (albeit this is an ancillary benefit relevant at some HRCs), but financial efficiency. I don't think this message has been well communicated to date.

I would list the reasons for this change as follows (in magnitude of benefit from greatest to least):

1. Evidence of usage of Dorset HRC's by residents of other authorities (particularly BCP, Somerset, Wilts) will allow Dorset to charge those authorities/residents (currently we are cross charged by some neighbouring authorities but not the other way around). Particularly relevant where residents' nearest HRC is in an area different from that in which they live.
2. Identify frequent users of the HRC's who may be disposing of trade waste: this is two-pronged benefit as it may enable the council to identify and charge those users and/or reduce trade waste (trade waste is generally lower grade and therefore less profitable for Dorset Council to sell on for commercial recycling)).
3. Cost savings in better understanding and managing HRC usage times ensuring their smoother operation (benefits for staffing costs, transport operations (bin changeovers) etc).
4. Improvements in user experience where there are currently issues, such as queueing for entry etc.

The scale of the issue of cross boundary use of HRCs was shown by a survey last year indicating that 22.4% of visits to Sherborne tip – paid for by Dorset taxpayers – come from Somerset. With visitors travelling from either Yeovil, Milborne Port, Marston Magna etc. Equally it is known that visitors to Bridport tip come from East Devon (which already uses a booking system) whilst residents from Wiltshire nip over the border to use the facility in Shaftesbury.

Trailway update

Meeting scheduled on 21st July for me plus the Rights of Way team and Dorset's Active Travel team to establish where precisely things are with the entirety of the route from Maiden Newton to Loders.

Country Cars

The current plan is to bring the car schemes under Dorset Council's volunteer framework so they're covered by Dorset Council's public liability insurance. Research is ongoing to establish how precisely this will work in practice re procedures.

Audit and Governance update

There are procurement issues and investigations are ongoing. Audit and Governance Committee held a committee meeting in private on the 7th July to consider a report by the internal audit service which is provided by South West Audit Partnership (SWAP). Present at the meeting were the Chief Exec, most of the Senior Leadership team as well as members of the

Audit and Governance Committee. It is clear that a number of control failings occurred, some of which are likely to attract media interest when details are able to be made public.

News article from the BBC: [Dorset Council audit finds 'significant weaknesses'](#)

Highways Communications

Email sent to Ian Newport (Community Highways Manager), cc'd Edward Morello MP, Sam Crowe (interim Chief Executive), Nick Ireland (Council Leader) and Jon Andrews (head of Place services). Raising issues of terrible communications and providing several examples including Barrowland Lane.

Response back from Ian Newport of Highways:

You've raised some very valid points about the disconnect between our emergency response actions and the longer-term structural maintenance scheme process. As you rightly point out, the current approach can feel reactive rather than proactive, and that's something I'm keen to improve. I agree that a more structured handover and clearer communication at the outset of a scheme could help manage expectations and reduce some frustration for all involved.

In terms of the schemes, you mentioned ...I would very much welcome the opportunity to meet with you and Cllr. Jon Andrews to discuss these in more detail.

I also believe a wider joint conversation could also help us explore how we can improve stakeholder engagement and communication going forward, particularly with Parish Councils.

Review of Ward Boundaries coming to Full Council 10th July

Recommendation that the Boundary Commission be approached with a formal request for an electoral review to be carried out and, if such a request is agreed, that a cross-party task group is established to undertake preparatory work necessary for a submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) for consideration by Full Council.