

County Councillor Report – April

Last month I reported that the County will be increasing Council Tax by 3% built up as 2% general precept and 1% extra for social care. Data has come in from around the Country and this increase places Warwickshire as having one of the lowest tax increases from amongst the Tier 1 authorities. The difference between authorities is basically the funding needed for social care and Warwickshire having less residents eligible for social care support due to our being a relatively wealthy society. All the same social care still accounts for a planned 79% of the County budget.

Due to people working from home and needing to take exercise there has been an explosion in pet ownership and puppies in particular. This has led to large increases in prices for dogs and criminals have got into the act. This has led to an epidemic of puppy theft and potential owners paying huge sums for pets that don't exist.

In April 2020 'Lucy's Law' was introduced, meaning that anyone wanting to get a new puppy (or kitten) in England must now buy direct from a breeder, or consider adopting from a rescue centre instead. Licensed dog breeders are required to show puppies interacting with their mothers in their place of birth. If a business sells puppies (or kittens) without a licence, they could receive an unlimited fine or be sent to prison for up to six months. The new law seeks to tackle the low-welfare, high volume supply of puppies (and kittens), by banning their commercial third-party sale in England.

For more information, please search '*buypuppysafe*' on the internet. "Blue Cross" has good advice.

Warwickshire continues to invest in fibre broadband, but it is now admitted that fibre cannot get to every household in rural areas and three providers; O2, Three and Vodafone, have joined forces for the first time to build more G4 masts to improve quality in rural areas. This agreement should mean better service and a cost effective alternative to the BT's effective monopoly in broadband provision in this area.

As part of efforts to speed recovery from the impact of the Covid-19 epidemic the County Council has increased borrowing and created a £300 million fund to support companies. It is hoped this funding will attract private sector investment into Warwickshire.

Covid-19 is still about and, if you have not thought about it, please give some consideration to registering for a postal vote so you can avoid attending a polling station.

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