

CDC Councillor Tony Berry: 2019/20 Report

SOMERFORD KEYNES

The key to this last year took place at the beginning of May with the Local Council elections. My thanks to the many of you that voted for my return as your Ward Councillor, I shall continue to support you as best I am able. Unfortunately, a large number of voters in the Cotswold decided to punish the government for the 'Brexit' fiasco that was going on at the time and this led to a new Liberal Administration taking control of the Council.

Little happened over the next few month's other than the declaration of a 'Climate Emergency' and the recruitment of a senior manager to define and run this programme. (Christopher Crookall-Fallon joined in December to take on this role).

The planned change to the refuse collection in November was postponed till this March, since which time (and complicated by the CV19 'lock-in') it has been a struggle to get the new system running efficiently, but signs are that this is now happening for everything other than garden waste. We are pressing hard for this to be re-established immediately.

December was noticeable for the General Election and a clearing away of all the dithering and squabbling at Westminster for which many are thankful!

In February the new administration pushed through their budget which included:-

- The maximum increase in Council Tax allowed without a referendum,
- Borrowing of £60 million, half of which was to support commercial property purchases.
- Spending £12.8 million on the new Waterloo car park.
- Spending the reserves built up over the last 10 years.

Subsequent to the Covid 19 pandemic this budget will need to be reviewed. Otherwise this illness has had a dramatic effect on all our lives which continues until ?

Closer to home, I have:

- Attended your Parish Council Meetings.
- Liaised on a number of planning issues.
- Assisted with your Neighbourhood Plan, which is close to finalisation.
- Generally responded as required on CDC matters affecting your Parish.