

Chairman's Report

28th May 2020

A few weeks in to my role as Chair of the Town Council I am being kept very busy. All the staff and councillors are working hard to run things as normally as possible whilst still trying to stay distant from each other.

We have spent quite a lot of time discussing how to promote the town and its businesses once the restrictions imposed due to Covid-19 are eased. We are well aware that we will need to help people back on their feet and have formed working groups to look at where help is needed.

It was nice to be able to give permission to Collett Park Cafe to open again in time for a lovely sunny bank holiday weekend. Let's hope these restrictions ease in time to enjoy some of the warm summer weather we have.

The economic climate has an understandable degree of uncertainty at the moment, (when was petrol last near a pound a litre?) and we as a council are aware that we may be asked to consider grants to various organisations and groups. We will always look into the viability of a request and debate as a group before coming to a decision. We possibly have some hard choices to make and we need to be prudent with our finances.

Whilst the actions of some prominent people, as highlighted in the media and the numbers flocking to tourists' spots may lead us to think things will be back to normal soon, I think it worth pointing out that Weston General Hospital is closed to new patients due to the number of Covid-19 it has admitted. Weston isn't far away! The Mendip area has fared well so far and reported cases of the virus are low, let's keep it that way.

At the risk of waffling, as I'm struggling for column inches this week, I'm going to go now and see if my new battery strimmer is as good as it reckons on the box!!

Edric Hobbs, Chair, Shepton Mallet Town Council