



17th January 2023

Good evening, Mayor and Councillors.




Since our last report at the December meeting of the Town Council, the clock has ticked on relentlessly towards the demise of SSDC and the other three District and Somerset County councils. Only 73 days remain and as the deadline approaches the pressure to ensure a fit and proper council is ready to take their place is mounting.

As such, this is normally the time of year when your District Council is going through the excitement of setting budgets and Medium-Term Financial Plans. With abacuses abound and head scratching accompanying creased furrows and deep thought.

However, that has all shifted up to the Big Council, which leaves the District looking through what it is about to hand over. This includes a sizeable estate, commercial property and investments, as well as a substantial workforce. All while trying to maintain the level of service expected of our residents across the District.

Since our last report, there has been no Area West Committee or Full Council meetings, these will be held tomorrow and Thursday. For the agendas, you can follow the link below.

Full Council

-  We are expecting a presentation by Opium Power Ltd. This is the company that looks after our Battery Storage facilities in Taunton and Fareham in Hampshire. We received this presentation at one of our recent Audit meetings and recommended that they come to full council. If you are interested in renewable energy and battery storage, as well as the electrical power supply market, then this is for you. Again, you can watch it online by following the SSDC link below. Highly recommended by Cllr Hamilton.
-  To that end, we recently received a report on the performance of our commercial investments at our Scrutiny Committee. The latest report shows the investments performing well and within the set thresholds. But like all investments at this time, caution has to be applied.
-  There will also be a report and a question for council on whether to accept a Lottery Fund grant of £1.6m towards the 'Uncovering Ham Hill's past for its future' project. The total cost of this project is estimated to be in the region of £2.168m and is being funded from a variety of sources, including the Lottery Fund and £.0.5m from SSDC. This will see an improved visitor centre, as well as upgrade of the existing facilities and employment of management staff and rangers. The whole project will take just over two years to complete, with the new visitor centre and facilities hopefully opening by October 2024. See link for details.



➤ Area West

- The next scheduled Area West Committee meeting is due to be held tomorrow night, Wednesday 18th January 2023.
- At this meeting a report will be brought to the Committee, updating all Area committees on Section 106 (S.106) schemes across South Somerset and to update members regarding the new system for monitoring S.106 monies which will be taken to the new Somerset Council. An example of how that will look is contained in the report. See link for details.

Cllr Val Keitch

Cllr Brian Hamilton



INFORMATION REFERENCES:

Links to South Somerset District Council's agendas, minutes and other useful information can be found at the following links:



YouTube recordings of SSDC meetings:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSDst3IHGj9WoGnwJGF_soA



SSDC agendas, minutes and decisions can all be found either through the 'Modern.Gov' application or by following the link:

<https://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1>



Somerset Waste Partnership: <https://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/>

Recycle More: <https://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/recycle-more/>

SSDC NEWS:



Links to South Somerset District Council's latest news stories can be found at the following link: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/news/>