

**Committee: Resources**

**Date: 7 September 2021**

**Title: Parish elections**

**Purpose of Report**

Members to consider future elections in light of the decision to create a unitary Somerset authority

**Recommendation:**

Members to note the report and agree if this should be an item taken to Full Council on the 21 September.

**Report:**

1. It has been agreed that a single Somerset Unitary authority will be created.
2. At the last Ilminster Full Council meeting it was agreed that there will be a regular item on the progress of moving towards a single authority along with Ilminster Town Council's thoughts on how it can best support its population as the new authority is created.
3. The Town Council has been contacted by Somerset Association of Local Councils in order to seek the opinion as to whether arrangements for local elections should alter in order to bring them in line with the election process for the new authority.
4. The next elections are timetabled for May 2023. These would coincide with the next District Council elections taking place. However, the creation of a new unitary authority means that elections to the new authority will now be held on 5 May 2022 and there will be no principal authority elections in 2023.
5. This means that should Ilminster choose to have a contested election in 2023 they will face a significant increase in election costs due to having to pay the entire cost for holding the election. It would also mean that the local elections would be out of sync with the principal authority going forward.
6. It does mean that the term of office for all members would end come to an end in 2022 rather than 2023.

## **AGENDA ITEM 9**

8. Under the current Terms of Reference for this committee it is possible for it to decide how this should be taken forward. It would however be appropriate for all members of the council to have the opportunity to voice their opinions. This item can be included in a Full Council Item so that a decision can be fed back before the deadline of the 30 September 2021.

**Mark Tredwin  
Town Clerk  
6 September 2021**