

COUNTY/DISTRICT NOVEMBER REPORT 2018

SCC

County Hall will be closed over the Christmas week.

Officers have been considering the future shape of the organisation and have agreed a set of design principles. More information will be available in the coming weeks.

SCC has pledged to reduce 'single use' plastics, and to improve re-cycling facilities.

CONNECTING DEVON & SOMERSET

The problems that local communities have been experiencing with Broadband installation, particularly in relation to providers such as Gigaclear, has been raised.

SCC - FINANCES

The budget gap of £19m is being addressed; detailed proposals to follow in the new year. County Hall A Block is now closed to the public; renovation work costing £7m, and re-housing eight offices currently located elsewhere, will generate a Revenue Budget saving of £700k p.a. The cost is partly due to the presence of asbestos and heating system replacement. Several residents have questioned the need for such an expenditure.

Future borrowing is needed to fund the Capital Budget, this will itself be funded by setting up an 'Invest to Save' scheme.

Mid Term Financial Plan - most savings are on track and the outlook is good. Extra funding from central government is welcome but finance remains a challenge.

Unpaid leave – unions representing staff rejected the compulsory unpaid leave proposal put forward. Savings not now made have been built into individual service budgets, with a proportionate reduction; individual staff can volunteer to take unpaid leave if they wish.

UNITARY AUTHORITY DISCUSSION

The consultancy 'Ignite' has been appointed to write the business case for each option. All Somerset Councils are engaging well with the process, which will cost around £100k, split equally between them. The positions of BANES and North Somerset are being considered at the same time. The national process for bidding for Unitary status is to change in 2019.

DSFRS

I have been selected to attend the Fire & Rescue Leadership Programme at Warwick University, in addition to attending the national firefighters' conference in Brighton next year. The service is currently undergoing a review of shift patterns, in line with the use of the new Rapid Intervention Vehicles, enabling a swifter response in areas with narrow access roads.

As part of the ongoing prevention and protection strategy, residents are encouraged to make contact for Home Fire Safety Checks - 0800 05 02 999.

Equipment that can be provided for vulnerable people includes:- smoke and heat detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, hard of hearing alarms and arson proof letter boxes.

Trailing extension leads should be used for multiple appliances NOT multi-plugs.

YEOVIL POLICE STATION

The current station is not fit for purpose and is under-utilised. Re-developing the existing site is felt to be in the best interests of operational policing and local people, maintaining continuity and familiarity, whilst freeing up resources from buildings costly to run and maintain. The re-development, subject to planning permission, will reduce the current six floors to three, costing approx. £4m., including refurbishment. There will be new cladding, the installation of a new heating and cooling system and an open plan office space.

HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD

At this month's meeting the focus was on the 'Improving Lives Strategy', part of which includes the creation of opportunities to build stronger communities, through investment, actively securing funding opportunities, and greater involvement with the voluntary sector. The CQC had rated SCC as 'good' for its Drugs and Alcohol Strategy.

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES CONSULTATION

Consultation to review SCC's provision of early help services, is live until 31 Dec., to consider ceasing SCC's contribution to Level 2 'getset' services. Level 2 Services provide extra help to tackle short-term problems or difficulties, to help people to achieve their potential; Level 2 support is also provided by other organisations. The proposals do not directly impact on services in Ilminster. At present 'getset' supports families by:

- Organising and attending parenting support groups
- Providing individual one-to-one support for families

These aspects of SCC's support would stop if the proposal is taken forward, but it does include a £200k start-up fund to support community groups to increase support to families. The consultation is open to individuals or organisations with an interest in the service.

For more info. go to www.somerset.gov.uk/getsetconsultation

SOMERSET SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD

The SSAB identified the following four objectives within its Strategic Plan for 2016-19:

≈ Prevention ≈ Making Safeguarding Personal ≈ Think Family ≈ SSAB Effectiveness

For 217/18, a total of 4916 concerns were reported, a drop of 1255 from the previous year as a result of work to reduce the number of repeat and inappropriate referrals.

- majority of individuals (908 – 60.61%) requiring a statutory response were female
- majority of individuals (953 – 63.62%) requiring a statutory response were over 65
- most common type of risk was physical abuse (549 – 26%).
- most common location where people were identified as at risk was their home (42%).

PUPIL PRODUCT RATIO (PPR)

A decision paper proposing a revision of the formula for calculating S106 education contributions, and the allocation of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) monies for school places, is being considered, to ensure adequate developer contributions are sought to fund the necessary school places. Currently PPRs are based on the number of children living in dwellings built in Somerset between Jan. 2012 and Dec. 2017. PPRs, based on 2001 census data. Revised formulas, based on research, will seek appropriate third-party contributions to fund necessary school places and new builds. All Local Planning Authorities have been aware that SCC's PPR is too low, and Planning Officers have been updated on the methodology used and advised of its outcomes. The revision will require increased developer S106 contributions and, where CIL is chargeable, SCC will apply for funding on the same basis, but there is no guarantee that contributions will be forthcoming.

MUCHELNEY HOUSE

Following concerns raised in relation to the reduction in the hot meal provision for residents, and the CQC announcement on the financial position of Allied Healthcare, I have received the following information. 'SCC has contracts with Allied Healthcare to deliver care and support across 16 schemes and has issued notification to them that they will end the contract this month. From Dec. 1st Allied Healthcare will no longer deliver services on these schemes. For the immediate future SCC will work with Somerset Care to continue to oversee the delivery of both care and support for these services at the current level.'

HIGHWAYS

FATAL COLLISION - Sun 11 Nov 2018 A358 Ashill - 2 vehicles involved, with 3 fatalities

ROADWORKS

I have not been advised of any further planned roadworks other than those already advised.

SMALL IMPROVMENT SCHEME - WINSHAM

The proposal for Winsham is currently not included in the list of schemes, as they have not been commissioned yet, but will be in tranche 2, which is likely to be started early next year.

KINGSTONE SPEEDING

Responding to concerns raised by local residents, Highways have agreed there may be scope for a speed limit in Kingstone in line with DfT guidance, but costs will need to be recovered. New speed readings have been requested to establish non-compliance levels.

ILMINSTER LIBRARY

Confirmation has been received that the library is to remain open, with community support. There remains some uncertainty about specific plans until all options have been explored, taking into account reduced funding, but SCC have committed to secure the library's long-term future and are investigating sources of external income, including a request submitted to the Town Council for a contribution in the region of £5k.

It is hoped to maintain current opening hours and a self-service machine will be installed in 2019. The staff team will be restructured over the next two months, with the aim of retaining staffed hours by pursuing external income opportunities.

The Friends group (FOLL) have been pro-active in considering options for support, including:

- Fundraising for equipment and events at the library
- Volunteering to support events or activities
- Volunteering alongside SCC library staff, to help with day to day tasks
- Volunteering to extend current opening hours

SCC will be able to clarify the position in the new year and will continue to work with FOLL.

TEMPORARY SPEED INDICATOR DEVICES

Although some communities intended to fund their part of SCC's mobile SID programme there has not been sufficient uptake to fully fund the cost of running a scheme. SCC can no longer provide a community mobile SID programme, but can support local communities wishing to purchase and manage their own SID signs. They will work with Town/PCs to identify suitable locations and equipment, ensuring signs are installed and operated safely. Installation of these signs will need to be by someone qualified and accredited to work on the highway. Having had Chapter 8 of the Traffic Signs Manual, signing, lighting and guarding training. Providers can deliver the course locally for £185+VAT. Public liability insurance and employer's liability insurance is also required.

In response to feedback, SCC will now consider signs displaying the actual vehicle speed, in addition to SIDs displaying the posted speed limit when activated. To pursue purchasing and managing a SID sign, or for more info. contact transportdata@somerset.gov.uk.

SSDC - PLANNING

The following application, is raising local concern - **18/02609/FUL** - Longforward Lane, Kingstone, Ilminster, TA17 8TB: Erection of buildings to store and aid carnival float construction. <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planningsearch?keyword=kingstone>

SSDC – REGULATION COMMITTEE

A disappointing response to the complaint in relation to a recent Ashill planning application has now been received. As yet no firm decision has been made on how to take this further.

SSDC – HOUSING

A new standard for calculating 'local housing need' has been proposed. The new figure is based on 2014 household projections and includes an affordability ratio. South Somerset local housing need has been re-calculated at 14,510 = 726 new homes per year (including affordable housing), but no firm decision has been made yet.

A Tenancy Accreditation course has been introduced to help those who are homeless have a better opportunity to find suitable housing.

SSDC does not currently provide financial support to Village Agents, due to its area team structure.

COUNTY WIDE PARKING REVIEW

Traffic, congestion and parking is an increasing issue; inconsiderate parking, availability of parking space, and requests for disabled parking spaces. Until now, parking restriction requests have been dealt with on a case-by-case basis, with no consistency. To address this, a review of each town's on-street parking controls will take place on a rolling programme, to ensure a balance between the needs of residents, businesses and visitors. Consideration will be given to the appropriateness of existing restrictions, safety, and keeping key routes congestion free. A consultation exercise will take place to identify all issues, and feedback from this will inform any draft design for further consultation.

Chard will be part of the first review, with Ilminster following at a time to be advised, and rural communities as required. The review will be funded from income generated by parking services. New parking schemes will need to be self-financing, and may involve charges for on-street parking in key retail and tourist areas.

Local SCC Traffic Engineers will no longer deal with individual and local traffic engineering requests benefitting a few individuals; including requests for new/amendments to existing signing, lining, speed limits, HGV's restrictions, disabled parking bays etc. Focus will be on schemes with the greatest benefit. Minor requests will be included in the wider parking review, forming part of the evidence base for road safety and congestion issues.

For more info. contact 01823 358089 or BJNorman@somerset.gov.uk

LEISURE

SCC has no statutory responsibility to provide community leisure services and the contract with 1610 to provide community leisure facilities at schools expires in Mar. 2019. In Dec. the Cabinet Member will consider a paper regarding SCC's role in community leisure provision. Due to financial pressures, the recommendation is for SCC to stop commissioning these services and, where appropriate, transfer facilities to schools, saving £900k in annual management fees, plus the cost of maintaining/repairing facilities.

School-based community leisure services with current contracts with 1610 include Crewkerne Sports Centre at Wadham School in Crewkerne.

Pupils will continue to use the facilities, but community access will not be a condition of the transfer. Schools have no statutory responsibility to provide community leisure services and will need to work within financial and safeguarding constraints when considering future community use, which may not be possible in all cases. Some schools may wish to continue using facilities purely for curriculum use. If the decision is taken, SCC will support schools and 1610 to manage the end of the contract. Community users will be informed as details are finalised; some changes may take place early as part of a phased approach.

HORTON PLAYING FIELD PROJECT

The group responsible for leading this project, have been successful in winning the Skipton Grassroots Giving Grant for 2018, giving them £500, which will be used to purchase new seating for the field. At this month's PC meeting a comprehensive presentation was given outlining future plans, which won praise from all who attended.

COMMUNITY BREAKFASTS

Horton Village Hall – Sunday 2nd Dec. (Horton Playing Field Project)

Donyatt Village Hall - Sunday 9th Dec. (Gemini Carnival Club)

ACTIVITIES/MEETINGS

2/11	MIND in Somerset fund raising event
3/11	Somerset Community Food Conference – Wells
4/11	Winsham Art Exhibition
6/11	Broadway PC
6/11	Ilminster TC - planning
7/11	Somerset County Show meeting
7/11	Chard Museum trustee meeting
7/11	Winsham PC
8/11	Hinkley Point C visit
8/11	Fairtrade meeting
8/11	Dowlish Wake Pavilion pub night
9/11	Warehouse Theatre – Christmas Flower Demonstration
9/11	Ilminster Library meeting
10/11	Chaffcombe Remembrance event
11/11	Broadway combined parish Remembrance Service
11/11	Ilminster Remembrance Service
15/11	SCC Health & Wellbeing Board
15/11	SCC – social service meeting - Yeovil
15/11	Fiveways School
15/11	SSDC full council
16/11	Donyatt VH fund raising quiz
19/11	Chaffcombe PC
19/11	Horton PC
20/11	Ilminster TC
22/11	SSDC Local Plan update
23/11	SSDC – Housing briefing
28/11	SCC full council
28/11	Broadway Christmas lights
29/11	Greenfylde School reading support
29/11	Samaritans 50 th anniversary – Taunton
30/11	DSFRS Forum meeting – Exeter
30/11	Friends of Ilminster Library meeting
30/11	Broadway BATS performance