

ILMINSTER DIVISION COUNTY/DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT JULY 2019

HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD

At this month's meeting members received an update on the Fit For My Future initiative, intended to move towards more integrated mental health services, and focus on early intervention where untreated mental health conditions can have a significant impact on a person's lifespan.

There is concern over the prevalence of domestic abuse and as part of the serious violence strategy £1.16m has been made available by Somerset & Avon Police to set up a Violence Reduction Unit.

There has been a significant rise in sexually transmitted infections.

INDEPENDENT ADVISORY GROUP (Avon & Somerset Police)

At this month's meeting, where I was accompanied by three youngsters on work experience, one of the key topics for discussion was related to raising awareness of autism within the police force. Key areas of concern for drug related crime (e.g. county lines) include Shepton Mallett and Chard. It is felt that some instances of low level anti-social behaviour could be avoided by improving links between the police and local schools and action is being taken to achieve this.

Car owners are being asked to be particularly vigilant as there has been a spate of car thefts.

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE (DSFRS)

Discussions have now begun concerning proposed changes to the service, which has generated a good deal of interest. The link is below

<https://www.dsfire.gov.uk/News/Newsdesk/PressReleaseArticle.cfm?ReleaseID=2250&siteCategoryId=3&T1ID=26&T2ID=36>

ILMINSTER FLOODING

The annual gully programme is enhanced by extra funding from the Somerset Rivers Authority for roads identified as being high risk to flooding. This enhanced programme should mean that these identified roads' gullies/drains are jetted an additional time within a twelve month period (every 6 months).

If residents feel a gully requires additional reactive cleaning in the meantime they are asked to notify the Area Highways Office via the following link:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-blocked-drain-on-the-road/>

HIGHWAYS

For Traffic Management enquiries use the following email TrafficManagement@somerset.gov.uk

For South Somerset county roads issues email countyroads-southsom@somerset.gov.uk

M5 JCT. 25 UPGRADE

Work has now commenced (mainly overnight) and is expected to take 2 years. The Tone Way phase has now begun and will eventually provide direct access from the M5 to the Park & Ride.

HIGHWAYS ENGLAND (HE) - CHANGES TO A358

The Highways England consultation document relating to the preferred route of the A358 upgrade is at https://highwaysengland.citizenspace.com/he/taunton-to-southfields-dualling-scheme/user_uploads/a358_tاونton-southfields_brochure_final_digital_19.06.19.pdf

Copies of the relevant documentation can be seen at SCC, online or at Taunton Library www.highwaysengland.co.uk/Taunton-to-Southfields

PLANNED ROADWORKS

Winsham, Whatley Lane - Drainage improvement. Temp. road closure. 2 - 27 Sept. 20 days
Broadway, A358 Broadway St. - Drainage improvement. Temp. road closure. 9 - 13 Dec. 5 days

GIGACLEAR – Temporary Prohibition of Vehicles

Sheephouse Farm Lane, Chillington - from jct. Lambert Lane to jct. with Fisherway Lane, for 593m. 1st Sept. for 7 days.

CHAFFCOMBE BROADBAND

In response to a local resident's concern and frustration over the poor rollout of broadband by Gigaclear, the following has been received from the Cabinet member, David Hall:

'The rollout of broadband by Gigaclear is significantly delayed, which is reflected on the Gigaclear website. Many of the start dates are listed as TBC. Updates are provided on the Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) website, giving details of the delays, implications and the next steps.

<https://www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/The-Gigaclear-contracts-with->

I appreciate that residents and businesses have been let down as a result of these delays and CDS has made it clear to Gigaclear that this uncertainty cannot continue. CDS has allowed the company additional time to evaluate and cost alternative methods of network construction. The company is on notice of default pending receipt of a revised plan by the end of July that is acceptable both to CDS and the Government. I can assure you that CDS will not shrink from taking further tough action if that is deemed necessary. I recognise that this will be of little comfort to residents who require a decent reliable internet connection sooner rather than later. Until Gigaclear can provide acceptable plans to deliver the contract future deployment is in delay. In the meantime, there are some alternative solutions residents may wish to investigate:

Better Broadband Scheme - a Government run scheme that provides a voucher up to the value of £350 towards a minimum broadband connection of 10Mbps. To qualify for this the recipient must have an existing broadband service of 2Mbps or lower. More information can be found at :

<https://basicbroadband.culture.gov.uk/>

Rural Gigabit Voucher Scheme - another Government run scheme that provides a voucher towards the connection of a gigabit (1000Mbps) broadband connection. Premises experiencing speeds below 30 Megabit per second (Mbps), are eligible for up to £3,500 per small and medium-sized business (SME) and up to £1,500 per resident to support the cost of installing new gigabit-capable connections when part of a group project (when two or more residents and/or SMEs get together to combine their vouchers towards the shared cost of installation). Single connections are not eligible for additional funding. Information on the scheme can be found at:

<https://gigabitvoucher.culture.gov.uk/rural/>

Anyone having further questions should contact Nathaniel Lucas at NMLucas@somerset.gov.uk and/or KLovelock@somerset.gov.uk or phone 07976 690 942.

ILMINSTER TRANSPORT

I am awaiting further information with regard to a follow up meeting with local transport providers.

SCC ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

The head of the department, Stephen Chandler, is leaving the service. Recruitment for his replacement will take place in the autumn. Mel Lock will take over the post in the interim.

In addition to this, the team leader for South Somerset, Julia Ingram, who I met with this month to discuss ongoing issues, is also leaving SCC and her temporary replacement is Maura Noone.

SOMERSET WASTE PARTNERSHIP (SWP)

Where there are problems with contact over issues such as missed collections, contact details are 01823 625700 or enquiries@somersetwaste.gov.uk

DONYATT SIS

This has now gone out to tender.

SSDC LOCAL PLAN CONSULTATION

<https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/your-council/your-council-plan-and-strategies/planning-policy/local-plan-review-2016-2036/>

Do be sure to access the website to comment on your preferred option. A high level of interest was shown at the information session held at The Shrubbery this week.

ENVIRONMENT STRATEGY

As part of an initial engagement exercise, elected members have been asked to make comments relating to the new strategy, due to be released in October, after gathering baseline evidence and analysis work that needs to be done prior to drafting potential priorities for action. I have expressed dismay that the timescale for responses was so short.

NEROCHE SCHOOL

Following the departure of the head teacher at the end of term, I can confirm that, after interviews were held, the current deputy head teacher, Alison Collins, has been appointed as the new head teacher. In addition to this, with effect from Sept. the new Chair of governors will be David Tucker.

CREWKERNE/ILMINSTER SCHOOLS REVIEW

The planned meeting for this month did not occur, in part due to illness, A copy of the report is available at: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/crewkerne-and-ilminster-strategic-school-review/>

SCC have set up a short survey to gauge local views. This is available at:

<http://www.somersetconsults.org.uk/consult.ti/IlminsterandCrewkerneSchools/answerQuestionnaire?qid=5801283>

SCC officers will decide which, if any, options to take forward or whether alternatives need to be explored, in order to make a decision on how to proceed next term, subject to consultation.

AREA WEST

Following a recent member workshop, area priorities have been agreed. The four key challenges and issues identified, with some weighting to identify emerging priorities for the 2020/21 period, were:

- Crime and community safety: The importance of supporting the multi-agency One Team approach in tackling community safety issues in the Area and District.
- To complete the gateway highway improvement scheme (Chard, Fore Street)
- Tourism: To attract tourists and increase spend in, and visits to, the Area and wider District
- Protecting the Environment: To develop an approach for protecting our environment and ensuring that the green agenda is at the forefront of what the SSDC does.

Between Aug. and Nov. priorities will be assessed to form part of SSDC's Plan for 2020/21.

YARLINGTON

CEO, Caroline Moore, gave a presentation to inform members of the recent partnership with social housing group, Radian. An update on the services provided by Yarlinton was also given, and a number of questions relating to the difficulty of residents in obtaining services were raised.

FUTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There has been no further news in relation to this, as this month's meeting was cancelled.

SSDC

The authority is currently in discussions with interested parties to consider whether or not it may be possible to have a multi-faith burial site situated within the district.

EXTINCTION REBELLION

The group were once again present at this month's SSDC full council meeting, to ensure that the climate emergency remains at the top of our agenda.

TRANSFORMATION

Full council approved one off additional resources of £494,990 in 2019/20 and £240,230 in 2020/21, to support service delivery to customers during the extended transition period from old to new ways of working, where it has been acknowledged that there have been significant failures.

SSDC PLANNING

This area of service provided by SSDC continues to face a number of challenges with planning applications not being validated in a timely manner

Land West of School Lane Ashill - 17/04328/OUT

Following the decision to refuse the application at Area West last month, contrary to the officer's recommendation, the application was considered at SSDC's Regulation Committee for determination and approved. Representatives of the local community have expressed their concern at this decision and the process which came to this conclusion and are intending to challenge this.

PLANNING APPEAL

18/03339/HOU - The demolition of existing railings and the erection of two boundary walls Inkwell House, Lower Chillington, (Officer delegated decision)

ILMINSTER LIBRARY

The Friends of Ilminster Library meet monthly to explore ways in which they can provide ongoing support, including regular coffee mornings on the last Saturday of each month, 10am-12 noon. The group are also seeking recipes for a fund-raising cookbook to support library activities.

TREE PLANTING

As part of recent discussions in relation to concerns over the environment, the benefits of tree planting have been highlighted. To obtain free trees to plant in your community or school contact the Woodland Trust at <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/>

ELECTRIC CHARGING POINTS

Ilminster is due to have one installed at West Street car park. Additional information can be found at <https://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/scotland/grants.../domestic-charge-point-funding>
The typical cost for a home charge point and installation is approximately £1000. As part of its Electric Vehicle Home charge scheme, OLEV currently offers applicants £500 towards this cost.

HORTON PARISH COUNCIL

A new clerk is being sought following the resignation of the existing clerk.

GREENFYLDE

Additional volunteers are being sought to provide reading support for children on a Thursday afternoon. Anyone interested should contact gill@magnolia.co.uk

ROTARY YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The Rotary Club of Ilminster are interested in receiving applications from young people aged 16-19 to attend the week-long leadership programme on Dartmoor, which takes place during the Feb. half-term. Anyone interested should contact kirstenhughes1962@hotmail.co.uk

ACTIVITIES/MEETINGS

1/7	Ashill PC
2/7	Broadway PC
2/7	Ashill planning meeting
4/7	Health & Wellbeing Board workshop – Frogmary Farm
4/7	SCC Chair Awards – Taunton Rugby Club
6/7	Fiveways School Fete
7/7	Ashill School Summer Fete
8/7	Dowlish Wake PC
9/7	Governance Complaints Training
10/7	DSFRA HR Committee
10/7	Ashill planning meeting
10/7	Swanmead School summer performance
11/7	SCC Health & Wellbeing Board
12/7	Neroche head teacher appraisal
12/7	Broadway – rights of way meeting
12/7	The Minster fund raising concert
13/7	St. John's Ambulance craft fair
14/7	Donyatt VH breakfast
14/7	Broadway Hill Church community lunch
15/7	FoIL trustee meeting
15/7	Neroche School governor meeting
16/7	SSDC Regulation Committee
16/7	Adult social services meeting
16/7	SSDC Scrutiny task & finish – Environment strategy
16/7	Iminster town council
16/7	Donyatt PC
17/7	SCC full council
17/7	SCC highways meeting re: modifications to M5 junction 25
17/7	SSDC Area West
18/7	Independent Advisory Group (Avon & Somerset Police)
18/7	Meeting with SSDC Leader and Full Council
19/7	Neroche School assembly
19/7	Meeting re: 2020 mental health event
20/7	Whitelackington table top sale
20/7	Chard Museum open day
20/7	Cricket Malherbie BBQ and quiz
21/7	Combined service Horton church
21/7	Donyatt duck race
22/7	SCC – meeting re: gypsy traveller community
22/7	SCC – meeting re: Rights of Way
22/7	Horton recreation project meeting
22/7	SSDC – member training – Speed Reading
22/7	SSDC – meeting re; planning
22/7	SSDC – member training – Listening & Questioning Skills
22/7	SSDC – meeting re: Leisure S106 monies
22/7	Chaffcombe PC
22/7	Iminster Fire Station
23/7	Fiveways - end of term assembly
24/7	Somerset County Show meeting
25/7	SSDC – Audit Committee
25/7	SSDC – meeting re: resident Council Tax
25/7	Iminster Education Fund meeting
25/7	Friends of Donyatt Despatch meeting
26/7	DSFRA forum
28/7	Hospice South West charity quiz
29/7	Horton PC
29/7	Iminster Lit Fest social evening
30/7	SSDC Scrutiny
30/7	SSDC Local Plan – Shrubbery Hotel
31/7	Connect Centre Wells – re: gypsy traveller community