

Committee: FULL COUNCIL

Date: 19 July 2022

Title: Clerk's update

Purpose of Report

For members to note information contained within the report on matters already reported to Full Council

Recommendation:

Members to note the report

Report:

Wessex Water

1. As reported to members at the June Full Council meeting a meeting was scheduled to be held with Wessex Water to discuss their intentions to locate an overspill tank in the Wharf Lane Car Park.
2. This meeting took place on the 12 July and representatives of Wessex Water met with the Clerk and Deputy Clerk as well as Ian Case from SSDC and Claire Oaten from Greenfylde School. Also in attendance was a representative of the consultancy company that Wessex Water had used to carry out the desk top planning exercise.
3. As a result of the meeting Wessex Water went away to look once again at the locating the overspill tank away from the Wharf Lane car-park. It had been pointed out to them that their investigations to this point on the impact of locating it in the Car-park fell well below what could be described as diligent.
4. It was very clear that they had little understanding of the actual impact of locating the tank in the car-park. In their eyes everything could be managed with the additional employment of people and would be managed by the contractors on site. A "deal with it as it arises" mentality seemed to be at the heart of their plans rather than actually looking at putting a plan in place that meant the issues did not arise in the first place.
5. During the discussions it was clear that their main problem was that there may be a gas pipe running near to the waterpipes along Orchard Vale. Ian Case pointed out that if this was the situation it was not an insurmountable problem.

6. Another possibility was raised as a location and this was for the overspill tank to be located on the Recreation Ground down by Canal Way and opposite Abbots Close. This might mean a temporary Road Way going into the Recreation Ground but this could be worked into other plans centred around the planned fitness trail.
7. The Wessex Water team have gone away to relook at their plans before coming back to the Town Council, Greenfylde School and SSDC with further thoughts. Once we have been updated with this information we will put it on a Full Council agenda ready for members consideration. Representatives will be invited to attend and explain their plans directly to members.

Cricket/IEF Lease

8. WE have now received from Ilminster Cricket Club the plan of the proposed area that they wish to obtain a separate lease from the IEF for the area of land which they would like to have a direct lease for..
9. The clerk is due to meet with the cricket Clubs solicitor on Tuesday 19 July and more information will be available following this meeting
10. As already brought to members attention there would be an agreement put in place with the If the report is confidential and to be discussed in exempt business then it should contain a “confidential watermark”.

Tennis Court Refurbishment

11. An online meeting was recently held with the Localities officer, a representative from the Lawn Tennis Association and the Clerks from Ilminster and Crewkerne. The issue of the charging for the courts was discussed and a number of proposals will be brought before members.
12. They have now carried out the survey's of all the intended courts and the results and the proposed works will be made available in the next few weeks. It is hoped to bring a more detailed report to members at the Open Spaces meeting in October.

Access to Ile Court

13. The Town Clerk spoke with the manager of the co-op about providing the access through the Magistrates Court and he was very happy for this to happen. He mentioned that a few people who park behind the store had asked if the path was likely to reopen and he is grateful to the council for agreeing that it will be reopened.

Food Bank

14. The Food Bank have received their first supply of cleaning materials as agreed at the last Full Council meeting. They wished to express their thanks to the council.

Unitary Authority

15. As members are aware there has been much speculation over what the Local Community Networks will look like. On Monday 18 July 2022 a press release was issued giving the following update.

18th July 2022

New Somerset Council supports local decision-making

Somerset councils today set out their plan for developing new Local Community Networks (LCNs) - groups that will be established in every part of the County to support decision-making at its most local level.

Leader of Somerset County Council, Cllr Bill Revans, said: "Having inherited the agreed unitary business case, and the LCN model, we must now work with it, and make sure it supports our vision for a fairer, greener, more flourishing Somerset.

"We absolutely support a way of representing people more locally and acknowledge that it must be within a structure that Somerset can afford, as inflation impacts our budgets.

"We realise LCNs have been anticipated right across the County. Our plan is to support these new, effective Committees of the unitary Council with decision-making powers and influence.

"Communities deserve clarity on when key decisions will be made ahead of Vesting Day, (the first day in the life of the new Council). We are working at pace on the offer. We are feeding-in more options on geographies, on roles and responsibilities, and on timescales."

Three LCN pilots continue to advance in Exmoor, the Frome Area and in South East Somerset:

- On Exmoor, a Highway Steward has taken up their post and we will be able to report early progress shortly.*
- The South East Somerset pilot will meet next month for a third time, to discuss options for tackling rural isolation and improving wellbeing.*
- The Frome Area pilot is focussing on better outcomes for children, young people and families.*

An LCN development officer role has been filled to help the pilots as they progress, and to evaluate their work.

A timeline for LCN development is in place, as follows:

- *Consideration of role, geographies, governance and funding of LCNs – July 2022*
- *Refine governance and financial modelling, linked to Medium Term Financial Planning - July to September 2022*
- *Engagement and Consultation on geographies for LCNs – Autumn 2022*
- *Formal Decision Paper including a resourcing plan - November 2022*

A plan on how LCNs are developed will go before the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) Implementation Board on Friday, 29 July. The Board has responsibility to inform and act on behalf of Somerset County Council's Executive, to ensure delivery of the new Council on time and to budget.

Cllr Revans concluded: "LCNs must be effective, affordable, and sustainable. They must suit our geographies and existing infrastructures, and be robust enough to give our communities real responsibility and access to their Councillors in the years ahead."

16. It is clear from this press release that more detailed information will be made available on the 29 July as to how the Local Community Network committee's will be set up.

Mark Tredwin
Town clerk
July 2022