

COUNTY/DISTRICT COUNCILLOR MONTHLY REPORT APRIL 2019

Activities have been somewhat subdued this month, on account of elected members being in Purdah in the run up to District elections on 2nd May.

SSC – SCRUTINY REVIEW

The Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) has been reviewing SCC's Scrutiny arrangements and have attended all 3 Scrutiny Committee this month, meeting with Members and Officers. The final report and any recommendations, will be considered at the July Full Council meeting.

CHILDREN & FAMILIES SCRUTINY

Adopt South West, a partnership of councils (Devon, Somerset, Plymouth and Torbay) has been formed with the intention of making the adoption process quicker and simpler and to encourage those who have not considered adoption before to come forward.

YOUNG CARERS

In a report received from the Young Carers Future Service provision there was concern at the lack of identification in order to allow support to be provided. In total just 60 young carers across the whole of Somerset have been recognised.

SCC FOOD CONTRACT

Following a procurement process undertaken collaboratively with N. Somerset Council, a 2 year contract has been agreed for the provision of food for Dillington House and Somerset Outdoor & Residential Learning Centres.

POLICE

This month a focused operation to tackle residential burglary, knife crime and the supply of drugs has been launched to strengthen public confidence.

An additional 100 police officers will be recruited, in addition to investment in a 12-month initiative, 'Operation Remedy', using force experts to work alongside local neighbourhood policing teams.

ILMINSTER SHUTTLE BUS

A new S1 – S3 timetable is due to be introduced with effect from Tues. 7 May. Copies of the timetable will be available on the bus and bus stop displays will display the new timetable from Fri. 3 May.

HIGHWAYS

Lee Norman has taken over from Mike Fear this month as South Somerset Area Assistant Highways Officer.

For Traffic Management enquiries email TrafficManagement@somerset.gov.uk or countyroads-southsom@somerset.gov.uk

A number of concerns raised by local parishes are ongoing and I am in regular contact with officers concerning these issues.

ILMINSTER

Flooding Update

Response from SCC – ‘with regard to the study carried out, we remain keen and have some funding options. To get the best outcome we are looking at how we can collaborate with the Environment Agency. As you will know Ilminster is at risk of flooding from a number of sources which fall under the jurisdiction of different authorities (e.g. surface water – SCC, Main River – EA). I am aware that the EA also want to look at Ilminster as part of their own modelling and so we are exploring how we may be able to combine these pieces of work. I will be back in touch once these discussions have concluded.’

Drain Clearance, New Road

The SCC 2017 Flood Investigation Report identified a probable cause of flooding as “.....blocked or partially blocked highway gullies” and Ilminster residents have once again raised concerns that the drains on New Road have either not been cleared at all or only partially cleared and have requested that they are regularly checked to maintain them free of blockages in order to minimise flood risk.

Winter Gritting

Following inclement weather in late Jan./early Feb. Ilminster TC considered the impact of SCC’s revised winter gritting/salting regime and have raised the following issues:

- The difficulty of getting children to school when roads have not been gritted
- The diversionary route road between Seavington St Mary and Ilminster is a main route if there is an accident on the A303, and will be on an ungritted road in bad weather
- In Ilminster most pedestrian town centre routes are on inclines and pavements should be gritted to allow pedestrians to walk into town safely.

Footpath Closure

Footpath CH 14/18 from its junction with footpath CH 32/UN in a SW direction for approximately 700m to its junction with the county road known as Greenway, due to an unsafe bridge. The closure became effective on 5th Apr. 2019 remaining in force for 21 days. For info. about works being carried out contact Rachel Pearce 01823 356001

LAND DISPOSAL - CROW LANE DONYATT

The decision was taken on April 18th to approve the proposed sale of land at Crow Lane Donyatt, for £60,000 to FMC Developments (SW) Ltd. The conclusion of this sale has been protracted since SCC owned land was inadvertently taken by a local Developer.

Background - some years ago neighbouring land was sold and developed by the current owner. Inadvertently the construction of one of the dwellings was built on land owned by SCC. Negotiations have taken place over some time to rectify the matter, resulting in the agreement to sell part of the land developed and ensure various other works were completed to the satisfaction of SCC as Highway Authority. These works have now been completed and the resultant issues resolved. The full proceeds of sale will be received by SCC to help meet its Mid-Term Financial Plan target for 2018/19. The sale price agreed with the purchaser reflects the special value to the purchaser.

ROAD CLOSURES - GIGA CLEAR

Ludney Lane, Kingstone - from the jct. with Longforward Hill to jct. with Kingstone Road, for 730 metres. The proposed date of closure is 29th Apr. 2019 for 6 days.

Knowle Church Road, Knowle St Giles– Junction with Cricket Lane to the junction with Pinkham Hill, a distance of 1450 metres. The proposed date of closure is 13th May 2019 for 10 days to enable Gigaclear to carry out reinstatement works.

SCHOOL MUSIC PROVISION

Officers have been meeting informally with neighbouring authorities to gain a greater understanding of how other areas structure their music provision, to gain insight into best practice, including other models of delivery. This will help to:

- Continually improve the service.
- Be better informed as to other service delivery options.
- Assess whether it would be worthwhile to undertake an options appraisal to explore alternatives to our existing structure.

If felt that it would be advantageous to consider alternative models to support long-term sustainability of music provision for children in Somerset, a full business case would be produced, and appropriate processes followed to consider those options.

NEROCHE SCHOOL

Parking

Following a request from the school, for the marking of a dedicated disabled parking space to accommodate a new pupil, and after discussion with myself, disabled bay marking is to be provided in the layby immediately by the main entrance, without charge. Work will commence shortly, and the school will erect an informative sign.

Head Teacher

Following the recent resignation of Connel Boyle, who is moving on after 8 years as head teacher, interviews took place this month and I can confirm that the current Deputy Head teacher, Alison Collins, was successful in being appointed to the post, to take effect from Sept. 2019.

LOCAL ELECTIONS

Later this week, local elections will be taking place. Although a number of seats will be uncontested, in addition to the District Council, local parishes and towns will see a change in their elected members as a number of existing councillors have decided not to stand. Several clerks have also decided to relinquish their positions. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who have served their communities in recent years for their dedication and hard work, and to wish those who have chosen to stand, the very best of luck in their endeavours.

ACTIVITIES/MEETINGS

1/4	Iminster planning – Horlicks site visit
4/4	Neroche School – head teacher interviews
4/4	IMEx meeting
5/4	Meeting with MP, Yeovil and residents re: Horlicks site
5/4	Neroche School assembly
6/4	Meeting re: Jemima Layzell charity event
6/4	Lent Lunch – Horton
7/4	Horton VH – b'fast – Playing Field Project
10/4	Iminster Lit. Fest. launch
12/4	Iminster library meeting
13/4	Lent lunch - Horton
13/4	Friends of Iminster Library fund raising event
14/4	Donyatt VH – b'fast – Gemini Carnival Club
15/4	Friends of Iminster Library meeting
15/4	Horton PC
15/4	Winsham PC
16/4	Winsham annual parish meeting
17/4	Meeting re: Somerset Show
17/4	SSDC Area West
18/4	SSDC - Licensing
18/4	Minster – Maundy supper
26/4	SCC - Children & Families Scrutiny
26/4	SCC – Children's Parliament
26/4	Warehouse Theatre
27/4	BHMC fund raising event Horton VH
27/4	Ashill School PTFA quiz
28/4	Broadway VH concert
28/4	Ashill combine service
28/4	Broadway quiz
29/4	Neroche School visit
29/4	Iminster Lit6 Fest meeting
29/4	Chaffcombe Annual Parish meeting