

ILMINSTER DIVISION DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT SEPTEMBER 2018

SCC

The proposed savings mentioned in last month's report were discussed at the Cabinet meeting this month on the 12th, which a large number of members of the public attended. The Cabinet noted the challenging financial circumstances of SCC, and considered the impacts that any saving measures would have on those services most likely to be affected in addressing the projected overspend during 2018/19 and beyond.

Of the decisions made, key areas of interest were

- agreement to postpone any change to the current support to Young Carers until further information was available and a robust business case put forward.
- Withdrawal of youth support services, with the exception of the DofE Award scheme, and the youth equipment store.
- To reduce support for the Citizens Advice Bureau on a gradual basis over several years, to allow the CAB to undertake their own transformation.
- The decision relating to changes to the Get Set early help programme has been called in, and is due to be considered at an Emergency Full Council meeting in Oct.
- Withdrawal of the Park & Ride service at Taunton.
- Reduction in some areas of highways maintenance.

DSFRS

Rapid Intervention Vehicles, using new technology, are to be used as part of a programme to modernise the service, ensuring readiness to deal with changing risks in society. The RIVs are smaller, agile vehicles that can negotiate narrow roads more effectively when attending an emergency and help to reach some incidents more quickly. The locations of all response resources is under consideration, using the revised Integrated Risk Management Plan, to analyse current and future fire and rescue related risks.

POLICE - Independent Advisory Group

I have been invited to become a member of this group and will be meeting up with the Chief Inspector, Local Policing Area Commander, Sharon Baker, in early October.

HEALTH

Work is underway to develop proposals for the Somerset Health and Care Strategy to address challenges identified for urgent and emergency care, proactive care, long term conditions and frailty, mental health and learning disabilities, children's and maternity services, planned care and cancer.

Somerset Sustainability & Transformation Partnership has established a multi-agency group; schemes are in place to mitigate capacity shortfall due to increased demand over the winter period. Action has been taken to integrate Taunton & Somerset NHS FT with Somerset Partnership NHS FT, and commitment to explore alternative ways of working. For the 13 Community Hospitals, recruiting and retaining registered nurses still poses a significant challenge and has worsened slightly.

There is a need to increase the number of stroke beds in the county to alleviate the constant waiting list, which has led to pressure on other hospital beds.

SOMERSET SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD

Priorities for 2018/19 continue to centre on prevention, making safeguarding personal, adopting a Think Family approach, and enhancing the Board's effectiveness and increased engagement with Healthwatch.

HEALTHWATCH

The main focus for this summer has been the NHS 111 service in Somerset, as a recent CQC inspection rated the service as 'requirements improvement'.

Whilst lots of positive comments were received in response to a resident survey carried out, issues raised in lengthy waits for call backs from a medical professional, along with the irrelevance of some assessment questions, and a robotic approach by advisors.

The Health Visitor Service is due to meet with SCC in Oct. to address concerns in relation to information and timely visits.

LEARNING DISABILITY SERVICES

Concerns remain over the provision of learning disability services by Discovery in relation to the process adopted, the way data had been presented, and the timetable for reviews.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

I now meet monthly with the South Somerset Operations Manager, Julia Ingram, and await responses to the latest issues brought to my attention, including a lack of confidence in the service, where those deemed not to have capacity should have an independent person present to ensure their wishes are known.

ILMINSTER/CREWKERNE SCHOOLS

There have been concerns in relation to the lack of progress by Futures for Somerset and I met briefly with Dave Farrow this week. SCC's current financial difficulties have meant that at present the review is unable to commence, but he is intending to speak to Somerset Schools Forum next week to discuss alternative funding to gain approval to move this forward. He assures me that he remains committed to carrying out the review to ensure a financially sustainable education system to deliver good quality education within the area.

ILMINSTER FLOODING UPDATE

The study to quantify risks and mechanisms of flooding to identify potential flood alleviation measures is likely to be deferred in 2018/19. SCC will consider opportunities for funding this in the coming years. The following actions are planned to demonstrate commitment to mitigating the risk and impact of flooding, with some funding made available from SRA.

Highway gully cleansing

Community feedback has resulted in the priority increase of routine maintenance. Annual maintenance will be increased to 6 monthly.

Highway jetting

An order has been placed for jetting of the drainage system, to ensure highway drainage pipework between gullies is clear and functioning. It is expected the work will be undertaken before the winter.

Property protection measures

The Flood Team met with several affected property owners to discuss resistance and resilience measures to mitigate the impact of flooding, with a view to supporting work they might undertake and for SCC to consider assistance.

A programme of work is being undertaken to install resilience measures on a number of properties in 2018/19, including several properties in the Ditton Street area.

Riparian maintenance of watercourses

Maintenance of sections of the Shudrick stream and other water courses around Canal Way is a problem. The Flood Team have been pursuing this with Persimmon homes, to ensure they attend to maintenance on their land, without the need for recourse to SCC's land drainage powers.

BRIDLEWAYS

I have been contacted by SS Bridleways Assoc. in relation to 4 applications submitted 8 years ago. SCC have now been directed by the Planning Inspectorate to determine 3 of these applications and SCC have provisionally indicated they will be turning them, due to insufficient historical evidence.

Those involved feel frustrated that all of their hard work has been discarded so readily by SCC's Rights of Way department. There has also been a delay in SCC sending on the file on Copse Lane, Ashill, and its accompanying user, back to the Planning Inspectorate. There is concern that it may take years to move the case any further forward.

HIGHWAYS – Speed Indicator Signs

With a reduction in Highways activity in Somerset, local communities have been exploring options, including the installation of Vehicle Activated Signs. For further information contact Dave Grabham, (SID Coordinator), Traffic Management Group, PP601a, County Hall, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4DY Tel. 01823 358265 or email - d.grabham@somerset.gov.uk

WINTER ROAD GRITTING

In response to concerns over changes to the winter road gritting programme, I have been advised that the following roads will no longer be part of the maintenance scheme.

I have asked to be informed as to the criteria used in making this decision.

- Chard – Eagle Tavern (A303 jct.)
- Old A303 from Horton to South Petherton
- Kingstone Main (St Raynes Hill – Ilminster)
- Broadchard, Crewkerne – Lopen Head

WINSHAM SMALL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME APPLICATION

This SIS application to address pedestrian safety issues on the B3162 has been approved to progress to the next stage, outline design, following which it will be re-assessed before progression. Inclusion does not guarantee a scheme will be constructed; it will be dependent upon how the scheme develops.

In the current economic climate SCC are looking to deliver the most efficient and safe solutions; where a signs and lines option is identified as safe and appropriate SCC will not be looking to implement a more extensive civil engineered solution.

Due to the number of successful applications, it is necessary for them to be commissioned in tranches to make the programme manageable; this scheme has not been identified in the first tranche for commissioning. Highways will be in touch in due course to advise when they will be able to progress, which is likely to be next year.

Winsham PC are asked to confirm that they wish to progress the proposed scheme.

The scheme project manager will be Juan Gomez.

PUDDLEBRIDGE HORTON

Following previously correspondence in respect of the feasibility of a speed limit reduction for Puddlebridge, a speed data survey has been carried out. Next steps are for the parish to decide if they would like to take this forward, whereby data would be considered by the Police for consideration. Highways are confident there are grounds to achieve a speed reduction to 40mph through Puddlebridge, but not to 30mph as requested. The estimated cost to introduce this and issue a TRO would be £750, the cost being born by the parish.

HIGHWAYS - Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders

This order will enable Gigaclear to carry out a rolling programme of underground cabling works with clearing of potential duct (pipe) blockages in this road, and becomes effective on 11th Oct. 2018, remaining in force for eighteen months. While the closure is in operation an alternative route will signposted. Visit www.roadworks.org for further info.

For info. about the works being carried out contact Callum Whitfield on 0780 362 6101

Lambert Lane, Chillington – from the jct. with Sheephouse Farm Lane to the jct. with Clay Lane, for 450 metres. Proposed closure date is 30th Oct. for 11 days.

Longforward Hill, Kingstone - from the jct. with Longforward Lane to the jct. with Ludney Lane, for 900 metres. Proposed date of closure is 5th Nov. for 5 days.

Wood Close Lane, Kingstone & Dinnington - from the jct. with Ludney Lane to the jct. with Dozens Lane, for 970 metres. Proposed date of the closure is 12th Nov. for 5 days.

Castles Hill, Kingstone - from the jct. with The Butts to the jct. with Ludney Lane, for 920 metres. Proposed date of closure is 19th Nov. for 5 days.

Ludney Lane, Kingstone - from the jct. with Longforward Hill to the jct. with Kingstone Road, for 730 metres. Proposed date of closure is 26th Nov. for 10 days.

Down Lane, Winsham – from the jct. with Windwhistle to the jct. with Limekiln Lane, for 1300 metres. Proposed date of closure is 5th Dec. for 10 days.

SSDC PEER REVIEW

The Local Government Peer Challenge team are due to return in October to assess progress in implementing plans and addressing issues highlighted earlier.

In particular, SSDC have asked the team to focus on:

- Overall Transformation Programme
- Commercialisation Programme
- Finance and Corporate Management
- Economic and Community Regeneration

This follow-up visit has been requested prior to completing the Transformation Programme to aid the delivery of the final stages of the programme.

AREA WEST

At this month's meeting Cllr. Carol Goodall was appointed as Vice-Chair.

PARISH RANGER SCHEME

Several enquiries have been made about this SSDC run scheme, as local residents have concerns relating to overgrown paths, overhanging bushes, obstructing the pathways, etc.

SSDC PLANNING

HORTON

An appeal against non-determination has been submitted in relation to the application for the demolition of 8 residential units and office and the erection of 10 single storey dwellings with associated parking, garages and landscaping at Riverside, Horton.

ASHILL

The outline application for 25 properties at Windmill Hill Lane was considered by Regulation Committee, where it was granted approval. This decision has raised cause for concern and submissions have been put forward to SSDC's CEO.

HERNE HILL

Land at Herne Hill, held and managed by Ilminster Town Council, has now been designated a Local Nature Reserve.

SSDC PLANNING – COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

A summary and guidance document, has been produced and sent to all parishes, and is available at <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/spatial-policy/community-infrastructure-levy/>

Briefly, CIL is a tax on new development, to pay for infrastructure to support growth.

Residential development is charged at £40 per sq. m. and out of town large retail is charged at £100 per sq. m., but there are some exemptions, where contributions have been gained from the existing S106 requirements.

Affordable housing and self-builds are normally exempt from CIL.

CIL can be spent on - transport, flood defences, schools, hospitals, and other health and social care facilities, to fund a range of facilities such as play areas, parks and green spaces, cultural and sports facilities, district heating schemes and police stations and other community safety facilities.

When SSDC has received a significant amount of CIL money it will look at how best to allocate it to support growth in South Somerset.

Parish Councils will receive 15% of all CIL, rising to 25% if the town/parish has a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan. This portion of CIL can be spent on a wider range of things, other than infrastructure, provided it meets the need to 'support the development of the area'. SSDC must make payment in respect of the CIL it receives within six months.

Parish Councils will be free to spend CIL on facilities that serve to address the demands that development places on its area, but will be obliged to report CIL expenditure annually. The monies received must be spent within 5 years.

CRESTA POOL

The business plan submitted by residents to buy and run the pool has been rejected by SCC. It decided not to accept Kingfisher Community Pool's proposal because of concerns over costs, projected income, repair and maintenance.

SCC said the pool has "outlived its planned lifespan", and needs £1m of investment to replace failing equipment and to bring it up to standard, adding that the rejection was "in no way a reflection on the effort that has been put in" by residents.

Cllr. David Hall said: "Unless we are completely satisfied that the transfer could happen without risk to the public we cannot not let it go ahead. It has to be feasible, viable and sustainable and, unfortunately, we do not believe that is the case."

Over 100 volunteers offered their time to help run the pool, and crowdfunding raised £802.

LIBRARY SERVICE

Countywide, SCC received over 7,000 responses from the extended consultation carried out, which they are now in the process of reviewing and analysing. Decision dates are:
16 Oct. – consultation results and recommendations on the library service re-design will be published with the Scrutiny Policy and Place Meeting agenda

16 Oct. – Details of the recommendation for each library will be sent to communities along with, where relevant, a Community Library Partnership Expression of Interest invitation.

24 Oct. – SCC's Scrutiny Policy & Place Committee will meet to consider recommendations

5 Nov. – Cabinet to take a final decision on recommendations and future funding allocated.

15 Nov. – Expression of Interest in a Community Library Partnership closing date

Nov. 2018– Jan. 2019 – Community Library Partnerships proposals to be developed following Expressions of Interest being received from individual communities

Jan. – Apr. 2019 – Implementation of the Library Redesign Programme decisions.

For any questions about the proposals email librariesmail@somerset.gov.uk

DILLINGTON

I am meeting with Manager Adam Powell next week to discuss issues raised by local residents and businesses.

HORTON PLAYING FIELD PROJECT

This has been shortlisted to receive £500 funding from Skipton Building Society through their Grassroots Living fund. Local residents are urged to vote for them, before 12th Oct.
<https://www.skiptongrg.co.uk/apply-for-funding/.../the-orton-playing-field-project/>

COMMUNITY FUND RAISING BREAKFASTS

Donyatt VH – Sunday 13th Oct. – run by Gemini Carnival Club

Horton VH – Sunday 21st Oct. – in aid of Horton Playing Field Project

FIRST AID COURSE

Chaffcombe has been able to use some of the remaining Red Cross First Aid funding to run a course for 15 people. Feedback indicates that it was 'very informative and interesting'. It covered many different First Aid scenarios, provided guidance in identifying various types of emergency and the actions to be taken, along with information about defibrillators. 'It certainly equipped attendees with enough information to allow them to respond Money well spent!'

CARNIVAL QUIZ

The annual Ilminster Carnival Quiz will be held at The Shrubbery, on Wed. 3rd Oct., at 7.30pm. Get together to support this important community event, just £6 per team of 4.

ACTIVITIES/MEETINGS

1/9	Donyatt VH – BBQ & Auction of promises
2/9	Dowlish Wake Flower Wake
3/9	Ashill – shuttle bus service
3/9	Rotary youth meeting
3/9	Ashill PC
4/9	School safeguarding training
4/9	Neroche school – admissions appeal hearing
4/9	Healthwatch - Bridgwater
4/9	Horton – resident social services
4/9	Broadway PC
5/9	SCC – Adults & Health Scrutiny
5/9	Winsham PC
6/9	Dowlish Church cookbook
6/9	Ashill planning
7/9	DSFRS Forum meeting
8/9	Chard Museum Open Day
11/9	SSDC Licensing Committee
11/9	Ilminster Lit. Fest.
12/9	SCC Cabinet meeting
12/9	Somerset Show meeting
12/9	Warehouse Theatre – Ravenscroft
13/9	Adult Social services meeting
13/9	Wadham School awards evening - Crewkerne
17/9	Ashill planning
17/9	Neroche School governor meeting
18/9	SSDC Regulation committee
18/9	Horton PC
17/9	SSDC – Area West Economic Development Strategy - Chard
19/9	Area West - Chard
20/9	Greenfylde School reading support
20/9	SSDC – Transformation planning
20/9	SSDC – Full Council
26/9	Comm. Council for Somerset PC/Comm. spaces training – Long Sutton
26/9	Rotary fund-raising event for RAFA – Dowlish Wake
27/9	SCC Youth Services meeting
27/9	SCC Health & Wellbeing Committee
28/9	County Farms auction – Ilminster
28/9	MacMillan Coffee mornings (Ilminster (x 4), Ashill, Horton, Dowlish Wake)
29/9	Feast Taunton
30/9	Chillington Harvest walk
30/9	Broadway Harvest Service
30/9	Ilminster Bowling Club charity quiz