

ILMINSTER DIVISION COUNTY/DISTRICT MONTHLY REPORT MARCH 2019

SCC ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES

This month, I was able to meet with with Julia Ingram, the Locality Team Manager, in connection with a number of ongoing areas of concern; the recent injuries caused to a long-term resident in care, the over payment of monies paid by several residents in receipt of care, and unpaid invoices for a third person. Plans are in place to re-instate my monthly meetings to ensure progress.

DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

Currently there is likely to be a £7m. budget gap; attention is being given as to how this might be resolved, whilst continuing to provide a service where safety and rapid response to incidents remains a priority.

I was invited to attend the annual firefighters conference in Brighton this month. The focus for the new inspection regime is on three areas of operation - efficiency, effectiveness, people.

With the inspection due in May/June, inclusivity remains a concern, particularly with regard to the under-representation of women, especially at a senior level.

Acting Chief Fire Officer Glenn Askew has been successfully appointed to the new post of Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

LICENSING

SSDC are seeking views on the proposed recommendations in the draft statutory guidance to taxi and private hire vehicle (PHV) licensing authorities (Section 177 of the Policing and Crime Act 2017) on how licensing powers can safeguard children and vulnerable adults.

Consultation ends on 22 April. SSDC want to hear from any groups or individuals with an interest.

HIGHWAYS

ILMINSTER

Concerns have been raised in relation to traffic along Home Farm Way, with a view to exploring traffic calming measures.

The impact of an increase in through traffic at The Cross has also been raised.

The possibility of an increased flood risk connected to plans for development on the Horlicks site is causing some disquiet and I am due to meet with town representatives this coming week.

Following my meeting with Gary Warren this month, I am now in a position to update residents in relation to several outstanding issues and concerns. In future, I will be meeting with Gary every quarter to consider any outstanding concerns within the division.

ILMINSTER - FAIRTRADE

A request has been received for 'Fairtrade' signs to be put up on approach roads into Ilminster. I am advised that existing signage on the A358 Taunton approach is due to be replaced in the near future. When this is carried out it will include 'Fairtrade Town'. Signage on other approach roads, along the A303, are the responsibility of Highways England who should be approached directly.

ILMINSTER - BAY HILL

In view of objections raised in relation to the siting of yellow lines at this junction Gary is keen to obtain Town Council views, but he has pointed out that it is just a small portion of the area that will be affected and that his role is to protect the junction.

HORTON – PUDDLEBRIDGE

In response to residents' concerns about speeding, Highways have suggested reducing the speed limit from the A358 at Puddlebridge, going into Horton, to 40mph would help to mitigate the current problems. Reluctantly, Horton PC have agreed for this to go ahead. It is expected that once statutory notices have been issued, the new signage should be in place within six months.

KINGSTONE

In response to concerns re: speeding on the approach to the bend going into Ilminster, provided the community will fund the cost, it has been agreed that a 30mph. sign can be installed.

BROADWAY

There are ongoing discussions with Wessex Water in relation to the disabled parking space outside the almshouses opposite The Bell; work carried out by them has caused the markings to be obliterated and it is expected that they will fund the cost of reinstatement.

After concern was raised at this month's PC meeting in relation to the congestion caused by parked cars, often patrons of The Bell, options for solutions were discussed. The Highways Officer was emphatic that it was NOT an issue that should be addressed by The Bell and that it is down to the behaviour of individuals. A suggestion for a temporary solution has been made for traffic cones to be placed outside the boundary wall to The Bell or to extend the footpath adjacent to The Bell to be extended for its length. It is felt that S106 or CIL monies from recent planning approvals could be requested in this context. Whilst a Small Improvement Scheme application could be made it is felt that the process would be too lengthy to provide a solution within a reasonable timescale.

WINSHAM

The issue of traffic was raised as one of the key reasons behind SSDC's refusal to grant permission for the re-siting of the village shop to the former George pub site. I am advised by Gary Warren that the best way forward is for the PC to request that bollards/railings or a similar barrier be put up at the corner to prevent pedestrians from crossing at that point.

In relation to speeding concerns at the far end of the village, and where this abuts Dorset, Gary has indicated that in the first instance Dorset CC be approached for their views on possible speed reduction measures, then SCC will then be able to liaise with Dorset on the best way forward.

TEMPORARY ROAD CLOSURES

Donyatt and Dowlish Wake - Temporary Prohibition of Vehicles to specified roads.

The order comes into operation on 4th April, remaining in force for 18 months. Restrictions apply when indicated by traffic signs, and work is expected to start on 8th April.

Draft Traffic Regulation Order and associated plans can be seen at www.somerset.gov.uk/TRO

For information on alternative routes, where applicable, visit www.roadworks.org

For information about works contact Telent Infrastructure Services - 0800 078 9200

Woolley Lane, Knowle St. Giles - SCC have received an application for the temporary closure of Woolley Lane from Aplant Lux Traffic Control; from 15th April (remaining in force for 18 months) for 10 days, 09:30-15:30 (excl. the weekend) to enable BT Openreach to gain access to the overhead network for a new connection.

The order prohibits all traffic from proceeding along Woolley Lane from the junction with Cricket Lane, south-westwards for a distance of 900 metres.

CHAFFCOMBE PLANNING APPLICATION

Where local concern has focused on the danger posed by the additional movement of HGVs across the bridge in this area, I am advised that mitigation measures/restrictions can only be put in place if the bridge is deemed to be 'weak', and as yet no evidence of this has been forthcoming.

NIPPY BUS

This has been raised with me again. I am hoping to attend a meeting with the resident who raised this as being of particular concern, and the local bus company, which has indicated that whilst they are willing to consider providing a service evidence of need is required in order to ensure viability.

DONYATT - SMALL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

Highways have now uploaded the detailed design drawings onto the website for public viewing.

WINSHAM TRAFFIC – SMALL IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

The application has been approved but due to the number of schemes that made it through to the next stage it is necessary that they are commissioned in tranches in order to make the programme manageable. Thus, SCC are still progressing the commission of those schemes identified in the first tranche and all resources are committed at the moment. As the scheme in Winsham was identified in the second tranche, the project brief is yet to be moved forward resulting in the outline design stage being triggered. Note that details for this scheme will not be included in my monthly update until the project brief has been issued to the Design Team.

PLANNED SURFACING. STRUCTURAL MAINTENANCE & SURFACE DRESSING 2019/20

Drainage –	Broadway – Broadway Road/A358 jct. Ashill – Thickthorn Lane Winsham – Whatley Lane Knowle St. Giles – Cricket Lane
Surface dressing -	Donyatt – Bere Mills Lane Whitelackington – Stocklinch Road & Atherton Lane
Earthwork schemes –	Iminster – The Beacon

ILMINSTER – FLOODING

In response to a request at this month's Town Council meeting I have received the following:-
'I am really pleased that this project is attracting interest. In the first instance we are generally promoting the summary through the SRA. This is because the detailed report contains a lot of site-specific information and is also very long for most people's needs (nearly 750 pages). We will be using the detailed report ourselves to inform our other projects and initiatives.

A copy of the press release and a link to the summary document can be found here:

<https://www.somerset-rivers-authority.org.uk/unique-sra-study-probes-drainage-systems-around-new-properties/>

SSDC FULL COUNCIL

As part of SSDC's commercial strategy, at this month's meeting it was agreed to set up a Local Authority Trading Company, with a working capital loan of up to £132,000, with a view to generating income of at least £2.2m. by 2021.

Plans are in place to address recent problems in relation to manpower in the planning department, and funds have been allocated to address this.

SSDC PLANNING

It has come to SSDC's attention that there have been errors on website links due to an administrative error.

However, SSDC are very excited to share their new planning accounts.

By setting one up, you'll have access to new functions and facilities that make keeping track of applications easier and more comprehensive than ever, including:

Saving your searched criteria (so you only need to enter the details once)

Daily updates

Alerts for specific planning applications

Tracked applications

Map searches

For more details or if you have any questions, please email ssdcwebsite@southsomerset.gov.uk

BROADBAND

Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) broadband has announced that it is now offering vouchers through the national BDUK scheme. All homes and businesses in the county with broadband speeds of less than 2Mbps and without a published date for delivery for superfast broadband within the next 12 months are now eligible to apply for an interim solution under the scheme. Vouchers worth up to £350 would contribute towards the cost of equipment and installation of a 4G Fixed Wireless or satellite solution.

Applications need to be made through registered suppliers on the approved supplier list at <https://basicbroadbandchecker.culture.gov.uk/>

CREWKERNE/ILMINSTER SCHOOLS UPDATE

There has been much publicity in relation to the future of educational provision in the area – quote: ‘SCC officers have been meeting with Headteachers of schools in the area for some time to discuss the need to review the school structure in and around Ilminster and Crewkerne to ensure financial viability and the capacity to provide the range of curriculum opportunities to equip the children and young people in the area with the skills and qualifications they will need in the future. As a result of these discussions Futures for Somerset has been commissioned to carry out a review of education provision and produce a report looking at a range of alternative structures, setting out the pros and cons of each. In doing so they will look at a number of factors including the educational impacts of each model at each Key Stage. They will also look at the impact on pupils with Special Educational Needs, early years provision, transport costs, impact on communities and the costs of making any change.

A key consideration will be what staffing structures will be required for whatever revised structures are decided on, what support needs to be provided to staff, and what processes need to be followed to implement those changes. Professional associations and trade union representatives have been briefed about the review and will be kept informed of progress by SCC.

The intention is that Futures for Somerset will produce an Options Appraisal by the end of May to help SCC to decide which model(s) they want to take forward for further consultation. SCC expect to be in a position to identify a preferred option and the timescale for implementation by the end of the Summer Term.

There is recognition that there will be a period of uncertainty for school staff until a decision is made, but it is important that the review is as thorough as it can be, and that proper process is followed. SCC have reiterated that no changes can be made without going through a legal process involving consultation with parents, carers, staff, children and anyone else who may have an interest. Once a decision has been made SCC will work closely with Headteachers and Governors to ensure that any change is managed well.

SCC are aware that the two Middle schools in the area have applied to join The Bridgwater College Trust. It is expected the process will be completed by November this year for Swanmead. SCC are aware of rumours in the community about proposals for a subsequent change in age range for the schools to enable them to admit pupils through to age 16. At present, no application to change age ranges has been made to the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) who is responsible for deciding whether to agree to such an application, and SCC have been assured by the RSC Office that a decision in relation to any future application will be informed by the outcomes of the review. If such an application is made this is deemed to be a ‘Significant Change’ for an academy and there is a statutory process that must be followed prior to a decision being made which includes the need for a formal consultation process with all interested parties.

COMMUNITY BREAKFASTS

Donyatt – Gemini Carnival Club – Sunday 14th April

Horton Playing Field Project – Sunday 7th April, 9th June

ACTIVITIES/MEETINGS

1/3	Wadham School – meeting re: Ilminster/Crewkerne schools
1/3	Fairtrade event – The Minster
2/3	Fairtrade event Greenfylde School
4/3	Winsham PC open evening
5/3	Young Voices – Greenfylde school
5/3	Broadway PC meeting
6/3	Rotary Youth Speaks – Swanmead School
6/3	Winsham PC
7/3	SCC – meeting re: Ilminster/Crewkerne schools
7/3	IMEx meeting
7/3	Fairtrade dinner - The Bell, Broadway
9/3	Taunton food bank
9/3	Horton Lent lunch
10/3	Donyatt VH b'fast – Gemini club
12/3 13/3	Fire Service annual conference - Brighton
13/3	Chard Museum AGM
14/3	SCC – meeting re: Adult Social Services
14/3	Ilminster Town Assembly
15/3	DSFRS – member forum
15/3	Scam awareness training
15/3	Neroche School learning walk
15/3	Donyatt VH fund raising quiz
16/3	Winsham street fair big breakfast
16/3	Chard regeneration project presentation
16/3	Ilminster neighbourhood plan
16/3	Whitelackington VH table top sale
16/3	Horton lent lunch
16/3	Twinning Assoc. fund-raising event
17/3	Horton family service
18/3	Highways meeting – Broadway parking
18/3	DSFRS – HR Committee
19/3	Ilminster TC
20/3	SSDC - Area West committee
21/3	Swanmead School Young Chef competition
21/3	Friends of Ilminster Library fund raising event
21/3	SSDC – full council
22/3	DSFRS – appt. of deputy Chief Fire Officer
22/3	Chard Museum opening event
23/3	Chillington coffee morning
23/3	Horton Lent lunch
23/3	Chaffcombe VH event
24/3	Horton Easter egg hunt
25/3	Safeguarding governance training
25/3	Ilminster Literary Festival meeting
25/3	Neroche School governor meeting
29/3	Ilminster Library meeting
29/3	Broadway performance
30/3	Friends of Ilminster Library coffee morning
30/3	Horton lent lunch
30/3	Meeting House fund raising event
31/3	Isle Valley Benefice combined service