

# **Full Council Meeting – 29 September 2020**

## **Report of Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts – Leader of the Council**

The last few months have been some of the busiest that I have had in my time as Leader. I was reflecting that having been appointed the Leader by my group only 17 months ago, I have been dealing with one challenge or another with my Executive throughout that time.

The current triple of challenges of maintaining momentum on our collective aspirations as promoted within our corporate plan which you can see through my executive members reports, working to meet the threat that COVID presents to our people, communities and economy and now developing the Stronger Somerset bid and getting our to talk to communities and partners makes for an incredibly difficult but important period in our civic lives.

In line with these challenges I have been taking time to partners including Town and Parish Councils including a visit to Wiveliscombe. This will continue for the coming months with regards not only to the Stronger Somerset Proposal but also our corporate plan and COVID. I am also talking to Partner organisations such as the Board at Musgrove. I am also connected into National Networks such as the DCN (District Council Network) and have been on numerous seminars with MHCLG.

Alongside this I have had positive meetings with Arts Taunton regarding their ambitions and discussed Canonsgrove at the Somerset's Citizens Assembly which was attended by a vast area of organisations interested in social justice.

Some of the challenges we were facing prior to lockdown that have gone onto the back burner are starting to need to be dealt with and I am pleased that the Stronger Somerset bid has continued to commit to a Town Council for Taunton.

I am proud of the work that we have continued to do jointly as a Council led by the Executive and supported by our officers and you as members. We have many challenges but also opportunities ahead in the coming weeks but as the last year has shown, this council is ready to face them.