




Somerset County
Councillors Update
February 2020
Mandy Chilcott – Minehead
Christine Lawrence – Dunster



Useful Contacts, Resources & Websites

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Councillor Christine Lawrence	E - cmlawrence@somerset.gov.uk	01643 707889 07500 606800
Report Pothole/Road Defects	https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/report-a-pothole-or-road-defect/	0300 123 2224
Report Risk to Adult	adults@somerset.gov.uk	0300 123 2224 Emergency 999
Report Risk to Child	childrens@somerset.gov.uk	0300 123 2224 Emergency 999
Refuse Collection etc	Enquiries@somerstwaste.gov.uk https://www.somerstwaste.gov.uk/	00823 625 700
Interested in Fostering or Adoption	Fosteringinsomerset.org.uk	0800 587 9900
Road Works/diversions etc	Travelsomerset.co.uk One.network	
Talking Café Multi Agency Drop ins for help & advice Beach Hotel Mondays 10am –1 pm	Somersetagents.org/talking-cafes/ E – info@somerstrcc.org.uk	01823 331 222

COMMUNITY CONNECT - www.somersetcommunityconnect.org.uk - This is a website about your **care, health and wellbeing**. It is a website that has been created to help create awareness for the people in Somerset of what is available in the community.

This website has lots of **information and advice** and a **directory of providers, local groups and activities and information drop-ins** for adult residents in Somerset to find information, advice and services to manage their own care and wellbeing.

Current Consultations

Somerset West & Taunton Council - Closes 16 March	Local Plan for next 20 years to 2040	https://yoursay.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk/
For whole of Somerset, District & County Council Closes 25 Feb Adults, 18 th for 11-18 year olds	Climate Emergency	https://www.somerset.gov.uk/waste-planning-and-land/climate-emergency/
Council Fit for my Future – Closes 12 April	Community Health and Care Services	https://response.questback.com/isa/qbv.dll/ShowQuest?QuestID=5439572&sid=svGXw5jSKz Or search Fit For My Future - Community Health & Care Services Engagement Questionnaire

The Future of Local Government in Somerset – ONESOMERSET

The debate on the potential of a unitary authority for Somerset is to be started. The report that was commissioned to look into various options for the County can be viewed here:- <https://onesomerset.org.uk/>

Town and Parish Councils would remain exactly as they are - the report considers different ways of working for Somerset Districts and the County Council.

FIT FOR MY FUTURE - Minehead library engagement is on February 17th at 2.00-3.00 pm.

The NHS want to make it easier for people to get support and care where they live. This means they are looking at how we use our community health and care services. Details of the current online consultation questionnaire can be found in the consultation table above.

Community Connect

Somerset County Council's Adult Social Care team have implemented a new website www.somersetcommunityconnect.org.uk

Some of the key things on the site include:

- A directory of Micro-Providers - the growing network of small-scale, often single-person, care providers who can help with care at home.

- A list of drop-in events being run by a huge range of community and voluntary organisations in your local area
- Information about support for carers
- Help to access equipment through the county's two Independence and Advice Centres
- A directory of registered home care and care home providers

Talking Cafes

Adult Social Care now have 17 Talking Cafes and a network of Community Agents and village agents who work closely with SCC's social work teams to ensure that people are able to find solutions that help them live as independently as possible in their own home and community. To date 5,519 people have been supported through the Talking Cafes. Mineheads talking café is at the Beach Hotel on Mondays from 10 am – 1 pm.

Free Health Checks

Nearly 7,000 people benefitted from free health checks last year thanks to the service delivered for Somerset County Council and the NHS. And the checks will continue this year, giving anyone over 40 with the chance to have a free check-up every five years, helping identify those at higher risk of certain health problems, such as heart disease, diabetes, kidney disease or stroke. During the 30-minute check, healthcare professionals assess blood pressure, cholesterol, BMI and lifestyle. With these results the practitioner can advise patients about small changes that they can make which could have a huge impact on their future health. You can find out more about health checks here <https://somersethealthchecks.co.uk/about-nhs-health-checks>.

Caring about childrens mental health in Somerset.

This is a great initiative to help our young people improve their mental health.

In February, Somerset Libraries will be part of a national launch of a new Books on Prescription collection aimed at Children's mental health. Books on Prescription is delivered by The Reading Agency and aims to provide collections of self-help books that have been chosen by health professionals and endorsed by those living with the relevant health condition. This latest collection is targeted at children in Key Stage 2, and addresses topics that include how to stay mentally healthy, dealing with worries and emotions, and dealing

with tough times e.g. bereavement or trauma. One in eight 5-19 year olds had a mental health condition when assessed in 2017 and over one third of parents worry about their children's mental health (4 – 11 years) at least once a month, demonstrating that this collection will be a well needed provision.

The complete collection is available from Minehead Library.

Coronavirus (COVID 19) – Well Rehearsed Plans in Place Catch it, Bin it, Kill it.

Every winter health and care professionals gear up for a busy winter in preparation for flu and norovirus, and now there's a new virus on the block – Coronavirus (or COVID-19 it as officially named by the World Health Organisation).

There are at the time of writing no positive COVID-19 cases in the South West, but local health and care services are well prepared with well-rehearsed plans are in place to deal with any potential outbreaks.

So, what do we know about it? It's such a new illness that health professionals are learning more and more each day. It's believed to be spread from person to person through cough droplets. We also know simple basic hygiene measures (which we should be doing regularly anyway) can help prevent its spread. This includes washing your hands regularly with soap and water and using a tissue when sneezing or coughing and throwing it away – the familiar 'catch it, bin it, kill it'. Without a tissue, then use the crook of your arm rather than your hand.

For the latest information, advice and guidance, check out <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public>.

Minehead Parking Review

A piece of work is underway looking at the parking and lining in Minehead and Dunster. The town and parish Councillors have been consulted, and moving forward there will be discussions with the businesses and residents. Please get in touch if you have any issues that you wish to raise.

Update on Local Improvement Schemes

There are several Councillor small improvement schemes that are under consideration for Minehead.

- Drop Kerbs from Cher to Shops at Alcombe – these are about to be constructed.
 - Review of parking and Safety along Townsend Road between Minehead First School and Minehead Middle School – this is due to take place later in the year
 - Project to Allow Pedestrians to cross Bircham Road - this project is still in planning.
- All current projects are due to be completed by May 2021.

Somerset County Council Annual Budget

Budget plans set out thriving and ambitious future for Council

The annual budget meeting took place on 19 February and this is the link to the papers:-

<https://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=137&MId=1026&Ver=4>

New schools, investment in roads, a boost to local jobs and a dramatically improved financial outlook from a year ago have been outlined in the Somerset County Council budget.

As well as the investment in services, there was a repeated commitment to no further frontline job cuts.

Council have agreed a net budget of £338m and total spending in excess of £775m on services in 2020/21, as well as £319m of investment in capital projects – including school buildings – across 2020 to 2023 – including £133m in the next financial year.

A balanced budget which takes on board the challenge of rising Adult Social Care demand and costs - achieved without additional service cuts, but instead through efficiencies and service transformation has been presented.

An increase of 1.99 per cent of the County Council's element of the Council Tax is proposed, along with a 2 per cent ring-fence for Adult Social Care. The total 3.99 per cent rise equates to a 95p a week increase for a Band D property*, and makes available an extra £4.9m for services in general, plus a further £4.9m which will support the demand for growth in Adult Social Care services.

The proposed £133.5m capital programme for 2020/21, funded by government grants, borrowing and capital receipts, includes nearly £47m spent on school builds and expansions, £18m on highways and engineering, £33m on highways and traffic management, and £9.5m on economic development.

The headlines are:-

- Agree a net revenue budget of £338,370,800
- Agree to increase general Council Tax by 1.99%
- Agree to increase Council Tax by a further 2% for adult social care
- Agree the precept requirement of £257,292,090 for 2020/21 and set the County Council precept for Band D council tax charge at £1,289.20 for 2020/21. This is a rise of £0.95 per week for a *Band D property
- Contribute £1m to Climate Emergency Reserve.

The massive £1m climate emergency reserve has been created by Somerset County Council. (thought to be the biggest single investment of its kind in the country). The £1m pot will be available for parish and town councils to bid for green initiatives in their local area. SCC is acting on its decision to sign the national Climate Change Emergency Declaration which aims to make Somerset carbon neutral by 2030.

And the £1m fund is not the only good news for climate change. A motion to plant a tree for every baby born in Somerset next year was also agreed by councillors.

*over 2/3 of the homes in Somerset are Band A-C (which pay less than a band D).