

## ILMINSTER DIVISION COUNTY/DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT NOVEMBER 2020

### SCC FULL COUNCIL COVID PUBLIC HEALTH UPDATE

As this is a constantly moving feast up to date figures, when made available, are being provided separately. Decisions on which area goes into which tier are primarily based on 5 key epidemiological indicators:

- case detection rates in all age groups
- case detection rates in the over-60s
- the rate at which cases are rising or falling
- positivity rate (the number of positive cases detected as a percentage of tests taken)
- pressure on the NHS, including current and projected occupancy

Latest government information indicates that once the current lockdown ends this week Somerset will move into Tier 2 restrictions.

In Tier 2, households will not be allowed to mix indoors apart from in support bubbles. You can meet friends and family outside that do not live with you and are not part of your social bubble, including in a garden, so long as there is no more than six of you. This includes children. Pubs and bars must close unless operating as restaurants, meaning they must serve substantial meals. Alcohol can only be served as part of such a meal, with last orders at 10pm and closing at 11pm.

For up to date information use the daily Covid19 dashboard –

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/covid-19-dashboard/>

The number of positive tests has been reducing (3.8%) but it is still very busy (mainly from households, schools, care homes) and there remains concern about the capacity of the NHS. There has been a slight increase in the number of deaths (7 from one care home)

**Coronavirus infection rates:** As at 27<sup>th</sup> Nov. the number of confirmed Covid cases in Somerset was 5,110 (up from 2,738 on 1<sup>st</sup> Nov.) and the number of Covid-attributed deaths 228 (208). The rate per 100,000 currently stands at 99.1 for Somerset (Mendip at 138.4, Sedgemoor at 115.3, South Somerset 89.1 and SW&T at 67.7). The current number of total deaths across the County is currently 3% below the 5-year average and the latest R-value for Somerset is between 1.0 and 1.3.

***It is vitally important to remember at all times the Hands-Face-Space message.***

**Covid Christmas bubble guidance:** main points to be aware of:

- You can travel between tiers and UK nations to and from your Christmas bubble between **23 and 27 Dec.**
- Once at your destination you should follow [rules in that tier](#).
- **Three households** can form a Christmas bubble together.
- You can only be in one and cannot change your Christmas bubble.
- You can only meet your Christmas bubble in private homes, in your garden, places of worship, or public outdoor spaces.
- You can continue to meet people who are not in your Christmas bubble outside your home according to the rules in the tier where you are staying.
- For someone in your bubble. You can visit each other's homes staying overnight.

### DOMESTIC ABUSE:

During the first three months of lockdown, 10,000 people made contact with Somerset Integrated Domestic Abuse Service for info. and help – an increase of more than 8,000 for the same period in 2019. Covid-19 has exacerbated the problem for both male and female victims, with lockdown increasing the amount of time they spend at home with their abuser, potentially escalating the threat of domestic abuse and restricting their freedom. Help can be accessed by calling 0800 6949 999 or if someone is in immediate danger by calling 999.

## STRONGER SOMERSET

The four district councils have been invited to submit a full proposal for Local Government Review in Somerset by 9<sup>th</sup> Dec. The 'Stronger Somerset' proposal can be found at <https://www.strongersomerset.co.uk/>. To discuss the business case, the following meetings are proposed:- Following a private Member briefing, the proposal will be discussed further at SSDC DX on Thurs. 3 Dec. meeting and again at a special full council on Thurs. 3 Dec. at 6.30pm (both meetings will be streamed on YouTube and open to the public).

## SSDC DISTRICT EXEC.

Somerset's Climate Emergency Strategy was approved.

Clarity is being sought in relation to planning extensions of time that have been granted; whether as a result of SSDC requiring extra time or responding to an applicant's request. Concern has been raised about planning approvals where proposed commencement of developments is not coming forward.

Ref	Measure (frequency of reporting)	Description	Target 20/21	Q1 20/21	Q2 20/21	Perf against target	Direction of travel	Supporting information
PCS15	Planning – Extensions of time new measure for 2020/21	The number of accepted requests for extensions of time to determine planning applications	To be confirmed	55%	60%			This measure considers the number of requests for extensions that are accepted, hence why the target is 100%. In Q1 of the 388 decisions made, 204 had agreements to the request for an extension. In Q2 of the 347 decisions made, 208 had agreements to the request for an extension.
PCS16	Planning – Validations new measure for 2020/21	The number of days between receipt of applications and assessment for validation	3 days	6 days	7 days			As outlined above there is currently an improvement programme in place across the Planning Service to consider all elements of the process to be in place improvements.

## WASTE COLLECTION

A number of residents have reported that the SWP waste reporting link has not been not working, which should now have been rectified.

## HIGHWAYS

Winter Gritting - SCC's fleet of 23 Gritters will be maintaining the extended gritting service of last year, with approx. 900 miles of road being treated this winter; over a fifth of the county's roads. The main priority is to keep the busiest routes clear whenever ice or snow is expected. For more info., including a map showing all the roads treated, go to [www.travelsomerset.co.uk/gritting](http://www.travelsomerset.co.uk/gritting) or Twitter @TravelSomerset. The following has started:

The following operations have now commenced;

- Replenishment of salt stocks the respective depots across the county.
- Gritters undertaking test dry runs of the establish Precautionary Salting Network
- Automatic weather updates are now being received, which inform the decision-making process in relation to treating or not treating the network,
- The filling of grit bins. Resource has been allocated to fill bins for those parishes who have responded to our request for information in relation to their assets.

Carriageway Resurfacing/Surfacing/Structural Maintenance programme 2020/2021

The programme continues, and in South Somerset, by year end, a total of 9 sites are programmed to be resurfaced, with 1 site in Area West.

Resurfacing - Ilminster B3168 Station Road

Drainage - Winsham Whatley Lane - additional works

### **A358 DUALLING UPDATE**

Highways England (HE) has announced that the scheme has been allocated to Taylor Woodrow, who are also progressing early works on the scheme's preliminary design. The scheme is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) under the Planning Act 2008. This means HE will need to make an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to gain authorisation to acquire the land and construct the scheme. For more info. on this aspect of NSIPs visit:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/application-process/planning-inspectorate-role/>

Before HE can submit their application, they will hold a statutory public consultation on the design, inviting comments on the proposals. The future programme for the scheme is being finalised. but they anticipate holding the consultation next year.

For anyone who may be interested the Regional Delivery Partnerships framework that David Stock mentioned was launched a couple of years ago by the Department for Transport / Highways England.

The 13 framework companies – known as Delivery Integration Partners – will be part of the Regional Delivery Partnership working with Highways England. They will develop, design and construct highway projects on Motorways and major A Roads across England from 2019 through to 2024. Highways England say that this will improve their supply chain to and their ability to deliver value. More information is available from this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/better-journeys-ahead-with-groundbreaking-contract-awards>

The local community forum has asked for clarification on what type of contract there will be and what consultation with local interest groups before the Statutory Public Consultation.

*Thank you for your email on 25 Nov. 2020 regarding the Community Forums and the contract scope.*

*In regards to the Community Liaison Forum it is planned that we will hold a number of these events leading up to the Statutory Public Consultation next year. We will be in contact again in the early part of next year to advise about the details for the first of these meetings.*

*The Public Consultation will be delivered by both Highways England and Taylor Woodrow, this is because we are working in collaboration to deliver the scheme as part of the Regional Delivery Partnerships Framework.*

*We're in the process of finalising the scheme contract with Taylor Woodrow which will be a 'Design and Build' type contract. Therefore, it is the intention that Taylor Woodrow will be involved for the duration of the scheme.*

It is clear that there is no prospect of a meeting of the Community Forums for some time yet. However, once HE is in contact, it is proposed that a preliminary meeting be held to agree the issues people wish to raise. I will be back in touch early next year to update you further. In the meantime, if you have any questions in relation to this letter or about the project, please don't hesitate to contact the project team by emailing [A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:A358TauntontoSouthfields@highwaysengland.co.uk) or calling us on 0300 123 5000.

### **CANAL WAY HEDGES**

The maintenance of the hedge along Canal Way continues to be an increasing problem for local residents, which has become a health and safety issue; leaves on the path are deep and slippery, covering the footpath completely preventing safe pedestrian access except by using the adjacent cycle path. It is believed that until recently the hedge was managed by SSDC and SCC.

The cycle path is the responsibility of SCC and despite it being reported via the online website there has been a lack of response, which I am pursuing.

## **SUGGS LANE FOUL WATER DISCHARGE**

Once again there have been problems with flooding in Suggs Lane, Broadway, causing discharge of effluent in the area. Wessex Water have checked the sewerage system is operating effectively, given its current poor condition. They are currently appraising options to resolve what has been a long-term ongoing problem; the results of this are expected in the summer of 2021, with an update provided in April. Investigations, by CCTV, to find the cause will be carried out within the next few weeks.

Any further sewage flooding issues at Suggs Lane should be reported to the 24/7 customer service team on 0345 600 4 600.

## **SCC PLACE SCRUTINY – DILLINGTON HOUSE UPDATE**

The impact of Covid-19 on Dillington's operations, staffing and financial performance were discussed. Of the options and views going forward the 99 year lease expires on 25/3/2062 with breaks available at 25/03/2023 and 25/03/43, where 6 months notice is required. Rent is £1,430 p.a. on a full repairing lease basis. A Licence to Alter clause restricts compensation from the landlord for improvements (the Hyde) to a max. of £500k; Hyde loan repayments are £174k p.a.

The outturn position for 2019/20 was a deficit of £495k.

The projection for 2020/21 as at month 5 is a £1.33m deficit, as a result of Covid-19.

## **SSDC HOUSING PORTFOLIO BRIEFING**

In South Somerset there are currently 3 rough sleepers (2 problematic) where assistance has been refused and a lack of enforcement success with the courts

Temporary accommodation is being provided for 33 households (24 single 9 families) – all accommodation is now full including Pathways Hostel (30 bed spaces). 8 residents have moved from Pathways to more suitable move-on single rooms. There are 2 families in B&B accommodation.

Goldcroft is the new supported unit for 7 residents, now up and running. A newly acquired property in Sherborne Road will also help to free up urgent assessment beds.

Under severe weather provision rules, when temperatures dip below zero shared rooms are no longer an option.

Some chalet hotel rooms have been block booked in two hotels at around £30 per night for anyone showing symptoms or testing positive for Covid-19.

SSDC is funding taxi transport to enable those affected to access accommodation.

## **PLANNING MATTERS**

Confirmation was received this month that, as a result of updating the 5-year housing supply, calculations of the assessment for the period of 2020-2025 show that SSDC now has a supply equivalent to 6 years.

This means that the tilted balance towards the presumption in favour of sustainable development will no longer apply in respect of the lack of a 5-year land supply. To maintain this position the Accelerating Housing Delivery Programme will be working with developers and agents facilitate delivery of new homes in Yeovil and our Market Towns.

If you have any queries email [planningpolicy@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@southsomerset.gov.uk).

There are a number of key issues relating to the Planning Service:

Recruitment campaigns have resulted in the permanent appointment of the 3 senior planning officer vacancies; two staff was internal, and have been able to start their new roles immediately, the other is an external appointment, with an expected start date of Jan. 2021. Internal promotions have resulted in further junior vacancies.

The project team structure has made good progress in analysing the existing service processes, and management of staff and 2 members of the planning service have joined this group.

SSDC have also bought in additional temporary capacity to help with the backlog of work, and some additional capacity around breaches.

The Planning Reimagined workshops are now complete and Members have set out a series of recommendations that will be coming forward in Dec. and Jan.

A letter from Natural England (NE) has resulted in confusion about the official position regarding the impact of phosphates on areas listed as Ramsar sites and designated as Special Protection Areas (SPA) under the Habitats Regulations 2017.

This includes the Somerset Levels & Moors, which attract important numbers of wildlife, including wildfowl, aquatic invertebrates, and is site for breeding waders. This has resulted in greater scrutiny of plans or projects by NE, regarding increased nutrient loads that may have a significant effect.

A significant area of South Somerset falls within the catchment. It is considered by NE that despite improvements to the Sewage Treatment Works, along with other measures to tackle agricultural pollution, phosphate levels will not be sufficiently reduced.

So, the scope for permitting further development that would increase phosphates, directly or indirectly, is limited. Before determining certain planning applications the local planning authority) should initially undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), followed by an Appropriate Assessment (AA) where a likely significant effect cannot be ruled out. It is not acceptable to impose a condition on a planning permission; this has to be addressed prior to determination. This impacts on applications not yet determined, although existing detailed planning consents are not affected by this situation and can be built subject to suitable relevant conditions.

SSDC are taking legal advice to clarify further the situation with reserved matters and S.73 applications.

The types of development proposals affected are:

- New residential units – all applications for dwellings, including tourist accommodation, gypsy sites /pitches. This will even apply to single dwelling units and possible annexes.
- Commercial developments – new commercial floorspace that results in an increase in employees and/or to a use that would impact on wastewater – and tourism attractions.
- Agricultural Development – additional barns, slurry stores etc. where it is likely to lead to an increase in livestock.
- Prior Notifications of agricultural development where, as a result of the development, it will lead to an increase in livestock. Also, prior notifications for change of use of office to dwellings and agricultural buildings to dwellings
- Anaerobic Digesters that are reliant on farmyard manure and arable crops which are significant contributors to elevated phosphate levels in the catchment – particularly the production of maize.
- Possibly tourism attractions/developments that attract people to the district and generates additional wastewater.

Wessex Water's approach to phosphorus reduction is set out in their Business Plan 2020-2025 and has been accepted by the Environment Agency and NE. Go to for more detail:

<https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/corporate/strategy-andreports/business-plan-2020>

It is inevitable that delays to certain applications will arise over the coming months whilst the Somerset Ecology Service deals with the increased workload. SSDC are actively attempting to recruit its own ecologist but this is proving a challenge at present.

SSDC is working with developers to accelerate growth, including committed sites that have stalled. Some sites, particularly those that are greenfield and have wider landownership

options, may be able to achieve nutrient neutrality if they can demonstrate that sufficient measures have been taken to offset phosphate outputs. NE, in partnership, are hoping to develop a framework to enable short-term/interim solutions particularly for smaller scale developments.

SSDC is working together with the other Somerset councils to develop a county-wide Nutrient/Water Quality Strategy.

There has recently been contact from agents and applicants who believe that SSDC are no longer determining applications. This is not the case. Applications outside of the affected areas will still be determined.

## **COVID PUBLIC TRANSPORT CONCERNS**

In response to concerns raised by a member of the public I have received the following from the local manager at Buses of Somerset, giving actions they intend to take to rectify some of the issues raised:

'As indicated by the passenger, signage is in place on the buses, and passenger limits are in the main adhered to.

Windows – the few buses I checked recently all had their windows open. There is obviously a concern that as the colder/wetter weather develops, there is a tendency for passengers to close windows once seated. On that basis, I will continue to monitor both leaving the depot and whilst en route. We are trialling a modification which prevents windows being fully closed.

Sashes – the decision to remove sashes was taken due to the multi-purpose use of the buses doing both college runs and service work in the hope that passenger would take some responsibility for Social Distancing, which should be easily adopted with the recommended reduced limits of capacity.

Masks – Drivers realise the importance of passengers wearing masks and quite often question. However, there is very little we can do to police it if exemptions are claimed. Some services have been severely delayed whilst we tackle some that have refused. There have been 2 Incidents of drivers being 'spat at' so some are now wary of any confrontation. Bus Stop Corporation Street – Obviously you are aware of the impact of the Bus Station Taunton closure of East Street - some services have been amalgamated with others on the existing stops around The Parade/Castle Way. In most cases, departure timings are separated but on occasion, there may be a cluster of passengers. I am taking steps to try to monitor the stops and encourage 'Social Distancing' but this does illustrate the impact of the East Street closure on bus services, and we believe this is not being adequately considered.

I hope these answer the points that have been raised in relation to service 30 and the measures the bus operator is taking.'

## **LIBRARIES**

Following the new COVID-19 restrictions which came into effect on the 5th Nov., Somerset Libraries would like to reassure customers that key services remain in place.

**Borrowing** - although customers are unable to enter libraries to browse shelves, you may visit to collect items selected for you via the [library choice](#) service or which you have specifically requested via [www.libarieswest.org.uk](http://www.libarieswest.org.uk).

The "library choice" service enables borrowers to request up to ten books hand-picked by a member of staff based on favourite genres or authors. Simply complete the form on the Somerset Libraries website and library staff will be in touch to arrange collection.

Alternatively, for those wishing to borrow a particular title, continue to use the reservation system via [www.libarieswest.org.uk](http://www.libarieswest.org.uk). Charges may apply and reservation supply times may

be longer than usual. An automated notice will be sent by email, text or letter when items are available for collection.

**Returning** – items may be returned during library open hours. All items which were on loan, but not overdue, before Thurs. 5th Nov. have been extended to at least 14th Dec.

**Overdue items** - Any items which were due back before 5th Nov. have not been extended.

To avoid overdue charges, renew by logging onto [www.librarieswest.org.uk](http://www.librarieswest.org.uk), by phoning 0300 123 2224 or by emailing [librariesmail@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:librariesmail@somerset.gov.uk)

**Computers** - Limited access to the People's Network computers continues to be available for essential use at most libraries, although access hours may be reduced.

**Library Services Online 24/7** - The [online offer](#) continues, enabling library members to download books, audiobooks, magazines, newspapers and comics free of charge. Regular online events and updates will also be posted across Somerset Libraries social media.

**Delivery Services** - A Home Library Doorstep Delivery Service continues to be available for those not able to leave their home for more details email [librariesmail@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:librariesmail@somerset.gov.uk) or phone 0300 123 2224

### SCC CLIMATE EMERGENCY FUND

Group applications from local parish/town councils are invited for a new scheme to promote sustainable living and take action on climate change in rural areas. This new initiative, *Somerset Action in Villages for the Environment & Climate* (SAVE climate) is being developed by the Somerset Eco-Centre specifically for rural areas and smaller towns away from the urban centres. Its aim is to help communities take action on climate change and the environment by:

- Providing advice, practical information, demonstrations, and hands on activities for all ages
- Bringing a sustainable living roadshow to villages and rural towns
- Working with local people and groups to ensure that guidance and help is available throughout the year
- Providing a one-off opportunity to apply for a grant as a group of town/parish councils.

Grants can be used for:

- A mobile activity centre - a bus or van converted to a green fuel and equipped out
- An outreach programme to rural communities with a dedicated Outreach worker
- Running costs for these activities

The work of putting a SAVE Climate application together will be undertaken by Somerset Co-operative Services on the group of councils' behalf.

Steve Howell is the contact person for this initiative and is happy to attend PC/TC meetings to explain the initiative and answer any questions. A series of Zoom Intro and Q&A sessions are also being held.

The deadline for grant applications for Round 2 is 12th Jan. 2021.

For more information email [steve@somerset.coop](mailto:steve@somerset.coop) or [steve@ecocentresw.org](mailto:steve@ecocentresw.org)

Or call him on 07786 064 005.

## BUSINESS SUPPORT GRANTS

There is a new business support grant which village halls are also eligible for. Details can be found at: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/life-events/coronavirus-support/coronavirus-business-support/>

Further funding has been made available to support rate paying businesses that have been legally required to close during lockdown.

Businesses are encouraged to apply for these grants as it is central government funded, and any unused funds will be returned.

Eligible businesses can apply for a Business Support Grant of up to £3,000 to cover the 28 day national lockdown period. The funding will be provided on a rolling 28 day period for as long as the lockdown restrictions apply. Businesses required to close include:

- Non-essential retail
- Leisure
- Personal Care
- Sports Facilities
- Hospitality

Businesses continuing to operate as a takeaway, click and collect or online with delivery services, will still be counted as closed because the substantive business has had to close.

Business Support Grant payments are dependent on the Rateable Value of the business.

The amount that can be applied for is set out in the below table:

Rateable Value	Business Support Grant total
£15,000 or under	£1,334 per 28 day qualifying restriction period
£15,001 - £50,999	£2,000 per 28 day qualifying restriction period
£51,000 or above	£3,000 per 28 day qualifying restriction period

The online application can be accessed by going to;

[www.southsomerset.gov.uk/covidbusinesssupport](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/covidbusinesssupport). This does require registration for a basic 'My Account' - in order to apply [www.southsomerset.gov.uk/register](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/register).

Those businesses that applied for a grant during the first lockdown can still apply.

To cope with demand, some staff have been reassigned but is expected that applications will be dealt with within 14 days.

There are some exclusions to businesses who cannot claim the Business Support Grant:

- Businesses able to continue to trade because they do not depend on providing direct in-person services from premises and can operate remotely (e.g. accountants, solicitors)
- Businesses that are not mandated to close any part of their service
- Businesses that have chosen to close but have not been required to
- Businesses which have already received grant payments that equal the maximum levels of State aid permitted
- Businesses in administration, insolvent or where a striking off notice has been made.

SSDC has also been awarded an 'Additional Restrictions Grant', provided to offer additional business support activities in the local area. For more details visit

[www.southsomerset.gov.uk/covidbusinesssupport](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/covidbusinesssupport).

In addition, SSDC is continuing to work with local community organisations to ensure those who are vulnerable or facing hardship are supported and facilitate a number of grants to local foodbanks.

The Council is also issuing payments to those that are entitled and required to self-isolate.

If you are facing financial hardship and need support, contact SSDC on 01935 462462 or use the online form - <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/life-events/coronavirus-support/who-can-i-speak-to/>.

The Somerset Coronavirus Support Helpline number, 0300 790 6275, is also live to provide access to help, including emotional support.



## CHARD MUSEUM

The museum's AGM was held last week, and consideration is being given to becoming a Community Interest Organisation. In the coming year decisions will be made as to whether or not to extend the current lease with SSDC or to buy the property.

An application to SSDC for a Local Restrictions Support Grant, based around the loss of earnings from the Christmas Tree Festival, was successful and a grant of £2000 was awarded.

## CENSUS 2021

Census day is 21 March 2021. By taking part and encouraging others to do the same, you'll help make sure your community gets the services it needs.

## FIVEWAYS SCHOOL

I have been re-appointed as the Joint Chairperson of the Curriculum Committee.

## DSFRA

Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service would like to hear your views on how much you would be prepared to pay for the services provided by the fire service through your council tax. Use this online link - [council tax precept survey](#) or if you require this in another format please contact the Communications and Engagement Team on 01392 872347. This consultation finishes on 18 December 2020.

The link demonstrates what an increase, or no increase, would mean to the Service. As a combined authority, DSFRA set their own budget and council tax, which is separate to those set by other local authorities.

The Authority is committed to its ambitious plans to end preventable fire and rescue emergencies across the two counties while addressing funding challenges.

The Service provides 83 local fire stations, employing 2,000 staff to keep a population of 1.7 million plus visitors safe. Around 16,400 incidents are attended every year, including flooding, road traffic collisions, fires and other emergencies, in addition to prevention activities. The total cost of running DSFRA equates to approx. £43.91 a year per head of population. The current charge is £88.24 a year for a Band 'D' property.

## CARBON REDUCTION GRANTS

Grants of between £500 and £1000 are available to Somerset businesses, including unincorporated businesses such as partnerships, societies, clubs, sole traders, wishing to introduce and implement carbon reduction measures. The grant must be 'match-funded' by the business applying for the grant on a 50:50 basis.

Applications will be accepted until 31 March 2021, but the number of grants available under this scheme is limited and the scheme will cease when that limit is reached.

The council have produced a useful [Carbon Footprint Toolkit](#) with links to help and advice from a variety of sources. Eligible activity could include:

- more efficient lighting (LED)
- better insulation
- more efficient heating/cooling systems
- better IT equipment and technologies
- renewable energy
- resource efficiency
- waste reduction
- low carbon transport

Projects that include a Green Business/ Energy Efficiency audit (undertaken by a suitably qualified professional) that recommends deliverable, affordable (or no-cost) measures as part of their grant application will also be considered.

Go to the SCC website for info. [Guidance and information on Carbon Reduction Grants](#)

## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

A number of local residents have been the subject of several scams recently:

Before opening any emails, even from contacts known to you, it is good practice to 'hover' over the contact before opening the message to check the real source of the email.

Quite common are emails saying that you are entitled to a tax rebate; these are all scams. As we are now using more online services do also be sure to check that any transactions have been authorised by you - this month I discovered two charges from 'Deliveroo', a service I have never used, on my bank account.

Others have received several phone calls and text messages from various numbers. The messages vary from threats to take you to court, notice that car tax payment has not been received, TV licence has not been paid and also that DPD have been unable to deliver a parcel, requesting you to call a certain number. All of these calls are scams, if you call the number or click on the email attachment you can instantly have money debited to your phone bill or worse, your bank account accessed.

**Christmas shopping online:** Somerset's Trading Standards are advising online consumers to only buy from 'reputable' traders. The COVID-19 lockdowns have led to a rise in consumer spending online and 87 per cent of UK consumers are estimated to have purchased a product online. The public spends around £2bn a week on online purchases. A new information video if is available to explain how issues and problems can be dealt with <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dA75JeXrcu0>

## FAIRTRADE

The Christmas Tree Festival will go ahead virtually this year. Greenfylde School has prepared a Fairtrade Tree which will be on display at Just Things.

Fairtrade Fortnight 2021 will run from 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb. to 7<sup>th</sup> Mar. Early indications are that the focus will remain on cocoa and female producers.

As there is no guarantee that face to face events will proceed in the new year, so plans have been predominantly for online and school-based activity. The following proposals re under consideration:

- DJ Ginge quiz in aid of Ilminster Fairtrade;
- School public speaking competition during the fortnight, to include a Fairtrade 'hook'
- A Fairtrade display in The Emporium window;
- Online chocolate tasting with Nicola Knight of Celebrate Cacao;
- Online cooking demonstrations;
- Purchase of Fairtrade flags to fly during the fortnight

## TEAM ILMINSTER

### Interim Report 30th November 2020

The directors of Experience Ilminster have reviewed the Team Ilminster Project and have concluded that following Covid-19, the demand for an organisation such as Team Ilminster is now more necessary than previously believed and that the time is ripe for such an organisation to be launched as many people recognise the power of community actions.

The proposed Facebook-based structure would be inadequate and a more robust structure is needed, along with a function to raise the public profile of the project, principally through digital media, although print and broadcast media will also be used.

The Implementation Plan is to revise the Experience Ilminster webpage ([www.ilminsterexperience.co.uk](http://www.ilminsterexperience.co.uk)) to include:

A **Community Calendar** that will:

- enable Event and Activity Organisers to enter their events;
- be populated by information from social media, print media and public info. sources;
- provide weekly digests of the activity, which will be put on social media;
- be able to be interrogated through various filters: Children's activities, sports, food markets, theatre, concerts, etc. as well as by date and organisation
- become a default method for Event and Activity Organisers when promoting events
- drive people to the Experience Ilminster page

**Team Ilminster Members** page where Event and Activity Organisers within the TA19 postcode can ask for volunteers (a Shout-out) and Tem Ilminster members can register their willingness to participate, and find out about training.

receive a Shout-out;

The financial position is that to date approximately £130 of the SCC grant of £500 has been allocated to current costs.

## ACTIVITIES/MEETINGS

1/11	Isle Valley church service
2/11	Isle Valley prayers
2/11	Licensing Post- Covid-19 webinar
2/11	Neroche school governor meeting
2/11	Ashill PC meeting
3/11	SSDC Scrutiny
3/11	Neroche School Sports Premium
3/11	Broadway PC
4/11	SCC Place Scrutiny
4/11	Family intervention Team
4/11	Neroche Professional Intervention and Well-being workshop
4/11	Winsham PC
5/11	SSDC District Exec.
5/11	SCC Regulation Committee
5/11	SCC Schools Funding consultation
5/11	Crewkerne/Ilminster Schools proposal
6/11	Family Intervention Service
6/11	DSFRA Governance Review
7/11	Samaritans recruitment
8/11	Remembrance Service Broadway
8/11	Isle Valley Service
9/11	Horton Prayer meeting
9/11	Donyatt PC
10/11	FFT Aspire Pupil learning
10/11	Fiveways School Head Teachers Appraisal
11/11	Minster Remembrance Service
11/11	Ilminster Lit Fest Operations meeting
11/11	Horton Quiz
12/11	Family intervention Service meeting
12/11	Fairtrade meeting
13/11	SSDC Housing Briefing
13/11	Fiveways School Curriculum meeting
14/11	Tearfund quiz
15/11	Isle Valley service
16/11	Isle Valley Prayers
16/11	SSDC Member Portal update
16/11	SSDC Member briefing on Phosphates
16/11	Horton PC
16/11	Chaffcombe PC
17/11	CAMHS meeting
17/11	SSDC Ignite Transformation feedback session
17/11	Fiveways School Safeguarding training
18/11	SCC full council
18/11	SSDC Area West
18/11	Horton quiz
19/11	Isle Valley coffee morning
19/11	DSFRA Audit and Performance Management committee
19/11	SSDC Group Leader meeting
19/11	SSDC full council
20/11	SW Councils meeting
21/11	Samaritans recruitment interview
21/11	CAMHS meeting
23/11	SSDC briefing
24/11	Ilminster TC meeting
25/11	Chard Museum AGM
26/11	SCC Health & Wellbeing Board
26/11	SWAP training
27/11	Fiveways School - School Improvement Group
29/11	Isle Valley service
30/11	SSC CEO meeting
30/11	SSDC Stronger Somerset Member briefing
30/11	Ashill planning meeting

