

## Jenny Kenton – District councillors report July 2020

Both Martin and myself are part of a new working group at SSDC called “planning reimaged” this is designed to help SSDC to modernise the planning system and comply with the new Government regulations as well as making the application process easier. We are attending these workshops (as Council meetings) via Zoom. WE are also both part of the Chard regeneration board which has recently released the information that Chard has been successful in a bid for money to help the high street and has been awarded £1million pounds for this scheme, this will be match funded by SSDC which gives a total fund of £2m.

Up to 30 people will be able to attend services at Yeovil crematorium from July 6<sup>th</sup>. There is a new bereavement support service provided for any of those affected by loss, not just corona virus related. This service will be provided by Marie Curie and Mind in Somerset and the telephone number is

We have been invited to a zoom presentation of Somerset County Councils vision of “one Somerset” which is a unitary proposal, this is not supported by the five District Councils in Somerset and they are working towards producing an alternative proposal. Unfortunately the consortium of District Councils need to be “invited” by the Government to submit their ideas for change for Somerset moving forward.

Westlands will be open from 6<sup>th</sup> July with reduced capacity for film screening. Live shows still cannot be shown but for instance Thursdays will have screenings from the national theatre and Sundays will be musical day showing among others, Riverdance, 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and the king and I.

Community grants are now available to support local environmental initiatives. The fund will cover up to 50% of the project costs and the Parish Council must support the bid for it to be considered. You can apply for amounts from £100 - £12,500, funding is limited so applications are encouraged to be submitted as soon as possible.

The Government is introducing new planning rules due to Covid19 there will now be a fast track route for builders who request extensions to building site working hours. Also new permitted development rights for blocks of flats by 2 stories. There is also a new extension for all planning permission due to expire because of the pandemic. We are told to expect more new rules to back up the Governments pledge to “build, build, build”.