



Somerset Liberal Democrats Tatworth & Forton July 2022



Footpath Between Chard & Tatworth



I am pleased to say that contractors have now cut back the hedges and cleared the footpath, this took much longer than I would of liked but I have now been reassured that this footpath is now on the maintenance schedule and will be regularly maintained.

Local Government Reorganisation



*New Chief Executive
Duncan Sharkey*

Following a rigorous interview and assessment process, the Council has agreed that Duncan Sharkey will become Chief Executive of Somerset County Council, then the new Somerset Council from April next year.

This appointment means the leadership is in place to move forward with our work developing the new Council ready to deliver services from 1st April 2023.

Support for Somerset households with food and energy bills



Struggling with bills?
Support is available...

Somerset residents struggling to pay their bills could be eligible for support with the cost of food, energy, water and other essentials like fridges, freezers and cookers over the coming months. The County Council is distributing £3.8m before 30th September through the Household Support Fund. To apply, visit the Somerset County Council website and search 'Household Support Fund' online or call 0300 123 2224 and the Council will find an organisation who will support families to make an application.

Putting the heart back into S  merset

Liberal
Democrats 

Council Finance Update

Inflation is hitting the County Council hard, as it is everyone and every local council in the country. Pay awards, energy costs, building costs are all increasing fast, so the budget approved by the previous County Councillors in February is already way out-of-date. As ever, demand for our services – care for the elderly and infirm, for children, highways, education – is increasing. And the 'unitary bonus' saving of £18.5m annually envisaged by those who decided on a single unitary council looks increasingly unlikely to be realised. The situation is being monitored closely and we'll keep you updated.



Children and young people help shape the new Children and Young People's Plan for Somerset



The Children & Young People's Plan has been co-produced by the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership with children and young people, the County Council, the Police and the NHS. It provides clear direction and enables everyone to work better together on shared priorities in order to make very necessary changes to improve outcomes for children, young people and families in Somerset.

Local Community Networks

The plan for the development of new Local Community Networks (LCNs) has now been announced. Having inherited the unitary Council's business case, the Lib Dems are working hard to make sure LCNs support their vision of a fairer, greener, more flourishing Somerset. These LCNs are set to be treated as Committees of the Council, meaning they'll be given specific decision-making powers and influence. Three LCN pilots (Exmoor, Frome and South East Somerset) continue to progress and learning from those is being fed back into the development programme.

A timeline for LCN development is in place as follows:

- Consider the role, geographies, governance and funding of LCNs – July 2022
- Refine governance and financial modelling, linked to Medium Term Financial Planning - July to September 2022
- Engage and consult on geographies for LCNs – Autumn 2022
- Publish a formal Decision Paper including a resourcing plan - November 2022

The Lib Dems are clear that LCNs must be effective, affordable and sustainable. They must suit Somerset's geography, communities and existing infrastructures, and be robust enough to give our residents real responsibility and access to their Councillors in the years ahead.