

County Councillor's Brief for Town & Parish Councils



South Petherton and Islemoor
Division

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Headlines:

- **Cabinet Post:** Christopher has been asked to join the Somerset County Cabinet to head up Corporate Improvement. The initial effort will be directed at Children's and Adult Services; but, this is a wide ranging appointment and covers all aspects of the Counties responsibilities. I would welcome any ideas or suggestions from residents. We also wish to work closely with our new MPS all of which come from Somerset and have the interests of Somerset at heart.
- **Somerset Smokers.** Those that wish to quit will now have support closer to home and their workplace with the launch of an innovative mobile stop smoking clinic. 'Wellness on Wheels' is part of the new Smokefreelife service commissioned by Somerset County Council Public Health.
- **Cad Road Traffic Calming.** A combined effort has ensured that there will be traffic calming to limit the speed of traffic along Cad Road later this year. The Parish Council has agreed to cover 50% of the cost.
- **Somerset Choices is on its way.** Somerset Choices, which is set to launch in July, has been developed by Somerset County Council in partnership with the Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and District Councils. It will transform the way people access care and support services and find out about local groups. The new website will provide a wealth of useful information and advice and will allow people, or others on their behalf, to search for services, products, groups and events in their local area. Such as care homes, help at home, mobility equipment, personal assistants, lunch clubs, exercise groups and breaks for carers.
- **The Troubled Families Programme.** 870 families with complex needs in Somerset have had their lives turned around through the Troubled Families programme run by Somerset County Council and the five District Councils. Families are helped in a number of ways ranging from: encouraging children back to school; finding employment, a pathway back to work for adults, reducing youth crime and anti-social behaviour. Part of an expanding national programme a further 2,970 families will be helped in Somerset.
- **Sign up to Safety** plans were launched by the Musgrove Hospital on 19th June. The programme was initiated the Secretary of State, Jeremy Hunt in June 2014, with the aim

of strengthening patient safety in the NHS to make it the safest healthcare system in the world. The ambition is to halve avoidable harm and save 6,000 lives as a result. The Trust has signed up to pledges in a number of key areas, including sepsis, care of the deteriorating patient, maternity, learning culture and falls prevention.

- **First meeting of new independent Children's Scrutiny Committee.** A new independent committee met for the first time 12 Jun to discuss the progress being made to improve Children's Services in Somerset. Director of Children's Services, Julian Wooster told the committee about plans to recruit 50 permanent social workers by April 2016. The nine priorities to improve Somerset's services for children and young people are: Strengthening strategic leadership; Improving social work capacity; Developing management capacity; Ensuring quality safeguarding across all agencies Systematically identifying children most at risk across all agencies; Assessing the safety of all children who go missing; Embedding Early Help; Increasing local care placements; Achieving permanence for children in care. Members of the committee today heard from Julian Wooster, Director of Children's Services for Somerset County Council. He set out his nine priorities for improvement .
- **Brand new classroom on the way for more South Petherton pupils.** Work to bring a brand new classroom to staff and pupils at South Petherton Junior School began at the end of une. Somerset County Council is building a single-storey extension at the school, to include an additional classroom, taking the capacity of the school to 150 pupil places. Regulation Committee members gave the green light for the £317,000 project in April 2015. Once complete, it will provide much-needed additional learning space at the junior school, which is located on the village's southern outskirts. The new building will include the classroom, storage and cloakroom space, together with a glazed corridor linking the new extension to the main school. A school-funded group room for individual tuition will also be housed in the new building.

More Detail:

- **Smokefreelife Somerset's 'Wellness on Wheels'.** Delivered by a mobile stop smoking clinic will be staffed by practitioners specially trained in behaviour change to help clients have the highest possible chance of giving up smoking for good. Advice will be available in a number of different languages. There are 800-950 deaths in Somerset from smoking each year and for every death there are around twenty people living with serious health conditions as a result of their habit, including cancer, heart disease and stroke. Smoking is the single biggest lifestyle factor in health inequalities, the difference in health between the most and least affluent communities. We know many smokers want to quit, but many find the task daunting. The clinic is one of many options where individuals can get expert advice and support to quit smoking for good. Solutions4Health are very much looking forward to delivering the service and working in partnership with the Council and wider communities.
- **Cad Road Speed Limit.** A 40 MPH restriction will be installed on Cad Road later this year. At the request of the Parish Council, backed up by a petition, advice from Police and traffic management sufficient funds Cad Road Traffic Calming. A combined effort has ensured that there will be traffic calming to limit the speed of traffic along Cad Road later this year. Budgetary limitations have increasingly restricted the ability of County Highways to deliver road improvements. However, a solution has been found to ensure a 40 mph restriction is imposed from Rapps corner to the B3184 junction and the signs will be installed later this year. Part of the solution was a 50% contribution from Parish funds.
- **Somerset Choices is on its way.** Somerset Choices, which is set to launch in July, will transform the way people access care and support services and find out about local groups.

The new website will provide a wealth of useful information and advice and will allow people, or others on their behalf, to search for services, products, groups and events in their local area. Such as care homes, help at home, mobility equipment, personal assistants, lunch clubs, exercise groups and breaks for carers. Somerset Choices will give people more choice and in the future will be the primary way for care and health professionals to find out what is available in Somerset. The site has been developed by Somerset County Council in partnership with the Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and District Councils.

- **First meeting of new Children's & Families Scrutiny Committee.** A new independent committee met for the first time today to discuss the progress being made to improve Children's Services in Somerset. The Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee is chaired by Cllr Leigh Redman and was formed in May 2015. It will provide additional councillor oversight on all services provided for children and young people by Somerset County Council and partners. Cllr Frances Nicholson, Somerset County Council's Cabinet Member, said: "This independent committee will help inform and assess the journey of improvement the council and key partners must make to ensure that all children and young people receive the best possible care and support in Somerset. "The first meeting was both purposeful and stimulating. I look forward to both the in-depth scrutiny and the insight the committee will bring to our improvement plan and activities in the future."

Julian Wooster also explained the work being done to improve partnership working, reinforcing the message that the health, safety and wellbeing of all children in Somerset is

everyone's responsibility. Members also welcomed recommendations to provide a written policy on elective home education that gives parents the opportunity to access important information about their legal responsibility to ensure their child is educated. More evidence from parents will also be collected to understand why they choose to educate their child at home and to ensure every child in Somerset is receiving a good level of education.