

Somerset Council Report to Croscombe Parish Council meeting Tuesday 3rd December 2024

Somerset Council

This is the time of year when we would normally be briefed about what the 2025-2026 budget will look like. This year this is complicated by the Council's restructure programme and the fact that despite all efforts the Council continues to look at a financial budget gap over the next few years. The good news is that the 2024-2025 budget is on track to be delivered with overspends, in Children and Families Services especially, mitigated by underspends elsewhere. This however does not get away from the uphill climb required to set a balanced budget for 2025-2026, even with the restructuring programme. Elected members are briefed regularly on these matters.

The restructuring programme is now in a 45-day consultation phase. It is only at the end of that that we will have an idea of what impact this will have on the delivery of services to Somerset residents. Parish Council Members may have noticed proposals to develop combined authorities. A model for this is the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) with Bristol, South Gloucestershire and Bath and North East Somerset working with an elected mayor. Combined Authorities are very much in line with Government policy and Somerset is expected to play its part in this.

Devolution

Once the new Council structure is in place we will have a clearer idea about what this means for devolution of service provision to Town and Parish Councils.

Local Community Network (LCN)

A promised Shepton Local Community Network (LCN) Highways Working Group meeting with officers has yet to be arranged. We will be advised of the date.

Martin Lovell 26/11/2024