REPORT FOR PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

WATCHET AND STOGURSEY DIVISION

SEPTEMBER 2023

Council Finances: Somerset Council has warned that it will have to draw on reserves for second successive year to meet its budget for 2023/24. A recent Executive report describes the council’s financial position as “stark and challenging”. The latest budget gap for the current year is £28.6m. The papers reveal that the Council has already drawn £18 million from reserves to fund spending beyond the 2022/23 budgets. These figures are despite an £18.5m annual bonus created by moving to a Unitary Council and which were planned to be fully realised by next year.

Bus Services: Four bus services in the county are to be subsidised to safeguard their future until spring. The following services all require additional financial support,which the Council can provide as part of the Government’s Bus Service support funding, which has so far been worth over £12 million for the County. The routes include our own 28 Taunton to Minehead so the message is us, the late night routes or we will be loosing them again.

Covid Booster vaccinations are now planned to start on September 11 th , 2023 with priority to high risk groups. Flu vaccinations: NHS England has confirmed it will start by prioritising flu vaccinations for children from September, to prevent children from getting seriously ill and to break the chain of transmission to the wider population. School aged children will be able to get the flu vaccine at school or at community clinics.

We have had our share of road closures – if you want the details it is best to look at [www.one.network](http://www.one.network) because I have found that if I report road closures by the time it gets to the deadline the detail has changed.

My apologies for this being a short report. I am having IT problems and this is the third time I have typed this in since loosing the report as I type!

Councillor Rosemary Woods
Watchet and Stogursey Division
Somerset Council

2nd September 2023