Report to TownMeeting 2024

From Councillor Rosemary Woods, Watchet and Stogursey Divisionv

*The first items relate to April 2024 my overall Town Meeting notes will be reported after this summary.*

***Somerset Road Safety*** *Tragically, 30 people died whilst travelling Somerset’s Road in 2023. 43% up on the figures for 2022.*

***Britain in Bloom****Cannington in Bloom is a finalist in the Large Village category.*

***New Electric Buses****We should see one of the electric buses being used on the 28 route from Taunton to Minehead.*

***Voter registration****It is important that you register to vote. A General Election is expected within the next few months.*

***Purple Chair scheme.***

*Purple Chairs are being installed at Somerset Libraries including Williton, these are to provide a safe space for women and girls to get information about health and wellbeing.*

***No action from County***

*I find it is difficult to get response from the County even though I am the Division Councillor.*

*This is very frustrating.but I will keep at it!*

*23/24 Yearly Report*

***My yearly report must be dominated by the fact that the Somerset Council is financial nightmare.***

***Prior to the set up of Somerset County some of the District Councils decided to invest in businesses to generate income , now theCouncil have since decided to sell them to relieve the financial situation. You might have heard that the April County meeting tried to stop one of the investments which the County believed at the time were delivering arms to Israel – this was completely wrong the arms that the company dealt with were being sold to the British Army so the County have issued a apology for this issue.***

***To remedy the financial situation, the County want to offload some of their expenditure onto the Parish Councils. The Council has decided to sell off some of their premises and you will notice that the Library is being sold off and this is set to be moved to West Somerset House, together with the Children’s Centre and the Enterprize Centre. I have been informed that the Library has been marketed without going out to tender, I am trying to get this decision receded.***

***This is still an ongoing situation with the layout of the West Somerset House being reconfigured to allow the Council Chamber being moved to the first floor with access via the lift and stairs. This will allow some of our meetings to be held locally.***

This report relates to April/May 2024

My report this month, repeats the fact that Volunteer Drivers are still needed to convey people to hospital. If you have at least a ½ day a week available to help please volunteer.

The Waste Collection in the County is subject to renegotiations between Suez and the Somerset Council because Suez are in danger of suffering a loss on its 24m contract.

Roadside grass cutting is being reduced, wider verges are limited to a 1 metre swathe being mowed the rest being left to maintain biodiversity.

Bus Fares, Taunton will be moved to a £1.50 single adult fare whilst the rest of fares will be as is at £2.00 until December 2024.

Storm Henk Property Flood Resilience Grant is available but the rules on this are somewhat complex so I have forwarded the full report to your Clerk.

***10th May 2024***

Cllr Rosemary Woods
Watchet and Stogursey Division
Somerset