

In this report I will update you on matters arising since the February Town Council Meeting:

- Day-to-day updates from me will also be made available through my Councillor Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/cllrhuwjames/>
- If you have any comments or feedback, please do send them to huw.thomas.james@n-somerset.gov.uk!

Adult Services and Housing

1. **Social Housing and Affordable Homes in Portishead:** The Council's forward plan indicates that the Executive Member for Housing, Cllr Don Davies, has an upcoming decision on Grant funding for Alliance Homes to deliver affordable housing at Portishead.
2. **Assistive Technology in Social Care:** Ahead of the Council's Approval of Better Care Fund Plan 2019/20, I visited Sycamore House to speak to residents, care workers, and NHS staff to learn about North Somerset's work with Assistive Technology in the Care Sector. The Council has been able to draw in NHS funding to tackle loneliness, dehydration, and preventable bedside falls.
3. **Social Housing Lettings Policy:** North Somerset Council is changing its Home Choice Lettings Policy for access to Social Housing, these changes should make the Lettings Policy fairer for North Somerset Residents. These will be published ahead of the Executive Meeting in April.

Children and Youth Services

1. **Schools:** North Somerset Council was the third best Local Authority in England for allowing parents to choose their children's secondary school. The Council is working with Schools in Portishead and Pill to monitor and address the limited supply of school secondary school places in Gordano School.
2. **Fostering:** The Council has adopted a new Fostering Model to better support foster carers in the local area. The Council is hoping to better advertise Fostering opportunities locally, if you would like to invite the Council's Fostering Team to come and speak to your Community Group, please do email them. Check out <https://fostering.n-somerset.gov.uk/> for more information.
3. **St. Joseph's Nursey (20/P/0088/FUL):** Thank you to local residents and Portishead Town Council for referring me the Planning Application for St. Joseph's School Nursery. I have spoken to officers, who have commissioned some further work to be done on the application. I will meet with Planning Officers to review the full application when this work is finished.

Joint Local Transport Plan 4

1. **North Somerset Council has voted to accept the new Joint Local Transport Plan**, with an addendum that its support of Smart Motorways should be removed due to safety concerns.
2. These may be brought up by Cllr Davies in the West of England Joint Committee meeting later this month, where the final plans will be approved. I have expressed my concern that the plan did too little to tackle the problem of climate change, and that Major Schemes should be prioritised by climate change impact when the scheme is implemented.
3. I also expressed my concern that beyond the plans to reinstate the Portishead Line (which were in JLTP3) the plan did little to address the Portishead's Congestions problems.
4. These issues can later be addressed by the way North Somerset Council and the West of England prioritise their spending, and through the Local Plan.

Local Walking Cycling and Infrastructure Plan

1. **LCWIP** The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) is still running consultations on the regional Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan ending this Sunday, 15 March 2020: <https://travelwest.info/projects/transport-consultations/west-of-england-local-cycling-and-walking-infrastructure-plan>
 - a. I urge members of the public to examine the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan's proposal W20, alongside C15. Of particular interest to Portishead South are the proposals to:
 - i. **C15**
 1. Turn the High Street from Gordano School until Brampton Way into a One-Way Road with a separate segregated cycle path, with a 20 mph speed limit.
 2. Replacement of High Street / St Peters Road Roundabout with a T-Junction
 3. Reduce St Marys Road junction width to slow traffic turning into Wetlands Way
 4. Extend the town centre speed limit to 20 mph
 - ii. **W20**
 1. Redesigning of:
 - a. Brampton Way mini-roundabout junction
 - b. St Peter's and St Mary's Roads side road junctions
 - c. Church Road North and South junctions

Bus Services

1. The West of England Combined Authority (WECA) is still running consultations on the regional Bus Strategy ending this Sunday, 15 March 2020:
<https://travelwest.info/projects/transport-consultations/west-of-england-bus-strategy>
 - a. This strategy will help the West of England authorities where to prioritise our spending, below is a non-exhaustive list of factors being considered:
 - i. Increasing Connectivity (reaching more remote areas)
 - ii. Increasing Frequency
 - iii. Changing Infrastructure to improve Punctuality and Reliability
 - iv. Subsidising tickets to make the fares cheaper
 - v. Introducing Orbital Routes going around the West of England, rather than just connecting via Bristol
 - vi. New Park and Ride options
2. Overall, I am really happy with changes proposed by FirstBus, particularly their decision to retain active bus connections for Bristol Road and Port Marine, these ensure that all areas of Portishead are still connected to public transport network somewhat. It's a shame that residents in Brock End and Nightingale alongside the Police Headquarters will lose their bus connection, although the Stagecoach X5 service remains for those with access issues that would make the walk to Merlin Park inaccessible.
3. North Somerset Councillors will meet this March to discuss gaps in the bus network, aspirations for buses locally, new funding opportunities, and the West of England's Bus Strategy. North Somerset's Transport Levy is currently £1.95 million, of which £1.8 million is spent on Transport Subsidies and £0.3 million is spent on Tendered Bus Services.

EU Settlement Scheme

1. I have had a number of emails recently regarding support and signposting to EU Citizens living in North Somerset for EU Settlement Status. I have written to officers for a response and asking for further information.
2. For now, I can signpost the support of Citizen's Advice Bureau who are a registered Immigration Advice Service. Do ask for Immigration Advice on your existing residency if you are an EU Citizen living in the UK. Find a **registered** Immigration Advisor here: https://home.oisc.gov.uk/adviser_finder/finder.aspx
3. Appendix EU of the Immigration Rules gives the following information about the EU Settlement Scheme:

- a. EEA Citizens who have not yet accumulated 5 years of settled status in the UK can apply for **Pre-Settled Status**, this grants you limited Leave to Remain after the UK withdraws from the European Union.
 - b. EEA Citizens who have accumulated 5 years of settled status in the UK can apply for **Settled Status**, this grants you Indefinite Leave to Remain.
4. **All EEA citizens and Swiss Nationals and their family members in the UK (except the Irish) who don't have British Citizenship or Indefinite Leave to Remain must apply, even those who have acquired "permanent residence" under EU law**
 5. The deadline to apply for EU Settled Status is December 31st 2020 (No Deal Brexit), or by June 30th 2021 (Brexit with a Withdrawal Agreement).
 6. It is free to apply to these schemes.
 7. For more information, check out: <https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

Other Ongoing Consultations: <https://n-somerset.inconsult.uk/>

1. North Somerset Parking Review: 14 Feb 2020 to 31 Mar 2020 – thank you for all the responses so far!
2. Your Neighbourhood (Garden waste, Leisure and sport centres, Libraries, Parks and open spaces, Street cleansing):
13 Feb 2020 to 07 May 2020 – **the Your Neighbourhood Consultation Meeting is in Somerset Hall, Portishead TOMORROW (Thursday 12th March) at 6pm**
<https://www.facebook.com/events/571023850167753/>
3. Local Plan pre-commencement Document: 10 Mar 2020 to 22 Apr 2020
4. Changes to Financial Assessment Processes for Adult Care: 20 Feb 2020 to 19 Mar 2020

Have a lovely March,
Best Wishes,

