

SOMERSET COUNCIL

Rode Parish Council

Cllr Dawn Denton

July 2025

****SOMERSET PRESS RELEASES:** All Somerset County Council press releases: **Newsroom**

****FLOOD ENGINEERING:** I got in touch with Mike Stanton (Chair of the Somerset Rivers Authority - SRA). He remembers the SRA funding the work in Rode a couple of years ago, but wasn't aware it was incomplete. He has asked David Mitchell, SRA Manager, to check, and Jonathan Hudston to respond to Jim McAuliffe. He accepts that there was a hiccup over the transfer of Calm Engineering's work from Mendip DC to SC, and I hope it this means things will happen this summer. I will continue to chase.

****THE SPORTSMAN:** The Somerset Council Service Manager - Development Engineering, Andy Ley, met with the maintenance contractors and are chasing for confirmation of their acceptance of the job, with a potential start date. If the council does not get a positive response they will have to explore using other term or framework contracts. I will keep chasing and hope to get something positive over the summer.

****CHURCH FARM:** Simon Taylor of Autograph Homes, confirms that Autograph is in direct communication with the residents. He has reported that the path is fully serviceable and needs some additional works to drainage prior to the winter. The S106 Officer at the council will continue to chase and will keep me updated.

****A36 SLIP ROAD:** I have not forgotten and will keep chasing.

****Internal Audit Annual Opinion:** Somerset Council has received a "Limited Assurance" rating for the second consecutive year, signalling that key risks and controls still require improvement. The Internal Audit Annual Opinion report notes progress during 2024/25, but not enough to change the overall rating. Auditors remain concerned about financial sustainability, governance, and oversight of major projects. Weaknesses were identified in procurement, budget monitoring, and capital delivery.

****New Interim Chief Finance Officer:** Clive Heaphy started in his role as CFO on the 1st July 2025. He will be in post until April 2026. Clive comes with vast local government experience and we are pleased to have someone in the role, even if just for 9 months. In my role as Opposition Spokesperson for Finance, Procurement & Performance, I will be having regular meetings with him and his team to get a clear understanding of the financial situation our council faces. I know everyone in Somerset hopes that he is able to support the administration to find the savings needed to prevent a Section 114 notice (bankruptcy) within the next 9 months, and beyond.

****Somerset Council Transformation Plan:** Somerset Council has published its *Inspiring Innovation* plan - the second phase of its transformation programme - following £34m in staff redundancies delivered under Phase 1. This new plan is intended to plug a projected £101m budget gap in 2026/27, rising to £190m by 2029/30. The delivery of Phase 2 will require investment in a Strategic Transformation Partner (STP) to provide capacity and capability for

change. The draft plan is available on the Somerset Council website: [Appendix A - Draft Transformation Plan - Inspiring Innovation.pdf](#)

****Boundary Review Draft Proposals Published:** The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has published draft recommendations for Somerset Council's new electoral divisions. The proposals reduce the number of Somerset councillors from 110 to 96, creating 96 single-member divisions across the county. All current boundaries would be redrawn. A public consultation on the draft recommendations runs until 11 August 2025. Final proposals are due in December, with changes expected to take effect at the May 2027 elections. Councillors and residents are encouraged to submit views on the proposed boundaries. www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/somerset

****Safeguarding Review Following Resident's Death:** A safeguarding adults review has been published following the death of a Somerset resident, "Hazel," who died in 2019 after choking on food not prepared in line with her care plan. The Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) has issued a series of recommendations to improve how care risks are recorded, shared, and managed - particularly in relation to choking risks, autism-specific care, agency staff training, and inter-agency coordination. The review highlights the need for improved legal literacy, better oversight of provider performance, and consistent dysphagia training. Findings will be shared with all relevant health and care providers across Somerset. For more information about the SSAB and a copy of the report, visit www.somersetsafeguardingadults.org.uk

****Youth Parliament Nominations Now Open:** Nominations are now open for the 2025 Youth Parliament elections in Somerset. Young people aged 11–17 who live or study in the county can stand for election to become a Member of Youth Parliament (MYP), representing Somerset at a national level. Three MYPs will be elected to lead campaigns and work with local organisations to raise young people's voices. The deadline for nominations is Monday 3 November 2025, with elections taking place in December. More information, including how to stand or join the Youth Parliament Advisory Group, is available at: www.somersetyouthparliament.org.uk/elections

****ALL OPEN CONSULTATIONS: Citizen's Space**

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