

District Councillor Report to Glastonbury Town Council – October 2020

Cllr. Jon Cousins, Mendip District Councillor for Glastonbury St. John's Ward.
Member of Standards Committee and Audit Committee.

Mendip business impacting on Glastonbury:

Unitary Authority – Stronger Somerset:

There has been some debate in the wider 'political community' as to whether or not the drive for a Unitary Authority for Somerset would go ahead in light of the apparent 'U-turn' by 10 Downing Street with regard to Government policy. However, on 9th October Luke Hall MP published the following statement: "We are inviting councils in Cumbria, North Yorkshire and Somerset to submit locally-led proposals for how they want to restructure local government in their area to establish unitary local government".

For more information see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-invites-cumbria-north-yorkshire-and-somerset-to-submit-locally-led-proposals-for-unitary-local-government>

Section 106 Monies:

The situation regarding S106 monies have moved on a pace – and, in addition to the unspent the Section 106 money from the Watts Corner development, I have been having discussions with Mendip's Section 106 officer Carol Taylor over the past month, who identified an amount of almost £26k of Glastonbury S106 money that needed to be spent "immediately".

£26K and the Benedict Street tennis courts:

The S106 officer has agreed that the derelict tennis courts off Benedict Street would be an ideal project to utilise these funds – the renovation would fit "the improvement or enhancement of existing LAP" criterion; the public have been interested in seeing the site renovated; the 'need' for the project is self-evident. These factors are favourable to the required (very) quick turnaround: meeting the basic 'viable project to use the money in an exceptionally short timescale' conditions required by Mendip District Council to issue the legally binding Funding Agreement that will enable the Town Council to use the funds in accordance with the S106 Deed of Variation.

On Friday 25th September, there was a meeting between some Glastonbury officers, Cllr. Henderson, and I with Rob Taylor of Fusion to discuss the renovation of the courts as a matter of urgency; the Clerk has also begun consultation with suitable contractors to enable us to obtain the three quotes required – and, with a fair wind, I hope that the S106 monies may be with Glastonbury Town Council shortly, and that work can begin as soon as due diligence allows.

I attended the following Mendip meetings:

Tuesday 10th September: Full Council

Monday 28th September: Combined Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday 30th September: Full Council

Tuesday 13th October: Standards