


Somerset Equality Impact Assessment

Before completing this EIA please ensure you have read the EIA guidance notes – available from your Equality Officer or www.somerset.gov.uk/impactassessment

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|--|---|--|--|--|----------------------|--|
| Organisation prepared for (mark as appropriate) |  | | | | | |
| Version | V1 | | | | February 2024 | |
| Description of what is being impact assessed | | | | | | |
| <p>Devolution of services to Bridgwater Town Council (BTC) The following services will be devolved to BTC . Both BTC and SC are working towards a handover date of the operations by 1st May 2024. Asset transfers will follow. Grounds maintenance, cleansing and development of Parks, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mansfield Park • St Matthews fair and field • Blake Gardens • Victoria Park • Eastover Park / Cranleigh Gardens • King Square • Bedding planting • Management and maintenance of open spaces assets – including both green spaces as well as “hard” open spaces • Grass cutting and open spaces management • Grass cutting in Wembdon Road Cemetery and St Mary’s Church, however responsibility and maintenance of paths and walls will rest with Somerset Council <p>Events and other spaces*, including;</p> | | | | | | |

- West Street market (part of the fair)
- Roller-Coaster
- The docks and associated public Realm (transfer in 25/26)

*these items are Assets that are being transferred on a separate timescale

Street cleansing

- Street Cleaning across Bridgwater including highway channels and litter removal from verges
- Provision and collection of litter bins and dog waste bins
- Carnival clean-up
- Weed treatment
- Road sweeping

Public toilets

- Blake Gardens' toilets (operations, not assets from 1st May 2024)

Play Parks

- Play Parks (maintenance, development and Inspection from May 2024)

Evidence

What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups? Sources such as the [Office of National Statistics](#), [Somerset Intelligence Partnership](#), [Somerset's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis \(JSNA\)](#), Staff and/ or [area profiles](#), should be detailed here

Somerset budget consultation [Budget Consultation 2024/2025 - Somerset Council - Citizen Space](#)- local services and outdoor spaces are important to the community, no likely difference to the Bridgwater community, devolving services to BTC is a way of protecting those services for the community, quotes include:

*'Offload certain areas to town councils, devolved responsibilities where town councils can increase council tax by a larger amounts'
'Give money and autonomy to town councils to keep towns and villages maintained'*

Overall SC is expecting no impacts to protected groups, and it is hoped that given the enhanced cleansing and grounds work BTC are planning to deliver – there will be positive impacts to the wider community, including protected groups as part of this service devolution – no services are being stopped as part of this process.

Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups and what have they told you? If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?

During the devolution process SC have been working hard with BTC to understand the services they are willing to take on, BTC is a well established TC and have the structure and organisation in place to take on these services. They are committed to delivering the same services as SC have previously, and their intention is to build on the current provision offered by SC and improve the open space maintenance and cleansing offering to the BW Town centre area. The Town council have published their intentions in a paper for their full council (add in link to council report)

The town council have also been open with talking us through their budgets to give further confidence they understand the ask on them

Analysis of impact on protected groups

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. Consider how this policy/service will achieve these aims. In the table below, using the evidence outlined above and your own understanding, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Based on this information, make an assessment of the likely outcome, before you have implemented any mitigation.

| Protected group | Summary of impact | Negative outcome | Neutral outcome | Positive outcome |
|-------------------|--|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Age | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to BTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. To facilitate the devolution of services the Town Council will be seeking in an increase in the precept they charge as part of the annual council tax bill. Whilst it will have a no impact if a resident is in receipt of full benefits, anyone on partial benefits or no benefits will see an increase in the amount of council tax they have to pay. | □ | ⊗ | □ |
| Disability | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to BTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. To facilitate the devolution of services the Town Council will be seeking in an increase in the precept they charge as part of the annual council tax bill. Whilst it will have a no impact if a resident | □ | ⊗ | □ |

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|---------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| | <p>is in receipt of full benefits, anyone on partial benefits or no benefits will see an increase in the amount of council tax they have to pay.</p> | | | |
| Gender reassignment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to BTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. To facilitate the devolution of services the Town Council will be seeking in an increase in the precept they charge as part of the annual council tax bill. Whilst it will have a no impact if a resident is in receipt of full benefits, anyone on partial benefits or no benefits will see an increase in the amount of council tax they have to pay. | □ | ⊗ | □ |
| Marriage and civil partnership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to BTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. To facilitate the devolution of services the Town Council will be seeking in an increase in the precept they charge as part of the annual council tax bill. Whilst it will have a no impact if a resident is in receipt of full benefits, anyone on partial benefits or no benefits will see an increase in the amount of council tax they have to pay. | □ | ⊗ | □ |
| Pregnancy and maternity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to BTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they | □ | ⊗ | □ |

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| | <p>currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To facilitate the devolution of services the Town Council will be seeking in an increase in the precept they charge as part of the annual council tax bill. Whilst it will have a no impact if a resident is in receipt of full benefits, anyone on partial benefits or no benefits will see an increase in the amount of council tax they have to pay. | | | |
| Race and ethnicity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to BTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. To facilitate the devolution of services the Town Council will be seeking in an increase in the precept they charge as part of the annual council tax bill. Whilst it will have a no impact if a resident is in receipt of full benefits, anyone on partial benefits or no benefits will see an increase in the amount of council tax they have to pay. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Religion or belief | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to BTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sex | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to BTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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| Sexual orientation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to BTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Armed Forces (including serving personnel, families and veterans) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to BTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other, e.g. carers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to deliver these services BTC will need to raise their precept. This could bring negative impacts to individuals and families on low incomes where they are not on benefits or only on partial benefits. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Negative outcomes action plan

Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

| Action taken/to be taken | Date | Person responsible | How will it be monitored? | Action complete |
|---|-------------|--|--|--------------------------|
| Ongoing dialogue with Bridgwater Town Council | 03/06/2024 | Service Director-Regulatory and Operational Services | Annually, through partnership meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Select date | | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.

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| | |
| Completed by: | Sarah Dowden |
| Date | 13.3.2024 |
| Signed off by: | |
| Date | |
| Equality Lead sign off name: | Angela Farmer |
| Equality Lead sign off date: | 12 March 2024 |
| To be reviewed by: (officer name) | |
| Review date: | |