


# 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](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/impactassessment)

|  |   |                       |  |                   |  |  |
|--|---|-----------------------|--|-------------------|--|--|
| <b>Organisation prepared for (mark as appropriate)</b>   |  |                       |  |                   |  |  |
| <b>Version</b>   | <b>1.1</b>  | <b>Date Completed</b> |  | <b>02/07/2024</b> |  |  |
| <b>Description of what is being impact assessed</b>  |   |                       |  |                   |  |  |
| <p><b><u>Devolution of Yeovil Country Park to Yeovil Town Council</u></b></p> <p>This EIA assesses the impact of devolving Yeovil Country Park to Yeovil Town Council on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024. It only assesses the impact of the initial transfer of services and assets in their current state rather than focusing on what could happen in the future as it is expected that were Yeovil Town Council to decide to make changes to service provision in the future they would carry out their own equality impact assessment to evaluate the potential impacts.</p> <p>Land assets and site buildings to be transferred include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sampsons Wood</li> <li>• Ninesprings</li> <li>• Penn Hill</li> <li>• Wyndham Hill</li> <li>• Summerhouse Hill</li> <li>• Riverside Walk</li> <li>• Riverside Park</li> <li>• Site structures including bins, benches, bridges, dams, play area &amp; car park at Ninesprings and natural play area at Riverside</li> <li>• Ninesprings building including public toilets, café, ranger space, workshop &amp; associated building systems</li> <li>• Two shipping containers for storage at Goldenstones car park</li> </ul> |   |                       |  |                   |  |  |

This assessment focuses on what impact the devolution of the country park would have on protected groups. The park is currently widely used by individuals, families and some community groups.

Five members of staff would be transferred under TUPE transfer. Casual staff who work at the site would not transfer under TUPE but Yeovil Town Council has offered these staff continued employment. Equality data for the staff who would be impacted as a result of the site being devolved has been considered but is not included in this equality impact assessment due to the risk of identifying individuals.

## **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

### **Data from the Office of National Statistics, Census 2021, Area Profiles and Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019**

These data sets have been used to consider the impacts of devolving Yeovil Country Park to Yeovil Town Council. Some key statistics from these data sets include that the Yeovil parliamentary constituency has a slightly higher percentage of people who are religious compared to the whole of Somerset at 53.5% of the population compared to 52% county-wide. The ratio of sex in the population of the Yeovil parliamentary constituency also differs slightly to the county wide level. 50.7% of the population is female and 49.3% is male, compared to 51.1% and 48.9% respectively across Somerset. In the Yeovil parliamentary constituency 14.4% of households do not own a car or van (Somerset Intelligence Area Profiles). It is also worth noting that Yeovil Country Park is within walking distance of neighbourhoods ranked within the top 20% nationally for deprivation (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019).

### **Protected characteristics data held by the Council relating to staff**

The equality data for staff who would be impacted has been fully considered but is not included in this assessment due to the risk of identifying individuals. As a public authority and employer Yeovil Town Council will be under the same obligations as Somerset Council to uphold equalities standards from an employment perspective.

### **Information about community groups, clubs and local schools who currently use the venue**

Data showing whether individual users of the site have protected characteristics is not collected so this data does not exist to inform this impact assessment but some information is available about groups who use the site and this information has been used to inform this assessment.

**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?

No site users or protected groups have been consulted as the only change because of the devolution process will be the change of provider running the service. If Yeovil Town Council were to make changes in the future which impacted on equalities it would be for Yeovil Town Council to assess the impact.

Staff and trade unions have been consulted on devolution as part of the TUPE process.

**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             | <p>Groups of all ages visit Yeovil Country Park however due to the site being an open park no data is collected on the profile of these individuals therefore we are unable to determine whether a specific age group is likely to be more severely impacted than others.</p> <p>Volunteers range from 18years old to 80+ years old, carrying out practical work in the country park or assisting with the Friends of Yeovil Country Park. U3A attend events at the country park &amp; activities (such as history walks) are designed for adults in mind.</p> <p>In the immediate term devolution is not expected to have a disproportionate impact on any age group. However, it is unknown whether in the future Yeovil Town Council will make</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

|                          |  |          |          |          |
|--------------------------|--|----------|----------|----------|
|                          | <p>any changes to the provision of services and facilities at the Country Park and there is a risk that any future changes could have an impact on different age groups. It will be for Yeovil Town Council as a public authority to assess the equalities impacts of any changes they decide to make and there may also be future opportunities that Yeovil Town Council take which continue to improve access and increase inclusion for different age groups in the future.</p>   |          |          |          |
| <p><b>Disability</b></p> | <p>Yeovil Country Park has accessible trails which are suitable for wheelchair users. It also has several other initiatives including wheelchair accessible picnic tables near Ninesprings café and braille signs around the park. Various activities are also held throughout the year including an accessible bat walk arranged annually and a weekly Monday volunteering group with activities that are less strenuous over a shorter time period to allow people with disabilities to more easily participate in volunteering at the Country Park.</p> <p>In the immediate term devolution is not expected to have an impact on people with disabilities. However, it is unknown whether in the future Yeovil Town Council will make any changes to the provision of services and facilities at the Country Park and there is a risk that any future changes could have an impact on people with disabilities. It will be for Yeovil Town Council as a public authority to assess the equalities impacts of any changes they decide to make and there may also be future opportunities that Yeovil Town Council take which continue to</p> | <p>⊗</p> | <p>□</p> | <p>□</p> |

|                                   |  |  |   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
|                                   | <p>improve access and increase inclusion for people with disabilities in the future.</p> <p>Whilst most staff always work on site, for staff who currently occasionally homework this will likely not be possible in the immediate term after devolution of this service on 1<sup>st</sup> August as Yeovil Town Council do not currently have an IT setup which enables homeworking. This could potentially particularly disadvantage some staff with disabilities if homeworking helps to provide them with greater accessibility.</p>   |  |   |  |
| <p><b>Gender reassignment</b></p> | <p>Yeovil Pride use the country park annually for their Pride event. Based on the limited data available it is not thought that people will be impacted to a greater or lesser extent by the devolution of the park based on having undertaken gender reassignment in the immediate term. However, it is unknown whether in the future Yeovil Town Council will make any changes to the provision of services and facilities at the Country Park and there is a risk that any future changes could have an impact on those who have undertaken gender reassignment. It will be for Yeovil Town Council as a public authority to assess the equalities impacts of any changes they decide to make and there may also be future opportunities that Yeovil Town Council take which continue to improve access and increase inclusion for those who have or are undertaking gender reassignment in the future.</p> | <input data-bbox="1541 1013 1579 1056" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" data-bbox="1787 1013 1825 1056" type="checkbox"/> | <input data-bbox="1966 1013 2004 1056" type="checkbox"/> |

|                                       |   |                          |                                     |                          |
|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Marriage and civil partnership</b> | In the immediate term devolution is not expected to have a greater impact on people who are married or in a civil partnership than any other group.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>        | A Squats and Tots group have permitted use of the country park to deliver their pre and post-natal exercise classes. In the immediate term devolution is not expected to have an impact on pregnancy and maternity. However, it is unknown whether in the future Yeovil Town Council will make any changes to the provision of services and facilities at the Country Park and there is a risk that any future changes could have an impact on those who are pregnant or during maternity. It will be for Yeovil Town Council as a public authority to assess the equalities impacts of any changes they decide to make and there may also be future opportunities that Yeovil Town Council take which continue to improve access and increase inclusion for those going through pregnancy and maternity in the future. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Race and ethnicity</b>             | Data is not collected about the race and ethnicity of users of the site. Overall, the impact on these protected groups is not expected to be significantly greater than the impact all groups would experience as a result of devolution.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Religion or belief</b>             | Yeovil Country Park is located in the Yeovil parliamentary constituency. This area has a slightly higher percentage of people who are religious compared to the whole of Somerset   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

|                           |  |                          |                                     |                          |
|---------------------------|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
|                           | <p>at 53.5% of the population compared to 52% county-wide (Area Profiles). Due to the open nature of the park, the overall percentage of users of the site who are religious is unknown as this data is not collected. It is not expected that any impact from devolution would be greater for this protected group than other groups.</p>   |                          |                                     |                          |
| <b>Sex</b>                | <p>In the Yeovil parliamentary constituency 50.7% of the population is female and 49.3% is male, compared to 51.1% and 48.9% respectively across Somerset (Area Profiles, Census 2021). After consideration of the information available it is not expected that one sex would be greater affected than another by the devolution of the facilities.</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Sexual orientation</b> | <p>Yeovil Pride use the country park annually for their Pride event. Based on the limited data available it is not thought that people will be impacted to a greater or lesser extent by the devolution of the park based on their sexual orientation in the immediate term. However, it is unknown whether in the future Yeovil Town Council will make any changes to the provision of services and facilities at the Country Park and there is a risk that any future changes could have an impact on sexual orientation. It will be for Yeovil Town Council as a public authority to assess the equalities impacts of any changes they decide to make and there may also be future opportunities that Yeovil Town</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

|  |  |                                     |                                     |                          |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
|  | Council take which continue to improve access and increase inclusion for people of all sexual orientations in the future.  |                                     |                                     |                          |
| <b>Armed Forces (including serving personnel, families and veterans)</b> | <p>Given the park is in relatively close proximity to the RNAS Yeovilton base it is likely that serving personnel and their family members use the park, though no data on this is collected. Activities have been delivered in the past which have been focused on families of armed forces personnel following grant funding from the Armed Forces Community Covenant Fund. It is not thought that veterans, armed forces personnel or their families will be impacted to a greater or lesser extent by the devolution of the park in the immediate term. However, it is unknown whether in the future Yeovil Town Council will make any changes to the provision of services and facilities at the Country Park and there is a risk that any future changes could have an impact on veterans, armed forces personnel or their families. It will be for Yeovil Town Council as a public authority to assess the equalities impacts of any changes they decide to make and there may also be future opportunities that Yeovil Town Council take which continue to improve access and increase inclusion for veterans, armed forces personnel or their families in the future.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Other, e.g. carers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.</b>          | <p>Carers: Activities are delivered for young carer groups annually. Low income: Annual trail events are designed to be low cost and free drop-in activities and events are delivered with external grant funding. Grant funded activities have been delivered to organisations that support low income or vulnerable families, specifically Promise Works and Yeovil4Family.</p>  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> |



It is not expected that members of the public who are carers or on a low income will be impacted to a greater or lesser extent by the devolution of the Country Park in the immediate term. However, it is unknown whether in the future Yeovil Town Council will make any changes to the provision of services and facilities at the Country Park and there is a risk that any future changes could have an impact on these groups. It will be for Yeovil Town Council as a public authority to assess the equalities impacts of any changes they decide to make and there may also be future opportunities that Yeovil Town Council take which continue to improve access and increase inclusion for these groups.

Whilst most staff always work on site, for staff who currently occasionally homework this will likely not be possible in the immediate period after devolution of this service on 1<sup>st</sup> August as Yeovil Town Council do not currently have an IT setup which enables homeworking. This could potentially particularly disadvantage some staff with caring responsibilities by reducing flexibility around working arrangements.



**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          |
|---|---------|--------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Impacted staff and trade unions will be consulted regarding the change to working arrangements and homeworking as part of the TUPE process. | 31/7/24 | Elizabeth Dawson   | This will be monitored through the TUPE Consultation Process | <input type="checkbox"/> |

|  |        |                  |  |                          |
|--|--------|------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Somerset Council will work with Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) to deliver training and development opportunities around equality and diversity including legal and practical responsibilities for Parish and Town Councils. | 1/8/24 | Elizabeth Dawson | This will be monitored through the Yeovil Devolution Programme | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--|--------|------------------|--|--------------------------|

**If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.**

It is possible that there could be negative impacts for groups with protected characteristics as a consequence of devolution if Yeovil Town Council were to decide to make changes to the site in the future after devolution has occurred which have a negative impact for groups with protected characteristics. It would be for Yeovil Town Council to conduct their own assessment of any equalities impacts of any decisions they made in the future and as a public authority they are bound by the same legal duties as Somerset Council in relation to equalities.

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Completed by:</b>                | <b>Jessica Kemmish</b><br><b>Emily Glover</b>   |
| <b>Date</b>                         | <b>02/07/2024</b>   |
| <b>Signed off by:</b>               | <b>Elizabeth Dawson</b>   |
| <b>Date</b>                         | <b>4/7/24</b>   |
| <b>Equality Lead sign off name:</b> | <br><b>David Crisfield</b> |
| <b>Equality Lead sign off date:</b> | <b>03/07/2024</b>   |

|  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| <b>To be reviewed by:</b> (officer name) | <b>Jessica Kemmish</b> |
| <b>Review date:</b>                      | <b>10/8/24</b>         |