

## Local Community Networks – Consultation companion

The following pages present the consultation questions as they appear online to assist those who wish to make paper notes before completing the form online at this link: [www.somerset.inconsult.uk/connect.ti/LCNs/consultationHome](http://www.somerset.inconsult.uk/connect.ti/LCNs/consultationHome)

Full paper copies are available by emailing: [LCN@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:LCN@somerset.gov.uk) or by calling Somerset County Council direct on 0300 123 2224.

We recommend you read more about LCNs before sharing your views about the Proposals. You'll find information on our website: [www.newsomersetcouncil.org.uk](http://www.newsomersetcouncil.org.uk)

**PLEASE NOTE:** The LCN Consultation **closes on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at 23:59 hrs.** Please ensure your responses are back with us by that date.

### Background

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 a new unitary Somerset Council will replace Somerset County Council and the four district councils (Mendip, Sedgemoor, Somerset West and Taunton, and South Somerset).

Somerset Council will cover a large geographical area. Council Leaders are mindful that we need a model for communities where local voices are heard, partners are brought together, and decisions are taken with the benefit of local knowledge and experience. That's why all the Somerset councils support the development of Local Community Networks (LCNs).

- ✓ LCNs will be established in every part of Somerset.
- ✓ They will be Committees of the unitary Council, supported by dedicated officers and managers.
- ✓ They will have formal decision-making powers and influence.
- ✓ They will enable the Council, partners and communities to work together to address local issues and priorities, support health and wellbeing activities, and improve outcomes for residents.
- ✓ LCNs must be affordable and have the potential to develop their role alongside the new Somerset Council in the years to come.

Throughout the summer we have been working on developing the LCN model. This consultation asks for your involvement in guiding the decisions on the following key aspects:

- **Function** – what roles and responsibilities the LCNs can have in the first and subsequent years of Somerset Council.
- **Form** – development of options for the LCN boundaries, using existing democratic boundaries, Local Plans and community infrastructure
- **Name** – whether ‘Local Community Network’ is the right name.

## What happens next?

### Timeline

The LCN consultation will begin on 5<sup>th</sup> September and close on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2022. Following the consultation, a formal decision paper, including a resourcing plan, will be submitted to Somerset County Council’s Executive, scheduled for 16th November 2022.

### In-person engagement sessions

We are holding in-person engagement events where you can join us to discuss the proposals in more detail with a member of our team.

7 <sup>th</sup>	September	10-4pm	Somerset West and Taunton Offices, Taunton
22 <sup>nd</sup>	September	10-4pm	Mendip Council Offices, Shepton Mallet
29 <sup>th</sup>	September	10-4pm	South Somerset District Council Offices, Brympton
7 <sup>th</sup>	October	10-4pm	Sedgemoor Council Offices, Bridgwater
10 <sup>th</sup>	October	10-4pm	West Somerset House, Williton

**Feedback** - We will publish feedback on these proposals once the consultation ends.

## Consultation questionnaire

### 1. The aims for LCNs are listed below. Which do you think are most important?

Circle at least 1 option.

1. Ensure the countywide unitary council remains responsive to local needs
2. Improve outcomes for residents
3. Provide a mechanism for local action
4. Promote active community decision making

#### Other

### 2. Thinking of the ongoing evolution of LCNs, how important do you consider each of the following roles to be? Tick the most applicable option in each row. You must select an option in every row.

	Very important	Important	Not sure	Not very important	Not at all important
Acting as Committees of Somerset Council, with formal influence over services to reflect what's most important to their local area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bringing together public service providers (councils, NHS, police, education and more) with voluntary organisations, community groups and local businesses to work together to deliver shared goals.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being a forum for 'community voice', where participants discuss and promote shared ambitions for their local area.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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	Very important	Important	Not sure	Not very important	Not at all important
Identifying local issues and priorities using data and evidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Building community resilience through local activities which reduce the number of residents reaching crisis, in any form.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administering grant funding for local initiatives.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Exploring how best to support Planning and Licensing decision making.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting new technology which enables more people to engage with local democracy and council services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Providing information to support Asset of Community Value panels, which consider applications to give communities rights to buy or bid for council owned assets, such as buildings or land, should they be offered for sale.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prioritising minor road maintenance and highways services at a local level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting Parishes to work together including across LCN boundaries.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Are there other roles you want to see LCNs performing?**

## LCN Boundaries Proposals

In developing LCNs, we want to reflect the way in which our communities work and therefore we are keen communities and partners are involved in how they develop.

To help assess the proposals, we looked at a range of factors, to enable comparisons to be drawn. We tried to think about where people live, work, go to school and access services, including health. In all cases we kept to parish outlines as closely as possible.

The things we considered:

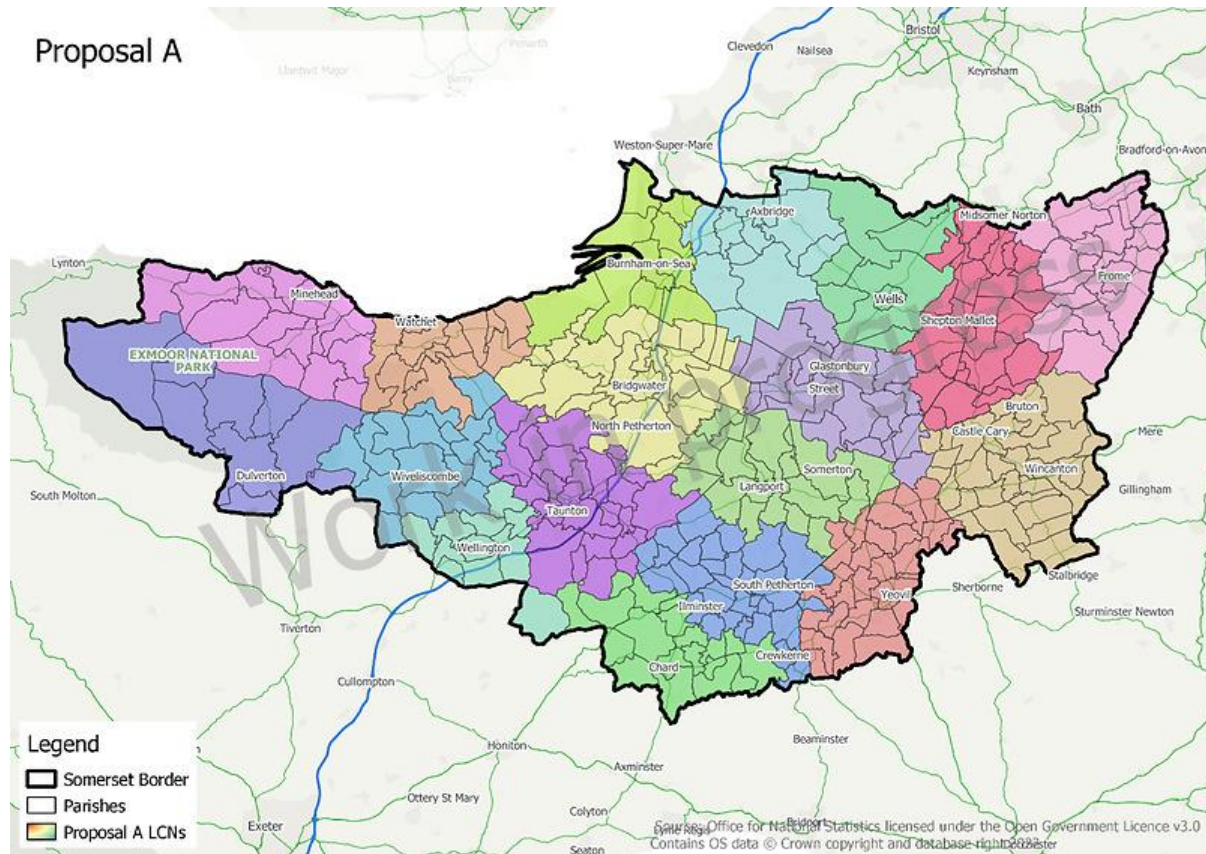
- **Population** – we looked at how balanced the population numbers were in each LCN, how important or not is it that they have similar numbers of residents in each area
- **Geographies** – how similar in size of area they were, and their distribution/spread across Somerset
- **Electoral Divisions** – the number of Unitary Electoral divisions, and how they split within, and across, LCN boundaries
- **Deprivation** – using indices of multiple deprivation, we looked at how the most and least deprived areas were distributed
- **Community Facilities, eg. Libraries** – we looked at where these were situated
- **Health** – we compared the ‘fit’ of Primary Care Network (PCN) boundaries to LCN boundaries
- **Secondary School Catchment Areas** – we checked how these were split in relation to LCNs, recognising schools are often at the heart of communities
- **Travel to Work Area** – we looked at their alignment to LCN areas
- **Current Local Plan Geographies** – we looked at their alignment to LCN areas

Based on analysis of this range of data and intelligence, **THREE** potential boundary proposals were identified – and we would welcome your comments on each of them.

1. Proposal A would have 18 LCNs
2. Proposal B would have 17 LCNs
3. Proposal C would have 10 LCNs

## EXAMPLE FOR NOTES – PLEASE DO NOT USE AS A FORMAL SUBMISSION

Maps detailing each proposal are included below. You can view an online interactive version by typing this link into your internet browser: <https://tinyurl.com/j7v2skwt>



- In this proposal, there would be 18 LCNs all a similar size in terms of area giving an even coverage across the county
- The population is not spread evenly across the county, and this results in a wide population size spread across the LCNs
- Many electoral divisions sit within one LCN with 15 sitting across 2 LCNs, 6 across 3, and 2 across 4 LCNs
- Most deprived areas sit within major population centres, and these remain similar across all proposals
- All LCNs contain at least one library with several containing 2 or more
- The majority of LCNs overlap between 2 and 4 PCNs
- The majority of LCNs overlap between 3 -5 secondary school catchment areas. 4 LCNs overlap 7 or 8 catchments areas

Matches some existing Local Plan geographies

**3. Do you support the proposed boundaries as described in Proposal A?**

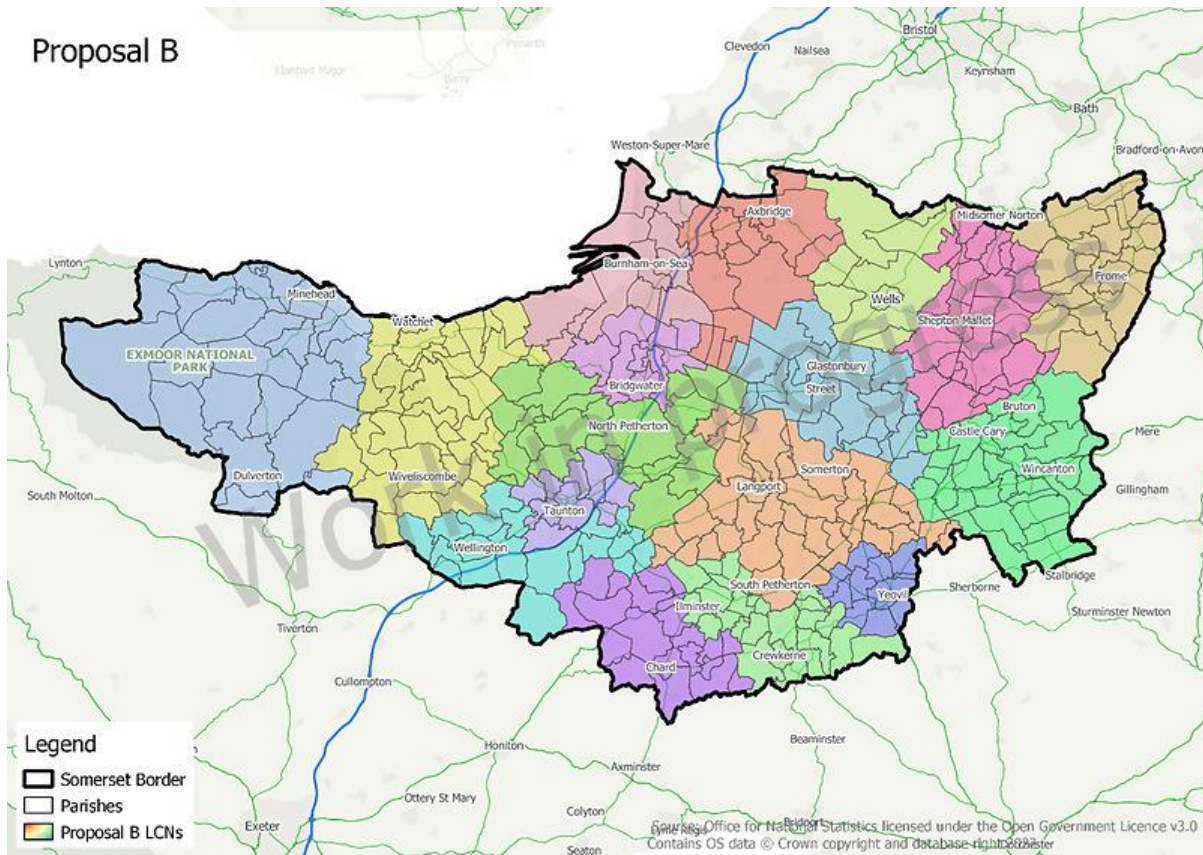
You must provide an answer to this question. Please tick.

- Support
- Partially support
- Don't support

Please comment on the strengths and weaknesses of this proposal:



Proposal B



- In this proposal, there would be 17 LCN areas
- This proposal balances the population across LCNs
- The area between Taunton and Bridgwater lacks a natural community identity
- Many electoral divisions sit within one LCN with 16 sitting across 2 LCNs, 5 across 3, and 3 across 4 LCNs
- Most deprived areas sit within major population centres, and these remain similar across all proposals
- All LCNs contain at least one library with several containing 2 or more
- The majority of LCNs overlap between 2 and 4 PCNs
- Many LCNs overlap between 3-5 secondary school catchment areas
- Matches some existing Local Plan geographies

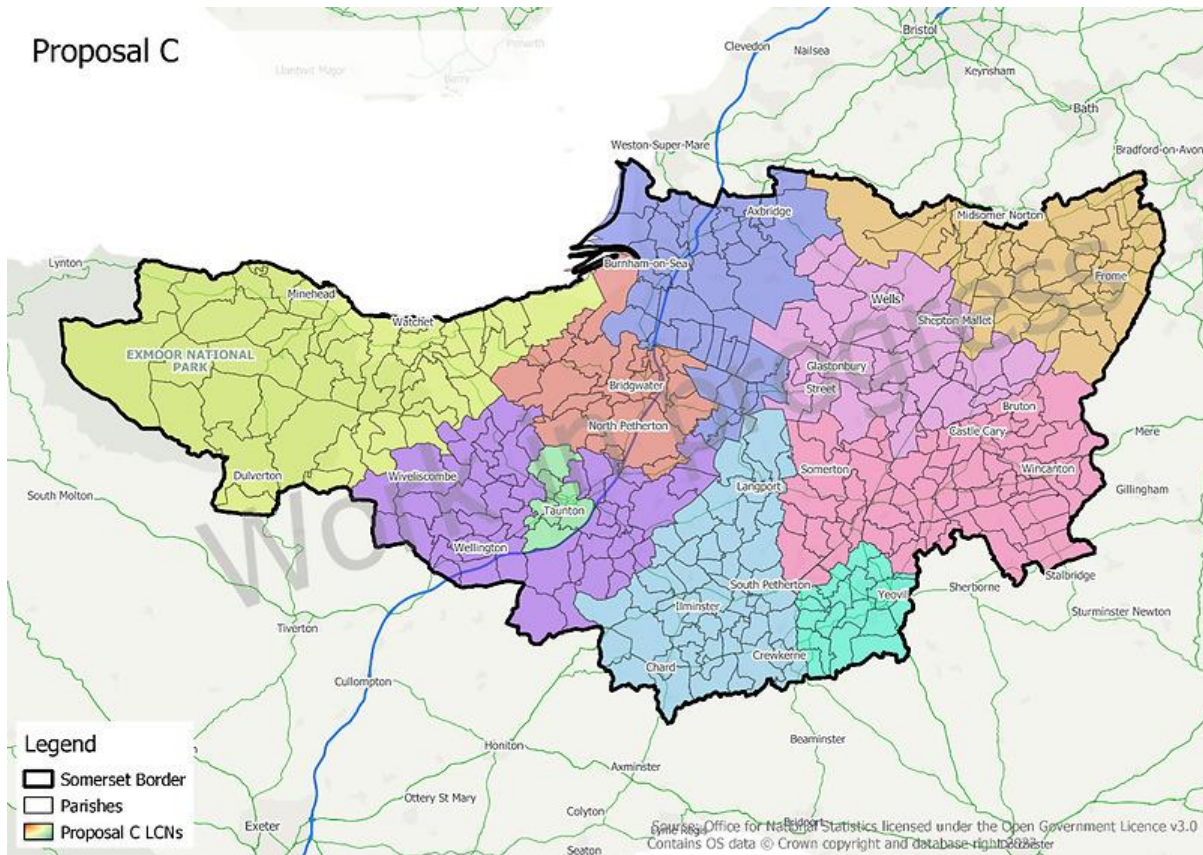
**4. Do you support the proposed boundaries as described in Proposal B?**

You must provide an answer to this question. Please circle.

- Support
- Partially support
- Don't support

Please comment on the strengths and weaknesses of this proposal:

Proposal C



- In this proposal, there would be 10 LCNs
- Generally, a good fit maintained with parish boundaries
- Population is well balanced across 9 of the 10 LCNs, where population ranges from 50,000 to 65,000. However, area to the west of Somerset is significantly lower at 35,005
- The LCN around the largest towns of Yeovil and Taunton is smaller in terms of area
- Large single area to the west of Somerset
- Note 'horseshoe' area wrapping the south of Taunton
- Strong fit with electoral divisions
- Most deprived areas sit within major population centres, and these remain similar across all proposals
- All LCNs contain at least one library with several containing 2 or more, due to the larger geographical size in this proposal, 4 LCNs contain 4+ libraries each
- Many of the LCNs overlap between 2 and 4 PCNs

EXAMPLE FOR NOTES – PLEASE DO NOT USE AS A FORMAL SUBMISSION

- Many LCNs overlap between 3-6 secondary school catchment areas, no LCNs in this proposal match a single catchment area
- A close match with existing Local Plan Geographies, meaning that in the short to medium term LCNs would each work only with one Local Plan

**5. Do you support the proposed boundaries as described in Proposal C?**

You must provide an answer to this question. Please circle.

- Support
- Partially support
- Don't support

Please comment on the strengths and weaknesses of this proposal.

## 6. Participation in LCNs

LCNs will meet 6 to 8 times a year in their local areas. Each LCN will be delegated authority to agree their own schedule of dates, within the context of the calendar for other public meetings.

**Can you foresee any barriers for organisations in participating in LCNs?**

**What will they be?** Tick at least 1 option.

- Time
- Financial
- Other:

## 7. What shall we call LCNs?

**Local Community Networks (LCNs) has been a working name. What do you think they should be called?**

You must provide an answer to this question. Circle your preference or provide an alternative.

- Local Community Networks
- Community Partnerships
- Community Boards
- Other: