



# Somerset – the future

Progress update, June 2020

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# Change is needed

- All five councils agreed that the existing arrangements could improve.
- The five councils concluded that a *single council* was *not* the right choice for Somerset.
- Our response to the coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated the power and importance of our *local* authorities.
- Our communities do not deserve the cheapest local government, they deserve the *best* local government which will drive improvement in quality of life.
- Not all communities are the same across the varied landscape of Somerset and new structures need to *reflect this diversity*.
- We *will* be submitting an alternative to the County Council's single unitary bid focused on what we *all need*, not what SCC need.

# Much to celebrate in Somerset



# Challenges for Somerset



## Disadvantaged Children

- Social Mobility
- Poverty and Deprivation
- Troubled Families



## Young People 16-24

- Higher Education
- Self Harm
- Affordable Housing



## The Economy

- Low Wage/Low Skill
- Low Productivity
- Digital Connectivity
- Travel
- Affordable Housing



## The Environment

- Carbon Neutral Councils
- Carbon Emissions
- Flooding



## Older People

- Increase in Older People
- Quality of Health
- Isolation

# What does our alternative look like?



Reduce cost



Reform services to improve quality and effectiveness



Improve efficiency



Collaborative and devolved approach to services to meet a variety of community needs



Meets statutory and organisational requirements



It will not be about doing things the same way with a different name

Our business case will be ready soon. It will be shaped by consultation - especially the views of our communities, towns and parish councils – clear evidence and **what is in the best interests of Somerset**

# What do we mean by improving quality and effectiveness?



## Starting well:

We need to address poor social mobility and deprivation



## Living well:

We need to develop our skills, create job opportunities and increase productivity



## Aging well:

This challenge is amplified in Somerset as a result of age profile, isolation and poor connectivity



## Homes:

We need to address the affordability gap



## Vulnerability to climate change:

We need to address the risks of climate change in Somerset.



## Large, rural county:

We need to reflect this diversity and ensure we reap the benefits of our very different, vibrant communities while overcoming current disadvantages

And we must give local communities more control of the things that matter

# Moving to solutions – Your views?

**How do we effect change?**

**How do we create better outcomes for our older population and the most vulnerable alongside creating better opportunities for young people?**

**How best to generate more inclusive and clean growth?**

**What role could parish and town councils play?**

**Which areas would you prioritise?**





**> Thank you >**

