

Public Agenda Pack



Notice of Meeting of

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - COMMUNITIES

Wednesday, 12 March 2025 at 10.00 am

Luttrell Room - County Hall, Taunton TA1 4DY

To: The members of the Scrutiny Committee - Communities

Chair: Councillor Gwil Wren
Vice-chair: Councillor Dawn Johnson

Councillor Suria Aujla	Councillor Simon Coles
Councillor Lance Duddridge	Councillor Pauline Ham
Councillor Susannah Hart	Councillor Andy Kendall
Councillor Marcus Kravis	Councillor Kathy Pearce
Councillor Tom Power	Councillor Hazel Prior-Sankey
Councillor Wes Read	

For further information about the meeting, including how to join the meeting virtually, please contact Democratic Services: democratic@somerset.gov.uk.

All members of the public are welcome to attend our meetings and ask questions or make a statement **by giving advance notice** in writing or by e-mail to the Monitoring Officer at email: democraticservicesteam@somerset.gov.uk by **5pm on Thursday, 6 March 2025**.

This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A: Access to Information.

The meeting will be webcast and an audio recording made.

Issued by (the Proper Officer) on Tuesday, 4 March 2025

AGENDA

Scrutiny Committee - Communities - 10.00 am Wednesday, 12 March 2025

8 Management of Open Spaces (Pages 5 - 10)

To receive the presentation

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Open Spaces

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Open Spaces

Within Somerset Council open spaces are:

- Play areas
- Parks
- Verges
- Roundabouts
- Playing fields
- Grass in and around HRA sites
- School grass

Those in red are the areas that the Regs and Ops service have a responsibility for. The others are picked up by the highways team or schools team.

Impact from Devolution since Vesting

This committee is familiar with the direction towards local devolution for Somerset Council.

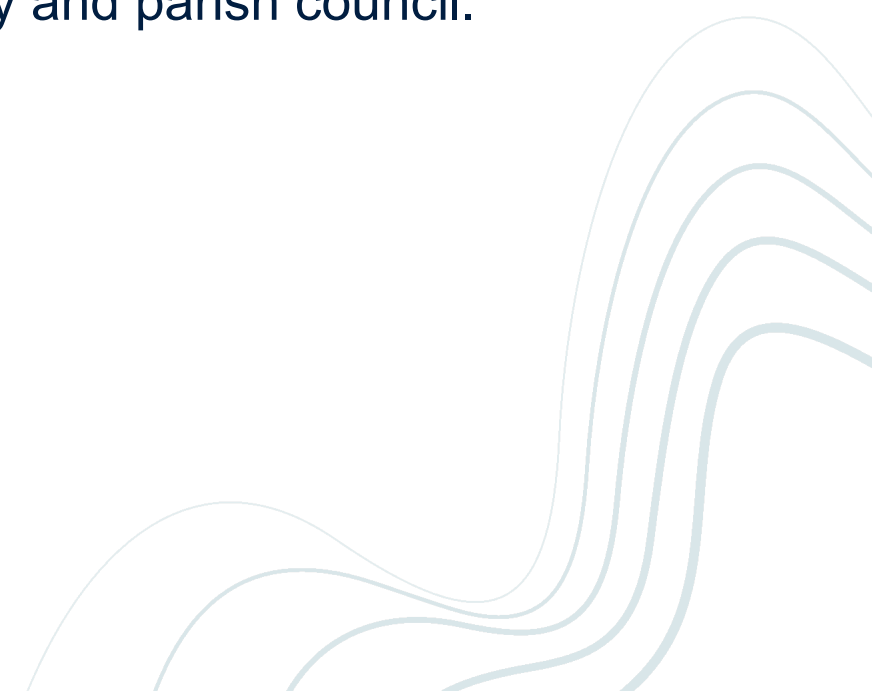
By June 2025 it is expected that operational (Open Space) services will have been devolved to tranche 1 Parish, Town and City Councils.

In turn this have reduced the headcount within our operational teams. This is through natural wastages as well as TUPE transfer of staff to those town city and parish council.

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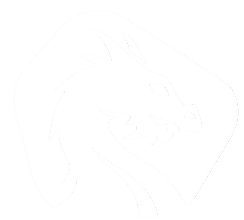
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What is devolution?

Different for each parish council, could be a combination of any of the following:

- Play area's
- Community space – park, Recreational space
- Street cleansing services
- Toilets
- Grounds maintenance
- Tree maintenance
- Fly tip collection



What's next?

Task list for 2025 and beyond

- Continue with the next phase of Devolution and assess the impact on our services.
- Bring consistency across the whole of Somerset, aligning grass schedules, tree work and cleansing, making this information available online as much as possible
- Make some assumptions about the next phase of devolution: likely to not include cleansing? Smaller?
- Look at Depot usage, reach and impact (see map slide)
- Strengthen services in open spaces
- Insourcing the former MDC area from June 2025.



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