

Devolution Update

Operational & Regulatory Services

December 2024



Somerset
Council

Devolution Update June 2024 - Recap

Service Devolution - Operations

- Grounds maintenance including trees, hedges, shrub beds
- Open spaces
- Play areas
- Public toilets
- Street cleansing (road and pavement sweeping, bin emptying, fly tipping, graffiti removal)
- These are services, but there is an asset management crossover.

Devolution Update June 2024 - Recap

Initial focus on the following city, town and parish councils

- Programme of devolution has been at the request of the Councils.
- Taunton
- Bridgwater
- Wellington
- Minehead
- Mendip (Wells, Street, Frome, Glastonbury, Shepton Mallet)

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Taunton

- Asset transfer of Victoria Park, Goodlands Gardens, Galmington Park, Taunton Green, French Weir, Greenway Rec, Hamilton Gault, Hawthorn Park, Lyngford Park, Priorswood Park, Comeytrove Park + public toilets complete.
- Somerset Council continuing to maintain these open spaces via a service 'buyback' arrangement with Taunton Town Council until 1/4/2025. Toilets already removed from external contract.
- TTC will manage these parks from 1/4/2025.

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Bridgwater

- Grounds maintenance and street cleansing services devolved to BTC 1/5/24.
- Working under a maintenance agreement currently, with full asset transfer to follow once legal process is complete.
- SC have supported where required but BTC teams working well. Carnival clean up a success.

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Wellington

- Wellington Town Council have approved budget for a service and asset devolution package from 1st April 2025.
- Grounds maintenance, open spaces, play areas, public toilets, trees, bus shelters.
- Key Decision taken August 2024.
- Public toilet cleaning devolved early.
- WTC / SC officer working group meeting monthly to deliver.

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Minehead

- Package of service devolution agreed at officer level. Now provisionally agreed by SC AMG and MTC internal devolution working group.
- Grounds maintenance, open spaces, play areas, trees and some low level street cleansing.
- Includes long term lease on the esplanade which is seen as integral to the town's tourist offering.

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Mendip

- Services delivered by external contractor until 31/5/25.
- Officer level conversations taken place with Mendip councils to understand appetite for devolution of services covered by the contract.
- Strong interest in open spaces, grounds maintenance, play areas.

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Mendip

- Conversations furthest progressed with Wells and Frome.
- Wells and Frome have been through AMG for sign off. Key decisions to follow.
- Conversations ongoing with Glastonbury.
- Cleansing of toilets removed from contract early.

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Other areas in progress

- Puriton, Nether Stowey, Cannington now managing open spaces and grounds under a maintenance agreement.
- Cheddar – allotments, toilets and open spaces approved in principle for devolution by AMWG May 24. Democratic process to follow.
- Conversations with smaller parishes taking place but expectations need to be managed based on asset management and legal capacity.

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Yeovil

- Grounds maintenance of Yeovil Rec devolved to Yeovil Town Council as part of tranche one package in August.
- Staff and equipment devolved with Rec.
- We have been approached by YTC with Tranche Two requests.

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Mendip Markets

- Conversations underway around devolution of market operations for Street, Glastonbury, Wells, Frome and Shepton Mallet.
- Markets are an important request for these councils and critical to the wider devolution opportunities.
- Each city, town and parish see markets as integral to their respective visions and aspirations. Having control over the market is a vital part of that.

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Questions