

MEMBERS' BRIEFING 10 March 2023



Welcome to your fortnightly update on South Somerset District Council news, including meetings, news updates, Local Government Reorganisation updates, and more.

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Visit our Website



Celebrating our successes: South Somerset District Council Corporate Plan 2022/23 achievements to date

We are pleased to share some of our key achievements to date in respect of this council's Corporate Plan 2022/23. The Corporate Plan details over 60 projects which will enable us to achieve the objectives within the five agreed areas of focus: Environment, Healthy & self-reliant communities, Economy and Covid-19 recovery plan, Places where we live and Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

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Upcoming Meetings

[Regulation Committee - Tuesday 21 March - 10.00am](#)

[Area North Committee - Wednesday 22 March - 2.00pm](#)

[Audit Committee - Friday 24 March - 10.00am](#)

[South Somerset District Council - Thursday 30 March - 7.30pm](#)

[Previous meetings can be viewed on our Youtube channel.](#)

Featured News



Millions released from dormant accounts to support vulnerable people with cost of living

Dormant Assets Scheme redirects money from forgotten accounts to good causes £76 million will go to those struggling with the cost of living, including through no-interest loans In England, Scheme is being expanded to include community wealth funds, pots of money that will allow local residents to improve their communities The most vulnerable people in society will be given additional support to deal with the cost of living, as £76 million tied up in forgotten accounts is unlocked.

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His Majesty King Charles III's Coronation Celebrations 6-8 May 2023: Street closure applications | South Somerset District Council

The Coronation ceremony for His Majesty King Charles III will take place on Saturday 6 May 2023 at Westminster Abbey with a host of celebrations in planning by His Majesty's Government, led by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), to mark the historic occasion.

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South Somerset - Meet your Broadband Providers | South Somerset District Council

South Somerset District Council (SSDC) is delighted to invite residents and businesses to join us on Zoom for our 'Meet your Broadband Providers' event on Thursday 16 th March at 2.30pm. We have some excellent speakers lined up, including Connecting Devon and Somerset, Wessex Internet, Jurassic Fibre and Gigaclear.

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SAVE THE DATE! OAK TREE SKATE PARK YEOVIL OPEN DAY, 13 APRIL 2023

You are invited to join in the celebrations as we open the brand new Oak Tree Skate Park. This is the first of the three new skate parks for Yeovil. It is already open to the public and receiving rave reviews from users. Do come along and join in the fun on 13 April from 12 noon until 4pm. Chairman of the new Somerset Council, Mike Best will open the event and we will enjoy professional skate demonstrations, music and fun with a special Playday event alongside. We will be sending the official invite via email soon, which will have a link for you to let us know if you are attending.

And over at Yew Tree Skate Park...

Work is progressing at a pace with an estimated completion date due in late spring!





Most vulnerable to be offered spring COVID-19 booster

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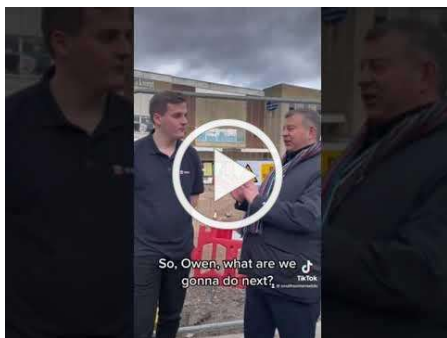
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Yeovil Refresh: Triangle Update

We have been releasing a series of video updates on social media to keep residents informed about the progress of the Yeovil Refresh project.

In this video, Ian, the Project Manager, spoke with Owen from South West Highways about the ongoing works at The Triangle in Yeovil and what we can expect to see over the coming months.

Check out yeovilrefresh.co.uk for further info. South West Highways also produce a newsletter which contains more detail about the project. You can view February's edition here: <https://www.yeovilrefresh.co.uk/swh-newsletter>



New specialist Free School for Somerset children gets green light

Children in Somerset will benefit from a new free specialist school in Wells which will provide places for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Somerset County Council has been successful in its application to the Department for Education (DfE) to open the school, one of 33 new free special schools nationally.

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Secondary school places announced for 2023/2024 academic year

Somerset children starting secondary school in September now know which school they will be attending. Parents who have applied for places online were emailed last week with their offer of a school place, whilst those who applied via a paper form will receive their offer by post in the coming days.

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Not all heroes wear capes - Somerset's community



Debate not Hate: Council supports bid to tackle abuse

stalwarts celebrated in this year's Chair's Awards

Gold-hearted community heroes from across Somerset have been recognised at the latest Somerset County Council Chair's Award for Service to the Community. The awards-giving has been an annual event for many years and this year's ceremony at Taunton Rugby Club was attended by 140 people, including 43 nominees from areas right across Somerset.

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and intimidation against councillors

Somerset's new unitary council will take a zero-tolerance approach to abuse of councillors or officers and has pledged to uphold exemplary standards of public and political debate. Somerset County Council's last Full Council meeting took place today and saw elected members from across all political parties voting to support a motion signing up the new...

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Mendip District Council joins the single platform

With 3 weeks remaining until Vesting Day, Mendip District Council have successfully 'cut over' to the Somerset Council domain. All IT services at Mendip will be fully exited from the Capita contract and cut over to Somerset Council's domain by 23 March.

Mendip's transition has been slightly different to the other districts due to the exit of the IT services required from the contract with Capita, therefore the cutover has been split into 3 phases being delivered over 2 weeks, which include:

- Phase 1 – Migration of tenancy and domain
- Phase 2 – Laptop reimaging
- Phase 3 – Network cut-over

On behalf of the Technical Asset Optimisation workstream, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all the individuals who have given countless hours of, often their own time to reach this enormous achievement. As we have said from the offset, working on a project of this technical detail and scale has been a substantial undertaking, and each of them deserve our immense thanks for their efforts.

An update on the progress of the cutover at Mendip District Council so far...

Most of the applications are up and running and the overall progress is ever-increasing but, at the time of writing this, is at 83%. This puts us in a good place to be completely aligned by Vesting Day; a huge, combined technical achievement.

The photo above depicts phase two of our migration process at Mendip, wherein staff and Members have their corporate laptops 're-imaged' by a dedicated team at our offices in Shepton Mallet. Once devices are re-imaged, they have instant access to the Somerset Council shared platform and can communicate seamlessly with their colleagues across the District and County Councils.

This is not to say that there isn't work still to be done. All services are not yet available as the last phase of the project needs to be completed.

Becoming accustomed to a new working environment will be a transition for Mendip District Council staff and Members, and there will still be plenty of learning for us all as we get accustomed to the Somerset Council single platform.

For further updates on the progress of Mendip's cutover, which will continue until the 20th March, you can view <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/mendipIT/>.

With all five organisations on one shared platform, we anticipate that there will be areas in the new environment which are unfamiliar. There are training materials available [here](#).

Digital Services Team, Mendip District Council

On behalf of LGR Technical Asset Optimisation Workstream

Further support and news

Coronavirus Support

The Coronavirus Support section on the Government website is a valuable resource to help you support your community, give health advice and keep you updated on COVID-19 news.

[Read More](#)



Local Government Reorganisation Update

Direct LGR updates will continue to be provided through the separate LGR bulletin. Other key updates include:

Council tax letters to be issued

Very soon, residents of Somerset will be sent their council tax letters for the coming financial year. This will be for many residents the first communications sent on behalf of Somerset Council and is symbolic of the starting point for our new organisation and its relationship with residents. Details on the letter will include single telephone number enabling our residents to get in contact with the council.

Staff working across our contact centres have been well trained in preparation to handle the additional calls this may generate and we would like to thank staff in advance for the professionalism and great customer service they will show our residents.

Cost of living crisis: Food collection points in South Somerset

As the cost of living crisis continues to impact our communities, food collection points have been set up for members and SSDC staff to donate at two SSDC sites. Donations will be taken to the Lord's Larder at The Gateway in Yeovil.

Places you can donate:

- Canteen, The Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil
- Please hand your donations to a Connect Officer in reception at The Connect Office, Petters Way, Yeovil.

Food items requested by the Lord's Larder include:

- Instant Coffee
- Tins of Baked Beans
- Tins of Ravioli
- Tins of Macaroni Cheese
- Tins of Spaghetti
- Tins of Meatballs
- Tins of Hot Dogs
- Tins of Chilli con Carne
- Tins of Potatoes
- Tins of Sweetcorn
- Tins of Fruit
- Tins of Peas
- Carrier Bags
- Jars of Pasta Sauce
- Long Life Milk
- Sugar
- Rice
- Shower Gel or Shampoo

The Lor