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## **Informal Discussion by Members of Area South Committee**

**Wednesday 6th October 2021**

**2.00 pm**

**A virtual consultative meeting via  
Zoom meeting software**

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The following members are requested to attend this virtual consultation meeting:

John Clark  
Nicola Clark  
Karl Gill  
David Gubbins  
Peter Gubbins  
Kaysar Hussain  
Andy Kendall

Mike Lock  
Pauline Lock  
Tony Lock  
Graham Oakes  
Wes Read  
David Recardo  
Gina Seaton

Peter Seib  
Alan Smith  
Jeny Snell  
Andy Soughton  
Rob Stickland

There are no planning applications to consider this month.

Any members of the public wishing to view, or address, the virtual consultative meeting during either Public Question Time, need to email [democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk) by 9.00am on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

The meeting will be viewable online at:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSDst3IHGj9WoGnwJGF\\_soA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSDst3IHGj9WoGnwJGF_soA)

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact:  
[democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk)

This Agenda was issued on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

**Jane Portman, Chief Executive**

**This information is also available on our website  
[www.southsomerset.gov.uk](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk) and via the mod.gov app**

## Information for the Public

In light of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19), Area South Committee will meet virtually via video-conferencing to consider reports. As of 7 May 2021 some interim arrangements are in place for committee meetings.

At the meeting of Full Council on 15 April 2021 it was agreed to make the following changes to the Council's Constitution:

- a) To continue to enable members to hold remote, virtual meetings using available technology;
- b) To amend Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Council's Constitution to allow those remote meetings to function as consultative bodies and delegate decisions, including Executive and Quasi-Judicial decisions, that would have been taken by those meetings if the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 had continued in force to the Chief Executive (or the relevant Director in the Chief Executive's absence) in consultation with those meetings and those members to whom the decision would otherwise have been delegated under Part 3 of the Constitution;
- c) The delegated authority given under (b) will expire on 31 July 2021 unless continued by a future decision of this Council;

For full details and to view the report please see -

<https://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=137&MId=2981&Ver=4>

Further to the above, at the meeting of Full Council on 8 July 2021, it was agreed to extend the arrangements for a further 6 months to 8 January 2022.

For full details and to view the report please see -

<https://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=137&MId=3033&Ver=4>

## Area South Committee

Meetings of the Area South Committee are usually held monthly, at 2.00pm, on the first Wednesday of the month (unless advised otherwise. However during the coronavirus pandemic these meetings will be held remotely via Zoom.

Agendas and minutes of meetings are published on the council's website

[www.southsomerset.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/meetings-and-decisions](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/meetings-and-decisions)

Agendas and minutes can also be viewed via the mod.gov app (free) available for iPads and Android devices. Search for 'mod.gov' in the app store for your device, install, and select 'South Somerset' from the list of publishers, then select the committees of interest. A wi-fi signal will be required for a very short time to download an agenda but once downloaded, documents will be viewable offline.

## **Public participation at meetings (held via Zoom)**

### **Public question time**

We recognise that these are challenging times but we still value the public's contribution to our virtual consultative meetings. If you would like to participate and contribute in the meeting, please join on-line through Zoom at: <https://zoom.us/join> You will need an internet connection to do this.

Please email [democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk) for the details to join the meeting.

The period allowed for participation in Public Question Time shall not exceed 15 minutes except with the consent of the Chairman and members of the Committee. Each individual speaker shall be restricted to a total of three minutes.

If you would like to address the virtual consultative meeting during either Public Question Time or regarding a Planning Application, please email [democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk) by 9.00am on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021. When you have registered, the Chairman will invite you to speak at the appropriate time during the virtual meeting.

### **Virtual meeting etiquette:**

- Consider joining the meeting early to ensure your technology is working correctly.
- Please note that we will mute all public attendees to minimise background noise. If you have registered to speak during the virtual meeting, the Chairman will un-mute your microphone at the appropriate time.
- Each individual speaker shall be restricted to a total of three minutes.
- When speaking, keep your points clear and concise.
- Please speak clearly – the Councillors are interested in your comments.

### **Planning applications**

***It is important that you register your request to speak at the virtual meeting by emailing [democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk) by 9.00am Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021. When you have registered, the Chairman will invite you to speak at the appropriate time during the virtual meeting.***

Consideration of planning applications at this meeting will commence no earlier than the time stated at the front of the agenda and on the planning applications schedule. The public and representatives of parish/town councils will be invited to speak on the individual planning applications at the time they are considered.

Comments should be confined to additional information or issues, which have not been fully covered in the officer's report. Members of the public are asked to submit any additional documents to the planning officer at least 72 hours in advance and not to present them to the Committee on the day of the meeting. This will give the planning officer the opportunity to respond appropriately. Information from the public should not be tabled at the meeting. It should also be noted that, in the interests of fairness, the use of presentational aids (e.g. PowerPoint) by the applicant/agent or those making representations will not be permitted. However, the applicant/agent or those making representations are able to ask the planning officer to include photographs/images within the officer's presentation subject to them being received by the officer at least 72 hours prior to the meeting. No more than 5 photographs/images either supporting or against the application to be submitted. The planning officer will also need to be satisfied that the photographs are appropriate in terms of planning grounds.

At the committee chairman's discretion, members of the public are permitted to speak for up to three minutes each and where there are a number of persons wishing to speak they should be encouraged to choose one spokesperson to speak either for the applicant or on behalf of any supporters or objectors to the application. The total period allowed for such participation on each application shall not normally exceed 15 minutes.

The order of speaking on planning items will be:

- Town or Parish Council Spokesperson
- Objectors
- Supporters
- Applicant and/or Agent
- District Council Ward Member

**If a member of the public wishes to speak at the virtual meeting they must email [democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk) by 9.00am on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021.**

In exceptional circumstances, the Chairman of the Committee shall have discretion to vary the procedure set out to ensure fairness to all sides.

## **Recording and photography at council meetings**

Recording of council meetings is permitted, however anyone wishing to do so should let the Chairperson of the meeting know prior to the start of the meeting. The recording should be overt and clearly visible to anyone at the meeting, but non-disruptive. If someone is recording the meeting, the Chairman will make an announcement at the beginning of the meeting.

Any member of the public has the right not to be recorded. If anyone making public representation does not wish to be recorded they must let the Chairperson know.

The full 'Policy on Audio/Visual Recording and Photography at Council Meetings' can be viewed online at:

<http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/documents/s3327/Policy%20on%20the%20recording%20of%20council%20meetings.pdf>

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# **Informal Discussion by Members of Area South Committee**

**Wednesday 6 October 2021**

## **Agenda**

### ***Preliminary Items***

**1. Minutes**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of previous meetings held on 31<sup>st</sup> March, 12<sup>th</sup> May and 7<sup>th</sup> July 2021. The draft minutes can be viewed at:

<https://modgov.southsomeset.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

**2. Apologies for Absence**

**3. Declarations of Interest**

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (as amended 26 February 2015), which includes all the provisions relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), personal and prejudicial interests, Members are asked to declare any DPI and also any personal interests (and whether or not such personal interests are also "prejudicial") in relation to any matter on the Agenda for this meeting.

Members are reminded that they need to declare the fact that they are also a member of a County, Town or Parish Council as a Personal Interest. Where you are also a member of Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council within South Somerset you must declare a prejudicial interest in any business on the agenda where there is a financial benefit or gain or advantage to Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council which would be at the cost or to the financial disadvantage of South Somerset District Council.

### **Planning Applications Referred to the District Council's Regulation Committee**

The following members of this Committee are also members of the Council's Regulation Committee:

Councillors Peter Gubbins, Tony Lock, David Recardo and Andy Soughton.

Where planning applications are referred by this Committee to the Regulation Committee for determination, Members of the Regulation Committee can participate and vote on these items at the Area Committee and at Regulation Committee. In these cases the Council's decision-making process is not complete until the application is determined by the Regulation Committee. Members of the Regulation Committee retain an open mind and will not finalise their position until the Regulation Committee. They will also consider the matter at Regulation Committee as Members of that Committee and not as representatives of the Area Committee.

**4. Public Question Time**

**5. Chairman's Announcements**

**6. Market Review Working Group - Verbal Update**

### ***Items for Discussion***

- 7. Presentation on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan** (Page 7)
- 8. Countryside Service Update Report** (Pages 8 - 14)
- 9. Yeovil Crematorium Update** (Page 15)
- 10. Progress Update Yeovil Refresh** (Pages 16 - 19)
- 11. Update Progress Report Area South - Area Chapter 2021** (Pages 20 - 25)
- 12. Area South Forward Plan** (Pages 26 - 27)
- 13. Planning Appeals (For Information)** (Page 28)

**Please note that members of the Area Committee will make a recommendation on the above reports. The decision will be taken by the Chief Executive.**

## **Presentation on the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan**

Lead Officer:	Lucy Bath, Technical Lead, Transport Policy for Somerset County Council
Contact Details:	LBath@somerset.gov.uk

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Lucy Bath Technical Lead – Transport Policy from Somerset County Council will be attending Area South Committee to give members a presentation regarding the Yeovil Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) are focused 10-year plans for developing a cycle and walking network within a local area. Working closely with South Somerset Council, Somerset County Council has developed a LCWIP for Yeovil which outlines a desired walking and cycling network and its delivery over the next 10 years. The presentation will outline the LCWIP process, highlight the outcomes of the process and present the desired walking and cycling network. It will provide a short overview of the LCWIP document, look at current funding opportunities and outline the next steps in the delivery process.

## Countryside Services Update Report 2021

Strategic Director:	Clare Pestell, Commercial Services & Income Generation
Service Manager:	Katy Menday, Leisure and Recreation Manager
Lead Officer:	Rachael Whaites, Countryside Manager
Contact Details:	Rachael.whaites@southsomerset.gov.uk or 07949 482 956

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## Purpose of the Report

To update members on the work of the countryside service over the last two years.

## Public Interest

The countryside service provides free and accessible green spaces for people to enjoy and nature to thrive. The country parks and nature reserves managed by the SSDC countryside service provide opportunities for leisure activities, wildlife watching, socialising, learning and a diverse wealth of environmental benefits.

## Recommendation

That members:-

Note and comment on the work and delivery of the countryside service.

## Background

### Impact of the coronavirus pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic in 2020 greatly affected the delivery of the countryside service. Three of the rangers were redeployed to the crematorium and wellbeing hub leaving two rangers and a casual on site to cover the basic site maintenance from March 2020 to July 2020.

The government social-distancing restrictions during the pandemic greatly reduced volunteering capacity across all three sites, with volunteers unable to work in the greenspaces for several months until the restrictions changed. When the volunteers did return they were limited to groups of six only, and this stayed in place for all of 2020 and the start of 2021. This was approximately one third of the capacity of the usual volunteer teams.



All planned public and community group events were cancelled and the work of the Community Heritage Officer ceased entirely from March to September 2020. The rangers couldn't deliver any face to face events and so delivered online activities and events through social media, which helped to keep people connected to 'their' greenspaces, when they were unable to travel to visit them.

Despite the restrictions placed on travel and social activities during the pandemic, the numbers of visitors using our country parks and nature reserves increased dramatically. The greenspaces became important meeting places for family and friends and the rangers witnessed some very emotional moments. Ninesprings Café also recorded its busiest ever year, testament to how many people were visiting Yeovil Country Park. With many venues shut and outdoor activities becoming the focus for leisure time, the simple experience of being able to buy a hot drink or a cake became a focus for a day out.

For the most part, visitors to our greenspaces behaved responsibly but there was an increase in litter across the sites. This was exacerbated with more food outlets offering takeaway services, as they were unable to seat customers inside. Footpath erosion was another negative impact on the greenspaces. Visitors trying to observe social distancing guidelines and keeping 2m apart caused the edges of the paths to become worn and naturally widened the paths. Paths across the sites were used a lot more frequently, even in winter, which is normally a quieter time for visitors. This caused pathways to become heavily trampled and muddy, making some impassable and increasing the footpath erosion as visitors tried to find less muddy routes.

One positive legacy that has resulted from the coronavirus pandemic is the increased understanding of the importance of greenspace for physical and mental wellbeing. Since restrictions have been lifted, the country parks and nature reserves are still busy with visitors, many of whom are visiting for their first time. The public appreciation of the work that the rangers do is highlighted in the feedback on their social media posts and this provides a much needed morale boost to the team.

As part of the District Council's coronavirus recovery strategy, the countryside service delivered a series of events throughout the 2021 school summer holidays in as part of the SSDC 'Summer of Play'. Across all three strategic sites, the rangers delivered and organised 27 events in total with 1900 people taking part.

As part of the wider Leisure and Recreation Service, a new website has been created as the home for all visitor information for South Somerset. [Visitsouthsomerset.com](https://visitsouthsomerset.com) is also the new host for all of the SSDC countryside sites. Through the new website, visitors can find out all of the essential information they need to know about Chard Reservoir, Ham Hill and Yeovil Country Park to plan their visit, as well as being able to book onto an event, download a trail leaflet and keep up to date with all of the news across the Leisure and Recreation service.

## Report Detail

### Ham Hill Country Park

Ham Hill's National Lottery Heritage Fund project 'Uncovering Ham Hill's Past for its Future' is progressing through the development stage of the application process. £98,000 of funding from the Heritage Fund for this stage has enabled discussions and planning with various consultants to progress to the final application for a £1.6 million four-year project, which seeks to:

- Create a small-scale sustainable visitor centre, with a café, visitor information centre, changing place toilet, public toilets and outdoor learning space.
- Improve the highway & parking to make the road safer for motorists and visitors.
- Develop a sustainable transport scheme for vulnerable and isolated communities to reach Ham Hill.
- Deliver a four-year activity plan for visitors, schools and community groups, particularly those that do not currently use Ham Hill currently, are vulnerable or isolated.
- Repair and protect important archaeological features such as the Iron Age ramparts and Lime Kiln, which have deteriorated, removing the Scheduled Monument from Historic England's 'At Risk' register.
- Habitat improvement works to increase biodiversity, improve habitat connectivity and protect existing populations of nationally important species e.g. dormice & shrill carder bees.
- Create a range of interpretation to tell the story of Ham Hill to visitors.

During the development phase, we have been working with consultants to:

- Investigate the options for a low scale sustainable visitor centre.
- Design a scheme and plan for changes to the highway to improve road safety.
- Develop ideas and themes to tell the story of Ham Hill in the interpretation plan.
- Deliver trial activities with community groups including Polinia & Friends.
- Investigate community transport options from Yeovil for vulnerable and isolated residents.

The final application is due for submission in spring 2022 (subject to Historic England approval) with the delivery phase of the project starting in summer 2022 for four years.

Ham Hill has also received over £68,000 of funding from the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage, covering the period from November 2020 to June 2021. This has enabled the recruitment of two additional full time members of staff. As a result, the team have been able to offer extra volunteering sessions, which has included sessions with Fairmead school. The grant also provided funding for digital training & equipment, a #2minute litter pick station, wildlife trail cameras and a new website for the Friends of Ham Hill. The new Friends of Ham Hill website will enable the Friends to attract more funding through highlighting previous grant funded projects and recruit more members to help with planning and delivery of events and projects.



The Friends of Ham Hill have received £800 of funding from the Somerset Community Foundation for an extension to the popular Wildwood Play Zone. This has enabled the rangers to create stepping-stones, a wooden xylophone and wigwam frames to aid den building, which has increased the play zone's popularity with visitors.

As well as the return of the weekly volunteer teams from May, the team at Ham Hill have also received voluntary support from Somerset-based business ADM Protexin, who spent a day litter picking at the hill and conservation volunteer group EuCAN, who provided volunteers to assist with repairing the dry stone walls.

The rangers carried out various wildlife surveys in the spring and early summer, with populations of birds, dormice, reptiles, butterflies and wildflowers recorded across the site. Wildlife surveys are an essential component of monitoring the effectiveness of the habitat management work, which is delivered in line with the site's five-year management plan.

During the lockdown in early 2021, the rangers delivered a 'Facebook Live' tree-planting event for Norton sub Hamdon and West Chinnock schools. The rangers planted one tree for every child in the reception classes. Due to the seasonality of tree planting in the autumn and winter period, the children themselves could not help to plant the trees, but the feedback from the schools and children was fantastic. Each tree was marked with a child's name so that they could visit the tree themselves with their families when government restrictions allowed.

#### Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve

Visitor numbers at Chard Reservoir have remained higher than normal since all of the restrictions were lifted, but unlike the other sites there has been very little in the way of littering, vandalism or anti-social behaviour.

Angling ceased at the reservoir from March to July 2020 and again from January to March 2021 during the most restrictive lockdown phases, which meant a loss of income for the Angling Club. The Angling Club licence with SSDC was also put on hold and so the reservoir also lost some income during this period. However, since reopening this year at the end of March it has been very busy. Combined with the increase in general visitors, the angler's car park off Chaffcombe road has been very busy and priority parking spaces have been designated for anglers, as this is the only car park that allows them access to the swims.

Since the volunteers return in May, they have been busy making the reserve more accessible for visitors. They created a better-surfaced path at the top of the bank from the angler's car park to the dam. This route gives pedestrians a safe path to walk on that is off the road and links to the popular Sustrans cycle path on the other side of the dam. The volunteers also installed resting benches in various locations across the reserve, and the benches in the northern section have been located to offer superb views across the water.

The five-year management plan for Chard Reservoir expired at the end of 2020 and has been updated to cover the period 2021-2025. The new management plan details the annual maintenance and habitat management works required on the site as well as the teams ambitions for events and educational engagement going forward.

There has been a change in staffing at Chard Reservoir. Former ranger Tim Brown retired in May after 26 years of service for SSDC. Tim worked at both Ham Hill and Chard Reservoir during this time with the latter 12 years as the ranger at Chard. Hannah Stanton has been appointed as the new ranger at Chard Reservoir and has settled well into the role.

The Chard Reservoir Volunteer Group were awarded £5000 from Area West towards a new children's trail activity leaflet at the reserve. The rangers and volunteers jointly planned the trail and the next step will be employing a designer to create the leaflet and markers. The trail focuses on nature at the reserve and offers small activities and a quiz for children to complete on their way round.

### Yeovil Country Park

Due to its accessibility to a large population, visitor numbers at Yeovil Country Park have remained high, even throughout the lockdown periods. Issues regarding littering, vandalism and anti-social behaviour are always ongoing at Yeovil Country Park and there have been spates of such activity in the park over the last six months. The rangers have worked hard to deal with issues as they arise and a good relationship with the PCSO and beat team has enabled a better Police presence at the park, ensuring that issues are dealt with promptly and visitors feel safe. There has also been an increase in homelessness and campers in the country park since July 2020; the rangers have worked jointly with the SSDC housing team and the Police to deal with this.

The Friends of Yeovil Country Park secured £7000 of funding from the People's Postcode Lottery in 2020 to plant 570 new trees on the eastern edge of Wyndham Hill, expanding the small copse that is already established on this side of the hill. The community tree-planting day that had been planned as part of the project, had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus restrictions and the rangers planted all 570 trees without any assistance. The trees planted were a mixture of native species including hazel, alder, wild cherry, oak, lime, holly, sweet chestnut and beech. This increases the woodland edge habitat on Wyndham Hill, increasing biodiversity and carbon sequestration; contributing to the Council's Environment Strategy.

The volunteer teams returned to their full capacity in May 2021, enabling the rangers to catch up with the backlog of work. They have also been helping to progress the Riverside Play Trail and have installed some new play features, with more to be installed throughout the autumn. The Monday volunteer group returned to the country park in July. This weekly volunteer session offers lighter activities over a shorter period for those that have mental and physical disabilities. All volunteer sessions at the

country park are fully subscribed and unfortunately, the staff do not have the capacity to take on extra volunteers, even though the demand remains high.

The Yeovil Rivers Community Trust have been working with the rangers to progress the Dodham Brook project. The rangers hinged trees in the water to provide habitat for fish and invertebrates and to help create a sinuous flow in the brook. Berms and benches were also installed in the watercourse to provide additional habitat for flora and fauna. The aim of these works has been to improve water quality and increase biodiversity; contributing to the Council's Environment Strategy.

During the spring and summer months, the rangers undertook a range of wildlife surveys to monitor the effectiveness of their habitat management work. Many of the surveys have been completed in conjunction with the Yeovil and District Wildlife Recording group, who publish an annual updated species list for the country park. The rangers have carried out surveys for birds, otters, water voles, reptiles and wasp spiders. Reptile surveys at riverside in 2020 uncovered a population of glow worms that had not been recorded previously, increasing the total number of species found at the country park to over 2700 species recorded. The rangers attended a free reptile training day delivered by Froglife, to increase their knowledge on reptile biology and behaviour, which will help them to plan more effective surveys and habitat management in the future.

The work of the Community Heritage Officer picked up again from October 2020, with some family woodland wellbeing sessions offered in October half term at Ninesprings. These sessions were very popular and the aim of the sessions was to give families the confidence to visit the country park and take part in organised activities again. Since all restrictions were lifted in summer 2021, the work of the Community Heritage Officer increased furthermore with community groups and visitors feeling more confident to join in with organised group activities and events. However, in August this year, Becky Russell, who has been the Community Heritage Officer since the start of the post in 2018, left SSDC to start a new career. Edd Chilcott has been successfully recruited to this post and joins the team from his engagement ranger role at Ham Hill, which had been funded by the Culture Recovery Fund for Heritage. Edd will continue the important community and education work of this role with sessions already programmed in with Yeovil 4 Families for the autumn. Edd will also continue to progress the Woodland Wellbeing sessions at Ham Hill, which will be delivered to groups from The Huddle and MIND. The Woodland Wellbeing sessions are being funded by Co-op community Fund and organised in conjunction with the Friends of Ham Hill.

#### Moldrams Ground and Eastfields Local Nature Reserves

Due to the travel restrictions placed by the government throughout the pandemic, work at both of these local nature reserves has been focussed on essential maintenance, with the rangers teams only visiting when essential works have needed to be carried out.

Species monitoring at Moldrams recommenced in April 2021 with great crested newt surveys taking place. The rangers have also been gaining experience in dormice surveys at Ham Hill, with the aim of obtaining a protected species licence for dormice so that effective monitoring can take place at Moldrams and Chard Reservoir, where dormice are also present.

The team are currently looking for a new tenant grazer at Eastfields LNR, to ensure the grassland is managed appropriately for wildflowers and butterflies. Without grazing, grasses will dominate and scrub will encroach on the floristically diverse grassland.

### **Financial Implications**

Not applicable.

### **Council Plan Implications**

#### **Area South**

- Support community led initiatives that contribute towards combatting climate change.
- Deliver a range of wellbeing sessions and practical volunteering at Yeovil Country Park to support Covid recovery, offering engagement with nature and offering sessions to key workers and their families. Supported by Yeovil Town Council.

#### **Area East**

- Deliver species monitoring training for Countryside staff and volunteers to enable them to carry out protected species monitoring and habitat enhancement work at Moldrams Ground LNR

#### **Area North**

- Support the development and diversification of volunteering at Ham Hill. Enable the Friends of Ham Hill to expand and create a new website to support the group's activities.
- Deliver a series of woodland wellbeing sessions to support Covid-19 recovery at Ham Hill, funded by the Co-op Community Fund.

#### **Area West**

- Support the volunteer group at Chard Reservoir to deliver a self-guided children's trail at the Local Nature Reserve

### **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

Not applicable.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

Not applicable.

### **Background Papers**

Not applicable.





## **Yeovil Crematorium Update**

*Strategic Director:* Clare Pestell, Commercial Services and Income Generation  
*Service Manager:* Robert Orrett, Commercial Property, Land and Development Manager  
*Contact Details:* [robert.orratt@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:robert.orratt@southsomerset.gov.uk)

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The Commercial Property, Land and Development Manager will attend the meeting to give a presentation and update members on the Yeovil Crematorium.

## Progress Update Yeovil Refresh

Strategic Director:	Jan Gamon, Director of Place and Recovery
Service Manager:	Natalie Fortt, Regeneration Programme Manager
Lead Officer:	Ian Timms, Yeovil Refresh Project Manager
Contact Details:	lan.timms@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462 462

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## Purpose of the Report

To give a brief update on progress with the Yeovil Refresh projects.

## Public Interest

Yeovil is South Somerset's principal town and the Yeovil Refresh is an important commitment by South Somerset District Council (SSDC) to invest in Yeovil town centre, working in close collaboration with local businesses, Somerset County Council and other stakeholders. Public consultation took place in March 2018 and both residents and local businesses provided feedback on the various priority projects identified in the document.

## Recommendation

Area South Committee note progress in delivery of the Yeovil Refresh Programme.

## Background

The Yeovil Refresh programme is a holistic programme of work designed to regenerate Yeovil town centre. The Refresh has three key infrastructure based themes supported by an underpinning animation theme. The Refresh was adopted in 2018 with work beginning on the three theme areas in late 2018. The projects focus on Transport, Major Development Sites and Public Realm.

The Refresh aims to make Yeovil town centre a vibrant place to live, work, learn and visit. It seeks to provide an improved transport network, revitalised public spaces and supports major developments to help regenerate the town centre.

The Covid -19 pandemic has accelerated changes in the way town centres are used which are very much in line with the broad thrust of the Refresh projects. This has really highlighted the need to reduce the dominance of retail space, providing alternatives through leisure, commercial and residential uses. This change in the way we use space will require more diversity in the use of existing brownfield sites and buildings within the town.



## **Transport**

The Refresh proposed a series of ideas to improve connectivity issues in the town centre area. This led to the creation of an access strategy which creates a transport package for the town centre. This is broken into sections which cover: highways, bus network, walking and cycling routes and links to wider areas such as the railway stations.

## **Public Realm**

This theme aims to create and transform public spaces through the town centre. This supports the place making aims within the Refresh. It will create streets which are shared spaces from Westminster Street through Middle Street to Wyndham Street area. The Borough will be improved as a civic space and an events space incorporating a big screen and fountain will be created in the Triangle area. Key principles are to declutter these areas making them more accessible, greener spaces with more planting and reduced levels of through traffic. The pandemic has illustrated that this type of space will be of real value in future providing strong support for the town centre.

## **Major Development Sites**

A number of large sites were identified which included Old Cattle Market, Glovers Walk and car park sites in SSDC ownership. The Old Cattle Market and Glovers Walk are in private ownership, therefore any potential development on these sites will be led by the private sector.

## **Update**

The previous update to this committee was to the June 2021 meeting. Progress in each themed area is outlined below:

## **Transport**

As stated in the background section of the report the Access Strategy work has been completed and this now forms the basis for action. Work is currently underway to deliver improvements to the Town Centre Cycling and Walking network. This also includes the proposals in the Refresh to reverse traffic flow in Stars lane which is intended to support the public realm works in the main streets.

As reported to the July meeting the cycling and walking work is broken into three phases with the aim of commencing construction in early 2022. We are working on the second phase design work, which is progressing well having now reached a stage where it is available for public consultation. Consultation should commence in September prior to this meeting. The plans are hosted on the SCC Small Improvement Schemes website with links from the Refresh Microsite.

The sections now ready for consultation are:

- Hendford
- Reversal of traffic flow Stars Lane and South Street

The following section requires further work, which includes ecological studies and liaison with the country park team

- Pen Mill Station link

This consultation includes residents and businesses along the route, statutory stakeholders and specified local consultees.

The following three sections are simple improvements to existing junctions so we plan to progress to tender as one package via the SSDC Public Realm Framework.

- Stars lane/ old Station Way
- Old Station Road Crossing
- Middle Street Junction with South Western Terrace

The highway network connections to Reckleford are also being explored but these are at an earlier feasibility stage. This work is intended to improve the network in this area to minimise congestion and positively impact air pollution levels.

### **Public Realm Work**

The work to complete the designs for improved public realm has been completed and a timetable for delivery agreed by the Refresh board. We expect to complete all works from Westminster Street to the Middle Street junction with South Western Terrace by the end of 22/23.

The first section in Westminster Street was due to start on 28<sup>th</sup> June but late changes to a sewer diversion has meant a change to this date. We will confirm dates when this is available, duration remains at three months. Works on the Triangle and Wine Street are projected to start on site with Wine Street in October. The Triangle works are expected to start in November and will be completed early summer 2022.

Tenders are also being prepared for Middle Street West, Middle street East and the Borough/High Street. The tender process commenced in September to allow us to have contracts in place by the end of the calendar year. This will enable us to complete the works in a relatively quick time frame.

A number of the sections benefit from Future High Streets funding which is matched by SSDC co-funding contributions.

A six month extension to the trial Traffic Regulation Order in Upper Middle Street was completed in July. This was extended as the original trial had been overlaid by Covid restrictions. We are now evaluating feedback to inform the final designs.

### **Development sites**

The Old Cattle Market site and Glovers Walk form a substantial part of the town centre area. Therefore, whilst they are not within SSDC control, officers are actively engaging with the owners/developers of both sites to investigate whether viable schemes can be brought forward.

There is also a project seeking to establish a co- working space that is ongoing which is part funded from Future High Streets Fund allocations.

### **Financial Implications**

None directly arising from this report.

### **Council Plan Implications**

Delivery of the Yeovil Refresh is part of Priority 2 in the Council Plan so focus will remain on the projects which are outlined within the document and on linked initiatives.

### **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

None arising from this report. However, all of the plans and projects are being developed with this theme in mind. As an example, public realm proposals include planting and greening of the area which was strongly supported by consultation in 2019. Also transport proposals seek to create a mixed network which promotes active travel, in practical terms this will promote walking and cycling as modes of transport.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

None arising directly from this report. However, when delivering each project impacts are identified and an Equality Impact Assessment carried out. We will continue to engage with groups and individuals to address issues and make reasonable adjustments where needed. Further consultations are also planned on traffic regulation orders in the next few months.

### **Background Papers**

None attached

## **Area South – Area Chapter 21/22 Update Report**

Director:	Kirsty Larkins, Director of Service Delivery
Manager:	Tim Cook, Locality Manager
Lead Officer:	Tim Cook, Locality Manager
Contact Details:	tim.cook@southsomerset.gov.uk
Director:	Kirsty Larkins, Director of Service Delivery

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## **Purpose of the Report**

To provide Members with an update of this year's delivery of the Area Chapter for Area South

## **Public Interest**

The priorities for Area South are used to influence the development of the Council Plan. Some priorities identified clearly have an area focus and are better placed in an Area Chapter. The Area Chapter presents key projects and areas of work planned for the coming year by teams from across the whole organisation.

This report provides members with an update on the 20/21 Chapter.

## **Recommendation**

That members note and comment on the report

## **Background**

Area Chapters focus on the priorities of the Area Committee. These priorities were identified by Members and SSDC Area + teams through member workshops, other service plans and data led information. The Chapter forms part of the Council Plan.

Area + teams consist of officers across the council who are best placed to provide the resources necessary (people and financial) in order to delivery each priority set out in the chapter. Each action or project identified in the plan is allocated a lead officer who collaborates with other officers across the council and/or the local community to deliver the project. The overall approach to delivery is based on the principle that we will enable others to deliver where we can, partner where it makes sense and only deliver if absolutely necessary.

## **Delivery of the Area Chapter**

Members will appreciate the ongoing restrictions and road maps out of the pandemic have ultimately meant that some project work has been difficult to achieve, complete or has caused delays.

**Appendix A** sets out this year's progress and overview of the area Chapter focus priorities.

## **Community Grant Awards**

There have been no grant awards so far this financial year. There are currently two pending applications. The ability for community groups to delivery projects is likely to be hindered due to the pandemic, however hopefully we will see an increase in requests over the next 6 months.

If Members are aware of any groups who would benefit from a Community grant please ask them to check our website for further information and eligibility <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/your-council/your-council-plan-and-strategies/communities/grants-and-other-support-for-the-voluntary-and-community-sector/> or contact [Communities@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:Communities@southsomerset.gov.uk).

Grants are awarded to charities, non-profit organisations and Town and Parish Councils. We can award up to a maximum of 50% of the application value and request there is support from the Parish or Town Council, as well as having considered other possible funding options. Requests between £101 and £12,500 are considered under this scheme.

Grant funding is available for a range of projects, which benefit the community including:

- Covering the cost of hiring a room/pitch or equipment to help start new activities
- Booking a coach or activity leader to help increase use of local facilities
- Helping to subsidise the cost of transport to get your idea moving
- Training for volunteers to make a difference in your community
- Getting some expert help for designs or other advice and guidance
- Environmental projects and initiatives

Revenue balance remaining (minus pending applications) and to be spent by end of financial year is £9,350.

Capital balance remaining, this is a rolling programme is £136,000



### **Financial Implications**

None from this report.

### **Council Plan Implications**

The priorities have been developed taking into account the SSDC Corporate plan and Area Chapter priorities.

### **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

This is considered on an individual project and programme basis as appropriate. The overall priority is to seek to create more balanced communities where people can live, work and get access to the services and facilities they need on a daily basis. Area working (Area+) helps to improve access to facilities, activities and services, reducing the need to travel.

All Community Grants applications are now assessed and scored against the environmental impact of projects.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

This is considered on an individual project and programme basis as appropriate. All Area Plans will have an Equality Impact Assessment.

### **Background Papers**

None

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Appendix A				
	<b>Area South Chapter 2021-2022</b>			
		<b>Area + Team</b>		
	<b>Project description</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Lead Service</b>	<b>Half yearly update</b>
<b>Economy</b>	Continue to support key businesses including work with the Chamber of Commerce and other partners	Joe Walsh	Economy	Attendance at regular Yeovil Chamber Events. Positions on: Yeovil Chamber Executive Committee, Manufacturing Hub Steering Group and the South Somerset Place Leadership Group.
	Support others to deliver Town Centre Event	Joe Walsh	Economy	Events programme currently being delivered by Love Yeovil to adhere to Government Guidance. 'Welcome Back' funding has also been awarded to Love Yeovil to continue to deliver events and marketing throughout the remainder of this year, this will include stakeholder/retail engagement.
	To implement tailored Covid 19 Economic Recovery programmes that suit the needs of local businesses	Joe Walsh	Economy	Mandatory grant funding through the 'Restart Grant' administered and delivered to businesses. Discretionary Grant Fund administered and delivered to businesses. Various support initiatives promoted to businesses to support recovery and growth. Work underway to determine future spend of remaining Additional Restrictions Grant Funding to ensure suitable grant schemes are in place to support businesses through recovery, revitalisation and growth.
	To support the Manufacturing Hub (M-Hub) in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and private sector businesses	Joe Walsh	Economy	SSDC continue to support M-Hub with a £5,000 allocation of funding to support the administration and growth of the network. Officer sits on the Steering Group. To date 4 formal events have taken place this year with various newsletters, and networking opportunities also provided.
	Support Love Yeovil to deliver events and community benefit within the town	Joe Walsh	Economy	Funding provided to Love Yeovil to deliver benefit to the town centre. Ongoing work to ensure this is Covid compliant and suitable for the town. Events aimed at wellbeing are being planned.
	To work with education providers in Area South including Yeovil College to provide skills for the future to local residents	Joe Walsh	Economy	Work continues with various partners, including Yeovil College, to inform them of SSDC's knowledge of labour market needs. A different picture to what was expected regarding unemployment, with labour market shortages in key sectors being more of an issue. Work is focused on providing unemployed individuals with the support required to transition into employment.

	Project description	Lead Officer	Lead Service	Half yearly update
	To support the local food and drink sector through the Food and Drink directory	Joe Walsh	Economy	Work is ongoing with the Tourism department to upload businesses to an online map that will feature within the new tourism website. Take up of the opportunity has not been as high as expected and promotion is required to increase membership. Currently being promoted via 'Get Sussed. and business newsletters.
Environment	Support community led initiatives that contribute towards combatting climate change	Tim Cook	Locality	No requests received to date. The ability for community groups to delivery projects is still likely to be hindered due to the pandemic.
	To deliver with partners a range of ecological improvements to upper Milford Valley	Steve Fox	Environment Services	Some arboricultural works has been undertaken and works are planned for the winter / spring period
	To support partners in delivering the Westfield Community Association pocket park	Beth Poole	Locality	Following COVID disruption, activity on site has now resumed. Perimeter fencing now installed, with further fencing to be acquired, a path laid and the zones starting to take shape. A recent volunteer recruitment evening was well attended, and activities are ongoing to re-engage the community on site and renew local support for the project.
	Deliver a range of wellbeing sessions and practical volunteering at Yeovil Country Park to support Covid recovery, offering engagement with nature and offering sessions to key workers and their families. Supported by Yeovil Town Council.	Katy Menday	Leisure & Recreation	Summer events underway and well received. Bat walks, woodland wellbeing, pop up museum and other bookable events all available throughout July and August once restrictions allowed.
	Campaign and engage with Town and Parish Councils and residents around local enforcement related issues	Clare Warman	Locality	Liaison with 5 Town/Parish councils around dog fouling / littering. A total of 15 Patrols have taken place where signage has been erected and footpaths cleared of mess. 1 re-site of bin as of this date. Public liaison takes place during our patrols, more knowledge is gathered over problem areas which are then followed up. Area South hosted a playday event where the "Bin-It Bug" competition was introduced. A competition to engage our little people and educate on the importance of not littering and recycling where possible. Area South received over 100 entries at this event. Patrols with PCSO's have also taken place around Yeovil Town Centre with reference to Anti-Social Behaviour.
Housing	To proactively interact on the progress of targeted housing sites in the area	Peter Paddon	Place and Recovery	Focus will be key sites at Keyford and Mudford
	To support communities to identify and enable appropriate development in rural areas around Yeovil and support community land trust proposals to meet this demand	Peter Paddon	Place and Recovery	We continue to provide advice and guidance as needed and have had an early stage enquiry
	Encourage delivery of Yeovil key site including infrastructure funding needed to unblock delay	Peter Paddon	Place and Recovery	Further work is required at Keyford and Mudford regarding phosphate mitigation and section 106 work before planning can be finalised and construction commenced
	Support a range of improvements to community facilities through S106 and Community grants	Tim Cook	Locality	Please see S106 and Community projects below



	Project description	Lead Officer	Lead Service	Half yearly update
Healthy, Self-reliant Communities	Work towards replacement of wheeled play provisions at Milford, Yew Tree and Oaktree parks (Skate parks)	Steve Barnes	Locality	Tender has been sent out. Selection process for the company to deliver the Skate Parks will be chosen in the near future.
	Support the delivery of community facilities at Wyndham Park (subject to detailed land negotiation) as well as West Coker Pavilion and Recreation Ground	Steve Barnes	Locality	Support and investigation of various issues ongoing.
	Finalise funding package for pavilion improvements at Yeovil Recreation Centre, construct a new community space and café to open in Summer 2021	Katy Menday	Leisure & Recreation	Project complete. Cafe opened 14th July and formal opening 25th August.
	Work with Yeovil Connect to tackle health and inequality	Leigh Rampton	Communities	
	Maintain the network of volunteer led health walks through promotion, training and support.	Julia Guy	Locality	We have 4 walks in Area South and a new one due to start up soon. Attendance is good with over 300 walkers in the first quarter from April to July.
	Deliver the National Play Day	Julia Guy	Locality	National Play day was not delivered due to uncertainty around Covid restrictions. A successful smaller Play day event was held at Yew Tree park in the summer instead
	Deliver six free family wildlife sessions at Riverside Park; support Yeovil schools in delivering developmental forest school activities and run five large public events at Yeovil Country Park	Katy Menday	Leisure & Recreation	Delayed until Autumn 2021 due to Covid restrictions at end of summer term. Plan in place for session role out from September and public events in October half term.
	Deliver twice weekly volunteering opportunities at Yeovil Country Park. Seek funding and opportunities to expand the volunteering support programme	Katy Menday	Leisure & Recreation	Volunteering returned and sessions oversubscribed. Building capacity within staff team to support extra participants.
	Develop and commence delivery of an intergenerational project working in partnership with South Somerset Heritage Collection to use their collection as inspiration for a project linking 7 care homes and 7 schools or youth groups across Yeovil	Katy Menday	Strategy & Commissioning	Project paused due to change in staff. Will recommence once new Community Heritage Officer appointed.
	Change the name of CHAC to South Somerset Heritage Collection and relaunch on new web pages with a digital archive. Promote the heritage collection and research resources through community talks and engagement	Katy Menday	Leisure & Recreation	Name changed on museum accreditation list. New logo created and digital archive placed on new visitsouthsomerset.com webpages
	Improving opportunities for non-car transport including walking and cycling	Jess Power/Charlotte Fry	Strategy & Commissioning	Project paused due to change in staff. Will look at picking this up again this autumn.
Project support	Community grant - advice and support to Yeovil Swan Theatre for ventilation improvements	Nathan Turnball	Locality	Funding awarded. Project completed and full payment made
	Yeovil Multi Cultural event	Beth Poole	Locality	Yeovil Together was held on 28/08/2021. It was attended by an estimated 400 people, and feedback was very positive with hopes for the event to become an annual fixture. £413.56 was raised for the Yeovil's Lord's Larder food bank.

## Area South Forward Plan

Director:	Nicola Hix, Strategy & Support Services
Lead Officer:	Jo Boucher, Case Officer (Strategy & Commissioning)
Contact Details:	Jo.boucher@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462011

## Purpose of the Report

This report informs Members of the agreed Area South Forward Plan.

## Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- a. Comment upon and note the proposed Area South Forward Plan as attached;
- b. Identify priorities for further reports to be added to the Area South Forward Plan, developed by the SSDC lead officers.

## Area South Committee Forward Plan

The forward plan sets out items and issues to be discussed by the Area Committee over the coming months.

The forward plan will be reviewed and updated each month, by the joint lead officers from SSDC, in consultation with the Area Committee Chairman. It is included each month with the Area Committee agenda, where members of the Area Committee may endorse or request amendments.

Members of the public, councillors, service managers, and partners may request an item is placed within the forward plan for a future meeting, by contacting the Agenda Coordinator.

## Background Papers

None

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Notes

- (1) Items marked in *italics* are not yet confirmed, due to the attendance of additional representatives.
- (2) For further details on these items, or to suggest / request an agenda item for the Area South Committee, please contact the Case Officer – Strategy and Commissioning; Jo Boucher.

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Lead Officer
<b>Monthly Ongoing</b> -	Verbal Update – Yeovil Market Review Group	Cllr Karl Gill
<b>TBC</b>	<i>Update on recent road improvements in the town and the public feedback</i>	SCC
<b>TBC</b>	<i>Community Funding Requests</i>	Ongoing

## Planning Appeals

Director:	Kirsty Larkins, Service Delivery
Lead Officer:	John Hammond, Specialist Principal Planner
Contact Details:	John.hammond@southsomerset.gov.uk

## Purpose of the Report

To inform members of the appeals that have been lodged, decided upon or withdrawn.

## Recommendations

That the report be noted.

## Background

The Area Chairmen have asked that a monthly report relating to the number of appeals received, decided upon or withdrawn be submitted to the Committee.

## Report Detail

### Appeals Received

Ward: Yeovil Westland  
Proposal: Notification of intent to erect a 15m Phase 8 Monopole C/W wrapround Cabinet at base and associated ancillary works  
Appellant: Hutchison UK Ltd  
Site: 5G Telecommunications Cabinet Lysander Road Yeovil Somerset

## Background Papers

Decision Notices attached.

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