

Stronger Somerset

Change is coming to Somerset that affects you

Change is coming to Somerset that affects everyone, both the services they receive and their quality of life.

It will affect the vibrancy of our towns and villages, the strength of our economy, opportunities for our young people, the quality of care for our children and older people, how successful we are in tackling Climate Change, and much more besides.

If the right decisions are made, Somerset's future could be really bright. However, if the wrong decision is made it could mean that the county's prospects are damaged for decades.

The Secretary of State for Local Government has confirmed that Westminster is moving ahead with a consultation on major change for local government in Somerset and it is important that your views are heard.

There is now a clear choice:

- a single council for Somerset, distant from its people and operating in a very traditional way, focussed on cutting costs
- Stronger Somerset - two councils for Somerset, close to the people they serve, operating in a modern and efficient way, focussed on investing in better services as well as driving forward the economy, tackling the climate emergency and improving quality of life

The four district councils in Somerset are committed to working together to deliver Stronger Somerset and ensure the best future for residents and businesses in Somerset. Stronger Somerset will ensure:

- **Every child starts well** - currently 25% of children in Somerset live in poverty and more communities are experiencing deprivation
- **Every young person believes they can live well** – many young adults leave the county to find opportunities elsewhere
- **Our older population ages well** – there is a growing older population and we will ensure they are supported to live happy, healthy, independent lives
- **Our economy levels up and contributes nationally** – we need to close the productivity gap and improves skills, wages and opportunities for green growth that everyone can benefit from as well as ensuring that our residents have a decent and affordable home.
- **Our transition to net zero carbon** – reducing the effects of Somerset on climate change and protecting our communities from the effects of climate change such as flooding

We will achieve this by:

- **Strengthening relationships with local communities** – ensuring councils that are close to the people they serve
- **Stronger communities with greater power** – give more control to local people over the things that matter to them
- **A fresh start in Care** - Transformation of Children's and Adults Social Care adopting the best of what works elsewhere
- **Two new councils for Somerset**, to replace the four districts and the county council – ensuring people and communities are well represented in our large county
- **A Somerset West Council and a Somerset East Council** will ensure a focus on the differing challenges, community identities and economic areas that exist in what is a large county; but which work together for the benefit of all of Somerset
- **Modern economy** with new skills, higher wages to “level-up” society and ensuring housing genuinely affordable for local people
- **Devolution of powers and resources from Westminster** – ensuring Somerset makes decisions for our economy and communities and can Level Up in Somerset, drive our economy forward and improve quality of life

Somerset deserves the best form of local government, not the cheapest and only Stronger Somerset will deliver this. The Stronger Somerset proposal is for a fresh start for local government in the county that will ensure better services, an improved economy and better quality of life.

If we are to get that, we need your support – the residents and businesses of Somerset.

Over the next few weeks, residents, communities, businesses and stakeholders from across the county are being invited to join a number of major online events to help inform and shape the county's future. The result of these events will shape the final Stronger Somerset Proposals to be submitted to the government.

Details on the sessions will be released soon. In the meantime, to have your say, show your support, and get involved please visit strongersomerset.co.uk or follow us on social media.

Major change is coming that affects you. Have your say.

www.strongersomerset.co.uk

**Stronger
Somerset**

