



Report on The Devolution of Open Spaces Assets and Services from Somerset Council to Minehead Town Council

Executive Summary

Somerset Council has formally agreed to transfer the ownership and management of open spaces assets and services to Minehead Town Council from April 2025. This includes key assets such as Blenheim Gardens and The Parks, along with multiple play areas and various open spaces. The transfer is part of Somerset Council's cost-saving strategy while ensuring continued local service delivery.

MTC has accounted for this transition in its 2025/26 budget, but formal approval from councillors is still required. The expanded responsibilities will necessitate additional staffing, vehicles, and equipment. Initial estimates project an increase in staffing costs of £122,993.40, alongside additional expenses for insurance and maintenance. Legal considerations, including TUPE staff transfers and property agreements, require thorough due diligence.

Operational changes will present opportunities to streamline service delivery, enhance maintenance standards, improve response times, and simplify open space management for the wider community. Environmental initiatives, such as rewilding, will be integrated into maintenance plans. Regular public communication will ensure residents are well-informed about any service changes.

Key recommendations include approving the asset transfer, securing legal representation, implementing a seven-day rota system for staff and acquiring an additional vehicle. Regular progress monitoring and flexibility in implementation will be essential to the success of this transition.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This report presents a detailed analysis of the proposals and associated costs for managing Minehead's open spaces from April 2025. The information contained herein will enable Councillors to make an informed decision regarding the proposed devolution of assets and services, understanding both the opportunities and challenges this transfer presents.

1.2 Scope

This document encompasses a comprehensive examination of current operations, detailed assessment of proposed transfers, and thorough analysis of operational implications. It further addresses financial considerations, legal requirements, risk factors, and provides specific recommendations for implementation. The scope extends to all aspects of the proposed transfer, ensuring Council members have access to all the information required for decision-making purposes.

2. Background and Context

2.1 Initial Proposal

The devolution process began on November 8th, 2023, when Somerset Council Leader Bill Revans issued formal communication to all City, Town and Parish Councils. This communication outlined the significant financial challenges facing Somerset Council and proposed the devolution of assets and services to local councils as a potential solution. The proposal aimed to maintain service delivery while addressing Somerset Council's financial constraints. **Appendix 1**

2.2 MTC Response and Development

Minehead Town Council responded promptly on November 27, 2023, expressing willingness to engage in devolution discussions and provided a comprehensive inventory of desired assets within Minehead. **Appendix 2**. This initial response led to sustained dialogue with Somerset Council officers, culminating in the development of specific devolution proposals. This response letter established the framework for ongoing discussions and continued to serve as the reference document throughout the negotiation process.

2.3 Timeline and Transfer Process

On January 10th, 2025, Somerset Council's Executive Committee approved a key decision, as outlined in **Appendix 3**, authorising officers to devolve assets and services to MTC. As part of cost-saving measures, the council plans to transfer ownership of open space assets and associated service liabilities to MTC on April 1st 2025. If an immediate transfer is not feasible, responsibility will be assigned under a license agreement, with a commitment to completing the ownership transfer as soon as possible.

3. Current Operations

3.1 Existing Service Delivery Model

The current arrangement for grounds maintenance in Minehead involves both MTC and Somerset Council delivering services, creating operational inefficiencies and public confusion regarding responsibility. This dual-delivery model has led to inconsistent maintenance standards across the town. Recent examples demonstrate MTC's increasing role in service delivery, such as assuming responsibility for

Blenheim Gardens bedding and night-time locking of the Gardens when Somerset Council faced service delivery challenges.

3.2 Current MTC Assets and Responsibilities

Minehead Town Council presently maintains an extensive portfolio of public spaces and facilities throughout the town. The council manages several significant open spaces, including Irnham Recreation Ground, King George Playing Field, Marsh Common, and Lower Marsh Common. The council's allotment provision encompasses six distinct sites: Marshfield Road, Harepark, Poundfield, Periton Way, Periton Lane, and Orchard Road allotments. Additionally, MTC oversees multiple play areas, including facilities at Irnham Recreation, King George, Cross Farm, and Periton. Below is a table of areas currently owned and/or maintained by Minehead Town Council with works undertaken by the in house Amenities Team:

Site Name	Site Description	Comments
Irnham Recreation Ground	Open Space	
King George Playing Field	Open Space	
Marsh Common	Open Space	
Lower Marsh Common	Open Space	
Cross Farm Close	Open Space	
Periton Playing Field	Open Space	
Marshfield Road allotments	Allotment	Asset transfer is in progress as part of a pre-approved process.
Harepark Allotments	Allotment	
Poundfield Allotments	Allotment	
Periton Way Allotments	Allotment	Asset transfer is in progress as part of a pre-approved process.
Periton Lane Allotments	Allotment	Asset transfer is in progress as part of a pre-approved process.
Orchard Road Allotments	Allotment	Asset transfer is in progress as part of a pre-approved process.
Irnham Rec Play Area	Play Areas	
King George Play Area	Play Areas	
Cross Farm Play area x 2	Play Areas	Includes junior and toddler play areas
Periton Play Area	Play Areas	
Alcombe Common	Common Land	
Minehead Cemetery	Cemetery	
Alcombe War Memorial	War Memorial	
Minehead War Memorial	War Memorial	Asset currently owned by SC MTC
Wellington Square	Open Space	

All town flower displays	Open Space/Tubs	Various locations throughout town
Public conveniences	Public conveniences	Warren Road, Quay West, Summerland, Blenheim
Highways Verges & Roundabouts	Roadside verges	Assets owned by SC maintained by MTC
Grit bin reporting and monitoring	Highways	Assets owned by SC MTC assist with maintaining stock levels
Street Weed Control	Highways	Assumed responsibility by MTC

3.3 Current Resources and Equipment

The council maintains significant infrastructure across its managed sites. The current inventory includes approximately fifty benches distributed throughout public spaces, fourteen waste and recycling facilities, and ten dog waste bins. Play equipment varies across locations, with each play area containing age-appropriate installations.

Beyond these fixed assets, MTC possesses extensive grounds maintenance machinery and specialised equipment. A recent comprehensive asset review has enabled the identification and replacement of ageing equipment as required. This proactive approach to equipment management ensures service continuity and operational efficiency.

4. Proposed Asset Transfer

4.1 Core Assets for Transfer

The proposed devolution package includes several significant properties and facilities throughout Minehead. The centrepiece of this transfer is Blenheim Gardens, which includes the main gardens, café facility, and North Road car park. The Parks area encompasses multiple sites including Parks Walk, Woodcombe Walk (including the old toilet block), and Bratton Park. Additional major facilities include Jubilee Gardens with its café and Alexandra Road car park. The list of sites currently maintained and due for devolution are mapped for reference in **Appendix 4**, However, the list of sites are identified below (All transfers will be on a freehold basis unless stated otherwise. Please note that some discrepancies may exist between this and **Appendix 1** due to variations in the 'common names' used for certain areas):

Site Name	Site Description	Comments
Blenheim Gardens including Blenheim Café and North Road car park.	Open Space/Car Park	Includes footpath to Avenue. Income potential from café & Car Park.
The Parks - Parks walk	Open Space	

The Parks - Woodcombe Walk (including old toilet block building)	Open Space	
The Parks - Bratton Park	Open Space	
Esplanade	Open Space	Parts only due to various land owners. Leasehold.
Culvercliffe Open Space	Open Space	
Ellicombe Open Space	Open Space	
Stone flower planters, centre Island, The Parade	Planters	Currently maintained by MTC.
6 x Bus Shelters	Bus Shelters	Current agreement with Fernbank due to end. This will likely involve a different level of devolution discussions. See Appendix 5
Cuckoo Meadow Play Area	Play Area	
Seafront Play Areas x 2	Play Area	Part of Esplanade Leasehold. Pirate ship and toddler play by kiosk/PC's.
Seafront Play Area	Play Area	
Sycamore Road Play Area	Play Area	
Warren Road Play Area	Play Area	Included as part of Trinity way to Warren road walkway.
Trinity Way to Warren road walkway	Open Space	
Culvercliffe Play Area	Play Area	
Seaward Way Open Space	Open Space	Area opposite new rainbow way + paddock/grazing behind.
The Lagoons	Open Space	Opposite McDonalds.
Planters at Harbour	Planters	This means the asset transfer of the planters only.
Parkhouse road open space	Open Space	Area between Parkhouse road and Regents way
Hyde Road	Open Space	Tall trees area at top of West St.
Mollys Patch	Open Space	Land off Beacon Road
Alexandra Road car Park	Car Park	Income Potential. First year at least will need an SLA with SC to continue enforcement service. SLA T&C's TBC.
Jubilee Gardens &	Open Space & Café	Income Potential.

Café		
Minehead War Memorial	Open Space	Currently maintained by MTC.

The transfer also includes numerous open spaces throughout the town. These range from Ellicombe Open Space to smaller but significant areas such as Millbridge Gardens and Cuckoo Meadow Play Area. The package includes partial responsibility for the Esplanade, though this transfer will be on a leasehold basis due to multiple existing landowners.

4.2 Additional Maintenance Responsibilities

In addition to the primary asset transfer, MTC will take on routine maintenance responsibilities for several additional areas, including Webbers Garden and the Zig Zag path. While Somerset Council will retain asset ownership and remain responsible for long-term maintenance—such as tree work and footpath repairs—MTC will manage the day-to-day upkeep. This arrangement will provide a clear distinction between routine maintenance and major infrastructure responsibilities. However, this more informal element of the devolution process is equally critical. With SC planning to withdraw from its daily operational role in Minehead, MTC's involvement will ensure these areas remain smart, tidy, and well-maintained, preserving operational standards and the town's appearance.

4.3 Income Generating Assets

Several assets included in the transfer package present opportunities for revenue generation to help offset the additional operational costs associated with devolution. The Blenheim Gardens title deed includes both a café facility and the North Road car park, each offering potential income streams through rental fees and parking charges respectively. Similarly, Alexandra Road car park represents another parking revenue opportunity, though due to current constraints on time and staffing capacity, the car parks will require a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Somerset Council for enforcement services during at least the first year of operation. Under the proposed arrangement, MTC will enter into an SLA with Somerset Council at an agreed cost, which will be subtracted from any income collected, with the remaining amount transferred to MTC on a quarterly basis. While MTC will retain the ability to review its fees and charges independently from Somerset Council's rates, such changes will need to be implemented as a coordinated project alongside Somerset Council.

Additional income-generating assets include the Jubilee Gardens café and two kiosks along the esplanade - one at the Jubilee end and another at the Warren Road toilets - which will also transfer to MTC's responsibility.

While these assets present revenue-generating opportunities, exact income projections cannot be provided at this time as they will depend on various factors including existing lease agreements, market conditions, operational costs, enforcement arrangements for car parks, and ongoing maintenance requirements. The Deputy Clerk is currently conducting a comprehensive review of all existing lease agreements to understand the associated liabilities.

Looking ahead, MTC will need to develop business plans for each income-generating asset to maximise revenue potential while ensuring high-quality service delivery to the community. This may include future reviews of car parking enforcement arrangements and lease terms, though such initiatives will require careful planning, adequate resources, and appropriate timing to implement effectively.

It is important to note that SC has been reluctant to devolve income-generating assets. Several towns that have completed or are undergoing the devolution process have not succeeded in acquiring any of these assets. Although revenue from sites like car parks can be unpredictable, any income generated would be beneficial in offsetting the increased running costs—an advantage not afforded to other towns.

5. Operational Considerations

5.1 Staffing

Current staffing costs for the amenities team amount to £256,766.00 including on-costs for the 2024/25 financial year. Additional staff-related expenses, including training and PPE, currently stand at £8,000.00. Under TUPE regulations, three staff members have been identified for transfer to MTC, which will increase the total amenities salary cost across all associated cost centres to £426,790.68, accounting for on-costs and a 2025 pay award. **Appendix 6.**

Legal employment advice regarding TUPE implications confirms that transfer regulations apply in this instance. This necessitates the inclusion of affected staff in any devolution agreement. As described in **Appendix 7.** Management has identified the need to review working practices to ensure optimal resource allocation both before and after devolution. The recommendation includes consulting both existing and transferred staff regarding contract modifications to implement a five-day working week operated on a seven-day rota basis.

5.2 Infrastructure and Equipment

MTC's current operational base is spread across multiple locations, which impacts service delivery and efficiency. While a single-site depot would be the preferred long-term solution to enhance practicality and staff efficiency, in the short term, the existing split locations can be reorganised effectively to accommodate the additional staffing and equipment for the time being.

MTC currently have a fleet of five vehicles. They are as follows:

Make and Model	Van Type	Age/Year	Status
Ford Transit	Tipper	2019	Leased
Goupil G4	Tipper	2016	Owned
Goupil G4	Tipper	2017	Owned
Nissan E-nv200	Panel	2021	Leased
Vauxhall Vivaro	Panel	2014	Owned

The vehicle fleet needs to expand to meet growing service demands and staffing numbers. An analysis of vehicle requirements has identified the need for at least one additional mid-range tipper van.

As part of the ongoing service review between the Clerk and Amenities Manager, the Isuzu ‘Grafter’ has been identified as a suitable addition to the fleet. This vehicle meets the necessary service criteria—it is a tipper van, slightly smaller than a Transit but larger than a Goupil, has towing capability, and can accommodate three people.

The cost will depend on availability at the time of purchase, but a second-hand Isuzu Grafter (or a similar model from 2019 onwards) is estimated to range between £16,000 and £25,000 exc. VAT (www.autotrader.co.uk) if purchased outright.

Leasing options have been explored, but most do not offer immediate delivery, with lead times of several months, potentially impacting service delivery by the proposed start date of April 1st. While servicing can be included at an additional cost, it would likely be more cost-effective to manage maintenance locally. Additionally, most lease agreements impose penalties for returning the vehicle with dents or scratches—an unavoidable risk given the nature of the Amenities team’s work. **Appendix 8** outlines the specification of an Isuzu Grafter.

MTC, as an experienced operational service provider, already possesses a comprehensive range of tools and equipment necessary for performing the grounds maintenance duties linked to devolution. However, a key aspect of SC's devolution decision involves transferring any required equipment. Discussions are ongoing regarding the transfer of specific tools and equipment that could enhance MTC's existing inventory.

5.3 Financial Implications

Through the budget setting process, Full Council evaluated a budget report in January 2025 that also included the cost impact of devolution across multiple elements. While significant work has been done to identify additional costs, some expenses remain under evaluation. The budget setting report outlined the following significant costs associated with devolution:

Cost Centre	Cost Code	24/25 Budget	25/26 budget	Reason
Governance and Administration	Insurance	£15,660	£20,350	Public liability increased through devolution.
Depot Team	Wages, NI & Pension	£210,623	£322,083	3 x Additional Amenities Staff Required
Depots & Compounds	Refuse and Recycling	£8,000	£17,000	Although exact liabilities are still to be finalised, MTC bin responsibilities are set to

				increase substantially
Open Spaces & Recreation	Tree Works	£8,000	£10,000	MTC Tree stock set to substantially increase
Vehicles, Plant & Equipment	Fuel	£4,000	£5,500	Fuel usage set to increase across fleet and machinery usage due to devolution.
Vehicles, Plant & Equipment	Road Tax	£500	£1,800	MTC vehicle fleet will need to increase, budgeted on 'worst case' scenario with current road tax fees.
Vehicles, Plant & Equipment	Vehicle Replacement (EMR)	£13,500	£29,125.00*	MTC vehicle fleet will need to increase due to increased work force
Community Centre	Wages, NI and Pension	£19,358	£28,500	Increase reflects the additional duties associated with devolution undertaken by the post holder at community centre such as locking of Blenheim Gardens.
Town Centre Maintenance	General Maintenance	£500	£20,000	As devolution conversations continue, a number of costings estimates are becoming clearer. However, there is a lot of 'unknowns' As well as a number of years of neglect will mean an increased GM budget is required.

Town Centre Maintenance	Floral Displays	£7,750	£12,000	Will include all towns floral displays, inc. Blenheim Gardens. Will also have associated sundries costed to this e.g. compost.
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*Value of total amount to be in EMR in 2025/26.

The uncertainty that still exists around some specific devolution-related costs necessitates a fiscally prudent approach to financial planning for fiscal year 2025/26. It is therefore recommended that any underspend from the 2024/25 devolution budget be earmarked to mitigate these potential additional expenditures. (See additional agenda item) During the initial phase of devolution, particularly throughout the first operational year, it is imperative that both financial and staffing resources are strategically allocated to consolidate service provision across the town. The management of public expectation will be a critical part of this process, both with respect to capital improvements of devolved infrastructure assets (many of which have fallen into disrepair due to years of neglected maintenance) and community focused expenditures. Due to the significant additional costs associated with devolution and to achieve only a modest precept increase that was set totalling £1,011,635.00, community funding initiatives have not received the level of budgeting initially anticipated. This budgetary framework established the Town Council Band D rate in Minehead at £228.47 (6.5 % increase from 2024/25). Significantly lower than a number of other towns in Somerset that have either started or due to start a similar level of asset & service devolution themselves.

6. Legal Framework

6.1 Asset Transfer Process

The transfer of assets from Somerset Council to Minehead Town Council requires a significant legal work to ensure proper documentation and protection of the Council's interests. While the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk intend to manage many aspects of the transfer process, certain elements will require professional legal expertise.

The asset transfer process involves multiple legal considerations including:

- Property title investigations
- Transfer deed preparation
- Lease agreement reviews
- Covenant and restriction assessments
- Rights of way and access agreements
- Review of existing licences

- Employment contract transfers

6.2 Authority to Act

Somerset Council's legal authority to devolve or dispose of these assets is permitted under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972. For Minehead Town Council, different statutory provisions apply depending on the specific type of asset or service being acquired. Since MTC does not qualify for the General Power of Competence (GPC) as defined in Sections 1-8 of the Localism Act 2011 which states "A local authority has power to do anything that individuals generally may do", MTC must rely on other statutory provisions to exercise its powers and duties regarding devolution to meet legal compliance. The key pieces of legislation that enable MTC to carry out these functions are outlined below.

Function/Service	Statutory Provision
Acquisition of Land	Local Government Act 1972 S.124.
Car Parks	Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 S.57 (1) (b)
Play Areas	Open Spaces Act 1906 S 10 (b)
Open Spaces	Public Health Act 1875 S.164, and/or Open Spaces Act 1906 S 9 - 10.
Facilities in connection with recreational facilities (e.g. Cafés)	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 S.19 (1)(f)

6.3 Legal Representation

While the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk will act on behalf of MTC throughout the process where appropriate, certain aspects of the transfer will require the use of a solicitor and their specialised legal knowledge. Professional legal representation will ensure the Council's interests are properly protected and all statutory requirements are met. The Town Clerk is currently negotiating with a local solicitor, who has recently supported MTC with allotment transfers, to establish a practical and cost-effective professional legal assistance package for the devolution process.

6.4 Additional Considerations

Ellicombe open space requires particular attention, as a portion of the land falls outside Minehead parish boundaries. It is important to single out this site in particular regarding MTC's statutory authority to acquire and maintain an asset that is outside the parish. As with all other areas of land this asset can be acquired under Local Government Act 1972 S.124. It is important to note this part of legislation allows towns and parish councils the opportunity to acquire land both inside and outside their area making this acquisition lawful.

However, as a section of this open space is situated just outside of Minehead's parish boundary, Dunster Parish Council have been contacted and invited to provide their feedback on this proposed acquisition. The Clerk of Dunster Parish Council has added this topic onto their March Full Council Agenda for discussion.

7. Service Level Implications

7.1 Maintenance Standards

A comprehensive review of proposed maintenance standards must be established to ensure service consistency. This work has already begun and has been developed using a combination of known existing maintenance schedules, known frequencies of intervention and integration of existing MTC maintenance methods such as rewilding. This will ensure all grounds maintenance and general upkeep schedules align across existing and devolved assets. **Appendix 9** gives an overview of the required maintenance schedules across all sites from April 1st.

As time progresses, a more comprehensive plan of how MTC intends to manage and maintain these areas that includes timelines for infrastructure investment in some areas will need to be developed and approved by council to ensure long term planning, budgeting and investment.

7.2 Response Times

Through more localised ownership and management of these assets, response times to any matters will be faster and potential problems can be better identified. However, MTC will need to develop clear protocols for response times to various issues that occur out of hours, particularly for safety-related matters in play areas and public spaces. This will need to be developed alongside the review of staff contracts with the development of an out of hours reporting mechanism/number.

8. Environmental Impact

8.1 Carbon Footprint

The proposed changes to the vehicle fleet and maintenance practices will likely impact the council's carbon footprint. However, with more localised management and maintenance generally and the reduction of machinery to carry out the same tasks through joining working practices, the overall carbon footprint is likely to reduce through services owned, managed and maintained by MTC.

8.2 Biodiversity Considerations

MTC have already identified that the management of open spaces presents opportunities for biodiversity enhancement through adjusted maintenance regimes and habitat creation. In 2022 MTC began their rewilding initiatives across a number of open spaces, cemeteries and grass verges.

In order for the newly acquired open spaces to align with MTC's maintenance methods, it will be necessary to introduce rewilding across a number of the newly acquired areas. This will be rolled out in a similar way to before with areas identified based on area usage, demographic and size with selected areas left to rewild throughout the grass growing season and will be reviewed as required through public feedback/consultation.

9. Public Communication Strategy

9.1 Transition Period

A clear communication strategy is needed to inform residents about changes in service provision and reporting procedures.

This can be achieved through clear day 1 signage and removal of any incorrect signage and information at the same time, this alongside press releases and social media status and updates will be important. The Town Council's community engagement events can also be used to feature information on devolution and what this means to residents and visitors to the town.

9.2 Ongoing Engagement

Methods for public feedback and service monitoring should be established to ensure accountability and service quality.

10. Risk analysis

10.1 Swot analysis

The proposals through Devolution present a number of Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats that need to be carefully considered and evaluated before a decision can be made. **Appendix 10** Provides a SWOT analysis produced by the clerk for councillors to review and consider the key findings. It is important that this process is continually reviewed throughout this process and into the future to ensure that any associated controls required to address any threats are addressed.

10.2 Risk Assessments

Assessing all hazards, risks, probabilities, and associated controls through a risk assessment is a crucial aspect of the risk analysis process. **Appendix 11** includes a risk assessment prepared by the clerk, highlighting key findings. As with all risk assessments, regular reviews are essential to ensure they remain relevant and effectively aid in identifying hazards and their controls.

Recommendations for Council Consideration

The following recommendations require approval by the Council:

Asset Transfer Acceptance

- Approve the devolution of assets and services as outlined in the report, subject to satisfactory completion of due diligence.

Staffing and Operations

- Approve the TUPE transfer of three Somerset Council staff members.
- Approve the implementation of the proposed seven-day operation rota system.

Vehicle and Equipment

- Approve the purchase of one mid-size tipper van up to £21,000 before April 2025. Using the Vehicle Replacement (EMR) fund, with any additional costs covered by the evolution budget.

Legal and Administrative

- Approve the engagement of a qualified solicitor for complex asset transfer aspects, with a budget not exceeding £10,000.
- Approve the establishment of a service level agreement for devolved car park services.
- The Town Clerk is authorised to proceed with necessary legal documentation where required.
- The Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk are authorised to act on behalf of MTC where professional legal representation is not required.

Further Actions to Be Undertaken

The following steps should be carried out as part of the implementation process:

- Ensure all asset transfers are properly documented and registered with relevant authorities.
- Progress should be tracked through regular reports to the Council.
- Approaches should be adapted as needed based on operational experience and public feedback.

These recommendations form an integrated approach to service transition and delivery. Immediate approvals will enable the next steps, while ongoing actions will ensure a smooth implementation of the devolution process.

Ben Parker
Town Clerk
February 2025

Appendix 1.

Somerset Council
County Hall, Taunton
Somerset, TA1 4DY



8 November 2023

Dear Colleagues,

Asset and Service Devolution

By now you will be aware of the enormous financial challenge facing Somerset Council. The rising cost of social care, together with inflation, plus a failure by government to bring forward the promised Fair Cost of Care policy, have contributed to the emergency. And then there's the decision by central government to dramatically reduce funding for local authorities over recent years, the decision of the previous administration to freeze council tax for six years in a row, and the limit on how much local authorities can increase this by - all of which has led us to an emergency position.

Since the creation of Somerset Council, we have been committed to working with communities who want greater influence over local assets and services. We know that some city, town and parish councils have clear ambitions for devolution of specific functions and assets in their areas. We also recognise that not everyone is in the same position, and that whilst devolution conversations are seen as opportunities for some, they can be concerning for others.

We have been working on a framework that acknowledges these differences, with a view to working with you to develop a prioritised programme of devolution for the coming months and years. The scale of the financial challenge facing Somerset Council means we are rapidly having to review all of our activities and prioritise where our limited resources are deployed. Therefore, in order to protect many of the services our communities value, we intend to speed up the pace of devolution.

We are asking city, town and parish councils to consider which (if any) of the services we've listed below, they think their communities would like them to support financially. We recognise of course that with Somerset Council recently having taken over from the former district and county councils, service provision is not uniform across Somerset, and that a number of our city, town and parish councils already provide some of those services listed below.

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We will not make any decisions lightly; however our city, town and parish councils may want to help our communities continue to enjoy the services they currently have. Unlike Somerset Council, which has strict limits on how much it can raise for local services through Council Tax, our local councils have far more freedom to raise their precepts to protect those services their communities value.

Somerset Council's budget will not be finalised until February, and the first draft will not be ready until the start of December, so we cannot tell you definitively which discretionary services Somerset Council will be able to continue to provide next year. As proposals for the budget develop, we will keep you informed. In the meantime, I hope that the list below gives some indication of those areas you may wish to consider supporting.

There are many ways in which we would welcome city, town and parish councils contributing to the provision of services - these range from providing a financial contribution to enable the continuation of a specific service delivered by Somerset Council (or its contractors), working in partnership with or under delegated authority from Somerset Council, parishes taking full control of assets and services entirely, or working together to support communities in other ways if services have to cease and local devolution is not feasible.

The Local Community Networks (LCNs), set up following the creation of Somerset Council, will also have an important role to play. It has been encouraging to see these networks grow, develop their own priorities and begin to implement actions. While services cannot be devolved to LCNs, they are an essential forum to bring councils and partners together to prioritise and debate options. Neighbouring parishes and other stakeholders may wish to work together, to see how valuable services can be protected and delivered in the future. This could involve groups of parishes working in clusters or across boundaries to take on delegated responsibilities from Somerset Council. Each LCN can work with their constituent organisations as delivery partners to help facilitate those discussions.

By transferring the ownership and management of some assets and services to the local level, your local councils can potentially better tailor them to the specific needs and preferences of your communities. You can also access additional funding sources that are not available to the larger authorities and make use of local networks to mobilise volunteers and partners. Service devolution can also enhance the role of city, town and parish councils, as they become more involved in local decision-making and place-shaping.

If this is something that you wish to consider further, please contact my officers in the first instance via devolution@somerset.gov.uk and they will be get back to you to arrange discussions, which could be one-to-one or as groups of councils.

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We are committed to keeping city, town and parish councils informed and consulted over the coming weeks and months as the picture of which services Somerset Council will and will not be able to continue, becomes clearer. In addition, we will carry on engaging with you as a sector, through regular briefings and forums. We are also working with our Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) and Somerset Association of Local Councils (SALC) colleagues with the aim of ensuring a true partnership approach in how we support our communities.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Revans', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Cllr Bill Revans
Leader of Somerset Council

Appendix 1.

Somerset services - devolution opportunities

Theme	<p style="text-align: center;">Services & Assets</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Risks & Opportunities</p>
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community transport • Bus services/funding • Bus shelter cleaning and maintenance • Opportunity: Joint working on community and volunteer transport schemes; local contractor or volunteer work on bus shelters
Highways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street Cleaning covered in Street Scene but can include highway channels and litter removal from verges. • Winter Service - filling grit bins/dumpy bags • Roadside verges maintenance including grass cutting • Vegetation clearance and cutting on the Rights of Way network • Drain jetting/Gully cleansing – both ordering works from TMC Contractor and local self-delivery • Ditches and grips clearance • Hedge trimming • Non-illuminated sign cleaning and maintenance • Signage for new or changed speed limits • Weed treatment • Minor Highways functions such as footway and footpath repairs, • Planned path safety inspections • Opportunities: Parish Highway Steward Model (based on one per LCN area); P/T/C Council funding of most local highway services in accordance with community preferences eg on grass cutting regularity • Low tech preventative maintenance functions
Waste services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for household waste recycling sites • Opportunity: Funding to support existing opening hours at current sites
Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School crossing patrols • Opportunity: Funding to schools/Somerset Council to support ongoing or new patrols

Appendix 1.

Public toilets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public toilets, provision and opening hours • Opportunities: Asset transfers to Parish/Town/City Councils; contributions to cleaning costs / opening hours through Somerset Council contracts
Street Scene	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fly tipping • Street cleaning • Provision and collection of litter bins and dog waste bins • Carnival clean-up • Bedding planting • Management of allotments • Memorial maintenance • Opportunities: Asset transfers to P/T/C Councils; P/T/C Councils to take on more responsibility either through own provision of service or through contribution to Somerset Council service costs
Open Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management and maintenance of open spaces assets - including both green spaces as well as “hard” open spaces • Grass cutting and open space maintenance, closed churchyards • Local parks • Opportunities: Asset transfers to P/T/C Councils; P/T/C Councils to take on more responsibility either through own provision of service or through contribution to Somerset Council service costs • Maintenance of play areas • Installation and maintenance of play equipment • Maintenance of sports grounds
Economic Development /Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local tourism • Local town economic development (incl. e.g. job clubs) • Control of markets • Opportunities: P/T/C Councils support for Visitor information; local Chamber of Commerce; management of markets
Leisure / Arts / Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding to support Leisure Centres / Swimming pools • Support to theatres and arts centres • Additional support to libraries • Opportunities: Asset transfers to P/T/C Councils; P/T/C Councils support for existing services; asset transfers of cultural facilities; adoption of play areas; S106 funding for new play areas

Appendix 1.

Community Wellbeing and Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Centres• Provision of facilities and services for children and young people• Supporting Volunteering/Befriending• Community safety / neighbourhood watch• Local climate change initiatives (for example local green transport schemes while ensuring unitary has strategic overview)• Provision of sandbags/gel bags and some local flood response measures• Opportunities: Local provision of some flood response measures; P/T/C Council grants for community services (including young people) and climate change initiatives; LCN work on combining offers across LCN areas where geography allows; P/T/C Council grants for services for vulnerable people
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Date: 27 November 2023

Dear Councillor Revans,

Thank you for your letter dated 8th November 2023 in which you outline the potential for asset and service devolution. Minehead Town Councillors have now had time to meet to discuss the content of the letter and consider an initial response.

We acknowledge the financial challenge that Somerset Council is facing. Minehead Town Council has for many years advocated for the responsible devolution of assets and services to Town and Parish Councils. Our view is that local delivery of services and care of assets can be provided in an agile and responsive system that in turn provides better outcomes for the community. However, Minehead Town Council is well aware of the financial implications and liabilities to its residents of unfunded asset transfers.

Minehead Town Council is willing and available to have a broad discussion with Somerset Council to consider the transfer of assets and services and identify associated funding opportunities. We wish to explore the role we can play in providing short and long term solutions. As a responsible Town Council, we are eager to creatively work with you to identify practical options to offset Somerset and Minehead costs, whilst protecting our residents from avoidable precept increases. Whilst Minehead Town Council does have a small amount of other income, it is primarily reliant on the precept to fund all services.

As you know, we are preparing to set our budgets for 2024/25 and, as the prospect of devolution may have a knock-on effect to the budget setting process, it is essential that structured discussions be programmed at the earliest opportunity.

Attached is a list of assets and associated services that we believe are significant candidates for the negotiation processes.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Councillor Craig Palmer, Mayor of Minehead
On behalf of Minehead Town Council

Town Clerk: – Mrs H. Nathanson Council Offices, 3 Summerland Road, Minehead, TA24 5BP
Telephone: 01643 707213 e-mail: info@mineheadtowncouncil.co.uk
Website: www.mineheadtowncouncil.co.uk

Minehead - A Fairtrade Status Town



Appendix 2.

Attachment 1 to MTC letter dated 27 November 2023

Service/Asset	MTC Offer
Warren Road Toilet Block and Kiosk	Asset transfer of the building NB MTC already funds the toilets. Asset transfer of the kiosk to offset the costs of providing the toilets
Blenheim Gardens, including the Café.	Asset and service transfer NB MTC already owns and provides the toilets
The Parks (Parks walk, Woodcombe Walk, Bratton Park)	Asset and service transfer
The Esplanade	Asset and service transfer
Culvercliffe Open Space	Asset and service transfer
Ellicombe Open Space	Asset and service transfer
Stone flower planters, centre Island, The Parade	Asset transfer NB MTC already provides all floral displays throughout the town, including the planting of these stone planters
Play areas (Warren Road, Culvercliffe, Whitworth Road, Trinity way, Sycamore Road)	Asset and service transfer NB MTC already owns and maintains all other play parks in the town
Bus Shelters	Asset and service transfer
Car Parks (Warren Road, Station, Quay West, North Road, Clanville, Alexandra Road, Summerland Road)	Asset and service transfer to help MTC offset the costs of delivering the above services. Furthermore, given the current condition of the car parks this transfer will enable SC to avoid the cost of essential maintenance work.

Town Clerk: – Mrs H. Nathanson Council Offices, 3 Summerland Road, Minehead, TA24 5BP
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Minehead - A Fairtrade Status Town



Appendix 3.

Decision Report

Proposed Decision Date – 10/01/2025
Key Decision FP240523



Asset and Service Devolution to Minehead Town Council

Lead Member: Councillor Bill Revans, Leader of the Council

Local Members and Divisions affected: Councillor Andrew Hadley (Minehead),
Councillor Mandy Chilcott (Minehead), Councillor Marcus Kravis (Dunster),
Councillor Christine Lawrence (Dunster)

Executive Director: Chris Hall, Executive Director, Community, Place and Economy.

Executive Summary

This report seeks approval for devolution of assets and services detailed in Appendix 1 to Minehead Town Council (MTC) for 1st April 2025.

Devolution of services to Minehead Town Council will protect those services for residents of Minehead and deliver savings for Somerset Council.

Recommendations

That the Leader of the Council

- a. Agrees to devolve operational services and asset listed in Appendix 1, to Minehead Town Council from 1st April 2025, in line with the Council's adopted Asset and Services Devolution Framework.
- b. To transfer equipment, as required, to Minehead Town Council, ready for those operational services, from 1st April 2025.
- c. Delegate authority to the Executive Director Executive Director, Community, Place and Economy, in consultation with the Lead Member for Economic Development, Planning and Assets to agree the transfer of or grant of rights over the land and property assets detailed in Appendix 1 on appropriate terms as soon as practically possible by, on or after 1st April 2025, provided the Interim Head of Legal Services is satisfied that all relevant legal requirements have been met.
- d. Delegate authority to the Service Director, Regulatory and Operational Services, in consultation with the Executive Lead Member for Communities, HRA, Culture, Equality and Diversity and the Executive Director, Community, Place and Economy to agree the transfer of operational services on appropriate terms as soon as practically possible by, on or after 1st April 2025, provided the Interim Head of Legal Services is satisfied that all relevant legal requirements have been met

Appendix 3.

Reasons for Proposals

- 1.1 Executive Members support the principle for devolution of assets and services to Town, City and Parish Councils.
- 1.2 Officers have worked collaboratively with Minehead Town Council to ensure that devolution of services will be a seamless process, with no detrimental impact to residents of Minehead.
- 1.3 Officers are satisfied that sufficient due diligence has been carried out by both the disposing authority (Somerset Council) and Minehead Town Council as the new service operator.
- 1.4 Any further devolution of assets and services will be subject to a separate decision-making process.
- 1.5 All transfers are based on the condition at the transfer date and offered at nil consideration.
- 1.6 The devolution of services in Minehead supports strategic opportunities to reduce depot occupation across the county.
- 1.7 The Asset Management Group (AMG) has been informed of the programme of asset transfers assets on 26/6/2024. AMG agreed in principle that a transfer of the assets to MTC would be supported under the asset devolution programme. This was subject to further assessment of strategic / financial value – including potential value for BNG / phosphate credits), which has now been completed.

Final sign off was given by AMG 24/9/24.

Report Author: Jonathan Stevens, Head of Operations, Regulatory and Operational Services

Contact Details: jonathan.stevens@somerset.gov.uk

Appendix 3.

Main report and supporting information



Background and purpose of report

- 2.1** This report is to advise members on devolution of assets and services to Minehead Town Council (MTC). Somerset Council (SC) and Minehead Town Council are working towards a transfer date of 1 April 2025, subject to the relevant democratic approval processes at both Councils.
- 2.2** MTC have long held an ambition to run more services, especially around open spaces. Following the Leader's letter to city, towns and parish councils from Somerset Council regarding devolution opportunities last year, Minehead Town Council responded positively, expressing a desire to take on assets and services.
- 2.3** Officers have since been in conversation with Minehead Town Council regarding devolution of services and assets to support Somerset Council's financial position and protect services for residents of Minehead. MTC immediately set up a Devolution Advisory Group to help determine the Council's position, and conversations have been positive.
- During these conversations, MTC agreed immediate support for 24/25, funding the overnight locking of Blenheim Park and bedding plants for the town. This equates to an immediate 24/25 saving of £15,000 per annum. The town council also agreed to fund repairs to planters in the town, which also saved the Council a one off spend of £5,000.
- 2.4** SC and MTC officers subsequently reached an agreed in principle on a wider package of service and asset devolution, and this can be found in Appendix 1. It is estimated that by devolving services to MTC, a further saving of approximately £219,300 per annum can be made from the budgets of Regulatory and Operational Services (£193,300) and Assets (£26,000).
- However, the Council would lose income to other services to the value of £82,500, (Highways-car parks £50,000 and Assets £32,500) bringing the overall savings to the Council as a whole to £121,800.
- 2.5** Additional savings for the wider authority will be achieved from reduced transport costs and maintenance on buildings, but these are not included in this report as these budgets do not sit within Regulatory and Operational Services.

Appendix 3.

Devolution of services to MTC also supports Somerset Council in reducing its depot requirements. Somerset Council currently lease a depot in Minehead to maintain the parks, open spaces and grounds at a cost of £26,000 per annum. This is included in the overall savings figure.

Devolution in Minehead would allow the Council to cease this lease arrangement.

2.6 All asset transfers would be freehold, with the exception of the Esplanade and Culvercliffe open space.

The Esplanade remains of strategic interest to Somerset Council, and therefore a long term lease is preferred here. A lease allows MTC to have control over the maintenance and feel of the Esplanade as a key asset to the town. This approach is also MTC's preferred option.

Currently, Somerset Council is liable for regular sand clearance on the Esplanade, as well as maintenance for various shelters, kiosks, planters and play equipment.

The Council is also responsible for the drains which are regularly blocked by wind blown sand and require jetting to prevent pooling of water on the Esplanade. The council would retain responsibility for jetting and sand clearance as part of its statutory street cleansing duties.

The beach in front of the Esplanade is mostly not owned by the Council and the adjoining street scene is not considered of strategic value. The usable marine section for vessels is limited to the area around the harbour, of which the Council only owns land to the north of the Harbour. There is no interest in devolution of the harbour from MTC.

There would be a loss of income for Somerset Council of £12,500 per annum from lease of kiosks on the Esplanade and a loss of £20,000 per annum from the cafe. This has been factored into the overall savings figure.

Culvercliffe is a former waste site and therefore a long term lease is the preferred option for MTC.

2.7 Devolving services to MTC will help to protect those services for the communities they serve.

2.8 Appendix 1 is a shared document between Somerset Council and Minehead Town Council, and has been worked through in conjunction with the MTC Devolution Advisory Group. The Group recommended to MTC Full council to devolve all sites and services within Appendix one as described on 17/12/24, and this was approved by MTC Full Council. Budgets for the devolution will be set by MTC on 28/1/25.

Appendix 3.

MTC already has qualified staff in post who will be able to manage the additional responsibilities, as well as an existing grounds maintenance team who manage areas of land within the town.

Somerset Council officers have worked alongside officers at MTC on this process and are therefore reassured that MTC has the skills and means to successfully manage the assets and services listed in Appendix 1.

- 2.9** Devolution of two car parks within Minehead have been included in this devolution proposal. MTC expressed a desire at the outset of discussions to include all Minehead car parks in part of any devolution deal.

As part of the principles set by Somerset Council's Asset Management Working Group, car parks are out of scope for devolution. Although MTC's request for devolution of all car parks was not accepted by AMWG, it should be noted that Alexandra Road and North Road car parks are included in this devolution proposal.

North Road car park is currently part of the title deed for Blenheim Gardens, Minehead's flagship park and the only Green Flag accredited open space in West Somerset. The space is seen by MTC as an important part of their future aspirations for the Gardens, and they do not wish to see the car park removed from the title and separated.

North Road generates a low level of income in comparison to other car parks in Minehead and wider Somerset, and in the interest of supporting MTC with the longer term development of Blenheim Park and the fact that the car park is already part of the wider title, it is felt that the inclusion of a car park is acceptable here.

Alexandra Road car park is of strategic interest to MTC due to the location next to the new community centre, and the potential offered to grow facilities in the town, such as a swimming pool.

MTC have been working with partners, including the former Somerset West and Taunton Council, to explore options for building a new swimming pool in Minehead, and previously expressed an interest in Alexandra Road car park as a feasibility study had identified the site as suitable. The study integrated the car park with the neighbouring community centre and football club on a day to day operational basis, but also as it allowed for the potential use of renewable energy to heat the pool and keep running costs down.

Therefore, whilst Alexandra Road is an income generating car park for Somerset Council, the willingness to transfer to MTC is based on it being a piece of land that enables MTC to develop a community asset for the town, rather than as a car park.

Appendix 3.

Again, Alexandra Road generates a low level of income in relation to other car parks in Minehead and similar towns in the wider county.

Should these two car parks be devolved to the town council, there would be a loss of income to Somerset Council of circa £50,000 per annum, based on historical figures. This figure is included in the overall savings figure for Somerset Council.

It is worth noting that Minehead TC would need to consider how the car park is managed and/or enforced. As the car parks are currently regulated by virtue of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and associated regulations, Minehead TC can't enforce the car park themselves. Neither are they able to deregulate the car park and have a 3rd third party enforce using contract law and/or ANPR/CCTV.

However, Somerset Council is able to enter into an agreement with Minehead Town Council to continue the enforcement services.

Links to Council Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan

- 3.1** This decision links to the following Somerset Council Plan 2023-27 objectives:
- 3.2** A Fairer, Ambitious Somerset
City, town and parish councils are well placed to understand their local communities and run their services to support this. A stated priority for Somerset Council is to reduce the inequalities that cause these disparities, so that everyone in Somerset can live their lives as they choose.
- 3.3** A Flourishing and Resilient Somerset –
Devolution of services to City, town and parish councils give these organisations the freedom to invest in their key open spaces and high streets to support the existing economy, increase the number of events and encourage visitors. Insourcing operations, either through Somerset Council or city, town and parish councils, contributes to economic stability by managing costs effectively. It supports the development of a skilled workforce and local opportunities, aligning with the council's goal of promoting a stable and flourishing economy.

Other options considered

- 4.1** *Declining devolution conversations with Minehead Town Council and not progressing devolution in this area.*

Minehead is a large town and operating the services listed in Appendix 1 costs Regulatory and Operational Services an estimated £193,300 and

Appendix 3.

Assets £26,000k per annum, totalling £219,300. Not progressing with this devolution programme would not deliver these savings so this option has been discounted. Noting that the proposal also includes a loss of income as detailed elsewhere in the report, the net saving to Somerset Council would be £121,800 per year.

It would also mean that Operational Services would still need to operate out of a leased depot to undertake work in Minehead, removing the opportunity to reduce depot occupation across the county.

4.2 *Reducing levels of service, continuing to operate the services listed in Appendix 1 and retaining the assets listed in Appendix 1.*

Although this option would deliver some savings, this saving would not be significant enough against the backdrop of the Council's financial emergency.

This option would also reduce the quality of the local environment for residents of Minehead. Devolution of services protects this. This would be a less favourable position for both the community in terms of service delivery and the Council in terms of the financial saving.

It would also mean that Operational Services would still need to operate out of a leased depot to undertake work in Minehead, removing the opportunity to reduce depot occupation across the county.

Key considerations for the Council

Scrutiny comments / recommendations:

- 5.1** The Asset and Services Devolution Framework was considered by Scrutiny on 5th December 2023.
- 5.2** An update on devolution progress was presented to Community Scrutiny Committee on 13/6/2024 and 11/12/2024. Minehead was included in these updates.

Consultation and feedback

- 6.1** There has been no consultation or engagement from Somerset Council on this specific devolution programme. It is felt that MTC as the new service provider is best placed to undertake consultation and engagement.

Financial and Risk Implications

Appendix 3.

- 7.1** Officers have worked collectively with MTC to build a budget for running the services listed in the appendix. Through this process, officers have been able to estimate that devolution of services to MTC will bring a full year saving of circa £193,300k per annum for Regulatory and Operational Services and £26,000 per annum for Asset Management. The Asset Management saving is the cost to lease a depot, and the Regulatory and Operational saving is mainly made up of salaries, operational costs such as waste disposal, consumables and general maintenance, plant and machinery maintenance.
- 7.2** There would be a loss of income to the value of £82,500 per annum from the devolution of the assets and services covered within this report. This figure is made up from car park income at £50,000 and leases rent from local amenities at £32,500. This number has been factored in when calculating the overall £121,800 net saving.
- 7.3** The service will work with the finance team to ensure the appropriate adjustments are made to the in year budgets to reflect a full year saving in 2025/26.
- 7.4** Further savings for the wider authority will be achieved from reduced transport and asset maintenance costs, but these are not included here as these budgets do not sit within Regulatory and Operational Services.
- 7.5** Transfers for operational services are to be made on the 1st April 2025 with the responsibility for services being undertaken by the Town Council from then irrespective of the final transfer date of the assets.
- 7.6** If there was a gap between the transfer of services and the transfer of assets, this would mean that MTC would be maintaining land owned by Somerset Council. A temporary maintenance agreement would need to be put in place between the two authorities that sets out roles and responsibilities until transfers complete. The Finance team will work closely with Property and Legal on the transfer of the assets in respect of removing them from the Council's asset registers and reflecting this in the Council's Financial Statement of Accounts.

7.7 Key Risks

Reduced Service Quality					
As a much smaller council, MTC will not have access to the same resources or expertise as a unitary authority. This could potentially lead to decreased efficiency in service delivery, or issues in addressing community needs.					
Likelihood	2	Impact	4	Risk Score	8

Appendix 3.

Somerset Council staff have supported MTC colleagues to understand budget, staffing and service requirements in detail. Operational Services team will also support handover to the new MTC and be ready to step in if required. MTC have also appointed an experienced operational manager with an open spaces background to manage these services. Town Councils also have no cap on their council tax, so can raise their precept if required to allow wider expansion or more investment in services.

Fragmentation of Services

Devolving services to town councils could result in fragmentation, with different councils responsible for different services. This could lead to coordination challenges and inconsistencies in service provision across the County.

Likelihood	4	Impact	2	Risk Score	8
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Somerset Council is supporting MTC on a proactive comms plan which sets out who will be doing what in the town following devolution. All Council owned land is GIS mapped and these maps have also been shared with MTC.

Lack of Capacity

As a smaller council, MTC may lack the capacity to effectively manage certain services, particularly those that require specialized expertise or resources. This could result in gaps in service provision or sub-par service quality.

Likelihood	2	Impact	3	Risk Score	6
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Somerset Council staff are supporting MTC colleagues to understand budget, staffing and service requirements in detail. Operational Services team will also support handover to the new MTC, and be available to lend support and advice if required. MTC has also appointed an experienced operational manager with an open spaces background to manage these services. Town Councils also have no cap on their council tax, so can raise their precept if required to allow wider expansion or more investment in services.

Delayed Transfer of Asset Ownership

With a growing devolution programme, there is pressure on Asset and Legal services to complete asset transfers. This may result in a backlog, and MTC may take on maintenance on land and assets of which they will not own for some time. This may cause frustration and discontent, and at worst breakdown of relationship.

Likelihood	3	Impact	4	Risk Score	12
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Minehead has been identified as a devolution priority and Strategic Asset Management is aiming to have all assets transferred when the services move across on 1st April 2025. There is also a £600k fund being made available from reserves to support the devolution process, which has been used to increase legal support. If there was a gap between the transfer of services and the transfer of

Appendix 3.

assets, this would mean that MTC would be maintaining land owned by Somerset Council. A temporary maintenance agreement would need to be put in place between the two authorities that sets out roles and responsibilities until transfers complete.

Legal and Procurement Implications

- 8.1** The transfer of assets into the ownership of MTC will be subject to a formal legal process. This will be led by the Council's Strategic Asset Management and Legal teams. All existing covenants and restrictions on any open spaces will remain in place as part of the transfer.
- 8.2** If there was a gap between the transfer of services and the transfer of assets, this would mean that MTC would be maintaining land owned by Somerset Council. A temporary maintenance agreement would need to be put in place between the two authorities that sets out roles and responsibilities until transfers complete.
- 8.3** Legally, Somerset Council cannot transfer ownership of highways verges and land. Minehead Council will therefore manage this grass on behalf of Somerset Council via a management agreement between the two authorities.

HR / Workforce Implications

- 9.1** Under TUPE regulations, the Council as the current employer is obliged to identify posts that are subject to a TUPE transfer to the new employer. Three staff have been identified as being impacted by TUPE as a result of the proposed service devolution. All three currently work exclusively in Minehead.
- A full consultation process will be undertaken with impacted staff and relevant trade union.

Equalities Implications

- 10.1** An equality impact assessment has been completed and is attached as Appendix 2.

Community Safety Implications

- 11.1** Community Safety as a service is not being devolved to MTC.

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Devolution of services and assets to MTC will not bring negative impacts on the community. The Town Council will continue to maintain and protect assets as the local authority has done in the past.

Climate Change and Sustainability Implications

- 12.1** Devolution of urban open spaces does give Somerset Council less control over how they are managed across the county, and consistency on nature friendly grassland management and tree planting and maintenance may be reduced. This could lessen the Council's wider impact on nature recovery. However, the Council's Climate Emergency Strategy, Tree Strategy and Local Nature Recovery Strategy identify city, town and parish councils as key partners in the delivery of these agendas.

Health and Safety Implications

- 13.1** In this proposal SC is handing over the responsibility and risk to MTC. The Town Council is aware of their Health and Safety obligations, not only to those staff who are transferring to the town council but also towards those members of the public who use the parks and open spaces under their control.

MTC will need to ensure operations conform with legislation, largely but not limited to the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. The Council has the General Power of Competence so does not need to concern itself with other powers available to local councils to take on the services outlined in the appendix.

Officers have worked closely with colleagues at the town council and are assured that MTC are aware of the health and safety impacts and have measures in place to manage any risk. MTC have also appointed an experienced operational manager with an open spaces background to manage these services.

Health and Wellbeing Implications

- 14.1** There are no health and wellbeing implications associated with this report.

Social Value

- 15.1** There is no procurement or commissioning process related to this report, and therefore no social value implications.

Background Papers

Appendix 3.

- 16.1** Framework for Asset and/or Service Devolution
<https://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/documents/s18613/Devolution%20Framework.pdf>

Corporate and Resources Scrutiny Report – 5th December 2023

<https://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/documents/s18612/Scrutiny%20Report%20Devolution%2005122023.pdf>

Appendices

- 17.1**
1. Services and Assets covered by the devolution
 2. EIA for devolution of services and assets

Report assurance checklist

	Officer Name	Date Completed
Legal & Governance Implications	David Clark	17/9/2024
Finance & Procurement	Nicola Hix	11/10/2024
Workforce (*)	Dawn Bettridge	3/10/2024
Asset Management (*)	Simon Lewis	09/12/24
Executive Director	Chris Hall	29/11/2024
Executive Lead Member	Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts	
Consulted:	Councillor Name	
Local Division Members	Cllr Andrew Hadley (Minehead), Cllr Mandy Chilcott (Minehead), Cllr Marcus Kravis (Dunster), Cllr Christine Lawrence (Dunster)	2/12/2024
Opposition Spokesperson(s)	Cllr Diogo Rodrigues	17/12/2024
Relevant Scrutiny Chair(s)	Cllr Gwil Wren	2/10/2024

Appendix 3.

Appendix 1

Services being Devolved to Minehead Town Council

Maintenance of:

- Blenheim Gardens including Blenheim Café and North Road car park.
- 'The Parks' (Parks Walk, Woodcombe Walk, Bratton Park)
- Culvercliffe open space
- Ellicombe open space
- Seaward Way open space
- Parkhouse Road open space
- Play areas as per list below.
- All other small patches of grass and verge within the town (including highways grass) on a maintenance agreement.
- Bus shelters
- Planters at the harbour and along the Parade.
- The Esplanade
- Alexandra Road car park
- Warren Road Toilet Block and Kiosk
- Jubilee Gardens and Café

Assets being Devolved to Minehead Town Council

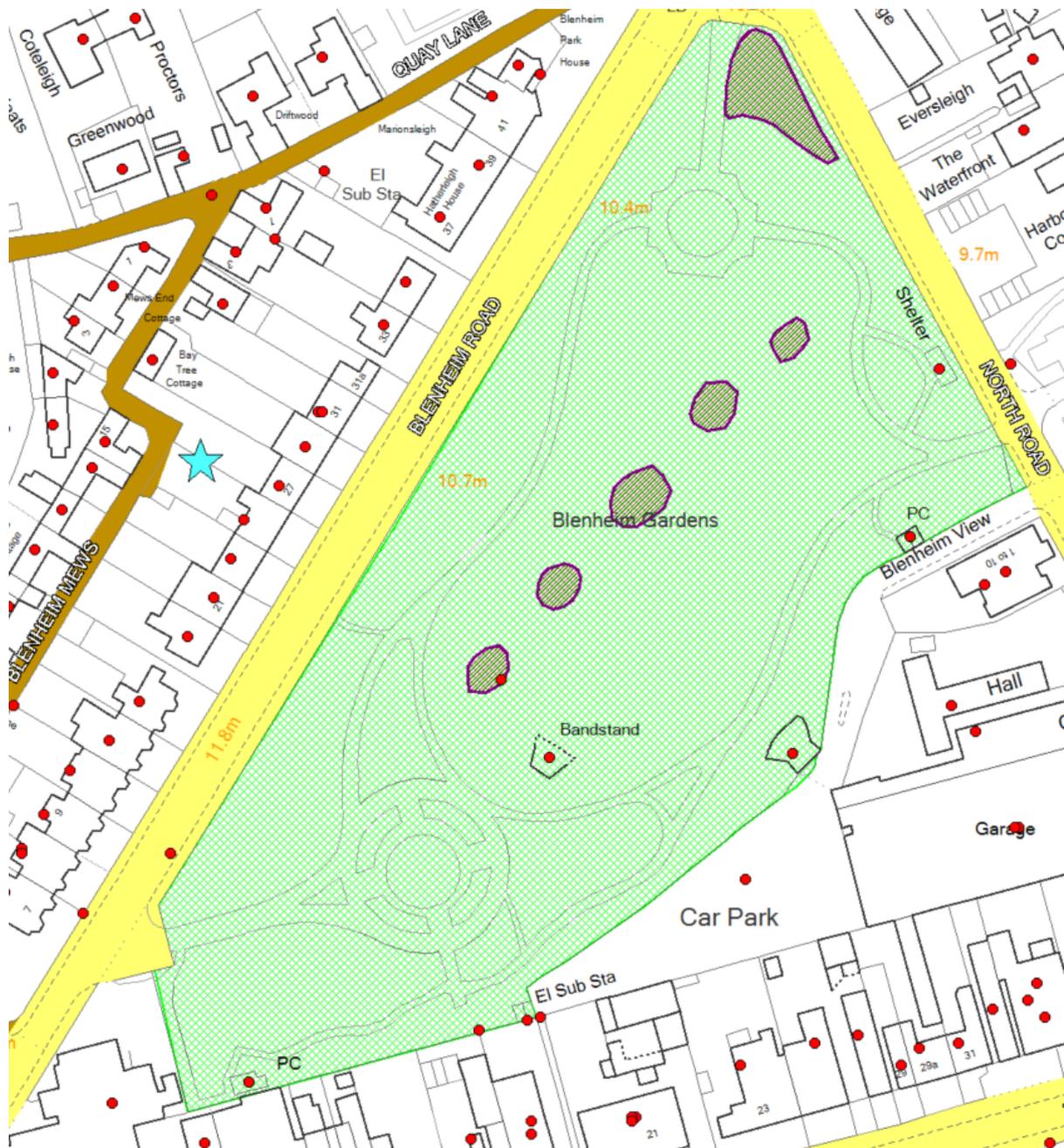
Blenheim Gardens including Blenheim Café and North Road car park.	Blenheim Road	TA24 5AY	Freehold
The Parks - Parks walk	Parkhouse Road	TA24 8AX	Freehold
The Parks - Woodcombe Walk (including old toilet block building)	Porlock Road	TA24 8RY	Freehold
The Parks - Bratton Park	Porlock Road	TA24 8SA	Freehold
Esplanade	Warren Road	TA24 5BE	Leasehold
Culvercliffe Open Space	Culvercliffe Walk	TA24 5UN	Leasehold
Ellicombe Open Space	Land at Ellicombe Roundabout	TA24 6UL	Freehold
Stone flower planters, centre Island, The Parade	The Parade	TA24 5UF	Freehold
Bus Shelters	Various		Freehold

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Cuckoo Meadow Play Area	Whitworth Road	TA24 8UB	Freehold
Seafront Play Area	Warren Road	TA24 5BE	Freehold
Sycamore Road Play Area	Sycamore Road	TA24 8EW	Freehold
Warren Road Play Area	Warren Road	TA24 5BG	Freehold
Culvercliffe Play Area	Culvercliffe Walk	TA24 5UN	Freehold
Planters at Harbour	Land at Quay West	TA24 5UL	Freehold
Seaward Way Open Space	Seaward Way	TA24 5BF	Freehold
Trinity Way to Warren road play area	Trinity Way	TA24 6GP	Freehold
Parkhouse road open space	Parkhouse Road	TA24 8AD	Freehold
Alexandra Road car park	Alexandra Road	TA24 5DP	Freehold
Jubilee Gardens & Café	The Esplanade	TA24 5BE	Freehold
Minehead War Memorial	Martlett Road	TA24 5JN	Freehold

Appendix 3.

Blenheim Gardens (including Blenheim Café and North Road car park)



Blenheim Gardens is a formal park, with a restrictive covenant on the land which requires it to be used as a public park or pleasure ground for the people of Minehead.

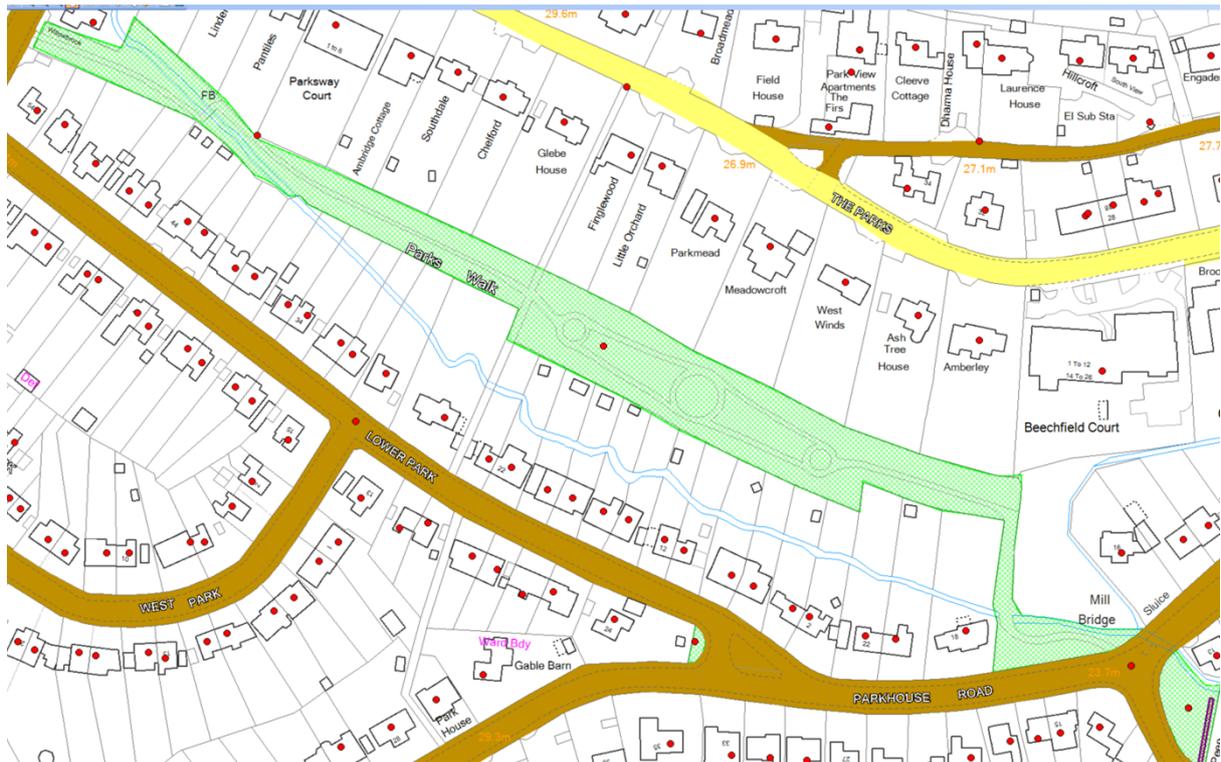
Due to the park's status there is limited opportunity for BNG or phosphate credits here.

Transfer of Blenheim Park will mean a small loss of income to Somerset Council in future years due to the lease arrangement with the tenant of Blenheim Café. The current tenant benefits from a rent free period until 2026, whereby a rental of £3750 per annum applies for years 3 and 4, and then £7,500 per annum from year 6.

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North Road car park is part of the title deed for Blenheim Gardens, and is of strategic importance to Minehead due to its proximity to Blenheim Park. Devolution of this car park would reduce the Council's car parking income by circa £41k per annum. This figure is factored into the overall savings figure.

Parks Walk



Parks Walk is an open space with various restrictions on the land which would prohibit future development.

Due to the park's status and size there is limited opportunity for BNG or phosphate credits here.

Woodcombe Walk

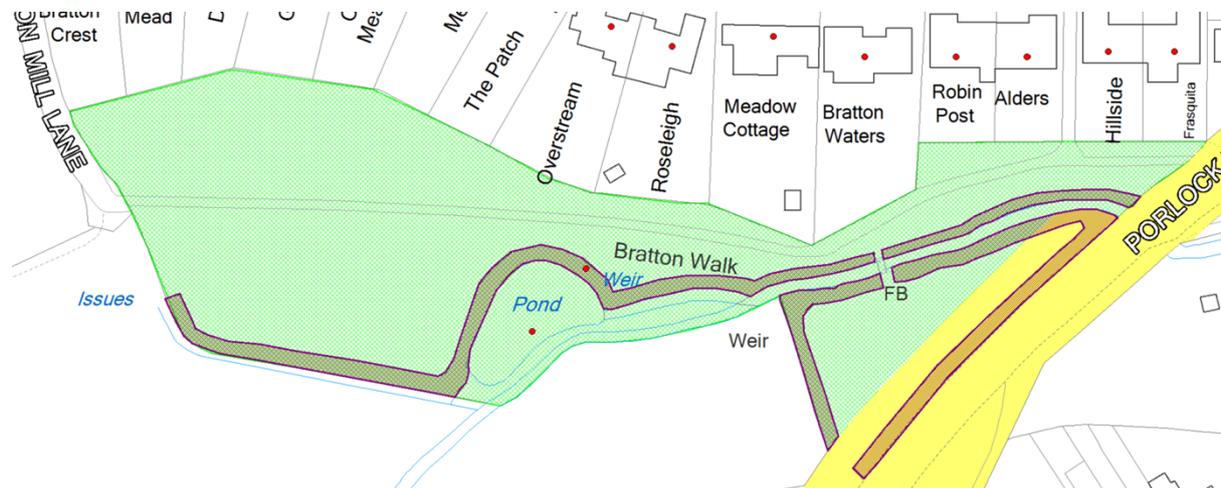


Appendix 3.

Woodcombe Walk is an open space with various restrictions on the land which would prohibit future development.

There is an old toilet block within the open space which has been closed for a number of years and is viewed as surplus to Somerset Council requirements.

Bratton Walk



Bratton Walk is an open space with various restrictions on the land which would prohibit future development.

Due to the park's status and size there is limited opportunity for BNG or phosphate credits here.

Appendix 3.

Culvercliffe Open Space



Culvercliffe is an open space with various restrictions on the land which would prohibit future development.

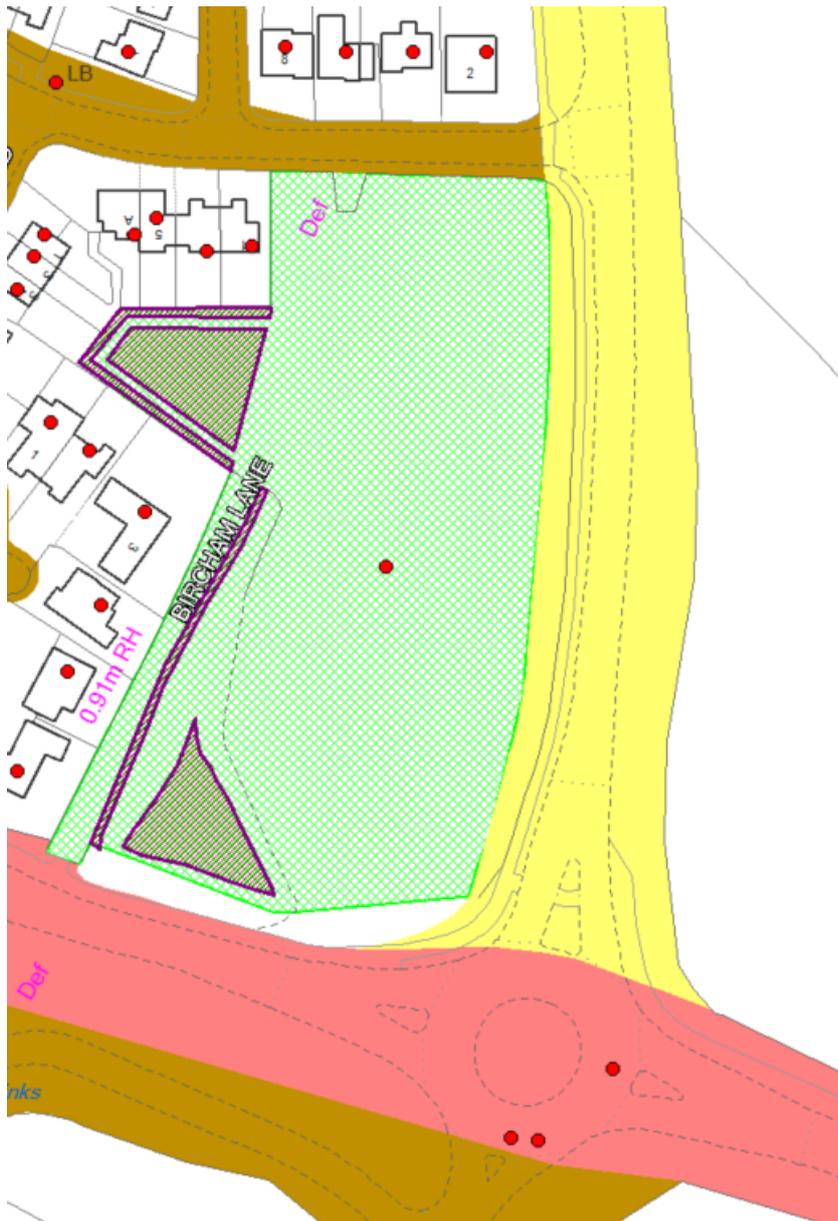
There is some opportunity for BNG here, but due to the size of the site this is negligible. The site is not large enough for any significant phosphate credit.

Culvercliffe is a former refuse site and therefore it is the preference of MTC to enter into a long term maintenance agreement or lease rather than a full freehold transfer.

The site also includes a play area at the southern end which would also transfer to MTC, but as a freehold separate from the larger site.

Appendix 3.

Ellicombe Road Open Space



Whilst the site is a green, grassed area containing mature trees, it is not designated as amenity land. There is no relevant planning history for the site save for an Article 4 Direction which restricts the use of the land for not more than 14 days in total for the purposes of the holding of markets.

Somerset West and Taunton recorded a Key Decision in November 2022 to hold the land for the delivery of a leisure facility in Minehead, to include a swimming pool.

At this time, the land as recorded in the fixed asset register with a value of £45,000.

The land may command a greater fee if offered to the open market, however devolution is considered acceptable as there is strong local pressure to keep this land as recreational or community space. Somerset Council would work with MTC to add restrictive covenants to ensure that the land remained as open space and/or

Appendix 3.

insert an overage clause in case the land did receive consent for valuable development.

Seaward Way Open Space



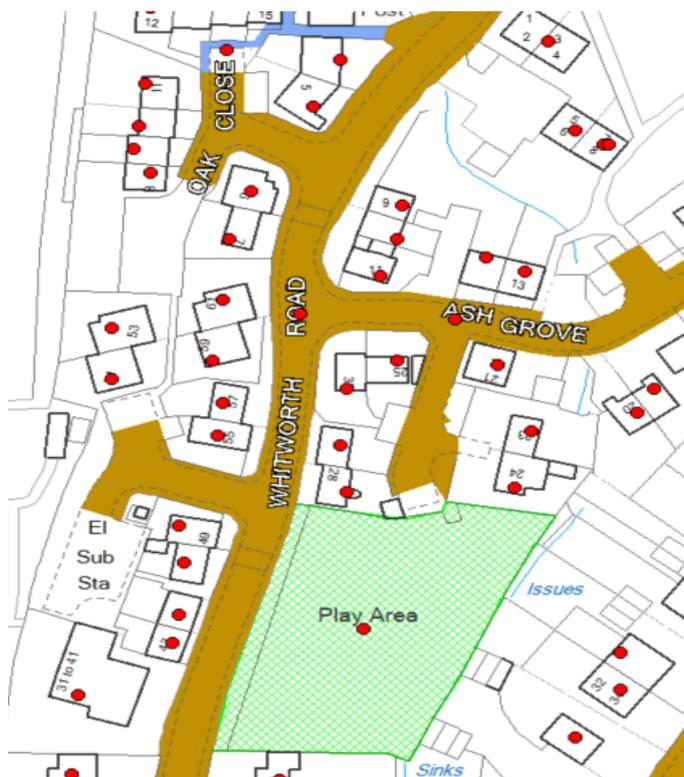
Seaward Way is an open space with various restrictions on the land which would prohibit future development.

There is some opportunity for BNG here, but due to the size of the site this is negligible. The site is not large enough for any significant phosphate credit.

As the local flood authority, Somerset Council would retain responsibility for the rhyes.

Appendix 3.

Cuckoo Meadow Play Area



Cuckoo Meadow is a play area with various restrictions on the land which would prohibit future development.

Due to the play area's status and size there is limited opportunity for BNG or phosphate credits here.

Sycamore Road Play Area

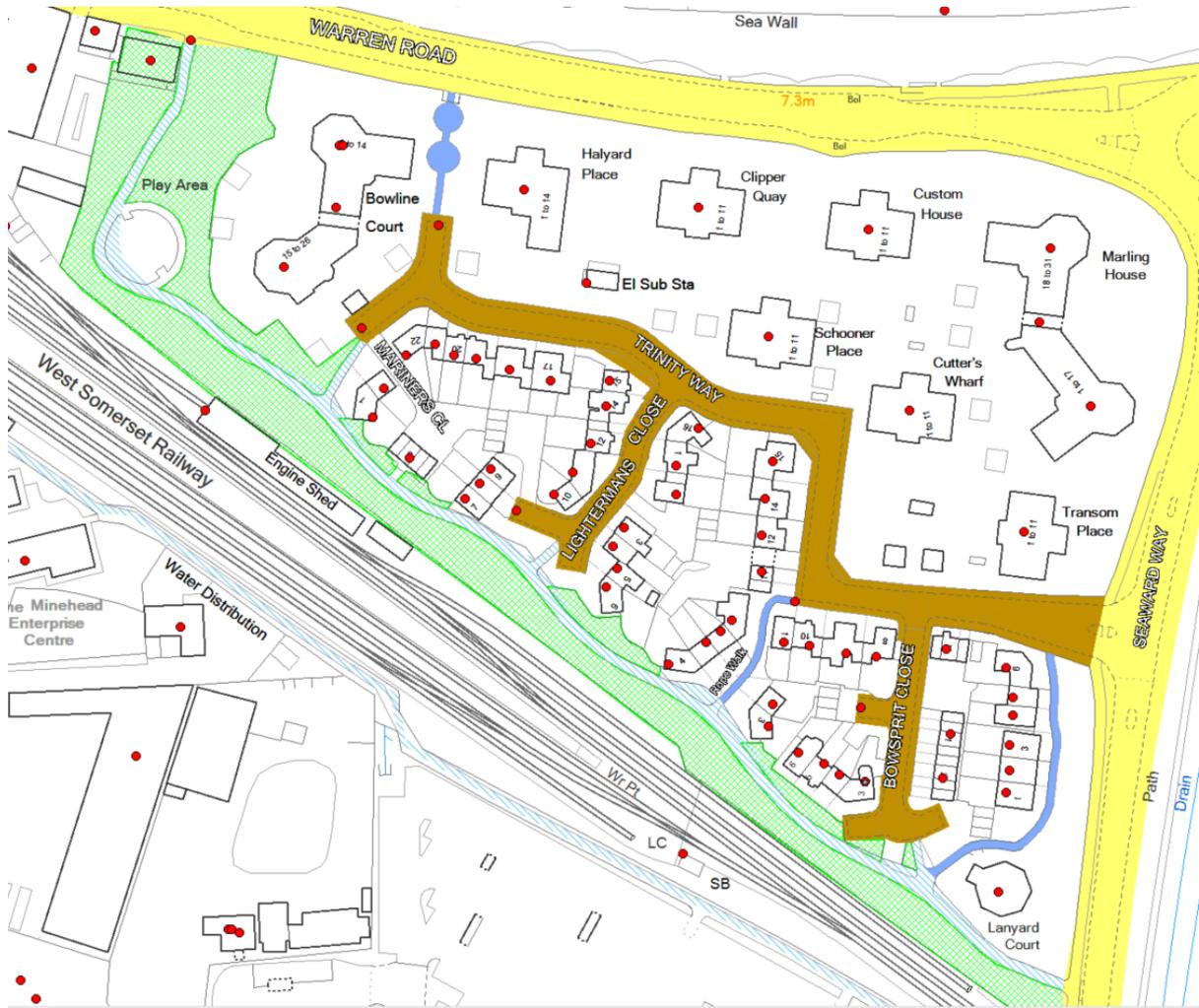


Appendix 3.

Sycamore Road is a play area with various restrictions on the land which would prohibit future development.

Due to the play area's status and size there is limited opportunity for BNG or phosphate credits here.

Warren Road to Trinity Road Play Area



Warren Road is a play area and open space strip with restrictive covenants on the land prohibiting commercial use and development.

Due to the play area's status and parcel size there is limited opportunity for BNG or phosphate credits here.

Appendix 3.

Parkhouse Road Open Space



Parkhouse Road is an open space with various restrictions on the land which would prohibit future development.

Due to the status and size there is limited opportunity for BNG or phosphate credits here.

Appendix 3.

The Esplanade



The Esplanade remains of strategic interest to Somerset Council, and therefore a long term lease is preferred here. This allows MTC to have control over the maintenance and feel of the Esplanade as a key asset to the town, and is also MTC's preferred option.

Currently, Somerset Council is liable for regular sand clearance on the Esplanade, as well as maintenance for various shelters, kiosks, planters, play equipment and a toilet block. The toilet block is already leased to MTC.

The Council is also responsible for the drains which are regularly blocked by wind blown sand and require jetting to prevent pooling of water on the Esplanade. The council would retain responsibility for jetting and sand clearance as part of its statutory street cleansing duties.

The beach in front of the Esplanade is mostly not owned by the Council and the adjoining street scene is not considered of strategic value. The usable marine section for vessels is limited to the area around the harbour, of which the Council only owns land to the north of the Harbour. There is no interest from MTC in devolution of the harbour.

There would be a loss of income for Somerset Council of £14,500 per annum from lease of kiosks on the Esplanade. The town council wish to use this income to fund the running of the toilet block. This has been factored into the overall savings figure.

Appendix 3.

Alexandra Road Car Park



Alexandra Road car park is of strategic importance to Minehead Town Council due to its proximity to the town's community centre and the potential to build a new swimming pool on the land between the car park and the football ground.

Devolution of this car park to the town council would mean Somerset Council's car parking income would reduce by circa £17k per annum. This figure is built into the overall savings figure.

Appendix 3.

Jubilee Gardens



Conveyance documents are historic and illegible, but it is there is little commercial value and it is likely that restrictions are in place that would prevent development.

There is a café within the gardens that Somerset Council currently leases at a value of £20k per annum. This income would be lost via devolution, but is built into the overall savings figure.

Appendix 3.

Somerset Equality Impact Assessment						
<p>Before completing this EIA please ensure you have read the EIA guidance notes – available from your Equality Officer or www.somerset.gov.uk/impactassessment</p>						
Organisation prepared for (mark as appropriate)	 Somerset Council					
Version	V1				July 2024	
Description of what is being impact assessed						
<p>Devolution of services to Minehead Town Council (MTC) The following services will be devolved to MTC . Both MTC and SC are working towards a handover date of the operations by 1st April 2025. Asset transfers will follow dependent on legal capacity, but aim is for simultaneous transfer.</p> <p>Assets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blenheim Gardens • The Parks - Parks walk • The Parks - Woodcombe Walk • The Parks - Bratton Park • Esplanade • Culvercliffe Open Space • Ellicombe Open Space • Stone flower planters, centre Island, The Parade • Bus Shelters • Cuckoo Meadow Play Area • Seafront Play Area • Sycamore Road Play Area • Teal Road Play Area • Warren Road Play Area • Culvercliffe Play Area 						

- Planters at Harbour
- Seaward Way Open Space
- Trinity Way to Warren road play area
- Woodcombe Walk old Toilet block (Not in use)
- Parkhouse road open space
- North Road car park
- Alexandra Road car park
- Jubilee Gardens & Café
- Minehead War Memorial

Services

- Grounds maintenance (including highways verges)
- Toilet cleaning
- Litter and dog bin emptying within open spaces and parks.
- Maintenance of shrub beds and hanging baskets
- Tree inspection and maintenance
- Play area inspection and maintenance
- Maintenance of the Esplanade

Evidence

What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups? Sources such as the [Office of National Statistics](#), [Somerset Intelligence Partnership](#), [Somerset's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis \(JSNA\)](#), Staff and/ or [area profiles](#), should be detailed here

Somerset budget consultation [Budget Consultation 2024/2025 - Somerset Council - Citizen Space](#)- local services and outdoor spaces are important to the community, no likely difference to the Minehead community, devolving services to MTC is a way of protecting those services for the community, quotes include:
'Offload certain areas to town councils, devolved responsibilities where town councils can increase council tax by a larger amounts'
'Give money and autonomy to town councils to keep towns and villages maintained'
 Overall SC is expecting no impacts to protected groups, and it is hoped that given the grounds work MTC are planning to deliver, there will be positive impacts to the wider community, including protected groups as part of this service devolution.

Appendix 3.

No services are being stopped as part of this process.
Transfer of the public toilets also protects the long term future of this service within Minehead.

Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups and what have they told you? If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?

During the devolution process SC have been working hard with MTC to understand the services they are willing to take on. MTC is a well established town council and have the structure and organisation in place to take on these services. They are committed to delivering the same services as SC have previously, and their intention is to build on the current provision offered by SC and improve the open space maintenance offering.

MTC are preparing to take a budget for implementation and annual revenue costs through their full council. They have also appointed experienced and suitable qualified staff to undertake delivery of the devolved services.

The town council have also been open with talking us through their budgets to give further confidence they understand the ask on them

Analysis of impact on protected groups

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. Consider how this policy/service will achieve these aims. In the table below, using the evidence outlined above and your own understanding, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Based on this information, make an assessment of the likely outcome, before you have implemented any mitigation.

Protected group	Summary of impact	Negative outcome	Neutral outcome	Positive outcome
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to MTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The town council are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. 	□	⊗	□

Appendix 3.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To facilitate the devolution of services the Town Council will be seeking in an increase in the precept they charge as part of the annual council tax bill. Whilst it will have a no impact if a resident is in receipt of full benefits, anyone on partial benefits or no benefits will see an increase in the amount of council tax they have to pay. Some income generating assets are being devolved to MTC to support the cost of running services which will partially offset a precept rise. 			
<p>Disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to BTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. To facilitate the devolution of services the Town Council will be seeking in an increase in the precept they charge as part of the annual council tax bill. Whilst it will have a no impact if a resident is in receipt of full benefits, anyone on partial benefits or no benefits will see an increase in the amount of council tax they have to pay. Some income generating assets are being devolved to MTC to support the cost of running services which will partially offset a precept rise. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Gender reassignment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to MTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. To facilitate the devolution of services the Town Council will be seeking in an increase in the precept they charge as part of the annual council tax bill. Whilst it will have a no impact if a resident is in receipt of full benefits, anyone on partial benefits or no benefits will see an increase in the amount of council tax they have to pay. Some income generating assets are being devolved to MTC to support the cost of running services which will partially offset a precept rise. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 3.

<p>Marriage and civil partnership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transferring services to MTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. • To facilitate the devolution of services the Town Council will be seeking in an increase in the precept they charge as part of the annual council tax bill. Whilst it will have a no impact if a resident is in receipt of full benefits, anyone on partial benefits or no benefits will see an increase in the amount of council tax they have to pay. Some income generating assets are being devolved to MTC to support the cost of running services which will partially offset a precept rise. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Pregnancy and maternity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transferring services to MTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. • To facilitate the devolution of services the Town Council will be seeking in an increase in the precept they charge as part of the annual council tax bill. Whilst it will have a no impact if a resident is in receipt of full benefits, anyone on partial benefits or no benefits will see an increase in the amount of council tax they have to pay. Some income generating assets are being devolved to MTC to support the cost of running services which will partially offset a precept rise. 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Race and ethnicity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transferring services to MTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. • To facilitate the devolution of services the Town Council will be seeking in an increase in the precept they charge as part of the annual council tax bill. Whilst it will have a no impact if a resident 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 3.

	<p>is in receipt of full benefits, anyone on partial benefits or no benefits will see an increase in the amount of council tax they have to pay. Some income generating assets are being devolved to MTC to support the cost of running services which will partially offset a precept rise.</p>			
Religion or belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to MTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. 	□	⊗	□
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to MTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. 	□	⊗	□
Sexual orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to MTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. 	□	⊗	□
Armed Forces (including serving personnel, families and veterans)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transferring services to MTC will not result in a loss of any existing service, so no negative impacts based on existing services. The TC are committed to working with their local community, as they currently do, so there is every opportunity for the devolution process to bring positive outcomes. 	□	⊗	□
Other, e.g. carers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to deliver these services MTC will need to raise their precept. This could bring negative impacts to individuals and families on low incomes where they are not on benefits or only on partial benefits. Some income generating assets are being devolved to MTC to support the cost of running services which will partially offset a precept rise. 	□	⊗	□

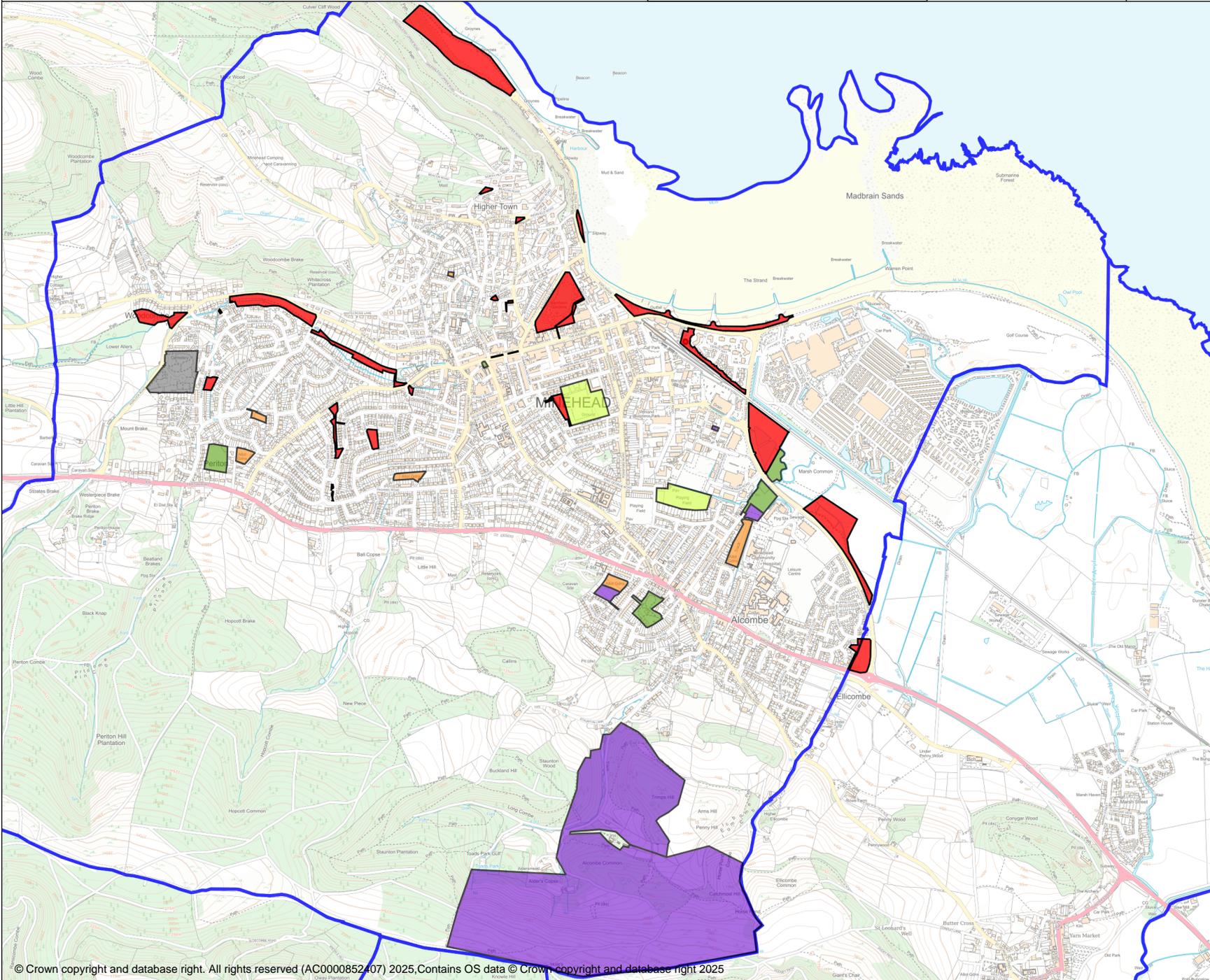
Appendix 3.

Negative outcomes action plan Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.				
Action taken/to be taken	Date	Person responsible	How will it be monitored?	Action complete
There are no actions.				<input type="checkbox"/>
If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.				
N/A				
Completed by:	Jonathan Stevens			
Date	25/9/2024			
Signed off by:				
Date				
Equality Lead sign off name:				
Equality Lead sign off date:				
To be reviewed by: (officer name)				
Review date:				

Appendix 4.

Author:

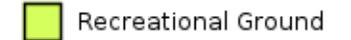
Date: 18/02/2025



Parish



Land



Proposed Devolved Assets



Appendix 5.

Bus Stop Information

Location	Ownership	Maintenance	Condition
Bancks Street junction of The Parade	Fernbank	Fernbank	Poor
The Parade junction of Holloway Street	Fernbank	Fernbank	Satisfactory
Bircham Road opposite Brook Street	Fernbank	Fernbank	Poor
Porlock Road junction with Woodcombe Lane	Fernbank	Fernbank	Satisfactory
The Avenue, outside 20 The Avenue	Fernbank	Fernbank	Poor
Bircham Road adjacent to Heron Close	SC	SC	New

Appendix 6.

Job Title/Role	Range	SCP	Annual Salary (Including on costs)	Working Hours (Per Week)
Amenities Team Manager	(18-23)	23	£ 48,509.16	37
Working Charge Hand (SC)	(15-19)	17	£ 43,667.40	37
Amenities operative	(7-12)	12	£ 40,315.92	37
Amenities operative	(7-12)	12	£ 40,315.92	37
Amenities operative	(7-12)	12	£ 40,435.92	37
Amenities operative	(7-12)	10	£ 31,278.12	30
Amenities operative	(7-12)	9	£ 37,669.80	37
Amenities operative	(7-12)	10	£ 37,922.76	30
Amenities operative	(7-12)	9	£ 27,349.68	26
GM Operative (SC)	(8-11)	11	£ 39,663.00	37
GM Operative (SC)	(8-11)	11	£ 39,663.00	37
Staffing Totals			£ 426,790.68	

Associated staff costs	Cost
PPE	£ 2,000.00
Uniform	£ 2,000.00
Training	£ 4,000.00
Total	£ 8,000.00

Our ref: DMC/em4511/31482
Date: 12th February 2025

Jo Chapman
Minehead Town Council
3 Summerland Road
Minehead
TA24 5BP

Dear Jo

Local grounds maintenance services - application of TUPE

Thank you for your enquiry regarding TUPE and the public sector.

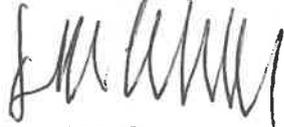
My advice is that it is very likely that TUPE will apply to the transfer of the above services to MTC, as they involve activities of a kind which can easily be carried out by an outsourced provider.

Therefore, if MTC were to proceed on the assumption that TUPE does not apply, and you seek either to avoid taking on some of the staff, or you try to change their terms after the transfer, MTC will be at significant risk of legal action from the employees affected, as they might claim unfair dismissal or breach of contract, depending on the action taken with respect to those employees.

The effect of TUPE, as I'm sure you are aware, is that the transferring employees must retain their terms and conditions of employment unless you are seeking to implement a change, with their agreement, which is for an economic, technical or organisational reason entailing a change in the workforce.

If you need any further advice regarding the effect of TUPE, do please let me know.

Yours sincerely



David McCrum
Consultant Solicitor

Also at:

17 The Crescent
Taunton
Somerset TA1 4EB

Central Court
25 Southampton Buildings
London WC2A 1AL

T: +44 (0) 1823 745 777
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DX: 32112 Taunton

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maitlandwalker.com



specifications:

Isuzu 'Grafter' N35.125(T) Tipper

3.5T GVW / EURO 6d (WLTP) 4x2 rigid twin rear wheels



Axle weights (kg)		
UK maximum Vehicle Weights (kg)	GVW	3500
	GTW*	7000
UK Axle design weights (kg)	Front	2100
	Rear	2435

Weights (kg) PROVISIONAL		
Cab type		day
Wheelbase	WB	2500
Vehicle Mass Unladen	Front	1380
	Rear	910
Total		2290
GVW		3500
Payload Allowance		1210
Max. Permissible Trailer Weight*		3500

Dimensions (mm) PROVISIONAL			
Overall Length	OAL		5000
Body Length		External Body Length	3275
		Internal Body Length	3125
Body Width	OVW	External Body Width	1950
		Internal Body Width	1895

Features	
Fully galvanised steel sub frames	Fully galvanised steel tipping gear
Multistage direct lift under floor ram	Wander lead control complete with 'Body Up' warning light
Dual tone audible warning buzzer	Electro hydraulic power pack with thermoplastic oil reservoir
Hose burst safety valve	Rubber mounted body rests
Heavy duty galvanised gantry with lower alloy infill and upper 'Isuzu' pressed infill	18mm alloy 'Tippadeck' heavy duty interlocking floor system
Single 400mm high alloy mill finish dropside boards c/w recessed spring catches	400mm high alloy mill finish tailboard with 2-way hinge assembly and rubber stops
Fully galvanised corner posts	Heavy duty under floor tie points either side
Half round thermoplastic mud wings	Integral body prop
Safety decals and colour instruction manual	

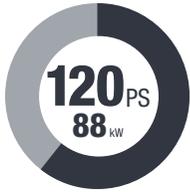
***Tachograph regulations may apply**

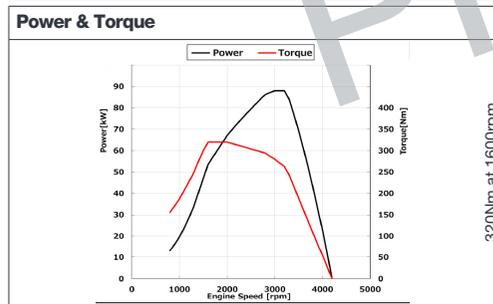
1. Unladen weights excludes driver, fuel and AdBlue®. Includes spare wheel + carrier. (Tolerance +/- 3%). Spare wheel and carrier 38kg. 2. The bodybuilder has ensured all legal requirements have been met. 3. Isuzu Truck (UK) Ltd. shall have no liability whatsoever should the information supplied have incorrect data, descriptions or illustrations.

Appendix 8. N35.125(T) 6d (WLTP) Tipper Mechanical Specification (standard equipment)

EURO 6d

POWER & TORQUE CHASSIS DETAILS

Engine	
Make & model:	RZ4E Isuzu turbo intercooled DOHC 4 cylinder diesel. Lean NOx trap. DPD & SCR.
Bore x stroke:	80 x 94.4mm
Capacity:	Max Power:
	
at 3200rpm	
Transmission	
Make & model:	Isuzu 6 speed manual synchromesh MVC6W overdrive.
Ratios:	1st - 4.942; 2nd - 2.686; 3rd - 1.527; 4th - 1.000; 5th - 0.796; 6th - 0.634; Reverse - 4.597
Rear Axle Ratio:	4.777:1
Clutch	
Type:	275mm diaphragm type with hydraulic actuation.



Electrical	
Type:	1 x 12V 595CCA 65Ah battery with 12V/150A alternator.
Tyres/Wheels	
Tyres:	205/75 R16 radial.
Wheels:	5.50J x 16, 5-stud.
Spare:	1 x wheel and tyre.
Frame	
Type:	Parallel ladder type channel section straight side rails, riveted upper flange.
Axles	
Front:	Independent type.
Rear:	Banjo fully floating.
Suspension	
Front:	Double wishbone and transverse parallel leaf suspension with hydraulic shock absorbers.
Rear:	Semi-elliptical steel suspension with hydraulic shock absorbers.
Brakes	
System:	Vacuum servo assisted hydraulic dual line with ABS, EBD (electronic brake distribution), EVSC (electronic vehicle stability control), ASR (anti slip regulation).
Front:	293mm ventilated discs with asbestos free pads.
Rear:	275mm ventilated discs with asbestos free pads.
Park:	Mechanical drum brake rear of transmission.

Fuel Tank	
Capacity:	AdBlue®:
 68 LITRES	 10 LITRES

SAFETY & SECURITY

R29 cab strength:	Complies with ECE-R29 cab strength standard.
Central locking:	Central locking with remote keyless entry and immobiliser.
Rear bumper:	Aluminium rear under run bar. Towbar option available.
Seat belts:	Red diagonal and lap belts.

CAB FEATURES

Cab Exterior		Steering	
Type:	Hexapod, white (standard) or metallic grey (option), all-steel.	Features:	Rack and pinion with full integral hydraulic power assistance. Tilt and telescopic steering column.
Features:	Manual tilt to 45 deg. Tinted widescreen. Chrome radiator grille. Plastic resin non-slip entry steps. 90 deg. opening doors. Zinc galvanised frame structure. Steel reinforced composite front bumper with fog and daytime running lamps. Two halogen head lamps with indicators. Front mudguards with spray suppression. Keyless door entry and immobiliser. Rear under run bar protection (R58.03)	Instruments	Features:
			Speedometer with odometer & trip. Rev counter. Fuel gauge. Engine coolant temperature. Multi-information display provides information on servicing, emissions and fuel economy. AdBlue® level. DPD operation. Calendar. Clock.
Cab Interior		Switches & Electrical	
Features:	Flame-resistant interior trim. Vinyl floor matting. Pillar mounted entrance grab handles both sides. Driver & passenger SRS airbags.	Features:	Combination stalk incorporating headlamps, indicators, fog lamp, washers and wipers. Auto lights. Steering wheel horn. Headlamp levelling. Engine quick warm-up. Central locking. Cigarette lighter. DPD, EVSC and ASR control. Hazard warning lights. DAB radio with Bluetooth® (Sat Nav option available).
			
Seats (cloth)		Warning/Indicator Lamps	
Features:	Driver's fully adjustable suspension seat with head restraint. Dual passenger seat with folding back. Driver and outer passenger retractable diagonal seat belts with pre-tensioner. Centre seat lap belt. Upholstery shade upgrade.	Features:	Battery charge. Oil pressure. Low fuel. Glow plug operation. High beam and indicators. Park brake warning. Fuel/water separator. Check engine. Engine over heat. EVSC. ABS. Front and rear fog lights. Seat belt warning and reminder. Brake fluid level. SRS air bag. Brake vacuum loss. Cab tilt lock warning. Airbag pictogram.
			
Vision		Tool Kit	
Features:	Large foldable mirrors. Interior rear view mirror on collapsible mounting. Driver and passenger sun visors. Deep cut side windows to reduce blind spots. Electric windows with driver control and lock.	Features:	Jack with a small selection of hand tools.
			

WARRANTY

All chassis cabs come with a three-year unlimited mileage warranty and roadside assistance as standard. Tipper bodies come with a three-year unlimited mileage warranty on bodywork components, twelve-months unlimited mileage warranty on all paintwork, from the date of the vehicle first registration. Terms and conditions apply.

Isuzu-backed Repair and Maintenance contracts available upon request.

For further information please contact your local dealer or phone us direct:



01707 282930 | www.isuzutruck.co.uk

Appendix 9.

Blenheim Gardens

Task	Areas	Duration (Hours)	Frequency	Months	Est Total Frequency	Staff required
Grass Cutting						
Ride on Grass Cutting	Large grass areas	4	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Trees/landscape features	4	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Hand Mowing	Annual bedding islands	3	weekly	March - Oct	34	1
Back up Hand Mowing	trees/edgings	1	weekly	March - Oct	34	1
Flower Bed Maintenance						
Removing Annual bedding	Top Circle/Windy/Shelter	5	Twice Yearly	May & Oct	2	2
Ground preparation annual bedding	Top Circle/Windy/Shelter	5	Twice Yearly	May & Oct	2	1
Planting annual bedding	Top Circle/Windy/Shelter	7.5	Twice Yearly	May & Oct	2	2
Watering	Top Circle/Windy/Shelter	1	2 times a week	May - Sept	32	1
Weeding	Top Circle/Windy/Shelter	2	Weekly (summer) Monthly (winter)	All year round	23	1
Edging	Top Circle/Windy/Shelter	1	weekly	March - Oct	34	1
Shrub Boarder Maintenance						
Pruning	Boundry boarders	37	Yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	Boundry boarders	1	weekly	All year round	52	1
Edging	Boundry boarders	37	Yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	1
Additional Works						
Leaf clearing	Whole Park	7.5	weekly	Oct - Dec	10	2
Path clearing	Whole Park	0.5	Daily (Oct/Nov) Adhoc (rest of year)	All year round	56	1
Path edging	Whole Park	37	Yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	1
Cut rewilding areas	Selected Areas	3	Yearly	Oct	1	1
Bin Emptying (Winter)	5/6 Bins	1	weekly	Oct - June	36	1
Bin Emptying (Summer)	5/6 Bins	1	Daily	July - September	84	1
Hedge Cutting	Boundary Hedge outer	2.5	Bi Yearly	June & Winter	2	2
Storm Shelter/Band Stand Cleaning		1	Monthly	April - September	6	1

Appendix 9.

Parks Walk

Task	Areas	Duration (Hours)	Frequency	Months	Est Total Frequency	Staff required
Grass Cutting						
Ride on Grass Cutting	Large grass areas	3	Bi-Weekly	March-Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Trees/Landscape features	3	Bi-Weekly	March-Oct	17	1
Hand Mowing	Front/Rose beds	1	Bi-Weekly	March-Oct	17	1
Front Bed Maintenance						
Weeding	Front/Rose beds	2	Monthly (Summer) Bi - Monthly (Winter)	All Year Round	9	1
Edging	Front/Rose beds	0.5	Bi-Weekly	March-Oct	8	1
Pruning	Front/Rose beds	2	Yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Shrub Boarder Maintenance						
Pruning	Boundary boarders	37	Yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	Boundary boarders	1	weekly	All year round	52	1
Edging	Boundary boarders	37	Yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	1
Additional Works						
Leaf clearing	whole park	7.5	weekly	Oct - Dec	10	2
Path clearing	whole park	0.5	Daily (Oct/Nov) Adhoc (rest of year)	All year round	56	1
Path edging	whole park	37	Yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	1
Bin Emptying	2 bins	0.5	weekly	All year round	52	1

Appendix 9.

Play Areas

Task	Areas	Duration (Hours)	Frequency	Months	Est Total Frequency	Staff required
Inspection	Cuckoo Meadow	0.75	weekly	All year round	52	1
Inspection	Sycamore	0.25	weekly	All year round	52	1
Inspection	Warren (Boat)	0.5	weekly	All year round	52	1
Inspection	Warren (Multi)	0.5	weekly	All year round	52	1
Inspection	Trinity Way	0.25	weekly	All year round	52	1
Inspection	Culvercliffe	0.25	weekly	All year round	52	1
Grass Cutting	Cuckoo Meadow	1	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Grass Cutting	Sycamore	0.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Grass Cutting	Trinity Way	0.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Grass Cutting	Culvercliffe	1	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Hedge Cutting	Cuckoo Meadow	7.5	Yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Hedge Cutting	Sycamore	2	Yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Hedge Cutting	Trinity Way	1	Yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Hedge Cutting	Plover	1	Yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Hedge Cutting	Teal	2	Yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Bin emptying	Cuckoo Meadow	0.25	weekly	All year round	52	1
Bin emptying	Sycamore	0.25	weekly	All year round	52	1
Bin emptying	Plover	0.25	weekly	All year round	52	1
Bin emptying	Teal	0.25	weekly	All year round	52	1
Back up grass cutting	Cuckoo Meadow	0.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up grass cutting	Sycamore	0.25	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up grass cutting	Trinity Way	0.25	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up grass cutting	Culvercliffe	0.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1

Appendix 9.

Grass Cutting Sites

Task	Site Name	Duration (Hours)	Frequency	Months	Est Total Frequency	Staff required
Ride on Grass Cutting	Culvercliffe	3	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Lifeboat Station	0.25	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Quay Street Green	0.75	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Jubilee Gardens	0.25	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Trinity Way	1.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Lagoon	1	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Stephenson Road	0.25	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Ellicombe Open Space	2	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Deane Gardens	0.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Hyde Road	1	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Regents Way	1.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	West Park	0.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Millbridge Gardens	0.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Woodcombe	2	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Bratton	2	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Clanville	0.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Ride on Grass Cutting	Mollys Patch	0.25	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Culvercliffe	3	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Lifeboat Station	0.25	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Quay Street Green	0.75	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Jubilee Gardens	1	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Trinity Way	2	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Stephenson Road	0.25	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Ellicombe Open Space	2	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Deane Gardens	0.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Hyde Road	1	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Regents Way	1	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	West Park	0.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Millbridge Gardens	0.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Woodcombe	2.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Bratton	2.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Clanville	0.5	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Hand mowing	Webbers Garden	1	Bi weekly	March - Oct	17	1
Back up Grass Cutting	Zig Zag Path	3	Yearly	May	1	2

Appendix 9.

Additional Maintenance of Sites

Task	Site Name	Duration (Hours)	Frequency	Months	Est Total Frequency	Staff required
Shrub pruning	Culvercliffe	0.5	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Shrub pruning	Quay Street Green	1.5	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	Quay Street Green	0.5	weekly	All year round	52	1
Shrub pruning	Commutator Garden	1	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	Commutator Garden	5	weekly	All year round	1	1
Shrub pruning	Jubilee Gardens	2	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	Jubilee Gardens	0.5	weekly	All year round	52	1
Shrub pruning	Coach Station	2	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	Coach Station	0.25	weekly	Nov/Dec/Jan	52	1
Shrub pruning	Esplanade	7.5	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	Esplanade	1	weekly	All year round	52	1
Shrub pruning	Warren Road Car Park	3	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	Warren Road Car Park	0.25	weekly	All year round	52	1
Shrub pruning	Trinity Way	37	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	Trinity Way	1	weekly	Nov/Dec/Jan	52	1
Shrub pruning	Surestart	1	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Hedge Cutting	Surestart Car Park	1	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Hedge Cutting/Strimming	Stephenson Road/Behind Miles etc	2.5	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Hedge Cutting	Ellicombe Open Space	2	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Hedge Cutting	Bircham Road	7.5	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Hedge Cutting	Deane Gardens	1	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Shrub pruning	Bircham Road raised bed	2	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	Bircham Road raised bed	0.25	yearly	All year round	52	1
Shrub pruning	Quarry Close	0.5	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	Quarry Close	0.25	weekly	Nov/Dec/Jan	52	1
Weeding	Hyde Road	0.5	weekly	All year round	52	1
Shrub pruning	Hyde Road	2	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Hedge Cutting	Regents Way	2	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Hedge Cutting	West Park	2	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Shrub pruning	Lower Park	1	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Shrub pruning	Millbridge Gardens	2	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	Millbridge Gardens	0.5	weekly	All year round	1	1
Hedge Cutting	Woodcombe	7.5	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Hedge Cutting	Bratton	7.5	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Shrub pruning	Clanville	4	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	Clanville	0.5	weekly	All year round	1	1
Cut rewinding areas	Mollys Patch	5	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Hedge Cutting	Mollys Patch	2.5	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Shrub pruning	Church Steps	2	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	Church Steps	0.25	weekly	All year round	52	1
Shrub pruning	The Ball	1	yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2
Weeding	The Ball	0.25	weekly	All year round	1	1
Stream Clearance/storm drain	Brooke Street	0.25	weekly (Oct-Dec) Adhoc (Jan- Sept)	All year round	16	1
Stream Clearance/storm drain	Minehead Hospital/Brackonsfield	0.25	weekly (Oct-Dec) Adhoc (Jan- Sept)	All year round	16	1
Stream Clearance/storm drain	Regents Way/Parkhouse Road	0.25	weekly (Oct-Dec) Adhoc (Jan- Sept)	All year round	16	1
Stream Clearance/storm drain	Cuckoo Meadow Play area	0.25	weekly (Oct-Dec) Adhoc (Jan- Sept)	All year round	16	1
Path Clearance	Zig Zag Path	1.5	weekly (Oct-Dec) Adhoc (Jan- Sept)	All year round	16	1
Hedge Cutting	Zig Zag Path/Webbers	2	Yearly	Nov/Dec/Jan	1	2

Appendix 9.

Car Parks

Task	Site Name	Frequency	Comments	Additional Comments
Fees & Charges	North Road CP	TBC	SLA between SC and MTC for SC to continue current service	SLA to be for year 1 possibly 2 in order to protect outward service
Management/maintenance Parking Meters	North Road CP	TBC	SLA between SC and MTC for SC to continue current service	SLA to be for year 1 possibly 2 in order to protect outward service
Emptying Float Parking Meters	North Road CP	TBC	SLA between SC and MTC for SC to continue current service	SLA to be for year 1 possibly 2 in order to protect outward service
Monitoring of parked cars	North Road CP	TBC	SLA between SC and MTC for SC to continue current service	SLA to be for year 1 possibly 2 in order to protect outward service
FPN issue	North Road CP	TBC	SLA between SC and MTC for SC to continue current service	SLA to be for year 1 possibly 2 in order to protect outward service
Charging points management/maintenance	North Road CP	TBC	SLA between SC and MTC for SC to continue current service	SLA to be for year 1 possibly 2 in order to protect outward service
White Lining	North Road CP	TBC	MTC responsibility	
Weed control	North Road CP	TBC	MTC responsibility	
Sign Replacement	North Road CP	TBC	MTC responsibility	
Additional Grounds maintenance, bins etc	North Road CP	TBC	MTC responsibility	
Fees & Charges	Alexandra Road CP	TBC	SLA between SC and MTC for SC to continue current service	SLA to be for year 1 possibly 2 in order to protect outward service
Management/maintenance Parking Meters	Alexandra Road CP	TBC	SLA between SC and MTC for SC to continue current service	SLA to be for year 1 possibly 2 in order to protect outward service
Emptying Float Parking Meters	Alexandra Road CP	TBC	SLA between SC and MTC for SC to continue current service	SLA to be for year 1 possibly 2 in order to protect outward service
Monitoring of parked cars	Alexandra Road CP	TBC	SLA between SC and MTC for SC to continue current service	SLA to be for year 1 possibly 2 in order to protect outward service
FPN issue	Alexandra Road CP	TBC	SLA between SC and MTC for SC to continue current service	SLA to be for year 1 possibly 2 in order to protect outward service
Charging points management/maintenance	Alexandra Road CP	TBC	SLA between SC and MTC for SC to continue current service	SLA to be for year 1 possibly 2 in order to protect outward service
White Lining	Alexandra Road CP	TBC	MTC responsibility	
Weed control	Alexandra Road CP	TBC	MTC responsibility	
Sign Replacement	Alexandra Road CP	TBC	MTC responsibility	
Additional Grounds maintenance, bins etc	Alexandra Road CP	TBC	MTC responsibility	



SWOT Analysis: Devolution of Open Spaces Assets and Services from Somerset Council to Minehead Town Council.

Strengths

- 1. Budgetary Preparation:** MTC has already set a budget for 2025/26 in anticipation of the transfer, which focused on reducing the need to pass costs directly to taxpayers through internal savings.
- 2. Existing Infrastructure:** MTC currently maintains similar infrastructure (benches, waste facilities, dog waste bins) demonstrating capacity for expanded responsibilities.
- 3. Equipment Readiness:** A recent asset review has enabled identification and proactive replacement of ageing equipment as required, ensuring operational readiness.
- 4. Established Maintenance Methods:** MTC has developed successful maintenance approaches, including rewilding initiatives implemented since 2022. Since 2022, the amenities service has become more structured and scheduled allowing for additional services to be consumed within existing schedules.
- 5. Established and experienced Staff Base:** The current amenities team provides an experienced and knowledgeable work force, both professionally and locally. Providing a solid foundation to build upon with the additional transferred staff.
- 6. Legal Framework and Powers:** The council's authority to acquire assets is firmly established under Section 124 of the Local Government Act 1972, supported by additional statutory provisions for specific service delivery. The staff transfer process is governed by comprehensive TUPE regulations, ensuring a legally compliant approach to workforce matters.
- 7. Existing Vehicle Fleet:** The current fleet of vehicles provides a starting point for expanded operations.
- 8. Communication and Community Engagement:** The council has established a community engagement framework over the past 12 months through monthly Community Engagement Events and enhanced social media presence. This can be used to provide an effective platform to communicate and promote the transition process to residents.
- 9. Existing Health and Safety arrangements:** MTC currently have an established system and methodology of recording and documenting health and safety with existing risk assessments and associated controls in place that encompass the proposed activities associated with devolution.

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Weaknesses

1. **Split Operational Bases/depots:** MTC's current operational base/depots consists of split locations, potentially reducing operational efficiency.
2. **Vehicle Requirements:** The current vehicle fleet requires expansion, indicating a resource gap.
3. **Staff Capacity Limitations:** The need for three additional staff members indicates current staffing is insufficient for expanded responsibilities.
4. **Limited Legal Expertise:** Certain aspects of the transfer will require specialised legal knowledge beyond in-house capabilities meaning additional solicitor costs.
5. **Uncertain Cost Elements:** Several cost elements remain under evaluation due to missing or incomplete information provided.
6. **Out of Hours Response System:** No current system exists for the consistent management for out-of-hours safety incidents in play areas and public spaces.
7. **Contract Modifications Needed:** The need to consult staff regarding contract modifications indicates current employment arrangements are unsuitable for the type of service MTC will need to provide.

Opportunities

1. **Additional Income Generation:** Money-making assets like Blenheim Café, Jubilee Café, and car parks present revenue opportunities to offset costs.
2. **Service Integration Efficiencies:** Consolidating currently split services under one authority can reduce duplication and improve efficiency.
3. **Enhanced Public Amenities:** Local control enables tailoring services to community needs, potentially increasing usage and satisfaction.
4. **Environmental Enhancement:** Expanded ownership of green spaces provides opportunities for increased biodiversity initiatives and carbon reduction.
5. **Grant Funding Access:** As the asset owner, MTC may qualify for grants and funding unavailable to Somerset Council for these spaces.
6. **Local Supplier Relationships:** Proximity to local businesses may enable more cost-effective maintenance arrangements than county-level contracts.
7. **Flexible Implementation:** The option for phased responsibility transfer under license offers flexibility if immediate ownership transfer proves challenging.
8. **Tourism Enhancement:** Improved maintenance of key visitor attractions like Blenheim Gardens could boost tourism and local economy.
9. **Enhanced Community Buy-in/Volunteer Opportunities:** Local ownership can foster greater community pride and involvement, creating pathways for volunteering in areas like gardening, events, maintenance, and environmental projects, reducing costs while building community connections.
10. **Simplified public understanding of ownership:** Local ownership will make it easier for residents to understand the services provided in town, as all green spaces will be managed by MTC.

Appendix 10.

Threats

- 1. Community Engagement Challenges:** Increased focus on service delivery may reduce capacity for community engagement and consultation.
- 2. Unforeseen Asset Liabilities:** Hidden infrastructure issues might emerge after transfer, creating unexpected expenses.
- 3. Public Expectation Management:** Residents may have unrealistic service improvement expectations that exceed budgetary capabilities.
- 4. Staff Integration Difficulties:** TUPE transfers may create workplace culture challenges or resistance to new working patterns.
- 5. Income Uncertainty:** Commercial assets, such as cafés, could become vacant unexpectedly, and car parks may generate less revenue than anticipated. Additionally, the cost of improvements may exceed the income generated, further impacting projected earnings.
- 6. Regulatory Changes:** Future legal or regulatory changes might impose additional compliance costs or restrictions.
- 7. Climate Change Impacts:** Increasing extreme weather events may accelerate infrastructure deterioration and escalate maintenance/clean-up costs.
- 8. Declining Volunteer Base:** If community support diminishes, the council may face increased costs replacing volunteer activities.
- 9. Limited officer delegation:** The growing scope of service delivery requires council to carefully evaluate appropriate delegation of spending authority to officers, particularly in amenities services, to ensure efficient operations while maintaining proper oversight.
- 10. Risk of excessive officer delegation:** While delegating authority to officers is necessary for operations, extending it beyond routine decisions could compromise the council's democratic oversight and financial governance mechanisms. A balanced approach to officer delegation is essential to maintain effective controls while enabling service delivery.
- 11. Increased Staff Workload:** Expansion of responsibilities will significantly impact workload, particularly in unseen administrative areas. The devolution will create substantial additional work in record-keeping for new assets, public correspondence and complaint handling, financial management and reporting, health and safety documentation, procurement and contract management, staff coordination, and public meeting preparation. These administrative burdens may not be fully accounted for in current staffing plans, potentially leading to burnout or service quality issues if not properly addressed.
- 12. Centralised control and accountability:** With all green spaces managed by MTC, responsibility falls entirely on one authority, leaving no alternative options if issues arise.

Conclusion

The devolution proposals present significant opportunities for enhancing local control of public spaces and improving service delivery in Minehead. However, they also

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entail substantial financial commitments and operational challenges. MTC will need to develop thorough implementation plans, secure adequate resources, and establish clear service standards to mitigate the identified risks while maximising the potential benefits of this major transfer of assets and responsibilities.

RA Ref	DEVO/1	
Team	MTC	
SWP required		No

Appendix 11.



Risk Assessment Title: Transfer of Assets and Services from Somerset Council to Minehead Town Council

Completed By - Name: Ben Parker

Date of Assessment: February 2025

Date for Review: Ongoing

HAZARD	RISK	PERSONS INVOLVED	Initial Risk Score			CONTROL MEASURES (Inc statutory requirements)	Residual Risk Score	
			SEVERITY (1-5)	LIKELIHOOD (1-5)	OVERALL SCORE		LIKELIHOOD (1-5)	OVERALL SCORE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal and Administrative Complexities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delays or errors in transfer documentation Legal disputes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council staff, legal representatives 	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage qualified legal professionals. Ensure all documentation is thoroughly reviewed. Establish service level agreements for car parks and their ongoing liabilities. Register all asset transfers with relevant authorities. Ensure any staff transfers follow the TUPE process in accordance with legal advice. 	2	8
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Burden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased costs for staffing, insurance, equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTC Council taxpayers 	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget planning with contingency for unknown costs. Use underspend from 2024/25 budget to cover uncertainties. Sufficient level of General Reserves in place. Review financial implications annually. Income generating assets included in devolution deal presenting income opportunities. 	3	12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational Capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff shortages Inefficient maintenance due to increased workload 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MTC Staff 	3	4	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TUPE transfer of three staff from Somerset Council. Implement seven-day rota system. Invest in necessary equipment and vehicles. Review office working arrangements at 	2	6

RA Ref	DEVO/1	
Team	MTC	
SWP required		No

Appendix 11.



						earliest opportunity.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Confusion Over Responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints and service requests misdirected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents Visitors Businesses 	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear communication with the community through press releases, websites and social media. Updated signage and public notices. Regular engagement through social media and community engagement events. 	2	6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infrastructure Deterioration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deferred maintenance causing hazards in open spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public MTC staff 	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement maintenance plans/schedules. Annual reviews of infrastructure investment. Any existing inspection reports to be transferred for review in advance. Implement a proactive reporting system for faults. Develop a long-term infrastructure enhancement plan outlining key projects and estimated costs. Implement a memorial bench and tree policy, allowing the public to contribute towards new installations. Actively seek external grant funding opportunities. 	3	12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental Risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased carbon footprint Biodiversity loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Environment 	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue rewilding program Invest in eco-friendly equipment and practices where possible Consider environmentally friendly methods when planning any future infrastructure or landscaping projects 	2	6

RA Ref	DEVO/1	
Team	MTC	
SWP required		No

Appendix 11.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health & Safety of Public and Staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Injuries due to unmaintained play areas, pathways, or equipment failure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public MTC staff 	4	3	12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct regular risk assessments and safety audits. Ensure staff training in health and safety measures. Carry out staff inductions of any newly appointed staff. Regularly review any existing staffing policies and procedures. Implement out-of-hours reporting for urgent issues. 	2	8
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Additional Control Measures <i>(to take account of local/individual circumstances including changes such as working practices, equipment, staffing levels).</i>	Action by Whom <i>(list the name of the person/people who have been designated to conduct actions)</i>	Action by When <i>(set timescales for the completion of the actions – remember to prioritise them)</i>	Action Completed <i>(record the actual date of completion for each action listed)</i>	Residual Risk Rating
Legal review of all asset transfer agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Clerk Solicitor 	April 2025		
Comprehensive review of Financial, Operational and Governance Risk Assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deputy Clerk Finance and Staffing Committee 	April 2025		
Staff training on any new operational requirements and ongoing training planning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Clerk Amenities Manager 	Ongoing		
DATE OF REVIEW: <i>Record actual date of review</i>	COMMENTS: <i>Record any comments reviewer wishes to make. Including recommendations for future reviews.</i>			

RA Ref	DEVO/1	
Team	MTC	
SWP required		No

DATE OF REVIEW:	COMMENTS:
DATE OF REVIEW:	COMMENTS:

Risk Matrix

Risk Rating				Consequence (Impact/Severity of Injury)					
Very High (VH) 15-25	High (H) 10-12	Medium (M) 5-9	Low (L) 1-4	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	
				Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic	
Likelihood Descriptor			Consequence Descriptor		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Near Miss. No treatment required. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First-Aid treatment (e.g. minor cuts, bruises, bumps) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medical treatment Lost time of >3 working days. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serious injury/ medical treatment. Hospitalisation. Lost time (RIDDOR) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loss of life. Permanent disability.
Likelihood (Probability/Chance)	Very likely. Event is expected to occur in most circumstances: More than 95% chance of occurring.		5.	Almost Certain	M-5	H-10	VH-15	VH-20	VH-25
	There is a strong possibility the event will occur. Between 65% - 95% chance of occurring.		4.	Likely	L-4	M-8	H-12	VH-16	VH-20
	The event has occurred before or could again. Between 35% - 65% chance of occurring.		3.	Possible	L-3	M-6	M-9	H-12	VH-15
	The event is not expected to occur but could under specific circumstances. Between 5% - 35% chance of occurring.		2.	Unlikely	L-2	L-4	M-6	M-8	H-10
	The event has not occurred before, but it may occur in exceptional circumstances. < 5% chance of occurring.		1.	Rare	L-1	L-2	L-3	L-4	M-5