

Appendix C – Details of major capital projects

A Fairer, Ambitious Somerset

Children with Special Education Needs & Disabilities

High Needs Provision Capital Allocations (HNPCA) grant will be used to fund projects that:

- enable and/or increase access to mainstream placements for children and young people who might otherwise require more specialist provision.
- increase the local availability of High Needs places, and
- adapt, re-model or improve existing High Needs places to make them suitable for a wider range of needs.

This involves a combination of expanding, repurposing and reconfiguring provision so that they better meet the needs of children and young people with complex needs, for example by improving:

- physical access to school buildings (e.g. ramps, handrails, and automated doors).
- access to the curriculum (e.g., specialist furniture and IT equipment).
- facilities within school buildings (e.g., medical rooms and acoustic improvements).
- access to specialist provision.

Schools - Energy Efficiency

This annual budget relates to a government funded grant allocated for individual schools for small capital projects and energy efficiency schemes. The grant is passported by Somerset Council onto Local Authority maintained schools for us in accordance with the conditions of the scheme.

Schools - Basic Need

The purpose of this investment is to meet the Council's statutory duty to deliver sufficient fit for purpose school places for all children in Somerset. The Council is facing increasing demand for school places, both mainstream and specialist provision, as the school age population in the county continues to rise. A number of projects to provide additional school places across the county will need to be undertaken over the coming years with funding being received from a number of sources including: Department for education (Dfe), Section106, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF)

Schools condition programme

As well as ensuring a sufficient provision of new places, schools must be maintained in an appropriate condition. This funding is to ensure school buildings are safe and functional and that their condition does not detract from teaching and learning or lead to unplanned school closures. The Department for Education (DfE) provides an annual capital grant to support this activity. However, there is a major and growing shortfall in funding between the level of need and the grant funding available, with a significant maintenance backlog currently identified. Grant funding will therefore be allocated to areas of highest need identified in the most recent condition surveys ie essential funding to replace critical building components

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(boilers/heating/roofs/windows etc) and major works which Schools would in most cases be unable to afford through their devolved funds.

A flourishing and resilient Somerset

Bridgwater Town Deal

Bridgwater is one of the Government's 101 Towns Fund Towns. In 2021-2022, the local authority secured £23.2m of investment to deliver eleven different projects within the town, ranging from travel to cultural improvements and diversifying what the town centre has to offer. The largest single project, which commenced in February 2023, will improve large parts of Bridgwater's public realm alongside better accessibility within the town centre.

Plans are also in place to regenerate the former Bridgwater Hospital, a significant Grade 2 building which has become dilapidated over recent years. Converting the building into a Training Academy for Health and Social Care will not only bring back into use a significant town centre site but also deliver wider benefits such as increasing town centre footfall, and training thousands of individuals to work across the health and care sectors.

Glastonbury Town Deal

Glastonbury is also one of the Government's 101 Town Deal towns and will benefit from £23.6m investment between 2021 and 2026. Some key projects have already been delivered, for example the Robert Richards Initiative has created a popular multi-user path at Tor Leisure and a learning and skills website in partnership with the Open University. Other initiatives include:

- local hubs for Sport and Leisure, Enterprise and Innovation
- clean energy initiatives
- improvements to Glastonbury Abbey, and
- a new Community Health and Wellbeing Centre.

A greener, more sustainable Somerset

Bridges, Road structures and Traffic Control

Highways Agency funding will be used to maintain the highways network and the various bridges and structures which Somerset Council is responsible for. This includes the core annual maintenance cycle relating to carriageways, footways and cycleways, drainage, street lighting, and traffic control. Grant funding has also been made available to complete the A38 Chelston Link to junction 26 of the M5 motorway.

There are currently 299 Traffic signal sites across Somerset. Approximately 137 of these sites have been identified as being in a critical condition with urgent works required, and 220 will be affected by national plans to connect all traffic signals to a digital network by the end of 2025.

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Lighting

The Council currently maintain circa 50,495 street lights, 1704 illuminated bollards, 4,839 illuminated signs and 401 Belisha Beacons/Beacon post lights. 64% of these have been replaced with LEDs, with the remainder due to be replaced over the next three years.

Bus Service Improvement Programme

Three separate infrastructure projects will be carried out as part of the BSIP programme:

- BSIP ‘Greenwaves’: A series of bus priority measures in Taunton along key routes into the town, including new bus lanes and upgrades to signals and traffic lights,
- Taunton Mobility Hub: These works will return the old bus station site to its original use as a bus interchange together with cycle parking, cycle hire, e-bike charging, community and commercial space and an indoor waiting area.
- Somerton Rural Mobility Hub: A smaller, rural mobility hub which will act as an interchange for existing bus services and DDRT service trial.

A Healthy and Caring Somerset

New Social Housing

New housing developments are planned at:

- The “Woolaway Project”, in North Taunton, which will provide a net increase of 69 new homes over the next 10 years.

- 40 new homes in Bridgewater, Sydenham, North Petherton and Nether Stowey.

Maintaining and improving HRA housing stock

Major items of capital expenditure will relate to:

- kitchens and bathrooms (£31m),
- windows and roofing (£21m)
- heating and insulation (£14m).

Further information about the Council's financial plans for social housing can be found at [Housing Revenue Account \(HRA\) updated 30 year Business Plan and Rent Set 202324.pdf \(somerset.gov.uk\)](#)