

SOMERSET COUNCIL

Frome Town Council

Cllr Dawn Denton

August 2025

****SOMERSET PRESS RELEASES:** All Somerset County Council press releases: **Newsroom**

****SYCAMORE ON HEATH DRIVE:** Open Spaces Tree team will assess this tree and action any outstanding work. It is in the works programme with no date applied.

****AMBIENT VOICE SCRIBING AT FROME MEDICAL PRACTICE:** I have received correspondence from a resident who is concerned that this is now being used at the practice but not communicated well with patients. Many are unaware it is being used and thus do not have the opportunity to opt out. I have requested a meeting and await a response.

****WESSEX WATER:** I am meeting with the Director of Infrastructure Development at Wessex Water, Matt Wheeldon, to discuss local river discharges.

****FROME COMMUNITY HOSPITAL:** 8/9 of the 24 beds at the Frome Community Hospital will be removed as part of a trial over the summer and autumn. This will make space and resources available to bring more local care into the community to include reablement services (to support faster, safer discharges and better care closer to home), as well as chemotherapy, dermatology, and orthopaedics. This has been running successfully in Wellington for over a year. More information:

<https://dawndenton.substack.com/p/community-hospital-beds-trial>

****FLY TIPPING:** After many locally reported fly tipping incidents around Frome, this will be raised with the Somerset Council Executive and senior managers this month. Continue to report all issues: [Report fly tipping](#)

—

****Planning Emergency Measures:** Somerset Council has [suspended normal planning services](#) for at least 12 weeks, citing a failure in capacity and rising risk of service collapse. Officers have warned the system is at a “past fail point” and that the Council could face a “catastrophic event” if urgent action is not taken. During this period, new and straightforward applications will be prioritised. Older or more complex cases will likely face further delays, and planning enforcement will be deprioritised. Site visits will be heavily restricted, and applicants, agents, and councillors will receive standardised holding responses rather than individual updates. The crisis stems from unresolved staffing shortages, IT system integration failures, and a growing backlog.

All correspondence with the planning team needs to go through the Planning Portal and will be triaged accordingly. Information: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/planning-services-update/>

Responses will only be received in relation to workload that directly affects the backlog

****£190 million Transformation Plan:** Somerset Council has approved its delayed “Inspiring Innovation” Transformation Plan, which outlines how the authority aims to save £190 million over five years. The Council says “*We do not know exactly how we will save £190 million. But we do know... we can do it because of our brilliant workforce and amazing residents.*” A strategic transformation partner will be sought to help develop detailed business cases and support delivery.

****Pay Review Costs:** Somerset Council has confirmed that its pay and grading review could add up to £8 million to the annual payroll bill by 2026/27, in addition to £3 million already allocated to deliver the review itself using an outsourced partner. At Full Council, councillors questioned the cost and timing of the review given the Council’s current financial emergency.

****New Waste Calendars and Food Recycling Push:** Somerset residents are receiving updated recycling and rubbish collection calendars which sets out collection days for the next 18 months. While Somerset has one of the highest food waste recycling rates in England, around 45% of food in household rubbish is still discarded in its packaging. The Council and contractor SUEZ will run a year-long campaign to encourage better food waste separation and promote the environmental and cost benefits of using food caddies. Residents can order free kitchen caddies and food waste bins online.

****Summer Reading Challenge 2025 Launches:** Primary school children across Somerset are being encouraged to take part in the 2025 Summer Reading Challenge, launched this month in local libraries. This year’s theme, *Story Garden: Adventures in Nature and the Great Outdoors*, invites children aged 4–11 to read six books over the summer holidays, earning rewards and a medal along the way. The free challenge is designed to promote reading for pleasure and help maintain literacy levels over the summer break. Libraries will also host themed events and offer activity packs to support participation. www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries/summer-reading-challenge-2025

****Transport Plan Consultation Opens:** Somerset Council has launched a public consultation on its draft Local Transport Plan (LTP), which will guide transport priorities across the county for the next 20 years. The plan outlines goals to promote walking, cycling, and public transport, support the transition to electric vehicles, and improve infrastructure and road safety. It also aims to tailor policies to the needs of different community types, from small villages to large towns. You can respond to the consultation by 7 September here <https://somersetcouncil.citizenspace.com/active-travel/copy-of-local-transport-plan-2025>

****ALL OPEN CONSULTATIONS: Citizen’s Space**

Dawn Denton: dawn.denton@somerset.gov.uk