**SOMERSET COUNCIL REPORT**

**LONG LOAD 16th January 2024**

**1 - Somerset Council Issues**

|  |
| --- |
| **1.1 - Council secures phosphate mitigation funding**  Somerset Council has secured £9.6m of Government funding to deliver phosphate mitigation measures which will unlock the delivery of new homes across the area and provide for long term nature recovery.  The award comes after the Council working in partnership with the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Plymouth University, Salinity Solutions, and Dorset Council, submitted a bid to the Government’s Nutrient Mitigation Fund.  The funding announced today (19 December) will be used to expand the Council’s existing phosphate credit scheme and deliver both interim and long-term phosphate mitigation measures including the use of new energy efficient water processing technology trialled at the Fivehead Wastewater Treatment Works near Taunton earlier this year.  Somerset Council has been building on the work begun by the former Somerset County Council and the four district councils (Somerset West and Taunton, Mendip, South Somerset, and Sedgemoor) which had been working together to minimise delay and uncertainty around planning applications since receiving advice from Natural England about the requirement to mitigate against high levels of phosphates in the Somerset Levels and Moors Ramsar Site in 2020, and the River Axe Special Area of Conservation in 2022.  Further information on the requirement and Somerset Council’s work can be found on our website -  [Phosphates (somerset.gov.uk)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/planning-buildings-and-land/phosphates-on-the-somerset-levels-and-moors-ramsar-site/#Background to Phosphates)  **1.2-End to charging for some DIY waste at recycling sites**  In line with recently published new legislation (The Controlled Waste (Amendment) Regulations 2023), from the 1 January 2024 there will be a change to Somerset Council’s approach to charging for the disposal of some domestic DIY waste at its recycling sites.  The affected materials are:   1. hardcore and rubble 2. asbestos 3. plasterboard   We will be raising awareness of these changes in the coming weeks. Please note, the legislative change was confirmed on 22 November 2023.  **Domestic Waste**  Currently, residents have to pay to dispose of these materials through the recycling sites which are managed for the council by Biffa. Deposits of asbestos and plasterboard need to be booked in advance, while hardcore and rubble are paid for on site. Not all sites are able to take asbestos and plasterboard but all 16 take hardcore and rubble.  **The new legislation means that from 1 January residents can dispose of these types of waste – asbestos, plasterboard hardcore/rubble – for free, so long as they have produced the waste through their own DIY.**  There will be a limit on how much of this type of construction and demolition waste can be disposed of each month through our sites.   * **Each household will be able to bring up to eight, 50 litre sacks (or eight 2m sheets of asbestos or plasterboard) to a recycling site each calendar month, free of charge, over a maximum of four visits in a month,** (for example, two visits bringing four bags each time, or a single visit bringing eight bags).   The type of waste in each sack should be kept separate but the eight sack allowance can be made up from a combination of the various waste types. For example three sacks/sheets of asbestos, two sacks/sheets of plasterboard and three sacks of rubble.   * **Householders will need to pre-book their visit if they wish to take asbestos, plasterboard, hardcore and rubble.** From 2 January, an online form will be available on somerset.gov.uk/waste to make bookings. If residents cannot access the online form, they can call Customer Services on: 0300 123 2224.   Residents will need to tell us:   * The amount of material they are disposing (up to eight, 50 litre sacks per month) * The number of times they need to visit (up to four visits per month) to dispose of the allowance.   The council and Biffa will monitor how often residents are visiting and how much of this type of DIY material they are bringing.  **Please note only the following recycling sites accept asbestos and/or plasterboard:** Bridgwater, Chard (not asbestos), Crewkerne (not asbestos), Dulverton (not asbestos), Frome, Highbridge, Minehead (not plasterboard), Street, Taunton, Wells (not asbestos), Williton (not asbestos), and Yeovil.  Please check online for how to wrap up asbestos that is taken to the recycling site.  Hardcore and rubble is accepted at all 16 sites and from 2 January deposits of this material will also need to be booked in advance. If residents need to dispose of asbestos, plasterboard or hardcore/rubble in excess of their free allowance they can pay for this online through the Somerset Council website somerset.gov.uk/waste  If households need to dispose of asbestos, plasterboard or hardcore/rubble. Before 31 December 2023, they can still do so by paying online here: [Bins, recycling and waste (somerset.gov.uk)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/bins-recycling-and-waste/) and using the ‘Do it online’ section. Hardcore and rubble deposits can also be paid for on site until 31 December.  **Trade waste**  **Construction and demolition waste from trade activity is classified as industrial waste and is not entitled to any free disposal.**  Biffa can accept trade construction and demolition waste (excluding trade asbestos) and a charge is payable to Biffa at the site. Please note not all sites accept plasterboard.  **For more information contact:**David Oaten.**-**Waste Services Contract Manager - Treatment & Infrastructure  **Email:** [david.oaten@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:david.oaten@somerset.gov.uk)  **-1.3-Council unveils new partnerships to deliver road surface repairs and improvements**  Somerset Council has awarded three new contracts to deliver essential road maintenance services as well as improvements on its network across the County.  The Council has awarded four-year contracts with Kiely Bros Ltd and Heidelberg Materials to deliver surface treatment services and resurfacing services respectively, while a third four-year contract has been awarded to Octavius Infrastructure Ltd to deliver new infrastructure assets, including traffic calming and active travel measures.    The contracts were approved by Somerset Council’s Executive last month following a tendering process and will ensure the Council meets its statutory duties to maintain and improve its 4,172-mile road network to the required standards.  Somerset Council recently signed a new eight-year contract with Kier Transportation Ltd to deliver essential core maintenance across its road network. That agreement covers key maintenance works – including road repairs, drainage, verge cutting and winter service, such as gritting and other emergency functions in adverse weather.  The current contract with Milestone Infrastructure comes to an end at the end of March 2024. Since 2021 the Council has been engaged in a tendering process involving suppliers from across the UK.  In a change to the way it delivers services, the Council divided up the existing contract into four separate contracts covering different areas of service delivery.  The aim is to increase efficiency, cost effectiveness and innovation whilst being more resilient to climate change with a reduced carbon output. |

**2.0 Local Issues**

**2.1 – Drainage issues** Given the recent events, a discussion with you to update on current knowledge of drainage and floods.

**2.2 - Repairs to SIS Fence on the footpath and continuation of the permissive path use**

Ongoing discussions with landowner. (email of 17/10/23) JB Updated in email (16/11/23) Awaiting response from Long Load. Way forward to be agree at te PC meeting

**Regards John and Emily**