

Stronger Somerset

17 March 2021

Dear Parish and Town Councils,

Last week we sent Parish and Town Councils a letter to alert you to the current consultation on potential changes to local government in Somerset and to encourage awareness of the Stronger Somerset proposals for two new unitary councils to replace the existing five councils, together with reform that includes increased support for communities and local councils.

Upon review we have concluded that in one section, the letter fell short of our desire to maintain a positive campaign and to focus on the merits of our proposals and case. Going forward, we are committed to ensuring our contribution to the debate can assist in positively raising awareness so that any person or organisation that wishes to respond to the Secretary of State's consultation can do so cognisant of the facts. We will continue to hold dialogue with Somerset County Council to ensure the highest standards are maintained in information giving on all sides and to plan how to implement the Secretary of State's decision following the consultation, whatever the result of that is, in the best interests of the people and communities of Somerset.

The potential changes to local government in Somerset will not only affect the structure of councils but will affect services and outcomes for communities for decades to come. We therefore would encourage you as key stakeholders in this debate to review both cases and express your views to the Secretary of State.

The full Stronger Somerset Business Case for two new councils can be found [here](#).

The One Somerset business case for a single unitary council can be found [here](#).

Details of the Secretary of State's consultation can be found [here](#).

Kind regards and in respect,



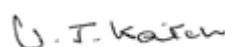
Councillor Duncan McGinty
Sedgemoor District Council



Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts
Somerset West and Taunton Council



Councillor Ros Wyke
Mendip District Council



Councillor Val Keitch
South Somerset District Council