

# West Devon Hub Committee



West Devon  
Borough  
Council

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Agenda</b>								
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Tuesday, 27th April, 2021</b>								
<b>Time:</b>	<b>2.00 pm</b>								
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Teams</b>								
<b>Full Members:</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Chairman</b> Cllr Jory</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Vice Chairman</b> Cllr Samuel</p> <p><i>Members:</i></p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td>Cllr Edmonds</td> <td>Cllr Moody</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Mott</td> <td>Cllr Pearce</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Leech</td> <td>Cllr Sellis</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Cheadle</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Cllr Edmonds	Cllr Moody	Cllr Mott	Cllr Pearce	Cllr Leech	Cllr Sellis	Cllr Cheadle	
Cllr Edmonds	Cllr Moody								
Cllr Mott	Cllr Pearce								
Cllr Leech	Cllr Sellis								
Cllr Cheadle									
<b>Interests – Declaration and Restriction on Participation:</b>	Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest not entered in the Authority's register or local non pecuniary interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda (subject to the exception for sensitive information) and to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on an item in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest.								
<b>Committee administrator:</b>	Democratic.Services@swdevon.gov.uk								

**1. Apologies for absence**

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Members are invited to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests, including the nature and extent of such interests they may have in any items to be considered at this meeting.

If Councillors have any questions relating to predetermination, bias or interests in items on this Agenda, then please contact the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

**3. Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

To consider those items which, in the opinion of the Chairman, should be considered by the Meeting as matters of urgency (if any)

**4. Confirmation of Minutes**

**1 - 8**

Minutes of meeting held on 16 March 2021

**5. Public Questions -a period of up to 15 minutes is available to deal with issues raised by the public**

**6. Hub Committee Forward Plan**

**9 - 12**

**7. Lead Hub Committee Member Update - Cllr Leech**

**8. Future Localities Service**

**13 - 20**

**9. Write-off Report for 2020/21**

**21 - 30**

**10. Tavistock BID Renewal**

**31 - 46**

**11. Enhancing the Democratic Decision-Making Process**

**47 - 54**

**12. Planning and Planning Enforcement Improvement Plan**

**55 - 60**

**13. Waste Collection Frequency Trial**

**61 - 70**

# Agenda Item 4

At a Meeting of the **HUB COMMITTEE** held via **TEAMS** on **TUESDAY**  
the **16<sup>th</sup>** day of **March 2021** at **2:00 pm**

**Present:** Cllr N Jory – Chairman  
Cllr L Samuel – Vice Chairman

Cllr R Cheadle	Cllr C Edmonds
Cllr A F Leech	Cllr J Moody
Cllr C Mott	Cllr T G Pearce
Cllr D K A Sellis	

**In attendance:** Senior Leadership Team  
Monitoring Officer  
Democratic Services Manager  
Head of Strategy and Projects  
Head of Housing, Revenues and Benefits  
Affordable Housing Specialist  
Senior Specialist Environmental Health  
Business Manager (Specialists)  
Business Manager (Case Management)  
Senior Specialist Place Making

**Other Members in attendance:**

Cllrs Crozier, Daniel, Ewings, Heyworth, Hipsey, Kemp, Kimber, Musgrave, Ratcliffe, Southcott, Wood and Yelland

**\*HC 60 APOLOGIES**  
No apologies were received.

**\*HC 61 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be discussed and these were recorded as follows:

Cllr T G Pearce declared a personal interest in agenda item 9: 'Community Housing – Brentor and Lamerton' (Minute HC 67 below refers) by virtue of being the Chairman of Brentor Parish Council and remained in the meeting during the debate and vote on this item; and

Cllr D K A Sellis declared a personal interest in agenda item 12: 'Public Space Protection Order – Dog Controls' (Minute HC 70 below refers) by virtue of walking her dog on Dartmoor and remained in the meeting and took part in the debate and vote thereon.

**\*HC 62 MINUTES**  
The Minutes of the Hub Committee meeting held on 2 February 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

**\*HC 63 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**  
One Question had been received from a member of the public as follows:

### **Question from Helen Harris**

*Will the toilets at the car park at Brentor be open from Easter for the season?*

In reply, the Leader informed that it was intended that the toilets at the car park would be open from 1 April (as per the annual contract), subject to confirmation from the church to the Parish Council that its financial contribution towards maintaining the toilets would be received.

#### **\*HC 64 HUB COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN**

Members were presented with the Hub Committee Forward Plan setting out items on the agenda for Hub Committee meetings for the next four months and the Plan was duly noted without any further comment.

#### **\*HC 65 LEAD HUB COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATE – CLLR JORY**

The Leader introduced his update and advised that it was intended to focus on the proposed timeline for the Council's Corporate Strategy. The Leader introduced the proposed timeline for the Strategy (as set out at Appendix A to these minutes) and made particular reference to:

- the importance of all Members being involved in the development of the Strategy; and
- his wish for the Strategy (once adopted) to be in place for the next three years. Furthermore, it was the wish of the Leader for the Strategy to sharpen the Council's focus on community and to create specific measurable targets that could be worked towards. In so doing, the need for the Strategy to be realistic and reflective of the Council's resources was noted.

In the ensuing discussion, the important role to be played by lead Hub Committee Members was highlighted and, as part of the appointment process at Annual Council in May, the need for parity of workload across the lead Member portfolio areas was recognised.

#### **HC 66 "BETTER HOMES, BETTER LIVES" ADOPTION OF SOUTH HAMS AND WEST DEVON HOUSING STRATEGY 2021/2026**

The Committee was presented with a report that recommended adoption of the draft South Hams and West Devon Housing Strategy for 2021/26.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- (a) the affordable housing numbers in the annual delivery plan. When questioned, officers advised that the numbers would be in line with those that had been adopted in the Joint Local Plan. In response to a specific request, officers agreed to circulate these numbers (including the numbers of shared ownership properties that were to come forward) to Members outside of this meeting;
- (b) the definition(s) of affordable housing. When considering the Delivery Plan in future years, some Members felt that it would be beneficial to include more detail in relation to the definition(s) of affordable housing and the different types of tenure to be included in development schemes;

- (c) the direct links to the Health and Wellbeing agenda. In stressing the close linkages to Health and Wellbeing, the lead Member stated the need for good quality housing to be developed;
- (d) thanks to the lead officers. In particular, Members wished to record their thanks to the Head of Housing, Revenues and Benefits for her hard work and efforts in developing such a comprehensive Strategy and Delivery Plan whilst also being heavily involved in the Council's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. Council be **RECOMMENDED** to adopt the "Better Homes, Better Lives" – the South Hams and West Devon Housing Strategy for 2021-2026 (as set out at Appendix 1 to the presented agenda report); and
2. the Delivery Plan for 2021 that supports the South Hams and West Devon Housing Strategy for 2021-2026 (as outlined at Appendix 2 to the presented agenda report) be approved.

## **HC 67 COMMUNITY HOUSING – BRENTOR AND LAMERTON**

A report was considered that presented an update on the Community Housing Programme and set out the recommended approach to:

- underlying principles;
- governance;
- budget and funding, including staff cost, design costs and borrowing; and
- housing need.

The report also provided an update on the Brentor and Lamerton projects.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) In light of a number of detailed questions arising in relation to the Lamerton project, the following additional recommendation was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED**:

*'That the Lamerton scheme be subject of a further report to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.'*

In debate on the addition, Members felt that there remained a number of questions that should be subject to further review by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. When put to the vote, the addition was declared **CARRIED** and it therefore became part of the substantive motion;

- (b) A number of Members expressed their support for the Community Housing concept and, whilst recognising that schemes were incredibly difficult to deliver and there were a number of associated risks, it was hoped that the Brentor scheme would ultimately be delivered;
- (c) Members expressed their support for the Governance Review to be undertaken by the Director of Governance and Assurance and it was agreed that the findings of the Review should be presented to a future meeting of the Hub Committee;

- (d) The extent of the Housing Need in the Borough and the requirement for the Programme to reflect the priorities of the Housing Strategy (once adopted) were noted.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the revised management structure of the community housing programme, jointly between the Head of Housing, Revenues & Benefits (community and housing need) and the Head of Assets (delivery) be noted;
2. the principles of the community housing scheme (as set out in section 3 of the presented agenda report) have been considered and approved;
3. the update on Brentor and Lamerton schemes be noted and it also be noted that the Lamerton scheme is not proceedable at this time;
4. the Lamerton scheme be subject of a further report to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
5. Council be **RECOMMENDED** to approve the expenditure of £85,000 from the Innovation Fund (Invest to Earn) Earmarked Reserve to undertake detailed design, specification and tendering of the Brentor scheme, subject to a successful planning decision.

**HC 68**

**MONTH 10 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2020/2021 (TO THE END OF JANUARY 2021)**

Members considered a report that set out the latest Revenue Budget Monitoring up to the end of January 2021.

In discussion, Members wished to put on record their thanks to the Section 151 Officer, Deputy Section 151 Officer and their finance colleagues for their prudent financial management. Also, Members welcomed the cautious but optimistic approach to financial management that was being adopted by the Council.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the significant forecast income and expenditure variations for the 2020/21 financial year and the overall projected surplus of £323,000 (4.19% of the total annual Budget of £7.713 million) be noted;
2. Council be **RECOMMENDED** to transfer the business rates pooling gain of £100,000 for 2020/21, into the Business Rates Retention Earmarked Reserve and £200,000 of the 2020/21 projected surplus into a Recovery Plan and Corporate Strategy Earmarked Reserve.

(NB. If approved by Council in March 2021, this would leave a remaining surplus on the 2020/21 Accounts position of a surplus of £23,000 (£323,000 less £100,000 less £200,000) against the 2020/21 Amended Budget);

3. Council be **RECOMMENDED** to transfer £80,000 of salary savings from 2020/21 into a Salary Savings Earmarked Reserve, to be ringfenced to support salary costs in 2021/22 as set out in section 1.8 of the presented agenda report; and
4. Council be **RECOMMENDED** to transfer any award from the National Leisure Recovery Fund (the national £100million Leisure Fund), into the Leisure Services Earmarked Reserve (as set out in Section 1.12 of the presented agenda report).

(NB. The Council's indicative allocation is £80,000, which has been applied for).

## HC 69

### **CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2020/2021**

Members considered a report that advised of the financial position as at 31 January 2021 for the purposes of Budget Monitoring.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) In citing the Green Homes Grant and Business Grants as examples, some Members felt that representations should be made to Central Government in respect of simplifying such processes; and
- (b) With regard to the condition of Brook Street Car Park, officers committed to re-opening discussions and dialogue with the Co-op;

It was then **RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be endorsed.

## HC 70

### **PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDERS – DOG CONTROLS**

Consideration was given to a report that sought a recommendation to the Council meeting to be held on 30 March 2021 that a Public Space Protection Order 2021 be made.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- (a) the importance of a communications campaign. Members emphasised the importance of a robust communications and education campaign to underpin the Order once approved;
- (b) reaching this point. A number of Members highlighted the difficulties that had been experienced in reaching this point whereby a recommendation could now be put forward to the Council. As a result, the Committee wished to thank the lead officers and lead Members in achieving a satisfactory outcome.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** to adopt the Public Space Protection Order 2021 (as outlined at Appendix 1 of the presented agenda report). To come into effect from 30 March 2021, the Order will introduce the following Borough-wide provisions that require dog walkers to:-

1. carry the means to pick up and to pick up;
2. keep dogs on lead on lanes designated as a Dogs on Lead Area and on roads with speed zones up to 30mph;

3. comply to put and keep dogs on leads if so directed (by an authorised officer); and
4. prevent dogs from accessing a dog exclusion zone.

HC 71

## **RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2 MARCH 2021**

### **(a) Consultation and Engagement Task and Finish Group**

Members considered the concluding report of the Consultation and Engagement Task and Finish Group that recommended adoption of a draft Community Consultation and Engagement Strategy.

The report also highlighted that the Strategy had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 2 March 2021. At that meeting, Committee Members had proceeded to recommend adoption of the Strategy.

During discussion, thanks were extended to the Task and Finish Group Members and the lead officers.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** to adopt the draft Community Consultation & Engagement Strategy (as set out at Appendix B of the presented agenda report).

### **(b) Localities Task and Finish Group**

The Committee considered the concluding report of the Localities Task and Finish Group.

The report informed that a version of this report had been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting held on 2 March 2021 and Committee Members had proceeded to recommend onward consideration of each of the recommendations.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- (i) the need for local Ward Members to engage with their Locality Officers. In particular, the importance of both Members and Officers providing feedback to each other (where appropriate) was recognised;
- (ii) the proposals having the support of the Team;
- (iii) the future of the Community Clustering arrangements. In the event of these arrangements being wound down, it was requested that those external representatives be kept informed and advised accordingly. To compensate for such a decision being taken, a Member proceeded to ask whether the Link Committees would be reinstated. In response, officers confirmed that the future of the Link Committees would require further consideration in the upcoming months;



- (iv) the lone worker policy. When questioned, officers confirmed that the Team was very familiar with the contents of the policy. As a general point, Members were reminded that the Council's Lone Worker Policy similarly applied to them and the wider membership was therefore encouraged to familiarise itself with the contents of the most recently adopted version;
- (v) a further report on the service being presented to the next Hub Committee meeting on 22 April 2021.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Business Manager for Case Management (in consultation with the Lead Hub Committee Member):

1. Carry out a review of the Locality Service structure in order to deliver the following:
  - 1.1 Environmental Protection Officers are incorporated into the Localities Service;
  - 1.2 close working relationships between the Localities, Parking Enforcement and Waste teams are formalised;
  - 1.3 shared officers are introduced to improve the flexibility to meet team demands; and
2. Drafts a new Locality Team structure to support recommendation 1 (above) that will ensure:
  - 2.1 Clearly defined roles that support the delivery of scheduled tasks and the work of community groups, developing service level agreements where necessary;
  - 2.2 Improved office based and field support for mobile officers.

**\*HC 72            EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED**

That in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business as the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Act is involved.

**\*HC 73            DEED OF VARIATION IN RELATION TO TAMAR VALLEY MINING HERITAGE PROJECT**

Members considered an exempt report on a Deed of Variation in relation to Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project.

In discussion, which concentrated on those considerations relevant to the Council's land management functions, Members asked that it be made absolutely clear that, for Development Management purposes, there had been no pre-determination in this respect.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the basis for taking the proposed approach with the underlying aim of safeguarding public access to the Tamar Trails network be noted; and

- final approval of the Deed of Variation be delegated to the Head of Assets, in consultation with the lead Hub Committee Member for Environment.

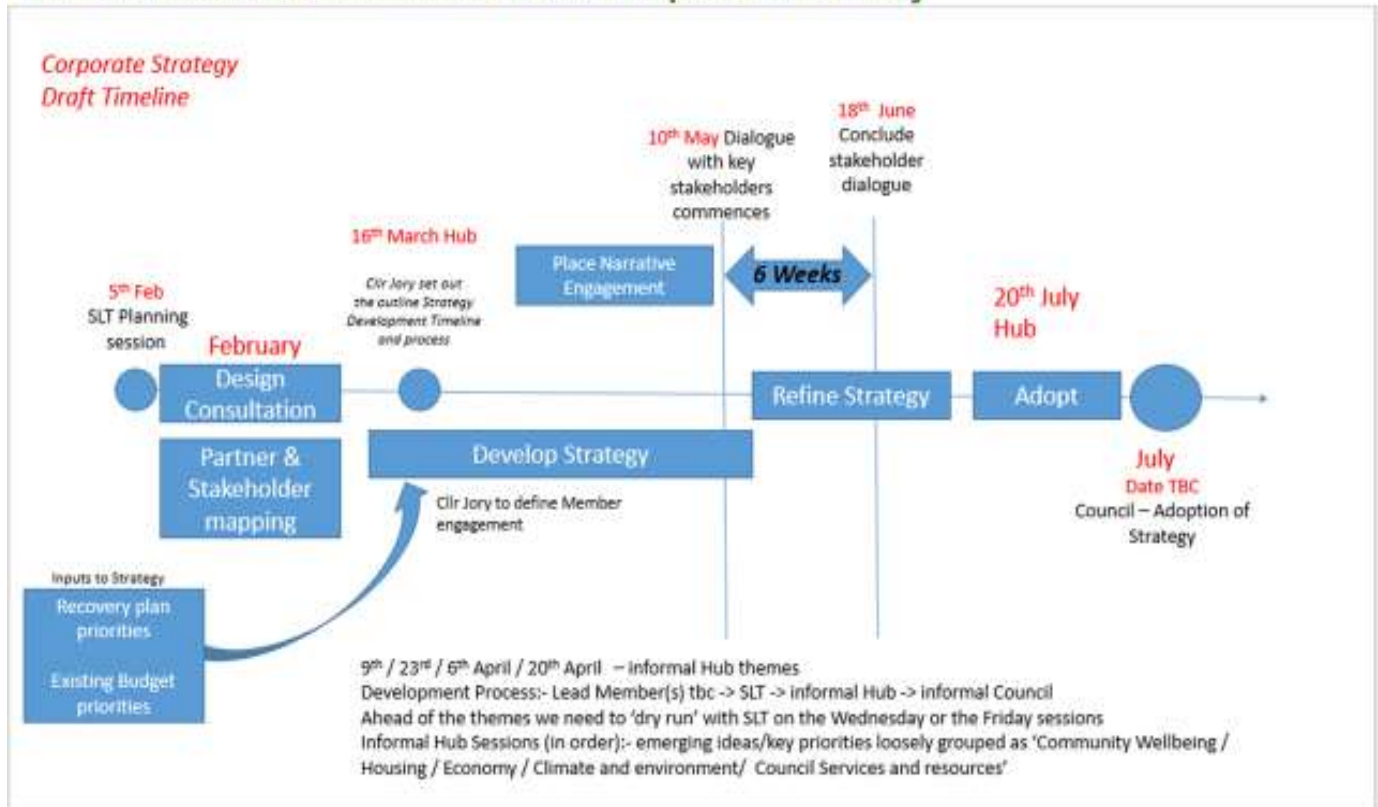
(The meeting terminated at 4.50 pm)

Chairman

**(NOTE: THESE DECISIONS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MINUTES HC 66 PART 1, HC 67 PART 4, HC 68 PARTS 2, 3 AND 4, HC 70 AND HC 71 (a), WHICH ARE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 30 MARCH 2021, WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE FROM WEDNESDAY 24 MARCH 2021 UNLESS CALLED IN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULE 18)**

## Appendix A

### Item 7: Lead Hub Committee Member Update - Cllr Jory



## WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL: HUB COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

This is the provisional forward plan for at least four months starting April 2021. It provides an indicative date for matters to be considered by the Hub Committee. Where possible, the Hub Committee will keep to the dates shown in the plan. However, it may be necessary for some items to be rescheduled and other items added.

The forward plan is published to publicise consultation dates and enable dialogue between the Hub Committee and all Councillors, the public, and other stakeholders. It will also assist the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee in planning their contribution to policy development and holding the Hub Committee to account.

The Plan is published on the Council's website ([www.westdevon.gov.uk](http://www.westdevon.gov.uk))

The Hub Committee consists of nine Councillors. Each has responsibility for a particular area of the Council's work.

*Leader – Cllr Neil Jory*

*Deputy Leader – Cllr Lois Samuel*

*Lead Member for Environment – Cllr Caroline Mott*

*Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing – Cllr Tony Leech*

*Lead Member for Enterprise – Cllr Ric Cheadle*

*Lead Member for Communities – Cllr Terry Pearce*

*Lead Member for Customer First – Cllr Jeff Moody*

*Lead Member for Resources and Performance – Cllr Chris Edmonds*

*Lead Member for Homes – Cllr Debo Sellis*

Further information on the workings of the Hub Committee, including latest information on agenda items, can be obtained by contacting the Democratic Services Section by e-mail to [democratic.services@westdevon.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westdevon.gov.uk)

**All items listed in this Forward Plan will be discussed in public at the relevant meeting, unless otherwise indicated**

Portfolio Area	Report Title and Summary	Lead Member / Officer	Documents to be considered in making decision	Date of Meeting	Consultees and means of consultation
Customer First	<b>Title: Future Localities Service</b> <b>Purpose:</b> To consider a report that implements the recommendations following on from the Locality and Clusters Task and Finish Group.	Cllr Moody/ Sarah Moody	Report of the Business Manager – Case Management	27 April 2021	
Council	<b>Title: Write Off Report</b> <b>Purpose of report:</b> The Council is responsible for the collection of: Housing Rents, Sundry Debts including Housing Benefit Overpayments, Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates. The report informs members of the debt written off for these revenue streams.	Cllr Edmonds / Lisa Buckle	Report of S151 Officer	27 April 2021	
Environment	<b>Title: Three Weekly Waste Update</b> <b>Purpose:</b> To provide Members with an outcome report on the 3 weekly waste trial	Cllr Mott / Jane Savage	Report of Head of Contracts and Commissioning	27 April 2021	
Homes	<b>Title: Homelessness Strategy – Annual Action Plan</b> <b>Purpose:</b> To consider a report that presents the Annual Action Plan that underpins the Council’s Homelessness Strategy.	Cllr Sellis / Issy Blake	Report of the Head of Housing, Revenues, and Benefits	8 June 2021	
Council	<b>Title: Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy Update</b> <b>Purpose:</b> Update on progress against delivery of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy	Cllrs Jory & Davis / Drew Powell	Report of Director of Governance and Assurance	8 June 2021	

Portfolio Area	Report Title and Summary	Lead Member / Officer	Documents to be considered in making decision	Date of Meeting	Consultees and means of consultation
Homes	<b>Title: Springhill Project Update</b> <b>Purpose:</b> To provide an update of the project and seek approval to submit a planning application for the scheme	Cllr Sellis / Issy Blake / Laura Wotton	Report of Head of Housing & Head of Assets	8 June 2021	
				July 2021	

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Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **27<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

Title: **Future Localities Service**

Portfolio Area: **Customer First**  
**Portfolio holder: Cllr Jeffrey Moody**

Wards Affected: **All**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance **N**  
obtained:

Authors: **Cllr Jeffrey Moody** Role: **Portfolio holder; Customer First**

**Sarah Moody** **Business Manager (Case Management)**

Contact: [Sarah.moody@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.moody@swdevon.gov.uk)

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Hub Committee RESOLVES to:

- 1) Approve an additional £13,000 to be built into the establishment base budget each year to meet the additional costs of the new structure; and
- 2) Note the new structure and approach set out in Appendix A of the report and agree to the implementation of the new service.

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Localities Task and Finish Group was set up in October 2020 to undertake a review of the Localities service.
- 1.2 Subsequently, a report was submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny panel in March 2021 setting out clear recommendations for the Localities service which would support the Council's emerging corporate strategy and were also reflective of the Council's response to the Covid-19 Pandemic (Minute O&S 69 refers).
- 1.3 The Portfolio holder and Lead Officers have considered the recommendations from the Task and Finish Group and have determined a

new structure; including new roles to reflect the needs and requirements of West Devon Borough Council.

- 1.4 This report sets out the proposed changes for Members to consider to deliver on the Task and Finish Group recommendations, and includes the associated costs of the new operating model.
- 1.5 The work of the Task and Finish Group is acknowledged, with Members and Officers working closely together to scope out the concluding recommendations.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Localities team have been operating for over five years and its creation was a key and innovative part of the Council's transformation programme.
- 2.2 The Localities Team act as a liaison and support service to Elected Members, residents, and visitors to West Devon Borough Council area. The service also undertakes work on behalf of a number of services across the organisation.
- 2.3 Following the Extended Leadership restructure in 2019, the team are now managed by the Business Manager for Case Management, supported by the Localities Team Leader.
- 2.4 Since its inception, the Localities service has not been reviewed and its operational and strategic direction has lost focus over time, with both Officers and Elected Members unclear on its purpose.
- 2.5 Currently the Localities service operates independently from other services. The need to build and formalise closer working relationships was identified as part of the Task and Finish Group, and will form part of the new structure if agreed.

## **3. Future Locality service - Outcome**

- 3.1 The Task and Finish Group set out a clear set of recommendations to ensure the Council delivers on its emerging priorities. Therefore careful consideration has been given to the operational delivery of this to ensure a robust and 'fit for purpose' service without compromising current work tasks and responsibilities. A number of proposals outlined below, for Members to consider, will deliver on these:
  - 3.1.1 Creation of a new shared Localities Support Officer (administrative role) within the team to allow Mobile Officers to spend more time 'on the ground' in the community. By centralising the administrative function of the service to a dedicated resource, this will ensure workflow is managed most effectively.
  - 3.1.2 Relaunch the Localities team and provide them with a sense of identity both for the Officers and the community. Providing them with a uniform making them easily identifiable, and a professional and friendly ambassador of the Council.



- 3.1.3** Enhancing and redefining the role of the Senior Mobile Localities Officer to a dedicated resource for Members only ensuring a quick, efficient response to elected Member concerns and issues.
- 3.1.4** The introduction into the team of a shared Senior Localities Officer to manage the quality, governance, compliance, and projects within the service.
- 3.1.5** Restructure the service, redefining roles and responsibilities to;
- provide a consistent visible presence within the community
  - provide clarity to Members and communities about who does what
  - enable officers to focus on problem solving in the field
  - move administrative tasks to a central function
- 3.2** All of the Council's operational workforce are now managed by the Business Manager - Case Management, therefore to ensure a fair and consistent approach to operational delivery, it is proposed that the following teams are included as part of the wider localities function (please see further details in Appendix B):
- Environmental Protection Case Managers
  - Waste Case Managers
  - Civil Enforcement Officers

By merging the teams together, there is the ability to raise the profile of the Council through more on-street visibility when it is needed most and increased public and business engagement. The outcome will be a consistent approach to education, enforcement, and contract monitoring with the aims of improving environmental quality, encouraging visitors to West Devon, and supporting the positive reputation of the Council.

## **4 Financial considerations**

- 4.1** As per the proposed structure, there is a budget pressure of £12,500 which is required to be built into the salary base budget each year. This pressure derives from the creation of the new shared Localities Support Officer (Administrative role) and the introduction of a shared Senior Localities Officer – Compliance, Enforcement, and Projects. There is also a pressure of £500 annually to provide uniforms.

## **5 Options available and consideration of risk – future recommendations;**

- 5.1** The Hub are asked to consider and agree the proposed recommendations as set out in the report.
- 5.2** There is a reputational risk of not adopting the proposals in particular during the summer months when footfall in West Devon is higher. This would

impact the street scene and public engagement with visitors and local businesses.

## 6 Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Hub Committee is responsible for recommending the Revenue Budget Proposals on an annual basis to Council.
Financial	Y	To acknowledge and approve an additional £13,000 to be built into the staffing establishment base budget each year to meet the additional staffing costs associated with the seasonal posts.
Risk	N	
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	N	
Safeguarding	N	
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	N	
Other implications	N	

### Supporting Information

#### Appendices:

Appendix A – Proposed structure

Appendix B – Team working

Appendix A – Proposed structure

**Proposed Structure & Roles**  
Localities, Waste & Parking

West Devon

Shared Officers

**Business Manager**  
Case Management

**Case Management Team Leader**  
Localities, Waste & Parking

**Senior Localities Officer**  
Supervisory Responsibilities  
Level 6

**Senior Localities Officer**  
Waste, Contracts and Performance  
Level 6

**Senior Localities Officer**  
Parking Services  
Level 6

**Senior Localities Officer**  
West Devon  
Level 6

**Waste Case Manger**  
Level 7

**Senior Localities Officer**  
Compliance, Enforcement and Projects  
Level 6

**Localities Support Officer**  
Level 8

**Waste Case Manger**  
Level 7

**Parking Administration CM**  
Level 7

**Parking Administration CM**  
Level 7

**Senior Mobile Locality Officer**  
Level 7

**Senior Mobile Locality Officer**  
Level 7

**Waste, Finance & Reporting**  
Level 8

**CEO Supervisor**  
Level 7

**Mobile Locality Officer**  
Level 8

**Mobile Locality Officer**  
Level 8

**Civil Enforcement Officer**  
Level 8

**Civil Enforcement Officer**  
Level 8

**Mobile Locality Officer**  
Level 8

**Civil Enforcement Officer**  
Level 8



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**Appendix B – Team working**

**Waste Case Management**

- Waste Contract monitoring
- Fly-tip reporting
- Environmental quality monitoring
- Assisted collection monitoring
- Resident recycling compliance
- Resident & Community engagement
- Complaint resolution

**Localities**

Versatile locality based case managers focussed on problem solving in a specific area.  
Building strong community links, providing support to members

and carrying out vital monitoring, reporting and site based inspection work where, and when, it is *needed most*

**Environmental Protection**

- Fly-tip & Environmental crime investigation
- Dog Patrols
- Abandoned vehicles
- Littering enforcement
- PSPO's
- Stray dogs
- Tables and chairs licensing
- High street management

**Formalising Links**

Localities, Waste, Parking and EP

**Parking Enforcement**

Trained in enforcement & conflict resolution  
Highly visible  
Equipped for mobile working  
Good local knowledge and community links



West Devon  
Borough Council

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Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **27 April 2021**

Title: **Write Off Report for 2020/21**

Portfolio Area: **Performance & Resources – Cllr Edmonds**

Wards Affected: **All**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y / N**

Date next steps can be taken: **N / A**

Author: **Lisa Buckle** Role: **Section 151 Officer**

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **That the Committee:**

- 1. notes that, in accordance with Financial Regulations, the Section 151 Officer has authorised the write-off of individual West Devon Borough Council debts totalling £114,226.37 as detailed in Tables 1 and 2; and**
- 2. approves the write off of individual debts in excess of £5,000 totalling £23,183.50 as detailed in Table 3.**

### **1. Executive summary**

The Council is responsible for the collection of: Sundry Debts including Housing Benefit Overpayments, Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates.

The report informs members of the debt written off for these revenue streams. Debts up to the value of £5,000 can be written off by the s151 Officer, under delegated authority. Permission needs to be sought from the Committee to write off individual debts with a value of more than £5,000.

This report covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

## **2. Background**

The Council's sound financial management arrangements underpin delivery of all the Councils priorities, including the commitment to providing value for money services.

This report forms part of the formal debt write-off procedures included in these financial arrangements.

West Devon Borough Council's collection rates for 2019/20 were; Council Tax 97.7% & Business Rates 97.6%. The national averages were 96.8% for Council Tax and 98% for Business Rates for 2019/20.

As at the end of February 2021, the Council has collected 94.98% of Council Tax for 2020/21 (this compares to 95.40% as at February 2020).

As at the end of February 2021, the Council has collected 88.56% of Business Rates for 2020/21 (this compares to 95.58% as at February 2020).

Debts are recovered in accordance with the Council's Recovery Policy which is published on our website.

## **3. Outcomes/outputs**

In accordance with good financial management principles the Council has, for the revenue streams detailed in this report, made a total bad debt provision of £3,646,460.38. This provision recognises that a proportion of the Authority's debts will prove irrecoverable and ensures that the value of debtors within the Authority's accounts is a fair reflection of the amount that will eventually be recovered.

All debts, taxes and rates within the Service's control are actively pursued, and in most instances are collected with little difficulty. In cases where payment is not received on time, a reminder will be issued promptly to the debtor. If this fails to secure payment, a final reminder and/or a summons will also be issued and if necessary the debt passed to an appropriate collection agent such as the Civil Enforcement Agents or the Council's Legal Department in order to secure payment.

Sometimes, however, if the debtor is having difficulty making the payment, special arrangements are used to effect recovery, and this may mean extending the period of time to collect the debt.

In some cases pursuit of an outstanding debt is not possible for a variety of reasons, such as bankruptcy or liquidation and such cases with arrears under £5,000 can be written off by the Section 151 Officer under delegated authority. Cases where the debt exceeds £5,000 must, however, be approved by the Committee prior to the debt being written off.



A record is kept of debts written off, together with the reason for doing so, so that if there is a realistic chance of recovery in the future a debt may be resurrected and pursued again.

The Service has access to Experian's Citizenvue database which is currently the most reliable means of tracing absconded debtors. Each case is checked against this system before a decision is taken to write off the debt. A periodic review of write offs against this system may also be carried out to resurrect debts where appropriate.

#### **4. Options available and consideration of risk**

The Committee can either approve to the debt being written off or not. Should the write off of an individual debt not be approved, it will remain on the appropriate system as an outstanding balance. In cases of insolvency there is no option available to the Council but to stop any action to collect the debt. With any case where the debt remains on the appropriate Council system, it may result in additional time and cost spent to pursue the debts when there is no realistic prospect of recovery.

#### **5. Proposed Way Forward**

The Committee approves the write off of individual debts in excess of £5,000 as detailed in Table 3.

#### **6. Implications**

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance		<p>The relevant powers for this report are contained within the following legislation;</p> <p>Section 151 Local Government Act 1972            Section 44 Local Government Finance Act 1988 (Non Domestic Rate)            Section 14 Local Government Finance Act 1992 (Council Tax)</p>
Financial implications to include reference to value for money		<p>The total debts to be written off total £137,409.87 for the year 2020/21 as shown above. This is £114,226.37 of debts less than £5,000 (written off by the S151 Officer in accordance with Financial Regulations) and £23,183.50 of debts over £5,000, which this report recommends to the Hub Committee to write off, as detailed in Table 3. Over £43,000 of the value of debts to be written off for the year (£43,477.09) are for Council Tax debts where there has been insolvency or bankruptcy (Table 1).</p>

		<p>West Devon Borough Council's collection rates for 2019/20 were; Council Tax 97.7% &amp; Business Rates 97.6%. The national averages were 96.8% for Council Tax and 98% for Business Rates for 2019/20.</p> <p>As at the end of February 2021, the Council has collected 94.98% of Council Tax for 2020/21 (this compares to 95.40% as at February 2020).</p> <p>As at the end of February 2021, the Council has collected 88.56% of Business Rates for 2020/21 (this compares to 95.58% as at February 2020).</p>
Risk		<p>Any risk to reputation is managed carefully by prompt recovery of amounts due wherever possible.</p> <p>This risk is also mitigated by taking a balanced view and ensuring that resources are not expended on debts which are not cost effective to pursue</p> <p>The obvious risk of debtors subsequently being able to pay a debt which has been written off is mitigated by the activity outlined in Part 3.</p>
Supporting Corporate Strategy		Delivering efficient and effective services
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact		No direct carbon/biodiversity impact arising from the recommendations
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		All enforcement action that is taken prior to this point is undertaken in accordance with legislation and accepted procedures to ensure no discrimination takes place.
Safeguarding		None
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		None
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		None
Other implications		A bad debt provision is built into the financial management of the Authority

## **Supporting Information**

### **Appendices:**

Table 1 – Council debt under £5,000 written off by the Section 151 Officer

Table 2 – Non-Domestic Rate debt under £5,000 written off by the Section 151 Officer

Table 3 – Summary of items over £5,000 where permission to write off is requested

Table 4 – National & Local Collection Statistics re 2019/20 Collection Rates

Table 5 – Quarterly income in 2019/20 relating to all years

Table 6 – Previous Year Write Off Totals

Table 7 – Bad debt provision breakdown

### **Background Papers:**

None

**TABLE 1 SUMMARY OF WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL DEBT UNDER £5,000 WRITTEN OFF BY S151 OFFICER**

TYPE OF DEBT	REASON FOR W/OFF	Financial Year 2020/21		Totals for Comparison purposes	
		Financial Year Total 2020/21		Financial Year Total 2019/20	
		Cases	Amount	Cases	Amount
<b>HOUSING BENEFIT</b>	Overpaid Entitlement	11	4,770.62	99	65,460.97
	Insolvency / Bankruptcy	2	1,339.33	13	16,001.57
	Deceased	1	39.54	12	6,361.37
	Other	-	-	1	85.89
	Absconded	-	-	-	-
	Not Cost Effective to Pursue	12	127.79	16	543.91
	Uncollectable Old Debt	13	6,713.22	34	15,816.53
Total		39	12,990.50	175	104,270.24
<b>COUNCIL TAX</b>	Absconded	26	6,801.20	3	985.64
	Insolvency / Bankruptcy	31	43,477.09	54	61,751.86
	Deceased	11	5,298.04	4	1,922.77
	Other (inc. CTR overpayment)	10	2,722.22	5	403.08
	Small Balance	71	56.91	69	226.55
	Uncollectable Old Debt	1	885.34	90	17,833.53
Total		150	59,240.80	225	83,123.43
<b>SUNDRY DEBTS</b>	Small Balance	35	2,342.49	2	36.28
	Insolvency / Bankruptcy	3	4,678.56	2	2,239.68
	Unable to pursue	4	807.13	1	95.50
	Uncollectable Old Debt	4	874.80	2	140.00
	Absconded	41	16,496.96	4	1,495.00
	Other	13	3,084.44	-	-
Total		100	28,284.38	11	4,006.46
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>289</b>	<b>100,515.68</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>191,400.13</b>

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**Breakdown of Absconded Council Tax Debt  
(Some cases have debts over more than one year)**

Year	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	Pre 2011/12	Total
<b>Value</b>	-	-	212.16	68.10	145.54	172.07	739.32	2,335.51	1,296.02	432.52	1399.96	6,801.20
<b>Number</b>	-	-	1	2	2	2	4	9	5	3	4	

**TABLE 2 SUMMARY OF NON DOMESTIC RATE DEBT UNDER £5,000 WRITTEN OFF BY THE S151 OFFICER**

TYPE OF DEBT	REASON FOR W/OFF	Financial Year 2020/21		Totals for Comparison purposes	
		Financial Year Total 2020/21		Financial Year Total 2019/20	
		Cases	Amount	Cases	Amount
<b>NON-DOMESTIC RATE</b>	Insolvency / Bankruptcy	6	11,060.38	11	13,121.87
	Absconded	-	-	-	-
	Deceased	-	-	-	-
	Other	-	-	-	-
	Small Balance	3	0.03	8	163.31
	Uncollectable Old Debt	1	2,650.28	1	2,844.95
<b>Total</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>13,710.69</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16,130.13</b>

**TABLE 3 SUMMARY OF ITEMS OVER £5,000 WHERE PERMISSION TO WRITE OFF IS REQUESTED**

TYPE OF DEBT	REASON FOR W/OFF	Financial Year 2020/21		Totals for Comparison purposes	
		Financial Year Total 2020/21		Financial Year Total 2019/20	
		Cases	Amount	Cases	Amount
<b>NON-DOMESTIC RATE</b>	Insolvency / Bankruptcy	-	-	3	123,504.56
	Absconded	-	-	-	-
	Deceased	-	-	-	-
	Other	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		-	-	3	123,504.56
<b>HOUSING BENEFIT</b>	Insolvency / Bankruptcy	-	-	-	-
	Absconded	-	-	-	-
	Other	-	-	-	-
	Deceased	-	-	-	-
	Overpaid entitlement	-	-	3	44,375.04
<b>Total</b>		-	-	3	44,375.04
<b>COUNCIL TAX</b>	Insolvency / Bankruptcy	2	11,540.15	1	5,242.92
	Absconded	-	-	-	-
	Other (inc. CTR overpayment)	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		2	11,540.15	1	5,242.92
<b>SUNDRY DEBTORS</b>	Insolvency / Bankruptcy	1	11,643.35	1	6,759.59
	Absconded	-	-	-	-
	Other	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>		1	11,643.35	1	6,759.59
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>23,183.50</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>179,882.11</b>

**TABLE 4 NATIONAL & LOCAL COLLECTION STATISTICS RE 2019-20 COLLECTION RATES**

**Total amount collected in 2019-20 relating to 2019-20 financial year only (net of refunds relating to 2019-20)**

	Council Tax			Non Domestic Rates		
	Collectable Debit i.r.o. 19/20 - £000s	Net Cash Collected* i.r.o. 19/20 - £000s	Amount Collected i.r.o. 19/20 - %age	Collectable Debit i.r.o. 19/20 - £000s	Net Cash Collected* i.r.o. 19/20 - £000s	Amount Collected i.r.o. 19/20 - %age
All England	32,076,334	31,061,572	96.8	26,416,752	25,899,784	98.0
Shire Districts	14,302,607	13,980,219	97.7	8,089,452	7,949,515	98.4
East Devon	114,469	112,968	98.7	36,001	35,249	97.9
Exeter	69,850	67,717	97.0	83,088	81,513	98.1
Mid Devon	56,699	55,465	97.8	15,755	15,569	98.8
North Devon	66,868	64,737	96.8	32,618	31,662	97.1
Plymouth	134,945	130,140	96.4	91,563	90,618	99.0
South Hams	74,533	73,269	98.3	30,430	30,025	98.7
Teignbridge	95,367	93,781	98.3	30,573	30,300	99.1
Torbay	86,107	82,361	95.7	34,356	32,672	95.1
Torridge	46,441	45,417	97.8	11,814	11,626	98.4
<b>West Devon</b>	<b>41,235</b>	<b>40,290</b>	<b>97.7</b>	<b>10,690</b>	<b>10,436</b>	<b>97.6</b>

\* Net Cash Collected is total 2019-20 receipts net of refunds paid, in respect of 2019-20 only

**TABLE 5 QUARTERLY INCOME IN 2019-20 RELATING TO ALL YEARS**

**Total amount collected in 2019-20 relating to any financial year (net of all refunds made in 2019-20)**

	Council Tax Net Cash Collected* £000s	Non Domestic Rates Net Cash Collected* £000s
Quarter 1 - Receipts collected between 1 <sup>st</sup> April – 30 <sup>th</sup> June	12,069	3,604
Quarter 2 - Receipts collected between 1 <sup>st</sup> July – 30 <sup>th</sup> September	11,330	3,144
Quarter 3 - Receipts collected between 1 <sup>st</sup> October – 31 <sup>st</sup> December	11,622	2,263
Quarter 4 - Receipts collected between 1 <sup>st</sup> January – 31 <sup>st</sup> March	5,818	1,404

\* Net Cash Collected is total receipts in 2019-2020 net of refunds paid, irrespective of the financial year (previous, current or future years) to which they relate

**TABLE 6 PREVIOUS YEAR WRITE OFF TOTALS**

		2020 - 21	2019 - 20	2018 - 19	2017 - 18	2016 - 17
HOUSING BENEFIT	Under £5,000 cases	12,990.50	104,270.24	75,961.02	117,461.11	28,341.72
HOUSING BENEFIT	£5,000 or over cases	-	44,375.04	12,721.09	17,126.57	15,685.10
Total		12,990.50	148,645.28	88,682.11	134,587.68	44,026.82
COUNCIL TAX	Under £5,000 cases	59,240.80	83,123.43	52,827.04	85,818.34	85,498.82
COUNCIL TAX	£5,000 or over cases	11,540.15	5,242.92	-	27,458.04	-
Total		70,780.95	88,366.35	52,827.04	113,276.38	85,498.82
SUNDRY DEBTS	Under £5,000 cases	28,284.38	4,006.46	16,145.70	85,064.24	15,895.01
SUNDRY DEBTS	£5,000 or over cases	11,643.35	6,759.59	-	-	-
Total		39,927.73	10,766.05	16,145.70	85,064.24	15,895.01
NON DOMESTIC RATES	Under £5,000 cases	13,710.69	16,130.13	9,704.04	8,876.14	10,517.74
NON DOMESTIC RATES	£5,000 or over cases	-	123,504.56	38,251.60	7,561.62	29,217.16
Total		13,710.69	139,634.69	47,955.64	16,437.76	39,734.90
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		<b>137,409.87</b>	<b>387,412.37</b>	<b>205,610.49</b>	<b>349,366.06</b>	<b>185,155.55</b>

The total debts to be written off total **£137,409.87** for the year 2020/21 as shown above. This is £114,226.37 of debts less than £5,000 (written off by the S151 Officer in accordance with Financial Regulations) and £23,183.50 of debts over £5,000, which this report recommends to the Hub Committee to write off, as detailed in Table 3. Over £43,000 of the value of debts to be written off for the year (£43,477.09) are for Council Tax debts where there has been insolvency or bankruptcy (Table 1).

**TABLE 7 BAD DEBT PROVISION RELATING TO ALL YEARS**

Total amount of bad debt provision for debts outstanding as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020

	West Devon element (£)	Gross Collection Fund amount* (£)
Council Tax	406,500.31	2,645,969.60
Business Rates	247,996.80	619,992.00
General Fund	125,013.55	125,013.55
Housing Benefit	252,000.00	252,000.00
Standard Charges	3,485.23	3,485.23
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,034,995.89</b>	<b>3,646,460.38</b>

\* Gross Collection Fund amount includes elements of Council Tax and Business Rates bad debts that relate to Central Government or other precepting bodies share of the provision.

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Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **27 April 2021**

Title: **Placemaking: Tavistock BID Renewal**

Portfolio Area:

Wards Affected: **All**

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken: **Following Call In**

Author: **Chris Brook** Role: **Director, Place and Enterprise**

Contact: **Chris.brook@swdevon.gov.uk**

## Recommendations:

1. **That the Hub Committee supports the Tavistock Business Improvement District (BID) renewal process.**
2. **That the Hub Committee notes the use of £20,000 of the ARG funding to support the BID renewal.**
3. **That the Hub Committee approves a further £13,241.90 of revenue funding in total, up to March 2026.**

## 1. Executive summary

1.1 West Devon Borough Council (WDBC) prioritises business, safeguards jobs and supports the economy across the borough, consistently offering staunch support to its business community. This has recently been demonstrated through the issuing of numerous grants to business applicants to support them through three government required lockdowns as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition, further investment has been made into the Devon LEAF and Business Information Point services, offering support to businesses, start ups and individuals seeking to start up their own business, right across the borough. This has included 76.25 hours business planning support to 11 pre-start ups and 19 existing businesses to date.

To support the high street, Okehampton and Tavistock have been given £5,000 to support safety measures during initial Covid-19 lockdowns. Funds from the Reopening High Streets Safely allocated £50k for safety measures within towns, including signage, sanitising stations and more. We're also appointing a Community Digital Communications Specialist to coordinate broadband improvements across the borough.

During January and March, meetings have been held with Okehampton Town Council representatives to discuss ways in which WDBC may assist and support their placemaking efforts. More conversations are set to take place to include their business representatives, including the possible re-exploration of whether to create a Business Improvement District within the town.

As part of WDBC's efforts to support its business community, the Tavistock BID is seen as a priority for safeguarding a resilient economy in the area and it is recommended to the Hub Committee to continue its ongoing support to the BID for a further five year term.

- 1.2 Tavistock BID renewal process will be going to a ballot of its members in July 2021 and requires the support of West Devon Borough Council to achieve that endeavour. The Council's support would align entirely with its aspiration to support the local economy, businesses, jobs and enterprise.
- 1.3 The BID supports 312 businesses in Tavistock and if successfully renewed will do so for a further 5 years.
- 1.4 The BID has delivered numerous place making and local economic improvements to the benefit of Tavistock and West Devon and has played a crucial supportive role through the pandemic (refer to section 3).
- 1.5 West Devon Borough Council's support will be both in Cllr and officer time and financial. The Financial ask is set out in section 5 and amounts to £13,241.90 over the next 5 years. An additional; £20k of support has already been provided through the ARG wider business support fund.
- 1.6 We are in the process of developing our corporate strategy and formulating our plans for West Devon and as part of our support for the economy we are committed to working with and supporting the other towns across the borough.

## 2. Background

### 2.1 The Relationship Between WDBC and Tavistock BID

WDBC has consistently supported the Tavistock business community in its ambitions to have a Business Improvement District (BID) since 2010. Working closely together and with the backing of the Tavistock Town Council, the public sector and private sector have formed a successful partnership through the vehicle of the BID to provide a cleaner, better marketed and more welcoming destination for residents and visitors alike. The BID focuses cash funding and in-kind contributions into Tavistock, and helps to safeguard the prosperity and resilience of the town's economy.

The BID, legislated by government, runs for a maximum term of five years and is due to come to an end during August 2021. In order to continue its work, the private sector led Board of the BID would like it to renew with a new five year business plan for delivery and funding from its business community. The timeline for renewal is fixed and dictated by government legislation, with procedures required to occur within specifically set numbers of days. The renewal timeline has occurred during a busy period over which WDBC must also administer an election as well as develop its new corporate strategy.

The BID is viewed as an important delivery for the Tavistock economy, equally benefitting rural economies local to the area, and as such will be an important delivery within the new WDBC corporate strategy. It is intended that the BID forms part of the suite of activity planned to support businesses across West

Devon and we plan to continue the good work and build upon the successful foundations already delivered by the first two terms (ten years) of the BID.

Due to the very specific timeline set by government, there is no opportunity of delaying the renewal process until later in the year, and it is required for Members to review the WDBC support at this point in time.

## 2.2 **Value for Money**

Upon review of the BID, it is found to provide excellent value for money. Taking two of the two most recent years of the current term as an example, 2018/2019 and 2019/20, the Business Improvement District has invested:

### 2018 - 2020

Placemaking	£40,253.63
Marketing, Promotion & Events	£53,187.07
Business Support	£720.65
Management & Admin (to WDBC for Levy collection)	£54,788.31 (£8,000 of this came to WDBC for Levy collection)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£148,949.66</b>

Across this same period, WDBC invested c.£5,000 through payment of BID Levy.

This provided WDBC with a 29:1 return on investment across that two year period.

WDBC has also received benefit from having a BID Manager for the town in post to provide a consistent service to the business community and a focal point for channelling delivery, enquiries and ideas.

The business community has benefited from having the BID Manager in post to champion their views, coordinate activities and unify voices for the town. Through the Manager's work, Tavistock has also gained prominence at a regional level working through the South West BIDs Group, which successfully lobbies the HotSW LEP, MPs, Chambers and Ministers.

## 2.3 **Tavistock BID Renewal**

The Tavistock Business Improvement District (BID) was launched in 2011 and has successfully unified business voices across the town, advanced delivery of a number of key projects to animate and enhance the area, and acts as a force for change in developing future resilience for its business community and underpinning its high street strength. The BID is due to move to a renewal ballot of its business members in July 2021 and requires the support of West Devon Borough Council in order to advance the renewal process.

## 2.4 **What is a BID?**

A BID is based on a precisely defined geographical area within which the majority of businesses have voted to invest collectively in local improvements to enhance their trading environment and attract more business. Business rate payers within that area decide the new or expanded services required to improve business, which are to be funded through a levy based on the rateable value of their business premises.

A business plan is drawn up setting out how the money raised will be spent for the benefit of businesses within the BID. The BID does not affect the

existing level or quality of services provided by local authorities in the area. It provides improved or additional services, identified by local businesses, over and above the services already being provided by local authorities.

A BID can only be set up following a ballot of all the businesses that will be paying towards its costs. For the ballot to approve the setting up of the BID two majorities must be achieved. First, the majority of those voting must support the proposal; and secondly, the rateable values of those businesses voting for the proposal must be greater than that of those voting against.

## 2.5 **The Tavistock BID Area**

The area currently encompasses 312 business premises and is currently defined as follows:

The River Tavy between Vigo Bridge and Meadowlands swimming pool forms its south eastern boundary, which then wraps around the swimming pool and runs along the canal to Canal Road.

The boundary then runs north westwards along Canal Road, Chapel Street and West Avenue so that all premises to the east of that line are included.

The boundary crosses West Street from West Avenue to Rocky Hill to include all the premises to the east along West Street and up King Street as far as Madge Lane. From Madge Lane the boundary heads eastwards to include all of Market Street, Pym Street and Barley Market Street before running along Old Exeter Road as far as, and including, the Brook Street supermarket and car park.

It returns to the River Tavy to include the premises at 1 Parkwood Road and both sides of Vigo Bridge Road.



It is likely that the renewal of the BID will see a small increase in the geographical footprint of the BID and businesses are currently being consulted on whether they would support inclusion within the BID area.

Within its renewal proposal, the intention is to engage with 300 hereditament premises and extend the boundary along part of Plymouth Road. The Board agreed a 1.75% levy on rateable values over a 3,000 threshold. The Board agreed not to inflate the levy each year as has been the case in

the past so businesses will pay less than they have previously. By including about 300 levy payers, the expectation is to generate £86,000 p.a. and the intention is to use the 2017 ratings list throughout the five year term to provide certainty for businesses and the BID.

## 2.6 **How is the BID Funded?**

The BID charges an annual Levy of its business members, formed as a percentage of annual business rateable values. All businesses that are located within the BID boundary pay the Levy, those that fall outside of the boundary do not.

The Levy is charged for a maximum of five years. Currently, the Tavistock BID generates an annual Levy income of £70,000, providing a total of £350,000 across a five year term.

This Levy is required, under government legislation, to be invested to bring benefit to businesses within the BID boundary area. It is entirely permissible for management and administrative costs to be spent from the BID Levy, and at no cost to local authorities. This enables small and dedicated teams to be employed by the business community to work on behalf of that business community.

Additional cash income is generated from entrepreneurial means, such as street trading, tour guide or event ticket sales and sponsorship, whilst additional contributions are generated through in-kind contributions of staff time, labour costs and pro bono support.

The Tavistock BID is currently funded through:

### 2016 - 2021

BID Levy	£350,000
Entrepreneurial (sponsorship/sales)	£33,550
In-Kind (donations/staff time)	£52,000
<b>Total Five Year Value of BID:</b>	<b>£435,550</b>

## **How Does the BID Work with the Town Council?**

The BID has a partnership with Tavistock Town Council (TTC) that works well and is mutually beneficial, with TTC providing the following support to the BID Company across the 5 year term:

### In-Kind Contributions valued in excess of £43k:

- Installation, switch on and de-rig labour of annual BID Christmas lighting.
- Operational Support at the annual Dickensian Evening (Chapter 8 stewards implement and manage road closures)
- Health & Safety advice for events FOC – 5-year value approx.: £5,000 (based on 10 hours throughout a standard year).
- Installation, maintenance of brackets and watering of hanging baskets (cost of labour and use of bowser), c. £22,500 value
- Operational Support from Works Depot as needed (often FOC).
- Partnership with town reopening following COVID (assistance with pavement widening provision, signage).
- Collaboration on town marketing where appropriate
- Partnership to encourage Coach Visitors – BID funds the promotional leaflet, TTC provide cash incentive to visiting drivers.

- Free use of Bedford Square for all BID events (including Dickensian Evening) – 5-year value approx.: £6,000.
- Operational support for South West in Bloom entry – 5-year value approx.: £10,000 (based on a ½ day a week throughout the year dedicated to South West in Bloom projects).

**Cash Contributions of £13,000:**

- Cash incentive to visiting Coach Drivers – 5-year value approx.: £13,000.

### 3. Outcomes/outputs

#### 3.1 What Has the Tavistock BID Achieved?

Since 2011, the BID has generated an additional £700,000 from BID levy contributions, all of which has been reinvested within the BID area. The BID has also successfully levered in further investment from additional Town Council and Local Authority investment and delivered a number of place based projects. Here's an extract from the BID's current campaign materials:

“Providing you with a support mechanism and championing the needs of the business community – never more so than during the COVID19 pandemic.

- Funding and managing Tavistock Dickensian Evening, which is a landmark event in the local Christmas calendar bringing in over 5,000 people to the town.
- Organising and funding the town's hanging baskets throughout the summer. We increased these from 36 to 190! We pay for the baskets, brackets, planting, watering and feeding.
- Ensuring the town centre has beautiful Christmas lights. We are responsible for lighting on Plymouth Road, Russell Street, West Street, King Street, Market Street, Pym Street, Pepper Street, Paddon's Row and The Wharf.
- Managing the town brand and marketing through Visit Tavistock. As a levy payer, you get a dedicated listing on [www.visit-tavistock.co.uk](http://www.visit-tavistock.co.uk) and on the town App 'Tavistock Local' – both worth £50.
- Managing a marketing strategy for the town: advertising in local media at key times throughout the year and in annual publications such as Enjoy Dartmoor; collaborating with other destination marketing organisations such as Visit Dartmoor, Visit Tamar Valley, Visit South Devon and Visit Plymouth to increase the reach of our town brand; ensuring regular coverage of the town on BBC Spotlight, ITV West Country and BBC Radio Devon.
- Managing the 'Tavistock Gift Card' which locked in £18,000 to the town in the run up to Christmas. Levy payers can participate in the scheme at no cost.
- Producing marketing campaigns such as the recent 'Golden Hours' and 'Keep Christmas Local'.
- Providing seasonal shopping concepts for you to take part in at no cost – like the Tavistock Passport, the Goosey Gander and all the Fiver Fest promotions.

- Producing the official Town Guide, Tavistock Top 10 leaflet and promotional content for events that take place in the town throughout the year and distributing across Devon to accommodation providers and tourist information centres.
- Establishing the Customer Service Excellence Awards along with Rhiannon Sturgeon.
- Providing an entertainment programme throughout the year designed to increase footfall in every season – this includes the popular town trails.
- Collaborating with key partners such as Tavistock Town Council and West Devon Borough Council to ensure that your voice as the heart of the high street gets heard.
- Securing additional funding to the tune of £13,000 from strategic stakeholders to assist in key projects that support the town centre.”

### 3.2 **Creating the New Business Plan**

In terms of writing the business plan, the BID team have begun consulting with business owners with more planned over coming weeks. This will include a key stakeholders’ planning meeting in conjunction with West Devon Borough Council which will be held at the end of this month. Based on feedback, the Council will receive the proposals and BID business plan before they go to print. Under the regulations the Council does not have to 'approve' them, though a note when instructing the BID team to hold the ballot to say that West Devon Borough Council is happy with the proposals and that they do not conflict with any policy formally adopted by the Council would be great assuming we are when the time comes. The BID team are considering the inclusion of two new events: a Blues music event and a food festival.

The business plan will be written with reference to the British BIDs best practice criteria which can be seen here:

[https://cdn.britishbids.info/publications/BB\\_Business-Criteria-Plan\\_2020\\_24062020.pdf?mtime=20200924142114](https://cdn.britishbids.info/publications/BB_Business-Criteria-Plan_2020_24062020.pdf?mtime=20200924142114)

## 4. **Options available and consideration of risk**

### 4.1 **Council BID Renewal Commitments**

In order for the BID to successfully renew for a further five year term of delivery, there are a number of commitments required from West Devon Borough Council. These are as follows:

#### **1. Baseline Service Level Agreement**

A contractual agreement between the BID and the Council should be created, formed as a baseline service level and establishing a value of service and in-kind contribution to match fund against the business BID Levy. This will contractually oblige the Council to maintain agreed standards of service within the BID area.

The service level agreement will likely feature:

Safety – licensing and enforcement

Street scene and waste services – public conveniences, street cleansing, waste collection  
Statutory – Environmental Health, Planning, Maintenance – grounds maintenance, street maintenance (not falling to Devon County Council)  
Continuous Service Improvements

In order to create this, Heads of Service will be asked to review services across the BID area and estimate their value in order to match fund against the BID Levy.

## **2. *Operating Agreement***

An operational agreement should be created between the BID Board and the Council, setting out the ways of working, monitoring and reporting requirements. This takes the form of a legal contract between the local billing authority and the BID Body setting out the arrangements between them, particularly in relation to levy collection and oversight. This will serve for the full term of the BID and should form the basis of a strong working relationship between the Parties and should be agreed and entered into (subject to the Ballot outcome) ahead of the Ballot period and included within the BID Proposal.

## **3. *Levy Collection***

The Council collects the annual BID Levy on behalf of the BID Board each year; this is then paid quarterly to the BID account. Collection rates exceed 90% each year and the Council has charged an annual fee of £4,000 to cover administration costs (This was not charged in 2020/21). Most BIDs in the UK pay a commission fee to their local authority, however the two nearest BIDs in Plymouth are offered this as a free collection service up to the value of £9,000. Should administration costs exceed £9,000, then fees become chargeable to the BID.

It is recommended that the Council waives the £4,000 annual fee as a contribution toward the BID activities, which will be recorded as a £20,000 in-kind contribution to the BID within its five year business plan.

## **4. *Independent Ballot***

To avoid pressure upon our internal resources, the BID renewal team recommend commissioning the services of an independent authority to conduct the renewal Ballot of business voters.

There are currently 323 operational BIDs across the UK, and the majority use Civica to conduct their start up and renewal Ballots. Civica work with over 75% of the UK's local authorities, providing electoral registration services and helping them to administer local and general elections. They also work extensively with membership organisations, corporates, building societies and mutuals, NHS bodies and trade unions.

Their fee is likely to be in the region of £3,000 which is charged to the local authority in most cases.

## **5. *Renewal Campaign Fund***

The sum of £20,000 to successfully renew the BID, covering administrative costs and project costs. This has been allocated from the



ARG fund.

## 6. Council Votes

West Devon Borough Council has had 14 votes during this current term of the BID, and will be asked to complete and return a Ballot paper for each within the renewal Ballot. West Devon Borough Council will now have 11 votes (3 were under the £3,000 rateable value threshold) so the total amount on 1.75% payable annually will be £2,048.38.

The papers will be sent to the Director of Place and Enterprise as the nominated voter for the Council.

## 5. Proposed Way Forward

### 5.1 Timeline for BID Renewal

Please see the separate enclosure (Appendix A) for the detailed stepped process for the renewal.

Key dates are as follows:

24 February	Letter to Secretary of State notifying of intention to go to renewal Ballot – COMPLETE
16 April	Agree baseline service delivery
23 April	Agree business plan project proposal
May	Placemaking Conference (with wider stakeholder group) – date to be confirmed
19 May	Final business plan issued to hereditament voters
21 May	Send final voter list to CIVICA
31 May	Issue Notice of Ballot to voters
14 June	Ballot papers dispatched to voters
15 July	Ballot day – final day of the Ballot and the votes are counted.
16 July	Ballot result

Overall value of contribution toward the Tavistock BID:

- £20k of ARG cash contribution toward the BID's renewal during April 2021.
- £20k value of in-kind contribution between April 2021 and March 2026 (Levy collection).
- £3k of WDBC cash contribution toward the BID's renewal during April 2021.
- £10,241.90 of WDBC cash Levy payment between April 2021 and March 2026.

Total WDBC Cash contribution over 5 years:	£13,241.90
Total ARG Cash during April 2021:	£20,000
Total WDBC In-Kind contribution over 5 years:	£20,000

It is recommended that the Hub Committee APPROVE these contributions.

## 6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	<p>Business Improvement Districts were introduced by the Local Government Act 2003 (LGA 2003). Their establishment, enforcement and operation is regulated by the framework set out in the LGA 2003 and the Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004.</p> <p>The Council may veto a BID proposal where it is of the opinion that the BID arrangements are likely to conflict any policy that has been formally adopted or would place a disproportionate financial burden on any person or class of person.</p> <p>If the proposals are accepted under the dual-key mechanism that applies to the result of the ballot, the BID will go on to implement the BID arrangements.</p> <p>The BID is a company limited by guarantee and is managed by the BID Board. There is an opportunity for the Portfolio Holder for Enterprise to become an observer to the BID Board.</p>
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	<p>£10,241.90 revenue funding over the next 5 years.            £3,000 capital funding.            £20,000 ARG funding (already paid)</p>
Risk	Y	<p>The BID renewal is not a forgone conclusion and requires a vote in favour from its members. That process will be concluded in July 2021. However, it will fail if the support of West Devon Borough Council is not agreed.</p>
Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	Enterprise
Climate Change – Carbon/Biodiversity Impact	N	
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	N	
Safeguarding	N	
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	

Health, Safety and Wellbeing	N	
Other implications	N	

**Supporting Information**

**Appendices:**

Appendix A.

**Background Papers:**

None

**Approval and clearance of report**

<b>Process checklist</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Portfolio Holder briefed/sign off	<b>Yes/No</b>
SLT Rep briefed/sign off	<b>Yes/No</b>
Relevant Heads of Practice sign off (draft)	<b>Yes/No</b>
Data protection issues considered	<b>Yes/No</b>
Accessibility checked	<b>Yes/No</b>

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## IN BRIEF – YOUR BID IN 2020/21

Planned expenditure for the BID income in 2020/21 will continue to be across three priority areas on projects voted by you in the 2016 Business Plan.

Marketing, Promotion & Events – flying the flag for Tavistock

Placemaking – enhancing the Town’s visual appeal

Putting Businesses First – fighting your corner, business support & communication

Your BID will focus on post-COVID recovery - promotion of the town, projects that encourage visitor and local spend, support of businesses and the wider town. Some highlights:

**Town Centre Support:** we will continue working closely with WDBC to identify funding opportunities and lobbying for post-COVID support packages. Our priority will be to provide ongoing support as required post-COVID and to implement the BID recovery plan, with your input. We will ensure that we are a fundamental partner with WDBC in any other plans for the town centre, including the 2021 parking strategy. Our focus will be on promoting the town and increasing footfall.

**Townscape Improvements:** new town signage will be up in the coming weeks which is more striking and user friendly. In collaboration with the Community Gardeners, we have already made a start on increasing floral displays and work will continue on this.

**Marketing Strategy:** we have re-designed our marketing strategy post-COVID and will be focusing on encouraging local spend as well as visitor footfall. Plans are advancing for the ‘Tavistock Gift Card’, which we hope to launch for Christmas 2020. We will continue with our current media campaign. The recent crisis took us away from immediate plans for working with Visit Dartmoor and other organisations, which will now be an autumn focus. Work has already started on improving our group travel offer by working directly with tour operators and cruise ship operators.

**Christmas Lights:** new lights are required for West Street, which we consider a priority for 2020. Depending on available funds, additional colour lights in the Churchyard are being considered.

**Events:** with no Dickensian this year, the funds will be diverted to enable us to do more town promotion and finance management of the Gift Card. However, we still plan to mark the season with smaller events and will collaborate with St. Eustachius on a town-wide Christmas Tree festival.

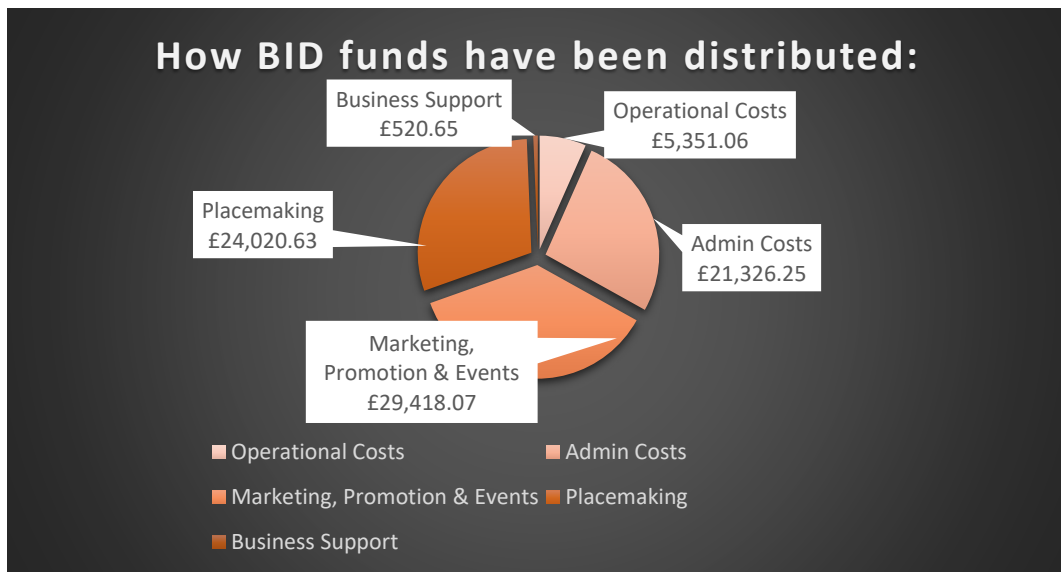
**Helping you to thrive:** in the current climate, it is difficult to envisage how our event planning will take shape for 2021. We will therefore focus on projects and promotions that encourage footfall and local support – such as an e-commerce platform for the whole high street. We have created a business plan and are actively seeking funds to make this happen. The way people shop has changed since COVID-19 and we need to adapt the town centre to face that challenge head on.

**Visit Tavistock Website, app & Social Media:** we continue to update the town website to make it more engaging and we will work on expanding the current offer of the town app ‘Tavistock Local’. You all have listings on both as part of your levy and those businesses not in the levy area will pay £50/year for both platforms. Further effort will be spent on increasing our social media campaigns.

**Ballot Preparation:** the second term of this BID is up for renewal in August 2021. We will be preparing for re-ballot in June/July and your input is needed in developing the next business plan.

# IN BRIEF – YOUR BID IN 2019/20

## WHAT WE HAVE DELIVERED



The latter part of the BID year has understandably been dominated by COVID-19. All of you have faced great challenges and we are not out of the woods yet. Much of our manpower has been devoted to supporting levy payers through the crisis and looking at ways to navigate our way out of it. We are proud of what we have achieved so far.

**COVID-19 Support:** throughout the initial phase of COVID-19 we worked hard to ensure you had the information that you needed and we provided crucial support – from regular communication on help available and assistance securing COVID grant money to creating a town re-opening toolkit which included government & industry guidance, safety advice and access to downloadable signage. We rolled out safety signage throughout the town and created personalised street motifs to encourage social distancing, which received plaudits from other towns nationally. We enlisted the help of volunteer street ambassadors during the initial weeks of re-opening and secured funding to provide information towers and sanitiser stations around the town.

COVID-19, we created a town app ‘Tavistock Local’ to focus on what services were available during the crisis and will be expanded to become an essential visitor tool. We have launched a media campaign to promote Tavistock as a safe go-to visitor destination: #TavistockSafelyWelcomesYou #Staysafe #Staylocal #StayTavistock. A media pack has been rolled out and the first campaign video reached 16k

**Fighting your corner:** we devised a town recovery plan and lobbied Devon County, West Devon Borough and Tavistock Town councils for their support. We have secured additional funding to enable us to continue operating and supporting the town. Tavistock is the only town in West Devon to have had such a coordinated response to the crisis with dedicated business support.

**Christmas Lights:** we purchased new lighting for King Street and replaced lighting on Russell Street. We also lit up the trees at Meadowlands and The Wharf. We held an inaugural light switch-on event, which saw the lights turned on in November and was attended by some 1,000 visitors.

**Promotions & Marketing Concepts:** in the early part of the BID year, we ran successful promotions such as October fiver fest, the Tavistock Passport, various Town Trails and another Paint the Town – which received further regional press coverage. We launched the new Town Guide, which included more visitor information and has also been distributed regionally for the first time.

**Collaborations:** during COVID-19, our working relationships with both West Devon and Tavistock Town councils have gone from strength to strength. Prior to lockdown, we were working on a strategy for the Guildhall Gateway Centre launch with Tavistock Heritage Trust which will roll into 2021. We have worked hard to ensure that the BID is at the centre of plans for the town.



## IN BRIEF – YOUR BID IN 2019/20

Planned expenditure for the BID income in 2019/20 will continue to be across three priority areas on projects voted by you in the 2016 Business Plan.

Marketing, Promotion & Events – flying the flag for Tavistock

Placemaking – enhancing the Town’s visual appeal

Putting Businesses First – fighting your corner, business support & communication

From increasing promotion of the town and focusing on more community-based events, your BID will continue to work hard to support the town and its businesses. Some highlights:

**Tavistock Community Festival – Spring/Summer 2020:** from the recent survey that was sent to businesses, the majority of you support a new town-wide festival in the Spring/Summer of next year. Along the lines of Dickensian, showcasing the town and its businesses will be the festival’s priority. This is **your event** and your input and ideas will form the shape of it. Which month should this happen? What would you like to see in it? Please let us know.

**Town Signage:** the current signage is being revamped and the final design will be much more striking and user friendly. Take a look at the examples here tonight. We are also designing additional boards to capitalise on the empty space below, to allow businesses to advertise themselves within it.

**Marketing Strategy:** this year we will be working our strategy much harder – creating an extended Town Guide to sit in Visitor Information Centres regionally, creating a business directory for inclusion in New Home packs, using the reach of the Visit Dartmoor brand to further promote the town and improving our group travel offer by working directly with tour operators and cruise ship operators. We are also looking in earnest at the ‘Tavistock Gift Card’ and securing sponsorship for it.

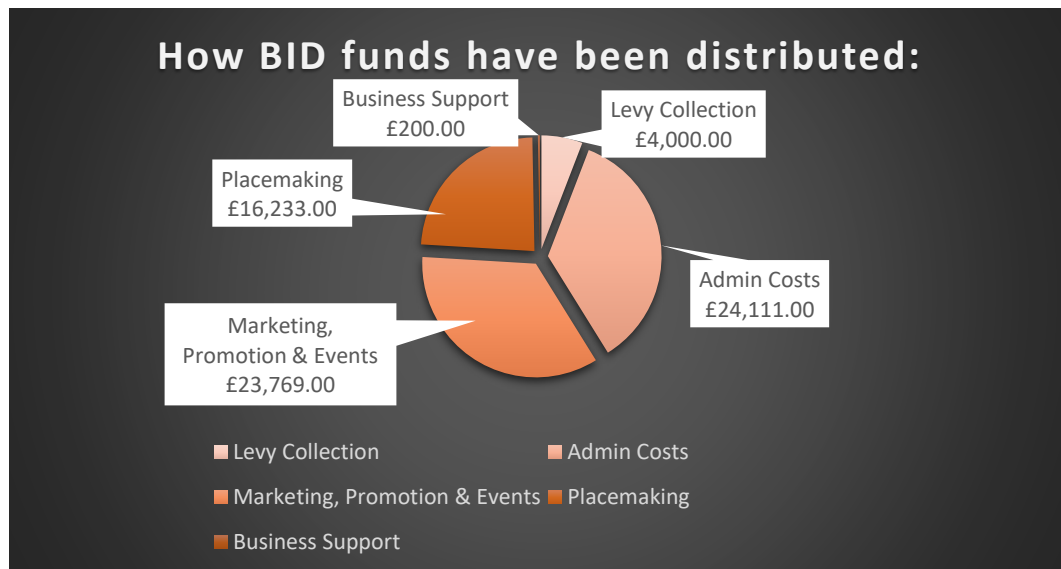
**Town Centre Support:** we are working with WDBC on a bid for the second round of High Street Funding and/or the Heritage Fund, working on a town centre promotion concept that focuses on getting people into town. We will continue to collaborate with WDBC to improve our car parking strategy with the BID having a direct input into the car parking tariffs and structure for 2020.

**Christmas Lights:** we will be increasing the reach of our lights up into King Street, outside Meadowlands and The Wharf. For 2020, we will look at allocating funds to replace the coloured lights in the centre of town for white ones, hopefully in partnership with the Town Council.

**Fighting your corner:** by working as part of the SW BID Group, we can positively influence the regional agenda thereby ensuring focus and funding for place and the businesses, communities and visitors they serve. We are starting discussions with key bodies around the topics we believe are relevant to the next generation of consumer. Through this group, that represents over 4000 businesses across the region, we also have a direct line into our Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) with whom we will collaborate in order to influence Town Centre policies on a national level. Your voice matters and will be heard through this partnership.

**Visit Tavistock Website & Social Media:** the town website has undergone a transformation and the result is great – a really fresh and vibrant site that gives a great user journey. You all have a listing as part of your membership and those businesses not in the levy area will pay £50/year to advertise within the brand, generating income that will pay for ongoing site maintenance.

# IN BRIEF – YOUR BID IN 2018/19



## WHAT WE HAVE DELIVERED

**Destination PR:** the BID continues to deliver a proactive destination PR campaign for the town. We have launched an exciting new website for Visit Tavistock. We have significantly improved our reach on Social Media with recent posts reaching 9,000 people. Over the past 12 months we have re-established a relationship with local media including BBC Radio Devon, BBC Spotlight and ITV Westcountry. We have had press releases in Tavy & Plym Links, The Moorlander, Tavistock Times and Plymouth Herald. We have created an engaging Top 10 leaflet for the VIC and website.

**Coach Visitors:** coach figures have improved significantly in 2019, doubling in the period April – August on the same period in 2018 and bringing in an additional 4371 people to the town. Based on a £5 spend per person, this equates to an increased revenue to the town of £21,855. We are now back on the Dartmoor Itinerary for coaches coming from Torquay.

**More Promotions & Marketing Concepts:** we have delivered some really good promotions this year - two lots of Fiver Fest, the Tavistock Passport, four Town Trails, the Customer Service Excellence Awards and Paint the Town among them. Participants of Fiver Fest have, on the whole, reported good uptake, new and returning customers as a result. Town Trails have seen on average 400 visitors over the period and, while the visits do not necessarily convert to sales on the day, many businesses have reported return visits. The Customer Service Excellence Awards had phenomenal support and 900 nominations, serving to get people focused on the high street experience.

**Britain in Bloom:** we entered into the Sargeant's Cup and BID categories this year and did really well winning a Silver Gilt award for both. Both entries were praised particularly for Town Environment and Community – the BID scored Gold for both of these elements. We saved £4000 on the hanging baskets this year by getting them sponsored and by changing provider.

**Fighting your corner:** a lot of time and effort went into campaigning against the Premier Inn proposal on behalf of BID members, meeting with Councillors from TTC and WDBC. The Board convened for extraordinary meetings and proactively lobbied WDBC into reconsidering their approach. We have also worked with WDBC on a car parking strategy, starting with a questionnaire.

**Collaborations:** we have fundamentally changed the way the BID is perceived among local community groups and consequently increased collaborations - working closely with the Lions creating a new Carnival Day to incorporate the town centre, with EcoFest providing businesses offering sustainable products / activities free advertising on the event brochure and been approached by other initiatives such as Chatter Natter, Precious Plastics, Fairtrade Tavistock.



Report to: **Hub Committee**  
Date: **27 April 2021**  
Title: **Enhancing the Democratic Decision Making Process**  
Portfolio Area: **Council – Leader Cllr Neil Jory**

Wards Affected: **All**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken: The Annual Review of the Council Constitution and Draft Calendar of Meetings for 2021/22 are due to be considered at the Annual Council Meeting to be held on 25 May 2021.

Author: **Drew Powell** Role: **Director of Governance and Assurance**  
**Andy Bates** **Chief Executive**

Contact: [Drew.powell@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:Drew.powell@swdevon.gov.uk)  
[Andy.bates@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:Andy.bates@swdevon.gov.uk)

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**That the Hub Committee be RECOMMENDED to:**

- 1. Support the changes set out in Section 4, with any consequent amendments being made to the Council Constitution and the draft Calendar of Meetings, with these to be reported to the Annual Council Meeting on 25 May; and**
- 2. Instruct the Chief Executive and Director of Governance and Assurance to continue working on any further changes to enhance the democratic decision making process (as set out in Section 3.2) during the course of 2021/22 Municipal Year.**

## **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 It is essential that members and officers operate within a local governance framework of checks and balances to ensure that decision-making is lawful, informed by objective advice, transparent, and consultative.
- 1.2 There is also a duty to ensure that our governance processes support efficiency and value for money in delivering services to the community.
- 1.3 Further, members have a critical role to play in representing the views and interests of the communities they serve, advocating on their behalf, and of seeking to ensure the Council understands and responds to the needs of residents.
- 1.4 In view of the above and the actions approved by members within the Council's adopted Recovery and Renewal Plan, officers have undertaken a review of some of the issues and options that members may consider will enhance the decision-making process as a whole. It is proposed to adopt a phased approach to bringing these changes forward for consideration by members over the next year.
- 1.5 As a first phase, this report seeks approval to bring forward changes to the calendar of meetings and to review the role and number of working groups with the intention for the new arrangements to be recommended to Annual Council on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 Delivering good governance as a Council is dependent on a number of key principles: one of which is the need to take informed and transparent decisions, which are subject to effective scrutiny and the management of risk.
- 2.2 Another is the importance of engaging with the community and other stakeholders to ensure robust public accountability.
- 2.3 At present Members and officers' work within the existing governance framework, the adopted Council Constitution, and established practice to deliver against these principles.
- 2.4 The last time the Council undertook a detailed review of its governance arrangements was in April 2017 (Minutes CM 68vi and HC 68 refer). Changes arising from this review included:
  - The Overview and Scrutiny function being carried out by one Committee (rather than two); and

- It being a requirement for all 31 Members of Council to serve on one of either the Hub Committee (9 Members); Audit Committee (7 Members); or Overview and Scrutiny Committee (15 Members).
- 2.5 The potential to improve the clarity, efficiency, and accountability of decision-making has been identified through a number of different sources.
  - 2.6 The LGA Peer Review in November 2018 identified as one of its six key recommendations, the need to 'Strengthen the Council's Political Governance Arrangements'.
  - 2.7 The Council's Recovery and Renewal Plan (Sections 5.8-5.13), which was developed by the full Membership and adopted on 8th December 2020 (minute 27/20 refers), echoed this and recognised the need for the Council's Constitution to be reviewed in order to reflect current ways of working, and to be more accessible.
  - 2.8 In addition to this, Members and officers have highlighted a number of issues that could potentially be improved including reducing the number of reports that go to more than one Committee, reducing the duration of meetings and removing reports that are simply for noting.
  - 2.9 Conversely, Members have highlighted the benefits and value of the informal Member Briefings.
  - 2.10 Reflecting on these recommendations and issues, the Chief Executive worked with the Director of Governance and Assurance and the Democratic Services Manager to analyse potential enhancements and improvements.
  - 2.11 This forms the background to a phased approach to enhancing the democratic decision-making process.

### **3. Outcomes**

- 3.1 Implementing the proposed changes set out in this report represents the first phase of a series of changes to the current decision-making framework and arrangements. It is envisaged that improvements can be made to secure greater transparency, accountability, clarity of roles, and efficiency of the democratic process.
- 3.2 Further changes will be subject to discussion with the Leader in full consultation with Committee Chairs and Political Group Leaders prior to further reports being brought to the Hub Committee and Council.

## **4. Proposals and Areas for Development**

### **Frequency and Timing of Meetings**

- 4.1 Members will recognise the benefits of a similar pattern and frequency of formal Member meetings being held across both the Council and South Hams District Council;
- 4.2 At the request of senior Members at SHDC, Officers have been undertaking a detailed review into the frequency and timing of meetings that has culminated in a number of changes including:
  - An increase in the number of Full Council meetings from 4 to 6 (in line with the provision of the Borough Council);
  - The wish to provide for a reasonable break in formal Member meetings during the summer (August) and over the Christmas and New Year period; and
  - Specifically in relation to the timing of their Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings, to ensure that they are held further in advance of an Executive meeting than the current two week provision.
- 4.3 In recognising the need for meetings to run closely in parallel across the two councils, it is recommended that our Calendar of Meetings be drafted to similarly mirror these changes prior to its presentation to the Annual Council meeting on 25 May 2021 for approval.

### **Reviewing the Role of Member 'Working' Groups**

- 4.4 Historically, the Council has utilised a range of formal and informal Member groups to, for example, support policy development, service change, and project delivery. These groups have proved effective and have been periodically reviewed and amended as necessary.
- 4.5 However, the approach to setting up the groups, their purpose and lifespan has, to an extent, been ad hoc and incremental, as has the review process.
- 4.6 There are a range of groups with a range of names, including 'Working Group', 'Panel' and 'Steering Group'. There is no clear differentiation between groups that, for example, are partnerships, have wider governance functions, have decision-making powers, or are simply advisory.
- 4.7 In addition, there is inconsistency in how the groups are constituted and how they function. There are also examples of 'Working Groups' that perhaps should have been formed as 'Task and Finish' groups; that is a group set up to fulfil a discrete purpose which is time bound.

- 4.8 In advance of the Annual Council meeting on 25 May 2021, and with a view to improving efficiency, it is opportune to set out the principles of when and how such groups should be set up, their function, and their name. Having agreed the principles, applying this logic to the existing list of groups would help ensure consistency and transparency in the future. A similar review is underway at South Hams and is also due to be reported to their Annual Council meeting in May.
- 4.9 We currently have a number of meetings under the heading of working groups, some of which are active and others that have served their purpose and are no longer needed. It is therefore proposed that we review and rationalise each of these, assign them as appropriate against the categories below, and disband any that are no longer needed. This will also help to provide clarity as to the role and purpose of each group.
- 4.10 In terms of the groups and how we might wish to progress, the following is proposed:

**1. 'Task and Finish' – A time-limited and single focus advisory group to support policy development and provide Member oversight of key projects.**

A Member group set up by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and selected from the whole Membership. The group will have a clear, time bound purpose and will report back to Overview & Scrutiny with its recommendations, i.e. its role is advisory with no decision-making powers. The group will then be dissolved. Examples of the effective use of the Task & Finish (T&F) approach include the Consultation and Engagement, and the Localities T&F Groups, with the active support and commitment of Hub Lead Members, through the recovery planning process. Both had a clearly defined Terms of Reference and scope, and reported back in a timely manner with recommendations that informed and ultimately resulted in new policy/working practices being adopted.

It is proposed to retain 'Task & Finish' groups as the main vehicle for policy development and project specific support. Develop a standard set of terms of reference and operating procedures, including reporting deadline. Agree nomination protocol and retain 'Task and Finish Group Updates' as a standing agenda item on Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting agendas

**2. 'Governance Boards' – Constituted to oversee Governance arrangements for partnership activity and with specified decision-making powers**

In practice these boards occur where the Council has a shared/joint responsibility with other partner councils or organisations. Examples – Devon Building Control Partnership and Joint SH/WD/PCC Local Plan Partnership Board. The terms of reference are agreed by Council (and set out in the Constitution) for each Board, which include voting rights for appointed Members.

It is proposed to retain Governance Boards in line with the definition above

**3. ‘Panels’ – An occasional Committee of the Council with specific decision-making powers.**

These meet occasionally to carry out a specific task to exercise delegated authority – example Council Tax Setting Panel.

It is proposed to retain ‘Panels’ in line with the definition above.

**5. Proposed Way Forward**

5.1 The proposals set out in this report will require changes to the Council’s adopted Constitution and/or Standing Orders. It is recommended that the changes will be reported back to Members at Annual Council on 25 May 2021.

5.2 Further changes will be subject to discussion with the Leader of Council, in full consultation with Committee Chairs, Political Group Leaders and the wider membership prior to further reports being brought to the Hub Committee and Full Council.

**6. Implications**

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	<p>The Council’s governance and decision-making powers are enshrined in legislation, primarily the Local Government Acts of 1972 and 2000. These set out what the Council can and cannot do, together with providing discretionary powers to determine its procedural rules within these parameters.</p> <p>Only the Council can make decisions regarding the Constitution and decision making processes</p>

Financial implications to include reference to value for money		There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
Risk		The report sets out a range of proposals to enhance the democratic decision-making process. Failing to consider and implement changes may result in the decision making process being inefficient and unclear to stakeholders.
Supporting Corporate Strategy		Supports all six corporate themes
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact		There are no direct impacts on climate change and biodiversity however maintaining effective decision-making through virtual committee meetings has the potential to reduce the need for travel and the associated carbon emissions.
<b>Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications</b>		
Equality and Diversity		No direct implications.
Safeguarding		No direct implications.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		No direct implications
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		No direct implications
Other implications		No direct implications

**Appendices:**

None

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Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **27 April 2021**

Title: **Development Management / Planning Enforcement Service Review**

Portfolio Area: **Environment – Councillor Caroline Mott**

Wards Affected: **All**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken: Upon the expiry of the Overview and Scrutiny Call-in period.

Author: **Steve Mullineaux** Role: **Director Customer Service Delivery**

Contact: **Steve.mullineaux@swdevon.gov.uk**

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1. That the Hub Committee endorses the review of the Development Management and Planning Enforcement Services, as set out in 3.2 to 3.11 below and the subsequent development of a service improvement plan.**
- 2. That officers are instructed to bring back a report and service improvement plan to the Hub Committee within the next 3 months.**
- 3. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitors the ongoing performance of the service against the improvement plan on a six monthly basis.**

### **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 Development Management and Planning Enforcement are key services delivered by the Council. The services can be highly complex and involve significant consultation and engagement with many different parties. As a result the services are highly visible to many within our communities, businesses and for those that interact with these services, a key indicator on the effectiveness of the Council.
- 1.2 The services are receiving year on year increases in applications and reported planning breaches. Despite increases in resources

both services are struggling to meet the needs of service users and there have been a number issues as a result of protracted timescales and / or quality issues.

1.3 The purpose of the review is deliver step change improvements in:

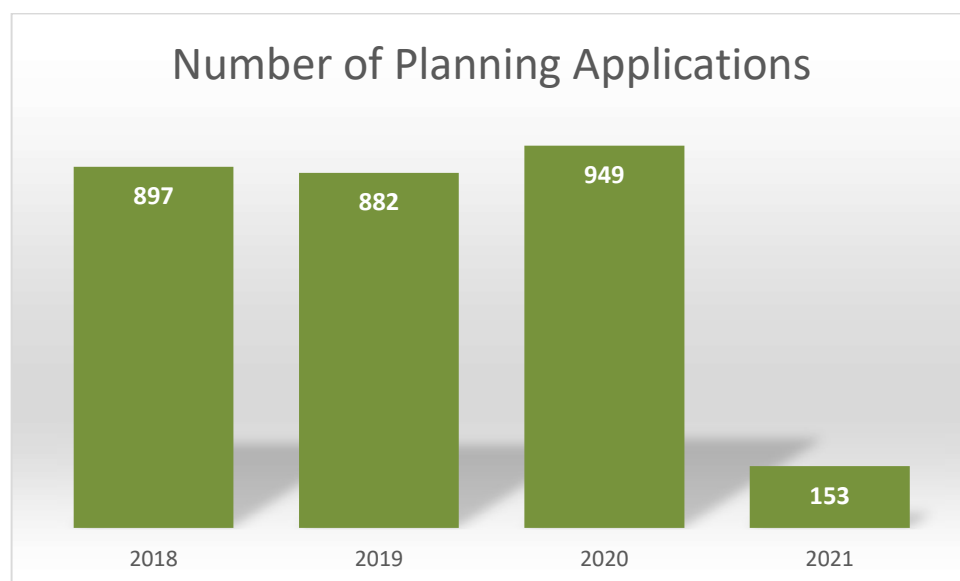
- Performance
- Quality
- Communication
- Customer and Member satisfaction

1.4 The Council and the shared officer team have been stretched considerably during the last 12 months of the Pandemic and through the 3 lockdowns. The planning and planning enforcement team are no exception. The team have had to adapt to Covid safe working practises and whilst having reduced capacity. Over the same period we have received a 7.5% increase in planning applications and a 45% increase in planning enforcement cases.

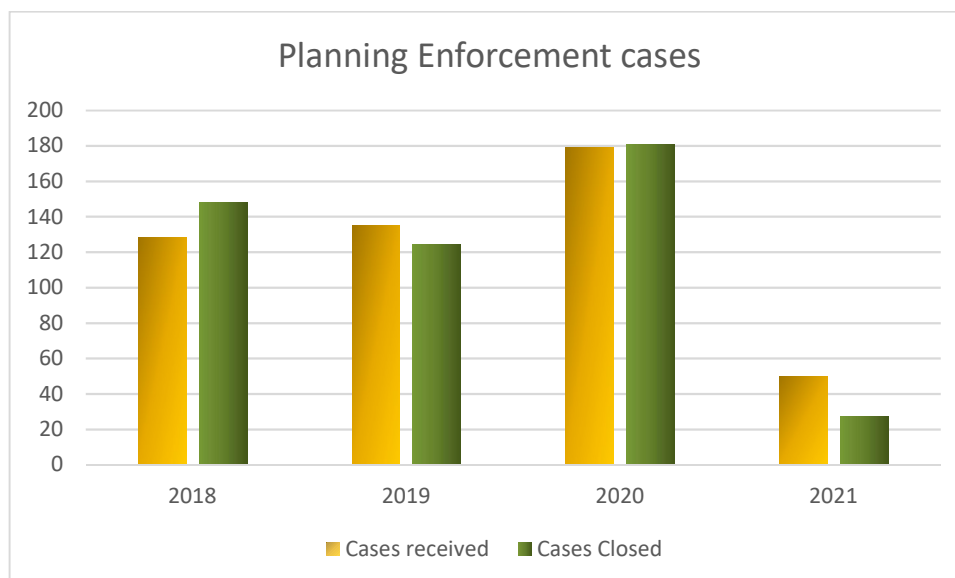
1.5 The report details the key areas that will inform the development of a service improvement plan which will be considered by a future meeting of the Hub. In addition, performance against the plan will be monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel on a six monthly basis.

## 2. Background

2.1 The table below demonstrates that the number of planning applications received increased in 2020 and based on the first 2 months of 2021, are almost 20% higher than the equivalent period in 2020.



2.2 The table below shows that planning enforcement cases also continue to increase, 2020 saw a 30% increase in reports and whilst the number of cases closed increased by over 45%, resolving complex cases have become increasingly difficult and protracted.



### 3. Outcomes/outputs

3.1 The scope of the review will be focussed on, but not limited to, the following:

3.2 Communication and customer engagement

i. Improve the day to day communication with:

- Customer
- Service users
- Members
- Town and Parish Councils

Ensuring that they are kept informed throughout the process in a timely manner.

3.3 Performance Management and Accountability

- i. Setting of clear expectations and objectives for all staff delivering the service directly or contributing to individual applications / issues.
- ii. Regular reporting of performance.

3.4 External benchmarking of the services against:

- i. Cost of the service.
- ii. Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) including Customer Satisfaction.

- 3.5 Processes & Resources
  - i. Review of all processes and resources with the introduction of the new IT system to deliver efficiencies and service enhancements.
- 3.6 Quality
  - i. Introduction of quality assurance across all areas to drive consistency and quality in terms of process, applying policy and determination/enforcement.
- 3.7 Pre-application Services
  - i. Ensuring that these paid for services (Planning Performance Agreements, Pre-app) deliver value for money for the customer and delivers a quality planning application.
- 3.8 Consultees
  - i. Review resources allocated against demand and performance. To include Heritage, Landscape, Ecology, Environmental Health and Drainage.
  - ii. Review processes and the performance of external consultees such as Devon County Council Highways, Environment Agency, Dartmoor National Park.
- 3.9 Legal
  - i. Review of resources against demand.
  - ii. Review the processes, interaction and engagement with both services.
- 3.10 Conservation & Heritage
  - i. A gap analysis what we actually do against; must do/should do/could do.
- 3.11 Strategic fit
  - i. Ensure the service aligns with the Councils wider corporate priorities and supports business and economic growth across all sectors.
  - ii. Consider how planning policy within the Joint Local Plan will be reviewed and updated.
- 3.12 It is anticipated that whilst some performance improvements should be seen in the short term, sustained and measurable improvements should be delivered through quarter 3 and 4 of the 2021/2022 financial year.

#### **4. Proposed Way forward**

- 4.1 As the data in 2.1 and 2.2 shows, there is clear need to review the services to ensure that they can deliver effective and improved performance against sustained increasing demand.

4.2 Failure to act now could result in increased customer and resident dissatisfaction and could result in increased financial costs as a result of appeals and legal challenges.

4.3 The Service Improvement Plan proposed in the report will be brought back to the Hub for consideration in due course.

## 5. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	N	
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	N	The review will also look at the financial aspects of the service.
Risk	N	
Supporting Corporate Strategy		Council Homes Environment Enterprise
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	N	No direct carbon/biodiversity impact arising from the recommendations
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	N	
Safeguarding	N	
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	N	
Other implications	N	

### **Supporting Information**

#### **Appendices:**

None

#### **Background Papers:**

None

Report to: **Hub Committee**  
Date: **27 April 2021**  
Title: **Waste Collection Frequency Trial**  
Portfolio Area: **Caroline Mott**  
**Lead Member for Environment**

Wards Affected: **All**

Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained:

Date next steps can be taken: After call-in

Authors: **Jane Savage &** Role: **Head of Contracts & Commissioning**  
**Natalie Johnson** **Senior Specialist (Waste)**

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**That the Hub Committee**

- 1. Endorses the findings of the trial of three weekly refuse collections to around 1000 households in the Borough;**
- 2. Receives a further report in September 2021 detailing the potential income/costs and national waste strategy impacts, so that a final decision can be made on whether a three weekly refuse collection should be implemented throughout the Borough from Spring 2022; and**
- 3. Continues to collect on a three weekly basis from the trial households during the interim.**

## **1. Executive summary**

1.1 On 4 June 2019, the Hub Committee approved the establishment of a trial of reduced frequency (3 weekly) residual collections to 1000 households. The trial which began in February 2020 was designed to provide the information necessary to estimate the potential environmental and financial implications if the service was to be introduced Borough-wide.

1.2 The findings from the first six months of the trial were largely inconclusive due to skewing of the data caused by the effects of the Coronavirus lockdown and in August 2020, the Hub Committee approved an extension of the trial to March 2021 in the hope that more meaningful data could be obtained.

1.3 This report details the findings from the trial. It shows that waste habits have changed significantly since before the first lockdown and that whilst the changes have not been quite so dramatic during subsequent lockdowns, the data is difficult to interpret against the backdrop of changing habits. This has made it difficult to accurately predict any savings, income and costs of a full introduction across the Borough.

1.4 Nevertheless, other authorities that have reduced the frequency of residual (black sack) collections have benefitted from increased recycling rates and reductions in residual waste.

1.5 Residents surveys and the level and type of customer contact has been considered. The surveys show a trend towards acceptance of the service and more consideration by residents about the waste they create. Storage of waste still recurs as a concern, however, this is not evidenced by complaints or other contact.

1.6 Fly tipping of household black sack waste has increased since 2019-20. However, the general trend for black sack waste shows an increase over a number of years and this is reflected by trends in other types of fly tips both in West Devon and nationally so cannot be solely attributed to reducing the frequency of residual collections.

1.7 In conclusion, a reduction in the frequency of residual waste collections is very likely to divert waste from the residual stream to recycling and will help the Council to meet its climate change targets. After experiencing reduced frequency collections, residents on the trial appear to be generally accepting of the service. What is less clear is whether changing the service will deliver guaranteed savings.

## **2. Background**

2.1 On 15 September 2020, the Hub Committee approved the extension of the trial to allow a full year of results to be analysed. The Committee requested a further report in March 2021 to include an officer appraisal over whether or not the Committee should recommend to Council that a



three weekly refuse collection should be implemented for all households in the Borough with a potential start date of autumn 2021.

2.2 Three weekly residual (black sack) collections have proved successful in other local authority areas in both improving recycling rates and reducing costs and/or making savings. In Britain currently, 15 local authorities collect residual waste on a 3 weekly basis, with at least 9 more about to roll out the service, or considering it.

2.3 The trial started on 25 February 2020 and involved around 1,000 households in the wards of Bridestowe, Okehampton North, Okehampton South and Tavistock South East. Households were selected to gather information from both rural and urban areas with a variety of demographics and housing types.

2.4 Data and information incorporating a broad range of measures has been collated including:

- a) Tonnages of dry recycling, food and residual waste
- b) Residents' surveys
- c) Call numbers
- d) Complaints
- e) Flytips
- f) Financial impact

2.5 The Government is currently consulting with the waste industry in order to form future national strategy. One of the areas being considered is the frequency of residual waste collections with a proposed minimum of fortnightly collections. Whilst it is unlikely that councils that have already introduced three or four weekly collections will be expected to revert back to fortnightly, there is a possibility that legislation may be changed to prevent other Councils from reducing frequencies in the future.

2.6 This fits with the Council themes of:

Environment  
Council  
Communities

### **3. Outcomes**

#### **3.1 Tonnages**

3.1.1 There is a tendency for waste to be diverted from residual to recycling when the collection frequency of residual waste is reduced and a weekly recycling collection is maintained. However, the data gathered has been difficult to interpret due to a background effect on all waste streams caused by the pandemic and the enhanced recycling scheme introduced in November 2019. These increases are tabulated below:

Table 1: Increase in kerbside waste collected April – December 2020 compared with April - December 2019

Residual	Dry Recycling	Food
5.4%	25.4%	18.6%

3.1.2 Although there was an increase in recycling in the trial areas, the background effect has meant that comparing tonnages from the trial areas before and during the trial alone, is not an accurate measure of how tonnages may act if the scheme were to be extended Borough-wide once Covid restrictions are lifted.

3.1.3 The effect on residual waste is easier to gauge as these weights were recorded at each collection and so can be directly compared with those collected from the whole district over the same period. Tonnages between April and December 2020 from the trial areas, show that trial residents produced 2.3% less residual waste when compared with the whole district.

3.1.4 As analysis of the data is not totally conclusive, the effect on those authorities that have reduced the residual collection frequency against national averages have been considered and are tabulated below:

Table 2: Changes to recycling rates in other local authorities after the introduction of 3 weekly collections.

	Recycling rate change	Average recycling rate 2019/20	Annual residual waste (*kg/hh) change	Average annual residual waste (kg/hh) 2019/20
English 3 weekly authorities (change from roll out)	+ 9.23%	50.7%	- 91.6	362.1
All England (change over similar period)	+ 0.10%	43.8%	- 28	529.3
Welsh 3 weekly properties (change from roll out)	+ 10.72%	66.06%	- 47	181.6
All Wales (change over similar period)	+ 1.30%	65%	- 14	180

\*kilograms per household

English authorities have been separated out from the Welsh authorities as there is a difference in the main collection regime between the two countries. West Devon's proposed scheme is similar to the Welsh model which demonstrates more dramatic improvements in each of the factors measured.

3.1.5 As of 2019/20, which is the latest year that tonnage data is available, East Devon is the only English district with a three weekly residual collection that has a similar collection regime to West Devon. East Devon saw a significant increase in recycling and reduction in residual waste when it moved to 3 weekly collections but it should be noted that other changes to the system happened at same time, such as the collection of more materials. The table below compares East Devon's results with West Devon's in 2019-20 in the national context.

Table 3: A comparison of East Devon and West Devon recycling rates and residual waste weights for 2019-20

	Recycling rate	Rank in England	Residual waste kg/hh/year	Rank in England
East Devon	60.5%	8	251.7	1
West Devon	53.7%	35	310.7	9

### 3.2 Residents' surveys

3.2.1 To monitor any change in attitudes as residents adjust to the service, three surveys were undertaken at the start of the trial, half way through, and recently in February 2021. Participation ranged from 5% in the first survey to 20% in the second, before falling partly back to 14% in the third.

3.2.2 The number of residents in each household ranged from 1 to over 5. An average of 9% of households had children using disposable nappies whilst 6% created incontinence waste and 5% preferred not to say.

3.2.3 The most significant changes in opinions reported by respondents of the surveys are as follows:

- A At the start, the majority said they weren't happy to be on the trial. This attitude changed over the trial period with the vast majority happy by the third survey.
- B At the start, the vast majority thought their waste would attract animals. However, by survey 3, the majority reported that the waste did not attract animals.
- C More of the trial residents now think about the amount of waste they create.
- D There is a reported increase in the amount of food waste put out for collection.
- E Whilst considerably fewer respondents stated that they struggled to store waste for 3 weeks by the end of the trial, there were still around half who said that they did have problems with storage.

3.2.4 At the final survey, recurring concerns from the open comment section were:

- Storing waste for collection if away or on holiday on day of collection
- Storage of dog waste/pet bedding
- It would be easier if we had wheelie bins
- Storing waste in summer is more difficult
- Confusion over collection days

3.2.5 It would be expected that the number of black sacks being put out by residents reduced once the frequency of collection reduced. However, it was reported that these initially rose at the second survey and then fell back at the time of the third though remaining higher than in survey 1. It is believed that this is the lockdown effect where we experienced an increase across all waste streams.

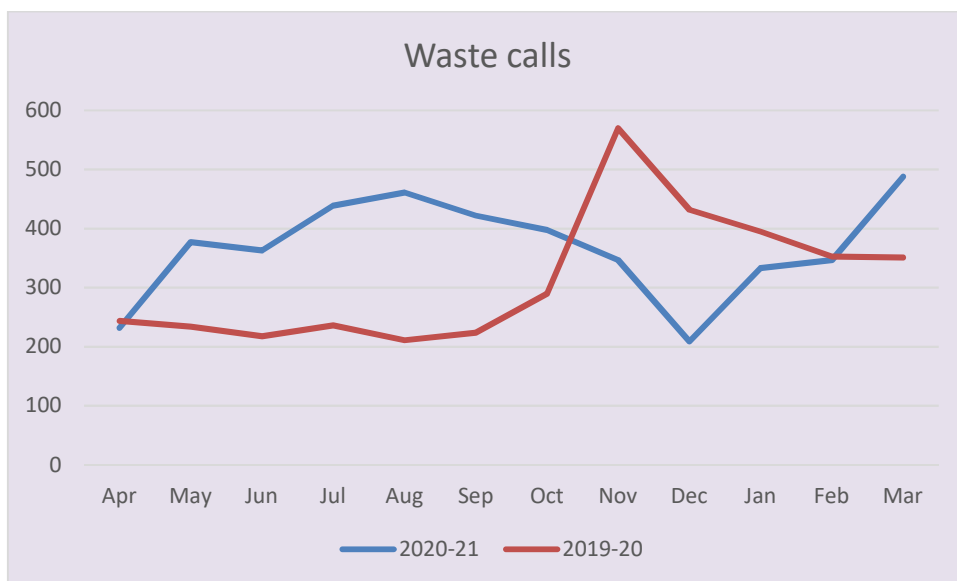
3.2.6 Participation in recycling and food waste collections would also be expected to increase on the trial. There was an initial increase which again fell back in the most recent survey though remained higher than before the trial. Again, this is believed to be attributable to lockdown.

3.2.7 The results regarding attitudes around storing nappies or incontinence related waste are inconclusive, as there were very few responses and the number of responses outweighed the total number of households that said they produce these types of waste. There were however extremely low levels of contact about either of these subjects, which may suggest that these types of waste are not of great concern.

### 3.3 Call numbers

3.3.1 The number of calls received via the specific phone line was very low considering the type and scale of changes happening across the whole Borough. For the 2 months immediately after the introduction of the trial, an additional 1.5 calls per day were received. Since November 2020, the number of calls has remained below the pre-trial (2019-20) levels.

Figure 1 Number of waste-related calls 2019/20 to 2020/21



Please note that these figures do not include calls to the dedicated garden waste line.

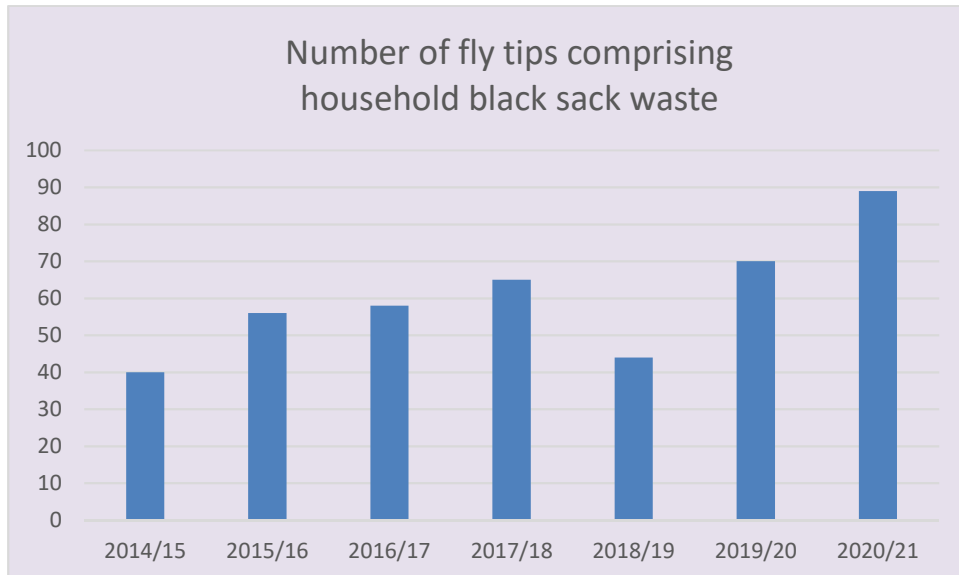
### 3.4 Complaints

3.4.1 There has been one formal complaint relating to the trial since April 2020 about a vermin issue which the complainant attributed to not all residents recycling at a communal collection point. This was received in June 2020 and since then there has been minimal contact with the Council over the trial other than through the surveys.

### 3.5 Fly tips

3.5.1 The chart below details the number of fly tips consisting of black sack waste since 2014.

Figure 2 Fly tipped household black sack waste 2014/15 to 2020/21



Please note that figures for 2018/19 are under-represented as the AllOnMobile reporting system was unavailable for a two short periods.

During the same period, both in West Devon and nationally, there has been an increase in the *total* number of fly tipping incidents. It therefore cannot be assumed that the increase is directly related to the trial. The effect of the lockdown and closure of recycling centres may also have affected the numbers for 2020/21.

### 3.6 Financial Impact

3.6.1 There are three main areas of potential savings, income and costs, and these are set out in 3.6.2 to 3.6.4. All three areas are affected by actual tonnages and so are difficult to calculate accurately using the data from the trial. Further details will be provided in the September 2021 report.

#### 3.6.2 Shared Savings Scheme

The Council is eligible to a share of the savings that Devon County Council benefit from as waste is diverted away from disposal to recycling. Initial indications show potential savings of between £100,000 and £150,000 per year and is indicative of pre-covid information. This scheme is expected to finish or adapt in 2025-26 dependent on the outcome of the national consultations.

#### 3.6.3 Income

Income will be available from recycling credits as these are paid by Devon County Council at a fixed annual rate and would be expected to rise with increased tonnage. Income from the sale of recyclable materials is less assured as it is subject to global markets. If markets are favourable income would increase. Conversely, if the markets degenerate, then the

income would reduce and may even become a cost. Currently these two factors are working against each other, and it is therefore assumed at this point that there will be no significant income from the additional recyclable materials in the short term. However, an annual saving could be gained if markets improve over the longer term.

#### 3.6.4 Cost

As waste is diverted from residual to recycling, there is likely to be a need for more recycling collection vehicles and fewer refuse collection vehicles and these factors may balance each other out. The implementation of a Borough-wide scheme would incur additional costs in the first year for communications and extra staffing resources.

### **4. Options available and consideration of risk**

4.1 The trial was extended in an attempt to improve the data gathered during the first 6 months but it is now clear that waste habits did not return to normal as the pandemic continued and subsequent lockdowns occurred. The tonnage data gathered cannot therefore be totally relied upon to evaluate accurate costs, income and savings. Further work is required in partnership with Devon County Council and the Council's waste contractor though assumptions on future domestic waste habits would have to be made.

4.2 Consistency of collections across all English waste authorities is one of the areas being considered amongst the on-going national consultations on the English waste strategy. The frequency of residual collections is included in the consistency of collections consultations. However, the waste industry considers any changes to policies brought about by the review on those authorities already providing three weekly collections to be unlikely, though it is not ruled out at this stage. Other areas being examined may also influence what is expected to be the biggest change in national waste policy for years.

4.3 Whilst the data gathered in West Devon is not totally conclusive, the positive effect on recycling and residual waste has been clearly proven in other authorities. Reducing the frequency of residual collection throughout the Borough would show a clear commitment towards meeting the Council's climate change goals.

4.4 The low number of complaints and customer contact suggests an acceptance of the collection frequency by those on the trial and attitudes have improved over the period of the trial.

### **5. Proposed Way Forward**

5.1 It is proposed that the recommendations are approved and that a further report is brought to the Hub Committee in September 2021 detailing full costings, expected income and savings, and any known impacts of the national waste consultations.

## 6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Authority has a duty to arrange for collection and disposal of household waste. The legislative framework is to be found in the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Waste Framework Directive 2008, and Controlled Waste Regulations 2012.
Financial	Y	Initial indications of the annual disposal savings from moving to a three weekly collection scheme are in the region of £100,000 to £150,000. There will be additional income from recycling credits. There may be additional income or costs associated with the sale of the extra recyclable materials dependent on market factors. There are potential costs if additional recycling rounds are required though these may be mitigated by a corresponding reduction in refuse rounds. There would be implementation costs in the first year for communications and extra staffing resources. A full indication of the financial implications will be provided in the September report.
Risk	Y	The risks are set out in section 4 of this report.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		N/A
Safeguarding		N/A
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		N/A
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		N/A
Other implications		N/A

## **Supporting Information**

### **Appendices:**

None

**Background Papers:**

4 December 2018 Council Report- instructed officers to work with successful bidder on trial

4 June 2019 Hub Committee - approved initial 6 months trial of 1,000 households

10 September 2019 Hub Committee - approved a set of desired outcomes for the Council's strategic theme of Environment including to: *'Increase the amount of waste we recycle'*.

15 September 2020 Hub Committee- approved extension to trial as information gathered in first 6 months was skewed by lockdown effects.