

West Devon Hub Committee



West Devon
Borough
Council

Title:	Agenda								
Date:	Tuesday, 13th July, 2021								
Time:	2.00 pm								
Venue:	Chamber - Kilworthy Park								
Full Members:	<p style="text-align: center;">Chairman Cllr Jory</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Vice Chairman Cllr Cheadle</p> <p><i>Members:</i></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">Cllr Edmonds</td> <td style="width: 33%;">Cllr Crozier</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Mott</td> <td>Cllr Daniel</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Leech</td> <td>Cllr Ratcliffe</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Pearce</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Cllr Edmonds	Cllr Crozier	Cllr Mott	Cllr Daniel	Cllr Leech	Cllr Ratcliffe	Cllr Pearce	
Cllr Edmonds	Cllr Crozier								
Cllr Mott	Cllr Daniel								
Cllr Leech	Cllr Ratcliffe								
Cllr Pearce									
Interests – Declaration and Restriction on Participation:	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.								
Committee administrator:	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

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Minutes of meeting held 8 June 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

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7. Development of the draft 'A Plan for West Devon'

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8. Draft Annual Report 2021/22

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9. Planning Service Review - Verbal Update

Agenda Item 4

At a Meeting of the **HUB COMMITTEE** held in the **Council Chamber, Kilworthy Park, Tavistock** on **TUESDAY** the **8th** day of **June 2021** at **2:00 pm**

Present: Cllr N Jory – Chairman
Cllr R Cheadle – Vice Chairman

Cllr P Crozier	Cllr L Daniel
Cllr C Edmonds	Cllr A F Leech
Cllr C Mott	Cllr T G Pearce

In attendance: Chief Executive
Director of Place and Enterprise
Director of Governance and Assurance
Democratic Services Manager
Head of Housing, Revenues and Benefits
Senior Specialist – Engineering
Senior Specialist – Climate Change
Senior Specialists – Housing

Other Members in attendance:
Cllrs Ewings and Hipsey

***HC 1/21 APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Cllr B Ratcliffe.

***HC 2/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be discussed.

For clarity, a Member sought advice on behalf of those Committee Members who were also Development Management and Licensing (DM&L) Committee Members in respect of the 1-2 Spring Hill Update report (Minute HC.7/20 below refers). In reply, the Leader advised that he had discussed this matter with the Monitoring Officer. In so doing, the Monitoring Officer had informed that he saw no potential conflict of interest between one Committee of the Council recommending that a planning application be submitted on a particular site and Members of that Committee also sitting on the DM&L Committee. The Monitoring Officer had also stated that there was case law that supported this viewpoint.

In light of this guidance, there were no interests declared.

***HC 3/21 URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chairman advised that he had agreed for one item of Urgent Business to be raised at this meeting. The item was titled: 'West Devon Transport Hub in Okehampton, Levelling Up Fund Bid' and was considered urgent in light of the associated time constraints.

(a) West Devon Transport Hub in Okehampton, Levelling Up Fund Bid

The Committee proceeded to consider a report that sought approval to the submission of the 'Levelling Up Fund' Bid, such that the rail infrastructure in West Devon could be improved immeasurably, for the benefit of all residents.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- the resource implications. Whilst an obvious challenge, officers confirmed that the organisation was prepared to flex its resources in order to provide the appropriate level of support for the Bid. Furthermore, the importance of appropriate support being provided by Devon County Council, Network Rail and Great Western Rail was also recognised;
- the need to support this Bid. Some Members reiterated the point that, if the Bid was successful, the benefits to the Borough would be immense;
- the views of a local Ward Member for Okehampton. Whilst not in attendance, a statement was read on behalf of a local Ward Member that set out her full support for the proposals and made specific reference to:
 - o her wish to record her thanks to those officers who had been working on the submission;
 - o the importance to the local and wider community of the Transport Hub being built out as soon as was practically possible. In addition, the Member emphasised the importance of external funding being sourced to assure that this could happen;
 - o once built, the Hub serving to both alleviate the pressures on Station Road in terms of traffic congestion and parking and ensure that those who had expressly stated their desire to use the service from North Cornwall and further afield would be able to do so easily and efficiently. Moreover, by having the new Transport Hub very close to the junction with the A30 would protect the Town Centre, minimise localised congestion and enable wider connectivity.

It was then **RESOLVED** that approval be given to the submission by the Director for Place and Enterprise of an application to the 'Levelling Up Fund' for Capital Funding for a West Devon Transport Hub in Okehampton (as outlined in Section 2 of the presented agenda report).

***HC 4/21 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Hub Committee meeting held on 27 April 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

***HC 5/21 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

It was noted that no Questions had been received in accordance with the Hub Committee Procedure Rules.

***HC 6/21 HUB COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN**

Members were presented with the Hub Committee Forward Plan that set out items on the agenda for Hub Committee meetings for the next four months.

In introducing the Plan, the Leader advised that the next published Plan would take into account the updated lead portfolio areas following the Committee appointments that had been made at the Annual Council meeting on 25 May 2021.

***HC 7/21 PROJECT UPDATE: 1-2 SPRING HILL, TAVISTOCK, REDEVELOPMENT OF HOMELESS PROVISION**

The Committee was presented with a report that set out a project update on the 1-2 Spring Hill, Tavistock: Redevelopment of Homeless Provision initiative.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) A number of Members recognised the importance of the heritage aspects that were associated with the project and that these had to be considered alongside the need for the scheme to be practical, affordable and fit for purpose;
- (b) Members noted that the budget implications of the project were to be presented to a future Hub Committee and Full Council meeting;
- (c) The desperate need for this facility was recognised by a number of Members;
- (d) With regard to the public consultation exercise on the project, it was confirmed that this would be undertaken as part of the normal planning process. In response to a specific request, it was agreed that consideration would be given to the merits of a press release accompanying the launch of the public consultation exercise.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the Planning Pre-Application advice (ref. 2570/19/PRM) (as set out in Appendix D of the presented agenda report) be noted;
2. the project finances be noted (as set out in Section 6 of the presented agenda report) and the Business Case (as presented to the Hub Committee at its meeting held on 20 October 2020 (Minute HC 29 refers) will be presented to both the Hub Committee and the Council for financial approval at an appropriate time; and
3. the Head of Assets be authorised to submit a full planning application for the preferred design as follows:
 - demolition of existing building and rebuild on larger footprint;
 - creation of 11 self-contained apartments with a mix of range of 1 and 2 bedroom units to maximise flexibility for users;
 - inclusion of a ground floor staff office and bin store to provide more effective management options; and
 - generation of a rear courtyard to provide safe outdoor space for residents.

***HC 8/21 CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

A report was considered that presented the six-monthly update on the Council's adopted Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- (a) action 1.6: 'Promote and administer grants for home insulation, efficient heating systems and sustainable energy sources for owner-occupied and tenanted properties'. A Member questioned how residents could be assured that such grant schemes were indeed genuine. In recognising the point, officers advised that they would liaise with the Communications Team to ensure that a publicity campaign would underpin these grants;
- (b) action 2.13: 'Maximise local and closed-loop recycling to minimise transport impact and valorise waste materials'. Members expressed some concerns that promotion of such initiatives was likely to result in increased pollution. Officers highlighted that they were due to meet with Environment Agency representatives in the upcoming weeks and they would ensure that this point was included as part of their discussions;
- (c) action 3.5: 'Ring-fencing and promoting a percentage of Members grants schemes (Sustainable Localities Fund) towards tree planting schemes for Community Groups, Town and Parish Councils or money towards a 'Tree Planting Grant Scheme'. Whilst noting that this idea had been generated from the Climate Change & Biodiversity Working Group, it was confirmed that any proposal to implement this action would ultimately require Member approval;
- (d) proposals for wind and solar energy sites. Having been informed that such proposals were to be considered as part of the Joint Local Plan review, some concerns were raised that this had not been discussed in any meetings to date of the Joint Local Plan Partnership Board. As a way forward, officers committed to raising this matter with the Strategic Planning Manager for the Joint Local Plan outside of this meeting;
- (e) the current carbon footprint of the Council. Officers advised that the current carbon footprint was 5,199 tonnes per annum;
- (f) the close linkages of the Plan with the Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA). In light of 40% of the Borough being located within the Dartmoor National Park, the importance of close working between the Council and DNPA to develop the evolving Action Plan was recognised;
- (g) the presentation format of the Action Plan. Members felt that, when the Plan was next presented in six months' time, it would be beneficial for the format to be revised to separate those Actions that were within the control of the Council and those that were not. In addition, another Member highlighted the importance of the Plan being realistic and deliverable with tangible outcomes included.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the progress against delivery of the adopted Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan be noted.

***HC 9/21 DEVON HOME CHOICE POLICY CHANGES**

Members considered a report that sought approval of a series of proposed changes to the Devon Home Choice Policy.

In discussion, support was expressed for adoption of the proposed Policy changes.

It was then **RESOLVED** that, with effect from 1 July 2021, the policy changes to Devon Home Choice be agreed.

***HC 10/21 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2021/22**

Consideration was given to a report that sought approval to the adoption of the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan for 2021/22.

In discussion, reference was made to:

- (a) the proposal to establish a Housing Company in the form of a Community Benefit Society to enable and increase provision of affordable housing across the Borough. With regard to timescales, officers confirmed that it was intended for this proposal to be formally presented to Members within the next twelve months;
- (b) the number of in-house letting agency properties in the Borough. Officers committed to inform Members outside of this meeting as to how many in-house letting agency properties were currently held in the West Devon Borough area;
- (c) the challenges associated with the delivery of affordable housing provision. In response to a number of specific points that were raised, the Committee requested that officers convene an all Member Affordable Housing Workshop in the upcoming months.

It was then **RESOLVED** that, with effect from 1 April 2021, the Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2021/22 be adopted.

(The meeting terminated at 3.40 pm)

Chairman

(NOTE: THESE DECISIONS WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE FROM THURSDAY, 17 JUNE 2021 UNLESS CALLED IN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULE 18

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WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL: HUB COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

This is the provisional forward plan for at least four months starting July 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)

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 and Lead Member for Communications – Cllr Ric Cheadle

Lead Member for Economy – Cllr Peter Crozier

Lead Member for Natural Environment – Cllr Lynn Daniel

Lead Member for Built Environment – Cllr Caroline Mott

Lead Member for Leisure, Health and Wellbeing – Cllr Tony Leech

Lead Member for Communities – Cllr Terry Pearce

Lead Member for Resources and Performance – Cllr Chris Edmonds

Lead Member for Housing – Cllr Barry Ratcliffe

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

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
All	Title: Draft Corporate Strategy Purpose: To consider a report that seeks to recommend to Council approval of the draft Corporate Strategy	Cllr Jory / Senior Leadership Team	Report of the Senior Leadership Team	13 July 2021	
Council	Title: Annual Report Purpose: To consider a report that seeks to recommend to Council approval of the Council's Annual Report.	Cllr Jory / Neil Hawke	Report of the Head of Strategy and Projects	13 July 2021	
Council Page 8	Title: Medium Term Financial Strategy for the five years 2022/23 to 2026/27 Purpose: To set the strategic intention for all of the different strands of funding available to the Council. This brings together all known factors affecting the Council's financial position and its financial sustainability, to provide a long term financial forecast.	Cllr Jory / Lisa Buckle	Report of S151 Officer	21 September 2021	
Council	Title: Regeneration and Investment Strategy Purpose: To consider a report that presents a draft Regeneration and Investment Strategy.	Cllr Jory / Chris Brook	Report of Director of Place and Enterprise	21 September 2021	
Resources and Performance	Title: Section 106 Agreement Expenditure Purpose: To consider a report that outlines the latest position in respect of Section 106 Agreement Expenditure.	Cllr Edmonds / Lisa Buckle	Report of the Section 151 Officer	21 September 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
Built Environment	<p>Title: Development Management / Planning Enforcement Service Review</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that presents a Service Improvement Plan for the approval of the Hub Committee.</p>	Cllr Mott / Steve Mullineaux	Report of the Deputy Chief Executive	21 September 2021	
Natural Environment	<p>Title: Waste Collections Frequency</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that details 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.</p>	Cllr Daniel / Jane Savage	Report of the Head of Commissioning and Contracts	21 September 2021	
Resources and Performance	<p>Title: Write Off Report for Quarters 1 and 2</p> <p>Purpose: 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.</p>	Cllr Edmonds / Lisa Buckle	Report of Strategic Finance Lead	2 November 2021	
Leisure, Health and Wellbeing	<p>Title: Leisure Update</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that seeks to present a Leisure Update to the Hub Committee.</p>	Cllr Leech / Chris Brook	Report of Director of Place and Enterprise	2 November 2021	

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Report to: **Hub Committee**
Date: **13 July 2021**
Title: **Development of the draft 'A Plan for West Devon'**
Portfolio Area: **Council – Leader Cllr Neil Jory**

Wards Affected: **All**
Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **N**

Date next steps can be taken:

Author: **Drew Powell** Role: **Director of Governance and Assurance**
Andy Bates **Chief Executive**
Contact: Drew.powell@swdevon.gov.uk

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Hub Committee RECOMMEND that Council:

- 1) Instruct officers to commence a formal public consultation exercise on the draft 'Plan for West Devon' in line with the adopted Community Consultation and Engagement Strategy; and**
- 2) Instruct the Chief Executive and the Director of Governance and Assurance to develop delivery plans for the Strategy, for consideration by Hub alongside the final Strategy at its meeting on 21 September 2021 before their onward consideration by Full Council on 28 September 2021.**

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The Council adopted its corporate strategy on 22 May 2018 prior to the end of the previous administration. As a result of the pandemic the context and landscape within which we now operate has fundamentally changed.
- 1.2 Whilst elements of the strategy clearly remain relevant and vitally important moving forward, the recovery and renewal planning process, which has involved extensive consultation and

engagement with the wider membership, has identified new emerging challenges, priorities and opportunities.

- 1.3 This report sets out the draft Corporate Strategy 'A Plan for West Devon' and timeline for the next steps, with a view to adopting the final strategy in September 2021.

2. Background

- 2.1 In recognition of the potential wide ranging and long lasting impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic, in early 2020 Members undertook to develop a Recovery and Renewal Plan.
- 2.2 The development of the plan was thorough and inclusive and included a sequence of full member workshops. In order to ensure that the whole membership was engaged with the process and had an opportunity to input, formal reports were also taken to the Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 23 June 2020 (O&S95) and 1 September 2020 (O&S19) and the Hub and ultimately to full Council for adoption on 8 December 2020 (Council Minute CM 22 refers)
- 2.3 The development of the plan, by its very nature, identified issues that were directly and indirectly related to the impacts of the pandemic. With the ideas generated by Members covering the full range of Council activity and influence.
- 2.4 In view of this, and prior to adoption, the actions and ideas put forward by Members were collected and triaged into the most appropriate vehicle for development and/or delivery. In the majority of cases this was either the Recovery and Renewal Plan itself or the emerging Climate Change and Biodiversity or Housing Strategies. The report, and appendices, to Council on 8th December 2020 sets this process out in more detail (Council Minute CM 22).
- 2.5 In terms of the strategic context, the Council adopted the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP) on 26 March 2019. The JLP establishes an over-arching strategic framework for sustainable growth and the management of change. It provides the statutory development plan for the three partner authorities.
- 2.6 The strategic objectives of the JLP which include meeting the need for new homes, jobs and services, will be key inputs to the new corporate strategy.

- 2.7 As well as articulating the Council's vision and ambitions for the longer-term, it is essential not only that the new strategy contains specific, measurable and time bound targets covering the short-term (next 3 years), but we put in place the skills and resources necessary to ensure these actions can be delivered.

3. Outcomes

- 3.1 The development and adoption of a new corporate strategy will ensure that Council resources are aligned in order to secure the efficient and effective delivery of the ambition and priorities set by Members.

4. Development of the new Corporate Strategy

- 4.1 The draft Corporate Strategy, to be called 'A Plan for West Devon' sets out a vision for the future with key deliverables that will help the Council to realise that vision.
- 4.2 There has been extensive and inclusive engagement with the full membership through recovery workshops (July 2020) and Strategy Emerging Theme workshops (March/April 2021). The key inputs to the new corporate strategy have enabled Hub Members to develop and refine the priorities and draft themes for the strategy.
- 4.3 The high level theme areas and emerging vision for the Council were set out at an all Member briefing on 22 June 2021. There was overall support for the draft strategy themes and areas of focus which has enabled the development of the draft corporate strategy as set out in Appendix A.
- 4.4 Officers have already commenced engagement with residents, businesses and visitors being asked their views on West Devon as a place to live, work and visit.
- 4.5 Once adopted in draft, we can build on this initial engagement with Officers and Members commencing a formal consultation on the strategy. The consultation will consist of a series of online polls and questionnaires, briefing notes for Members to enable them to engage with their Town and Parish Councils and discussions with residents, businesses and visitors to understand what their hopes and concerns are for the future.

- 4.6 The formal consultation will run for at least 6 weeks from 21st July and inform the final strategy and detailed delivery plans for adoption by Council in September 2021.
- 4.7 To further support development and delivery of the final strategy, 8 Hub Advisory Groups will be formed. Each Advisory Group will be chaired by the relevant Hub Committee Members and supported by a Senior Responsible Officer.
- 4.8 The primary focus and function of each Advisory Group will be to:
- i Focus on and monitor the delivery of targets within the adopted 'A Plan for West Devon'
 - ii Look forward and horizon scan to identify future issues and challenges relating to the thematic area; and
 - iii Provide support and guidance to the lead Hub Committee Member
- 4.9 It is anticipated that appointments to the Hub Advisory Groups will be made at Council on 20th July 2021 alongside consideration of the draft Strategy.
- 4.10 Draft Terms of Reference for the Group are as set out in Appendix B.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 This report sets out the draft corporate strategy for the Council. It is proposed that the Hub consider the draft strategy and recommend to Council that officers commence formal consultation.
- 5.2 In addition, it is recommended that Council instruct officers to commence development of delivery plans for 'A Plan for West Devon' which will be considered in September 2021.

6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
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Legal/Governance	Y	The Corporate Strategy is one of the plans and policies that comprise the Council's Policy Framework. Consequently, decisions to approve, adopt or amend the Corporate Strategy and themes are decisions of the Full Council.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money		There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The Council will seek to align the Council's corporate strategy (what we plan to do) to the Council's medium-term financial strategy (how we plan to resource it).
Risk		They key risk relates to the need to have an up to date corporate strategy that reflects the Councils future plans and is suitably resourced. These risks are managed through the process detailed in this report.
Supporting Corporate Strategy		Supports all existing six corporate themes.
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact		There are no direct impacts on climate change and biodiversity however tackling these issues are considered to be central to the development of the new plan.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
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:

Appendix 1: Draft Corporate Strategy

Background Documents:

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A Plan for West Devon

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September 2021



West Devon
Borough Council



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A Plan for West Devon

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Page 40	Quality Council services



A place to protect



The West Devon we know

Think of West Devon and reflections turn to an idyllic pastoral scene. Picture-postcard market towns where local producers sell their wares are surrounded by verdant farming land and dramatic Dartmoor views.

Home to the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, we have a rich mining heritage that draws attention from a global audience. It's a very special place for those who live here and the many visitors who come to West Devon to get away from it all.

From farmland to forest, discover a legacy of pioneering communities in our towns and villages. Our individuality and heritage play a vital role in shaping our future and driving our economy for the health and wellbeing of future generations loving living in West Devon.

A cycle along the lanes and paths of the Granite Way and Drake's Trail, connecting Okehampton all the way to Plymouth, reveals many stunning views.

A striking expanse it may be but with a population of just 55,000, delivery of public services costs more than in many other areas.



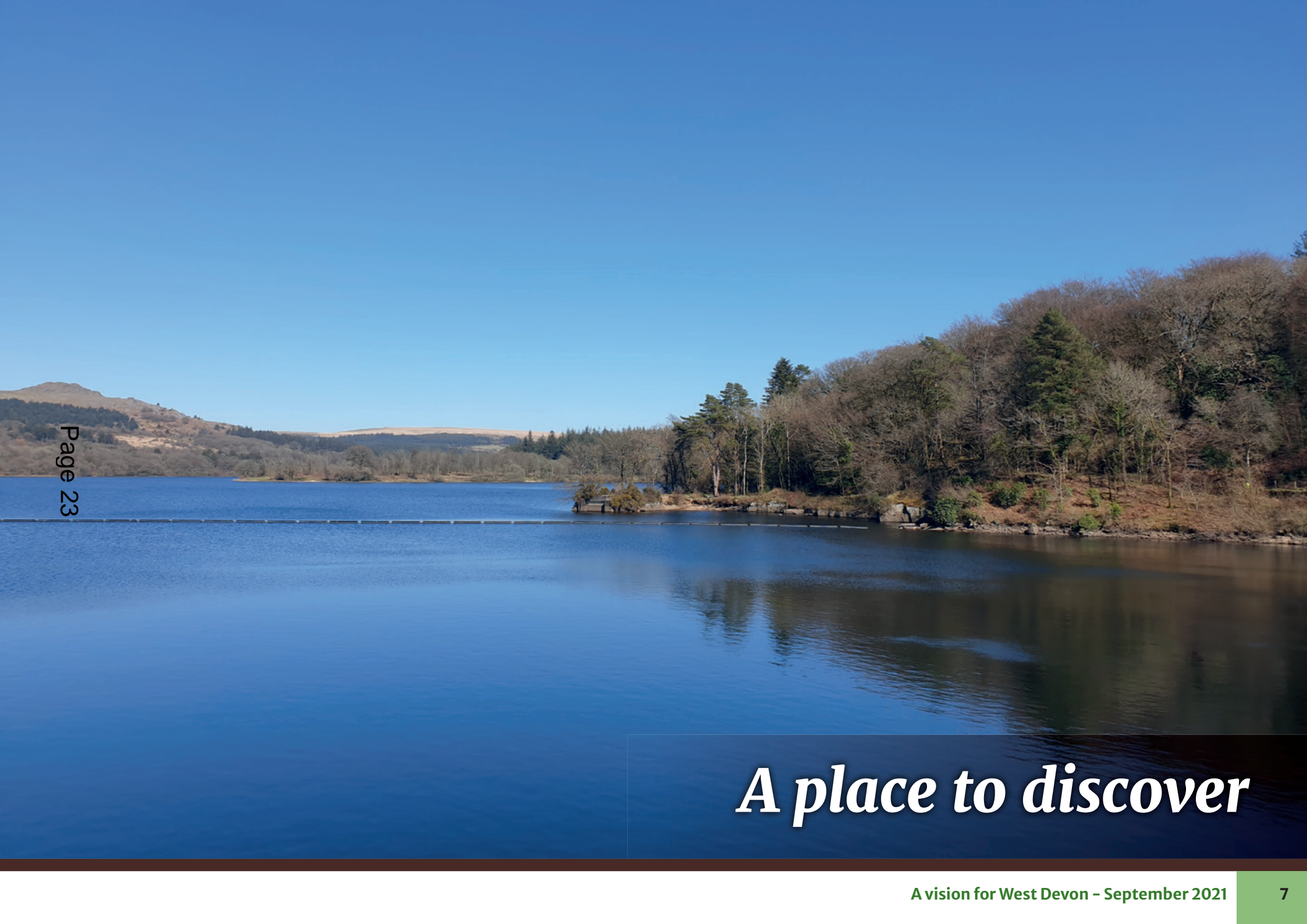
A place to breathe



Home to England's largest industrial UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape, there's a rich industrial heritage. This has influenced our people and landscapes in many ways too, building bustling market towns like Tavistock and a creative attitude.

Forged by the tin and copper mining industry and associated activity in the nineteenth century, remains of deep underground mines and ports, including those at Morwellham Quay, are a testimony to the contribution West Devon made to the Industrial Revolution in Britain.

While our past contributions are rightly celebrated, today West Devon residents are on average earning £5,000 less than the national average each year. House prices are nine times the average income – putting home ownership out of reach for many of our residents.



A place to discover



Independent stores and local fare are at the heart of our market towns including Okehampton and Chagford. Stop at a farm shop or deli to sample some of the award-winning local produce which finds its way to the tables of top restaurants across the country. Taste cheese and ice-cream made from the delicious milk of cattle grazed on our lush pastures or refresh after a moorland walk with a pint of locally brewed real ale from Princetown.

Issues facing farming communities are keenly felt in West Devon where diversifying is often the only solution. Our towns also face a challenging future, with consumers rapidly shifting to online shopping and ultrafast digital connectivity being 40% below the national average.

We know there are challenges. But by working together, we can seize every opportunity to support the wellbeing of our people, to enhance and protect our very special environment and strengthen the unique economy that we are proud to be custodians of.



A place to prosper



Our vision for West Devon

As councillors, we are continually reminded by residents that West Devon is a special place. From the wildness and beauty of the Moor, to the hustle and activity of our market towns, the legacy of our industrial heritage and the warmth and spirit of our communities, that evidence is around us every day.

West Devon Borough Council is committed to working with and for residents, communities and businesses to improve and enhance the area in which we live and to ensure that a thriving, modern and green economy offers opportunities for all.

This strategy – A Plan For West Devon – sets out the ways in which we think we can make a difference and what our residents should expect from our Council over the next 3 years. It identifies the areas that our Council has local responsibility for and how we aim to improve and develop our services and work with partners to protect and grow our environment, heritage and economy.

Cllr Neil Jory,
Leader West Devon Borough Council



A place to grow

Achieving our Vision

In order to achieve our longer term vision, we'll focus on the following areas.

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Strengthening our communities

An area that our communities can be proud of



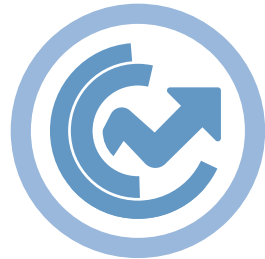
Enhancing community wellbeing

Every resident is able to live a healthy and active life



Improving homes

Every resident has access to a quality and safe home



Stimulating a thriving economy

A Borough that attracts high quality employment opportunities and space for business to grow



Growing our natural environment

An environment where people and nature thrive together



Adapting our built environment

Planning for the future, celebrating the past



Maximising Council resources

Making the best use
of our resources

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Delivering inclusive and accessible services

A listening, accessible
and caring council



A place to inspire



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steps to achieve the vision

- 1 Delivering 11 self-contained apartments to support people who are homeless
- 2 Rolling out a Community Broadband scheme in Sydenham Damerel
- 3 Developing West Devon Transport Hub proposals
- 4 Delivery of Brentor Community Housing Scheme
- 5 Supporting Tavistock Business Improvement District renewal
- 6 Progressing conversations with Okehampton businesses about how they may want to work together in the future
- 7 Supporting proposals for the Tavistock to Bere Alston trainline
- 8 Ambitions for the A386 Cycleway (Roborough to Yelverton)
- 9 Proposals for an Eco Museum



A place to succeed



Strengthening our communities

**An area that our communities
can be proud of**

Our communities are the beating heart of West Devon. This is clear to us by the way that they have come together to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic, supporting each other in new and innovative ways.

One of our core aims is for all residents to be proud of their area. Through s106 funding and Community Grants, we'll support enhancements to parks, gardens and play spaces and continue to enable our communities to deliver projects that are important to them.

Our voluntary sector is already incredibly responsive to community needs. We will work with the voluntary sector to promote volunteering, deliver events that celebrate the area and make a positive impact on the lives of all.

We will know we are succeeding when:

- ◆ We're supporting community groups by maximising grant allocations
- ◆ We see an increase in the numbers of people volunteering
- ◆ We have supported improvements to play parks and community facilities



We will enhance the sense of pride and community



Focus	Aims	Actions
<p>Empowering our communities to improve their area</p>	<p>Our residents have the best understanding of how to improve their areas. We will empower them to turn their ideas in to action.</p> <p>We will also listen to our communities and help them raise the profile of local issues through engagement with partners and by ensuring we have an on-the-street presence across the Borough.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maximise grant funding opportunities including for play parks, playing pitches and other community facilities ● Providing a visible and responsive localities service ● Working with Parish Councils to understand local issues and reinstate Parish-Borough Link Meetings ● Supporting and promoting events in the Borough
<p>Supporting our voluntary sector to respond to community needs</p>	<p>The voluntary sector in West Devon is incredibly reactive to the needs of our communities. We will take steps to support them and enable them to build on this positive work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a plan for supporting our voluntary sector partners in the future ● Work with CVS to hold quarterly Voluntary / community sector link meetings ● Ensure that the Council is represented at existing key partnerships / voluntary and community groups



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Play Your Part

- Volunteering for community groups
- Participate in Democracy
- Ask us about grants for your community project



Enhancing community wellbeing

Every resident is able to live a
healthy and active life

During the COVID-19 pandemic our communities pulled together to support the health and wellbeing of residents.

Page 37 The pandemic will have a lasting impact on the health and wellbeing of our communities. We will work together with partners including Devon County Council, the NHS and the Voluntary Sector to understand the impacts and identify opportunities to enhance community wellbeing.

As a Council, we will make a positive impact on community wellbeing by ensuring quality housing, supporting vulnerable residents to access advice and support and by promoting active lifestyle choices.

We will know we are succeeding when:

- ◆ We increase active participation in sport and physical activity
- ◆ We promote and support active travel – cycling and walking
- ◆ Less people live in fuel poverty
- ◆ More people are supported to live in their homes for longer
- ◆ We are, with partners, actively supporting our residents mental health and wellbeing



We will enhance the health and wellbeing of all residents



Focus	Aims	Actions
<p>Reducing health inequalities and rural poverty</p>	<p>Working with partners, we'll focus on the causes of rural poverty and health inequalities, employing practical solutions such as community transport, training and fuel poverty grants.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delivering a rural poverty pilot – co-ordinating with partners for a targeted scheme ● Launch a short-term grant funding scheme for Voluntary sector to implement projects responding to health and wellbeing ● Delivery of projects to enable residents to continue to live safely within their homes
<p>Ensuring leisure provision meets the needs of residents</p>	<p>We'll take steps to encourage all residents, regardless of ability, to take up sports or active leisure to support their overall health and wellbeing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Development of a new Playing Pitch Strategy ● Provision of high-quality and accessible leisure services ● Maximising funding for playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities ● Supporting grassroots sport in our rural and smaller communities
<p>Promote a positive approach to mental health and wellbeing</p>	<p>We all have a role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our residents. We will ensure that we work with partners to develop a joined-up approach for West Devon residents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fund delivery of mental health support and outreach for young people ● Work with Devon County Council to develop a joined-up approach to mental health and wellbeing in the Borough



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Play Your Part

- Talk and listen
- Take up a new sport
- Be active and healthy



Improving homes

Every resident has access
to a quality and safe home

West Devon is a beautiful place to live. Over the years this has had an impact on the affordability and availability of housing for local people.

Local people want to ensure that both they and their families are able to afford to remain in the area with a warm and secure home.

To support this ambition, we have adopted a five-year Housing Strategy to underpin how we will ensure better homes lead to better lives for all our residents.

We will know we are succeeding when:

- ◆ We deliver local homes for local people that meet their needs and make this available at a cost they can afford
- ◆ More people are supported to live independently for as long as they choose, particularly in later life or for people with health conditions or impairments
- ◆ We improve the overall quality of housing with more homes exceeding the minimum energy efficiency standards
- ◆ No one finds themselves without a roof over their heads
- ◆ We monitor progress through the review of Housing Strategy annual delivery plan



We will enable better homes for better lives



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Focus	Aims	Actions
<p>Housing for place</p>	<p>Driving the delivery of new homes that people can afford and meeting the different needs of our communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Delivery of at least 100 local homes for local people per year to 2025 (across West Devon and South Hams) ◆ Work with Devon County to support people to live independently – identifying opportunities for specialist, purpose-built accommodation ◆ Develop our understanding of housing need and implement plans for responding
<p>Housing for people</p>	<p>Ensuring the best use and improved quality of existing housing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ We will promote and support energy efficiency in homes – for example, with Green Homes Grants. ◆ We will promote the best use and improve quality of existing housing ◆ Deliver on our plans for 11 self-contained apartments in Tavistock to support people who are homeless

Check our progress so far

➤ [The Housing Strategy 2021-2026](#)

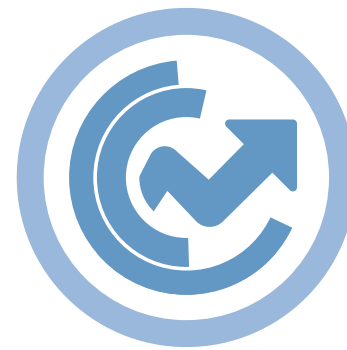


Play Your Part

- Increase the energy efficiency of your home
- Register your interest in affordable homes
- Let us know about empty homes



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Stimulating a thriving economy

A Borough that attracts
high quality employment
opportunities and space
for business to grow

We will create the environment for all size of business to flourish, through direct and indirect support and policy. This will include infrastructure and development aligned to our priorities.

We will strengthen our visitor economy, maximising the promotion of our unique cultural and heritage offer.

We will identify opportunities to lobby for the best outcomes for our agricultural sector and ensure that we seize on opportunities to attract additional funding through the Governments Levelling Up Fund, Community Renewal Fund and other sources.

We will know we are succeeding when:

- ◆ We have a strong relationship with our key business sectors and can work with them for the benefit of our whole economy
- ◆ We have secured additional inward investment to support the economy
- ◆ The visitor economy is strengthened
- ◆ Our towns and their businesses continue to thrive
- ◆ Digital Connectivity is not a barrier to business



We will stimulate a thriving economy



Focus	Aims	Actions
Promoting Destination West Devon	We will actively support marketing and schemes that will further promote West Devon as a tourist destination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Providing support for the visitor economy ● Support tourism enhancements – arts / culture/ heritage ● Marketing of cycling and other active travel schemes ● Joint promotion of the area working with partners such as Dartmoor National Park, Tamar Valley AONB and the UNESCO World Heritage Site
Helping West Devon’s towns and businesses thrive	Our economic development team will work to secure inward investment and conditions to support existing businesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improving Digital Connectivity ● Providing business advice services for new and growing businesses ● Delivery of government business grants ● Deliver an inward investment campaign ● Support Tavistock BID Renewal ● Establish a business forum for Okehampton
Responding to opportunities to enhance the economy	We will work with partners to prepare to respond to opportunities that will support the West Devon economy into the future, promoting events and supporting bids for schemes in the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote Tour of Britain ● Progressing plans for an Eco Museum and Active Travel (Community Renewal Fund) ● Delivering West Devon Transport Hub (Levelling Up Fund) ● Prepare for UK shared prosperity fund ● Support applications for Changing Spaces for disabled residents and visitors



Play Your Part

- Shop local
- Support the High Street
- Access business advice



Growing our natural environment

An environment where people
and nature thrive together

West Devon is a stunning part of the country. We will take steps to ensure we enhance the environment so that people and nature thrive together. We will work with key partners including Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB's) to protect, adapt and enhance the natural environment.

Residents, businesses and the Council must all do our part to make this happen. Encouraging and promoting active travel (such as cycling) will be a key focus for the Council.

We're already taking positive steps having adopted a Climate & Biodiversity Strategy and a detailed delivery plan for both the Council and the whole of West Devon.

The Council must lead by example and encourage all others to take their own steps to adapt and mitigate climate change and increase biodiversity.

We will know we are succeeding when:

- ◆ We increase access to our wonderful countryside through promoting and developing walking and cycling trails
- ◆ We measure positive progress against our aims in the Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy
- ◆ We see an increase in the amount of trees planted across the Borough



We will transition to an environment where people and nature thrive together



Focus	Aims	Actions
<p>Working towards net-zero</p>	<p>The Council will lead by example in reducing our carbon footprint through delivery of our Climate and Biodiversity Strategy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Phased conversion of our environmental management fleet to a greener fleet ◆ Increasing availability of electric charging points across the Borough ◆ Carry out a feasibility study of renewable energy schemes on our land ◆ Promote recycling to our residents
<p>Making the best use of our incredible natural environment</p>	<p>Promoting, enabling and supporting access and enhancement of our environment whilst increasing biodiversity and active travel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A 10% increase in biodiversity on Council land ◆ Support delivery of the Plymouth and South Devon Forest ◆ Work with others to support Local Nature Recovery Schemes ◆ Map our natural capital to better inform future land use ◆ Work with partners to promote tree planting within the Borough ◆ Support our key partners such as Tamar Valley AONB and Dartmoor National Park

Check our progress so far

- Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan along with regular updates



Play Your Part

- Take the Go Zero Challenge
- Sign up for our newsletter
- Join our online forums to share good practice
- Start a Tree Bank, pot up and give away unwanted tree seedlings



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Adapting our built environment

Planning for the future,
celebrating the past

From the Western edge of Dartmoor through to the east of Cornwall, we have a built environment of global importance through the World Heritage Site.

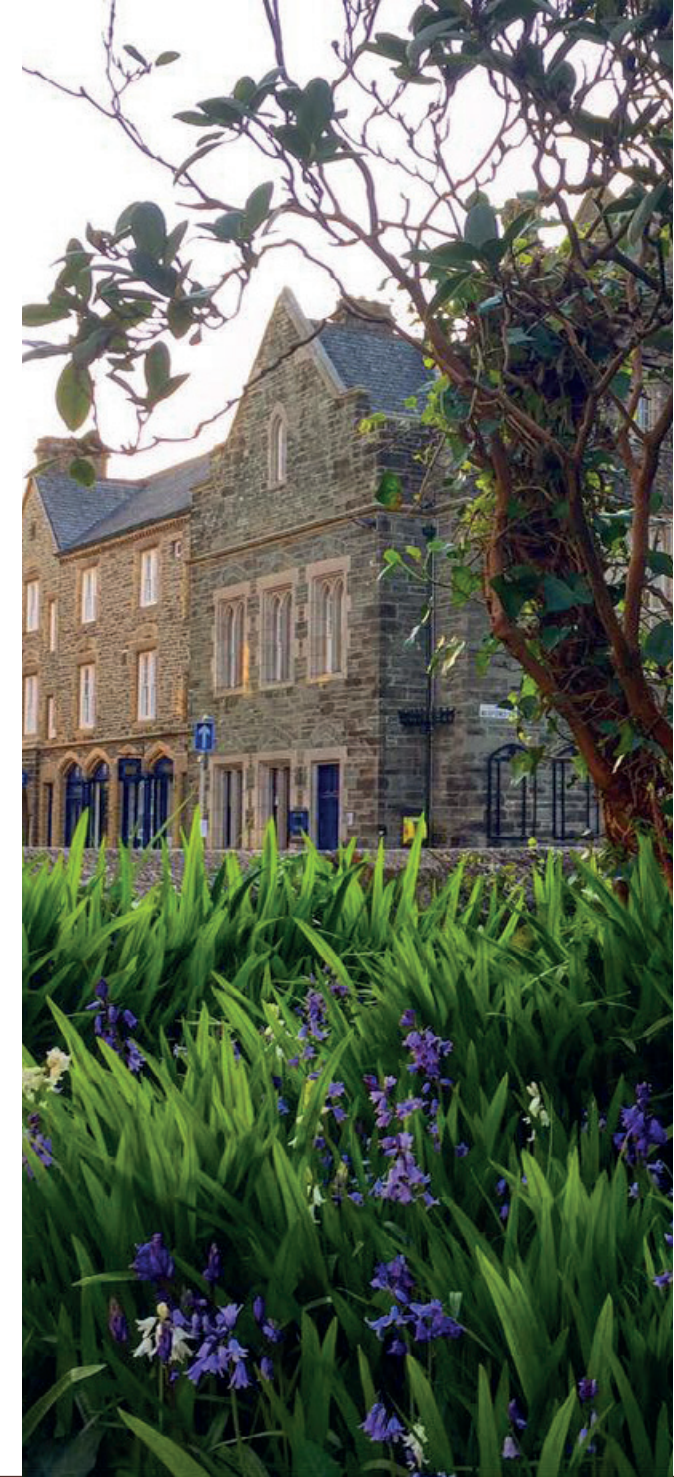
West Devon, together with South Hams and Plymouth have published a strategic plan for the area (Joint Local Plan) which sets out the future vision, policies and plans for our built and natural environment up to 2034.

We will work with our communities to produce new visions for all our towns, setting out the opportunities and actions required to ensure they remain thriving, active places. By the end of 2024, all main towns will have the opportunity for up to date and deliverable Town Centre strategies.

In our urban centres, we will develop conservation area plans to preserve and enhance important historic building and places across West Devon. We'll also work with our communities to support the development of Neighbourhood Plans.

We will know we are succeeding when:

- ◆ We have a good understanding of nature through mapping
- ◆ We make positive progress in delivering the Joint Local Plan
- ◆ Our urban areas have actively managed Conservation Area Plans



We will protect our past and plan for the future



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Focus	Aims	Actions
<p>Celebrating our heritage and ensuring it's protected</p>	<p>We will conserve and maintain existing historic fabric and retain and reflect locally distinctive features in the design of buildings, layouts and landscape to ensure the authenticity and integrity of the World Heritage Site.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commissioning and actively managing Conservation Area Plans ● Work with parishes surrounding the World Heritage Site to promote the area as a whole ● Funding for Tavistock Guildhall visitor centre and experience ● Support improvements across the Borough through the Welcome Back Fund including Tavistock Heritage Festival and enhancements to other towns
<p>Planning infrastructure for the future</p>	<p>We will ensure that we work with partners so West Devon has the infrastructure in place to meet the future needs of our communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Delivery of the Joint Local Plan ● Support Neighbourhood Plans ● Support key road corridor improvement including integrated cycling and walking ● Supporting improvements to local rail connectivity and links between Tavistock and Plymouth and Okehampton and Exeter



Play Your Part

- Actively engage in the planning process through consultations on the Joint Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans
- Respect the World Heritage Site



Supporting our ambitions

**Delivering quality Council
services to our residents
and communities**

The Council has been through a major period of change and improvement which has meant that we have continued to deliver services through the pandemic.

We will continue to be a modern organisation that is responsive to the changing needs of our residents, businesses and communities.

We will further modernise the way we work by making use of technology and striving to continually improve the services we offer.

We will do what we say, when we say and we will do it as efficiently as possible.

We recognise that our reputation is dependent on the quality and responsiveness of the services we provide.

We will know we are succeeding when:

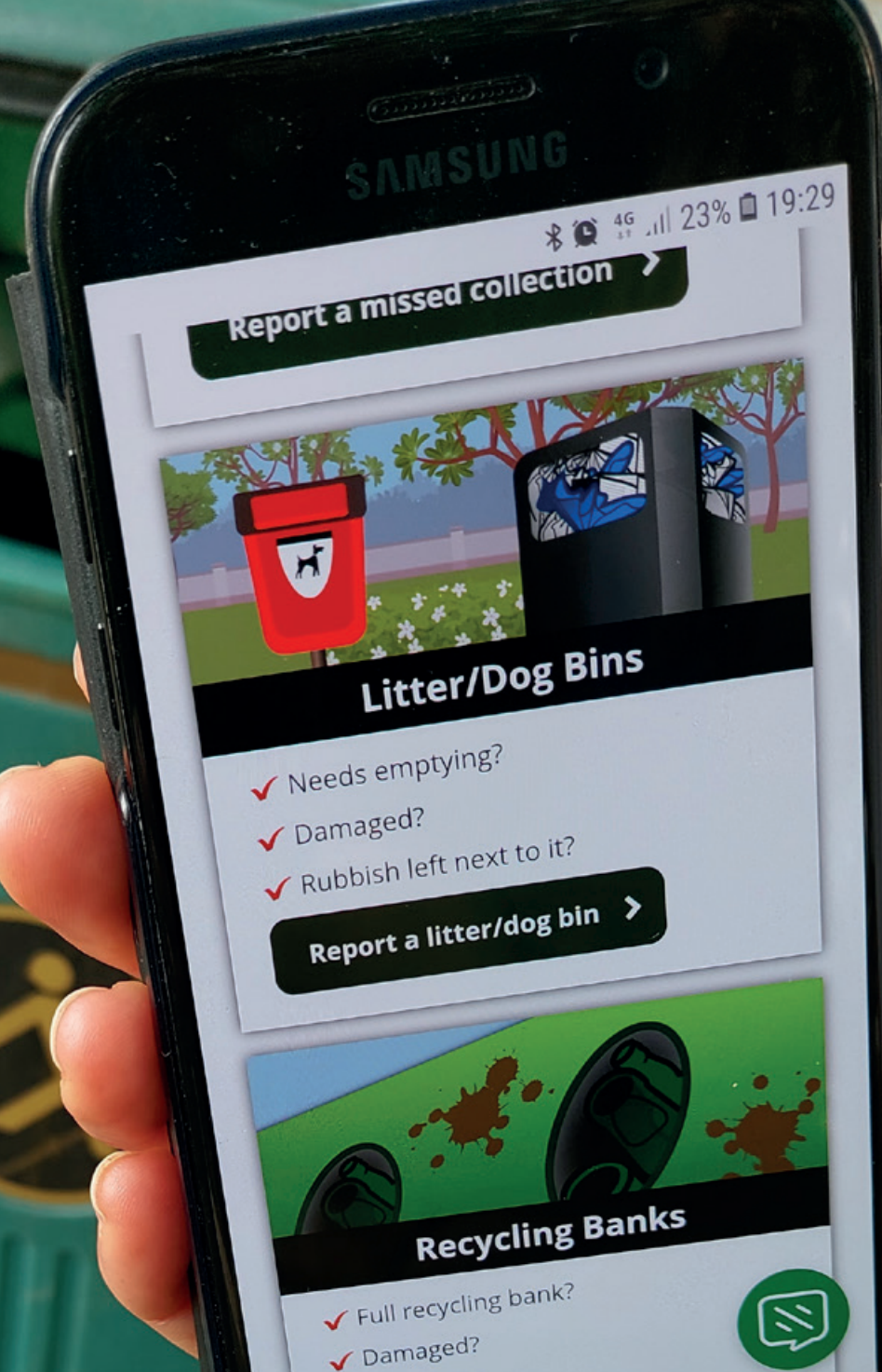
- You're able to get what you need, when you need it
- We get things right, and if we don't we take responsibility and fix it quickly
- You tell us that we're doing a good job



We will be a listening, accessible and caring council



Focus	Aims	Actions
<p>Listening and being accessible and caring</p>	<p>Our Consultation and Engagement Strategy sets out how we'll be open and transparent with our residents, and seek their views. We want to ensure that your voice is heard so that you can help shape our services and future direction. We'll be a Council that listens.</p> <p>Through the pandemic, customers have changed how they interact with us. Our ambition is that you should be able to access all Council services online in the coming years, although we'll still enable you to contact us in other ways if you prefer.</p> <p>We will set out clearly what our customers can expect from the Council, its Councillors and staff and ensure that our communications are free of jargon and can be understood by everyone.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Set out clearly what you can expect from us by developing a customer charter ◆ Enabling you to access all Council services online – by developing and delivering a Customer Access /Digital Strategy ◆ Actively seek your views when developing proposals – by delivering on our Consultation and Engagement Strategy ◆ Ask you how we're doing by carrying out an annual Residents' Satisfaction Survey ◆ We will ask you what you would like to know about the Council and consider how we can best communicate it to you



Play Your Part

- 'Do it Online'
- Tell us what we can do better
- Take part in our residents' surveys

We will make the best use of our resources



Focus	Aims	Actions
<p>Value for money of existing services</p>	<p>We'll ensure that the Council has clear performance measures and is clear about how we are performing.</p> <p>We'll also ensure that we manage the Council's resources including budgets, buildings, staff and systems effectively and efficiently.</p> <p>At all times we'll seek to deliver our services in the most cost effective way.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Implementing future proof IT systems through our Future IT Programme ◆ Developing a performance management framework with service targets and new reporting mechanisms ◆ Carry out reviews to improve the service you receive ◆ Manage and support our employees to deliver the best possible service
<p>Finances fit for our future</p>	<p>We need to ensure that in addition to ensuring value for money of existing services, that we plan for the future.</p> <p>To support our financial stability, we will effectively manage our budgets and ensure that we maximise our income.</p> <p>As a large employer with a net budget of £7m, we will also look at how we can increase our local spend to support the West Devon economy.</p> <p>We will develop partnerships with other 'anchor institutions' to maximise value for money, working together where there is mutual benefit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Ensure annual budgets meet our service delivery requirements ◆ Work to secure the Council's longer term financial sustainability ◆ Identifying opportunities to 'spend more locally' ◆ Work across Devon to increase efficiency and share services with others where it means you get a better service ◆ Lobbying for fairer funding for rural services



Play Your Part

- Volunteer to be on our Customer User Groups
- Look out for our Annual Report

Thanks to the many local people, businesses, organisations and community groups for sharing their photos -

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A Plan for West Devon



West Devon
Borough Council

www.westdevon.gov.uk

Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **13 July 2021**

Title: **Draft Annual Report 2020/21**

Portfolio Area: **Cllr Neil Jory
Leader**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Date next steps can be taken:

Author: **Neil Hawke** Role: **Head of Strategy**

Contact: **01803 861323** Neil.Hawke@swdevon.gov.uk

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. That the progress and achievements made by the Council be noted; and**
- 2. That the West Devon Borough Council Draft Annual Report (as presented at Appendix A) be considered for the financial year 2020/21, with any amendments being suggested prior to publishing the final report.**

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 It is good practice to undertake a review of the Council's progress across a range of activities as well as providing a public record
- 1.2 The Council's Annual Report reviews progress and achievements during what has been a challenging year for everyone.
- 1.3 The Annual Report is presented at Appendix A.

2. Background

- 2.1 The last financial year was unlike any other in memory, with the Council having to quickly take steps to respond to a global pandemic which presented many local challenges.
- 2.2 This year's annual report includes an overview of the support that the Council provided to support our businesses, residents and communities as well as highlighting some of the key projects delivered to support our wider aims.
- 2.3 The Annual Report, along with the Annual Governance Statement should help reassure the public that the Council is undertaking its

statutory functions, delivering its services efficiently and meeting its financial responsibilities in an open and transparent way.

3. Outcomes/outputs

- 3.1 The Annual Report demonstrates the progress made throughout 2020/21 in delivering against our plans but acknowledges the challenges that have been faced.
- 3.2 Once considered by Hub, the Annual Report will be published online as a permanent record of the year's activities.

4. Options available and consideration of risk

- 4.1 The Annual Report is a balanced view of the challenges faced by the Council and importantly the achievements made during the year.
- 4.2 The Council could decide to no longer publish an annual report however it is considered doing so supports our aims of being a transparent Council.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 It is proposed that the Annual Report 2020/21 is agreed.
- 5.2 Members are also asked to consider any amendments or additions to the Draft Annual Report prior to publishing of the final document.

6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	N	There are no direct legal implications as a result of this report. It is considered good practice to produce an Annual Report so as to highlight to Members and the public how the Council conducts its business and the key issues that the Council faces.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	The report provides an overview of the Council's financial performance during the 2020/21 Financial Year and sets out some of the key activities that the Council has been delivering. It does not seek any financial decisions or make any financial recommendations
Risk	Y	The main risk would be if the Council did not produce an annual report as it would be a reduction in levels of transparency.
Supporting Corporate Strategy		The annual report summarises some of the key achievement against the council's aims.

Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	Y	The Annual Report includes a summary of the positive steps that the Council is taking to respond to the Climate and Biodiversity Emergency
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	N	No policy or service change proposed
Safeguarding	N	No policy or service change proposed
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	No policy or service change proposed
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	N	
Other implications	N	

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Appendix A – Draft Annual Report 2020/21

Background Papers:

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Draft Annual Report 2020/21

West Devon Borough Council

Introduction

It has been an incredibly difficult year for us all. Many businesses have had to close for a significant part of the year, individuals have seen their livelihoods impacted, education and health care have been disrupted and some of us have lost loved ones to the global pandemic.

If there is to be a positive in all of this, it has been the tremendous community spirit. Residents of West Devon have come together to ensure that support has been provided where it is needed.

As a Borough council we have played an important role in delivering vital lifelines to our communities, with some £25m of government business grants awarded, emergency welfare support schemes launched and Members taking a lead role in bringing community groups together to ensure that all residents were supported.

While the pandemic required us to refocus officer effort to deliver these new support schemes, we have made really good progress in other areas including coming up with plans for how we can contribute to tackling the Climate and Biodiversity emergency and adopting a five year strategy to support housing need within the Borough.

It is important that we take stock of the impacts of the past year and refocus the council in order to meet future challenges and opportunities. With that in mind, this year we also commenced work on developing 'A Plan for West Devon' which will be adopted during 2020/22

Councillor Neil Jory
Leader of the Council

Andy Bates
Chief Executive

2020/21 In Numbers

2,154

Residents supported with debt, housing and employment advice through our partnership with Citizens Advice

Funding to support our key towns recovery from covid-19

£100k

630

Visits to support businesses with Covid-19 Safety Measures

£8,877

Awarded to maintain community facilities across West Devon through capital grants

21

Anti-Social Behaviour Referrals dealt with

31

Councillor computers repurposed to enable home education

Residents properties adapted to support their needs, enabling them to remain in their own homes

71

£13k

Member community grants

£25m

Awarded in Government Business Grants

A number of recent changes to Government funding means the Council no longer receives any Government Grant (Revenue Support Grant). It therefore has to be self-sufficient to fund all of its services. The Council has committed to protecting frontline services where possible.

Of every £1 in council tax paid, only 11 pence goes to West Devon Borough Council to pay for the services it provides. Therefore £238.32 of your overall council tax bill goes to West Devon Borough Council for a Band D household.

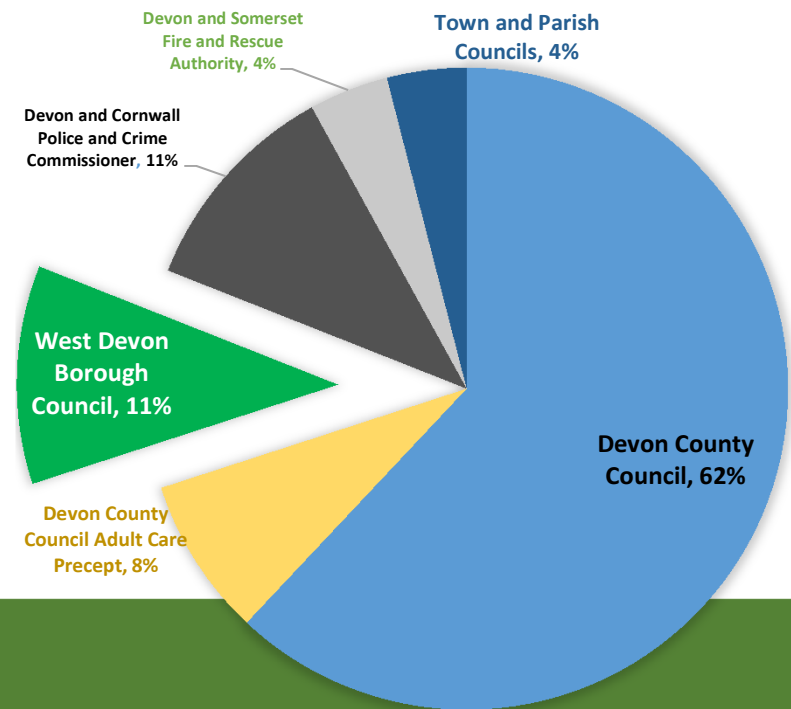
This contribution pays for services such as local planning, housing, environmental health, waste collection and recycling, street cleansing, providing recreational facilities, tourism and economic development. As well as being responsible for collecting the Council Tax, West Devon Borough Council also collects Business Rates and administers housing benefits.

At the point of preparing this report we are pleased to say that due to prudent financial management of our budgets, and additional covid-19 specific support from Central Government, our latest forecast is for a small surplus of £23,000 is predicted.

Looking Ahead

West Devon Borough Council plans to spend £22.7 million on providing services for 2021/22 (known as our Gross budget). A total of £17.8 million of this amount comes from the income we receive from grants, fees, charges and our share of business rates. This means that the amount of council tax we need to collect is £4.9 million.

Where your Council Tax went 2020,



Our Finances

Over the next few pages, we set out some of the positive steps the Council has taken during 2020/21 to support our residents, economy, communities and to ensure our services are fit for the future.

Supporting our Residents

In a year that has been challenging for all residents of West Devon, the Council has focused much of its effort on ensuring existing support was maintained while putting new support measures in place.

Action	20/21 Update
Covid-19 response	<p>During 2020/21 we took steps to ensure our residents were supported throughout the pandemic, we increased our Money Advice offering from 3 days to 5 days, launched an emergency welfare fund to support individuals that found themselves without money for essentials and delivered food parcels to our most vulnerable residents that were required to shield but couldn't access food and essential supplies.</p> <p>Our Councillors formed Community Clusters in order to ensure a joined up response between the Council and the Voluntary Sector - holding regular focused meetings online.</p>
Homes Strategy – Better Homes, Better Lives	During the year we developed and adopted a five year strategy setting out how we'll ensure all of our residents have access to safe and warm homes.
Disabled Facilities Grants	In the last 12 months we've enabled 71 residents to live in their homes more safely by adapting their property.
A warmer and more energy efficient home	During the year we've enabled 330 families to access energy efficient measures for their homes in addition to awarding grants to 38 of the least energy efficient properties for installing first time central heating
Counselling and Mentoring Young People	Through our membership of the Community Safety Partnership, we've worked with young people in Tavistock involved in county lines and exploitation. The young people have now disengaged with these concerning activities and continue to attend the youth sessions.
Support to our Leisure Services	During the year we worked closely with our Leisure provider, Fusion, to support them during a period which saw all Leisure Centres forced to closed. By providing financial support to cover essential operating costs while closed, we've ensured that the centres were in a position to reopen to our residents as Covid-19 restrictions began to lift.

Supporting the Economy

This year has been incredibly challenging for many of our business, most of which were required to close as part of the national effort to stop the spread of Covid-19. The Council has acted quickly to ensure that vital lifelines have been made available to businesses across the Borough.

Action	2020/21
Providing government business grants	The Council acted quickly, using its new IT platform to develop application processes for businesses to claim much needed grants. A total of £25m in grants was awarded throughout the year. An incredible effort by the team.
Covid safety advice and Support to businesses	The challenges of Covid required many businesses to adapt in order to offer a safe customer experience. To support our existing environmental health team, we appointed Covid-19 Compliance Officers to offer businesses and towns safety advice and support. Since they joined us in November, 630 visits to businesses have been undertaken across West Devon (and South Hams)
Business Growth Support and Advice	Through our partnership with Business Information Point, we have provided over 79 hours 1-to-1 support to 30 businesses. Support for the businesses has focused on advice to deal with the covid-19 pandemic, financial, marketing and business development support. We also ran a week long fully funded online course through the pop-up business school, leading to the launching of a West Devon Business Forum on Facebook to enable businesses across the Borough to network
Supporting our highstreets	The Council were awarded just under £100,000 to support Reopening of the Local High Streets as Covid restrictions begun being lifted. Working with Town Councils, we advertised our Towns, provided additional marshalls to encourage social distancing, enhancing the appearance of the high street but placing art in vacant shop window. We're developing plans to do more of the same in 2021/22
Spending Local	During the year, a new Procurement Strategy was considered. As part of the Strategy, the Council have made a commitment to explore opportunities to spend more of its budget with suppliers within the West Devon Borough Council area
Supporting our key towns	During the year we have supported the Tavistock Business Improvement District with its renewal proposals, hosted two conversations with businesses and town Councillors in Tavistock and Okehampton to better understand the needs of the place, begun conversations with Okehampton about how their businesses may want to work together in the future, and positioned Okehampton and Tavistock at the heart of an application for £922k of Community Renewal Fund monies.

NH1

Oke business support and Tavistock Bid - renewal process

Neil Hawke, 01/07/21

Enhancing our Communities

Action	2020/21
Support to community schemes	Our Members each have a locality fund of £500 a year which enables them to support local community initiatives. During 2020/21, over 35 schemes were awarded a total of £12,976. During the year we also launched a specific Covid-19 grant scheme which awarded funding to support voluntary sector schemes such as developing educational videos during lockdown, establishing delivery of essential supplies to residents and delivering food parcels to families that would normally receive free school meals.
Adopted a Climate and Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan	During 2020/21 the Council adopted a Climate and Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan which sets out specific actions that the Council and our communities can take to respond to the emergency.
Community Safety	During the year to Sept 2019- Oct 2021, 21 Anti-Social Behaviour referrals were made to the Community Safety Partnership. Included in these were issues with young people causing problems in Okehampton. The ASB Officer and the Police Youth Intervention Officers have worked with the Youth Offending Team to address the behaviour. Generally, there is positive engagement by all partner agencies and monthly ASB meetings continue to be held.
Seamoor Lotto	Our community lottery, now in its 3 rd year, is enabling 101 charity and community groups across West Devon and South Hams to raise over £25,000 a year.

Service Delivery and Governance

Throughout the year, we're really pleased that the significant majority of our services continued to be delivering in addition to the new services we implemented to respond to the pandemic. Our office staff all transitioned brilliantly to working from home full time and our frontline staff adopted new safety measures to ensure they could continue to support our residents and communities.

Action	2020/21
Maintaining services	<p>We took the decision in March that all office staff should work from home. Our staff have been able to work from home for many years and so this was a smooth transition.</p> <p>We supported employees through the transition to homeworking, including providing advice and guidance on maintaining health and wellbeing, and holding regular staff briefings online. A number of staff also trained as Mental Health First Aiders and can now offer support to colleagues.</p> <p>We also continued to recruit staff with our recruitment process shifting to an online interview process.</p>
Revising our budget	<p>Covid had a significant impact on our finances with some of our key income sources being impacted through the national lockdowns. As a result, in September, we developed and agreed a revised budget for the year. Fortunately additional funding has been provided by Government to contribute to some of the financial losses we suffered.</p>
Continuing to develop our priorities	<p>We have made great progress in pushing ahead with our priorities having adopted a number of strategies focusing on Housing, Climate and Biodiversity Strategy and Consultation and Engagement. The focus for the coming year will be on delivering against the action plans for these. We have also made good progress in developing the 'Plan for West Devon'</p>
Democracy Online	<p>The Council quickly took steps to implement remote meetings of its committees. All 31 Members of the Council were able to participate in the democratic process and our residents were able to watch meetings online. A total of 35 formal committee meetings were held online during the year.</p>
Three-Weekly Waste Collections	<p>During the year we commenced a trial of 1,000 properties moving to three-weekly waste collections and enhanced recycling services. The results of the trial will be considered during 2021/22 and if successful, may be rolled out across the Borough.</p>