

West Devon Hub Committee



West Devon
Borough
Council

Title:	Agenda								
Date:	Tuesday, 7th December, 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

1 - 6

Minutes of meeting held 2 November 2021

5. Public Questions

a period of 15 minutes is available to deal with issues raised by the public

6. Hub Committee Forward Plan

7 - 10

7. Planning Service Improvement Plan - Phase 3

11 - 16

8. Month 7 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report 2021/22

17 - 32

9. Capital Budget Monitoring 2021/22

33 - 44

10. Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals 2022/23 to 2024/25

45 - 80

11. West Devon Housing Challenges

81 - 106

12. Climate Change & Biodiversity Action Plan Update

107 - 134

Agenda Item 4

At a Meeting of the **HUB COMMITTEE** held in the **Council Chamber, Kilworthy Park, Tavistock** on **TUESDAY** the **2nd** day of **November 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 C Mott
Cllr B Ratcliffe

In attendance: Chief Executive
Monitoring Officer
Section 151 Officer
Director of Governance and Assurance
Director of Place and Enterprise
Democratic Services Manager
Head of Development Management
Senior Specialist – Place Making
Head of Environmental Health (via Teams)
Senior Specialist – Environmental Health
Specialist – Leisure (via Teams)

Other Members in attendance:

Cllrs Renders and Yelland

Other Members in attendance (via Teams):

Cllr Wood

***HC 32/21 MINUTES SILENCE**

As a mark of respect following the tragic recent deaths of Sir David Amess MP and Mr James Brokenshire MP, those Members and Officers in attendance stood and observed a minutes silence in their memory.

***HC 33/21 APOLOGIES**

There were apologies for absence received for this Meeting from Cllrs A F Leech and T G Pearce.

***HC 34/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be discussed and there were none made.

***HC 35/21 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Hub Committee meeting held on 21 September 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

***HC 36/21 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

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

***HC 37/21 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 discussion, it was agreed that the Leader would discuss with officers the need to schedule in further reviews of the thematic delivery plans that would underpin the recently adopted 'Plan for West Devon' and that this would be reflected in the next published edition of the Forward Plan.

The Leader also made reference to the recent discussions that had taken place in respect of the housing situation and it was his intention to request that officers present a Housing Options review paper to the next Hub Committee meeting to be held on 7 December 2021. This addition was welcomed by the wider Committee membership.

HC 38/21 PLANNING IMPROVEMENT PLAN – PHASE 2 RESOURCES

Consideration was given to a report that set out the latest phase (phase 2) of the Planning Improvement Plan. In particular, the report outlined the assessed need in terms of additional planning and legal specialist officers to support the planning and enforcement functions.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. Council be **RECOMMENDED** to employ six additional permanent posts (shared with South Hams District Council), being four planning specialists and two legal specialists, at an annual cost of £71,000 (the WDBC share of the costs), to be funded from additional planning income;
2. Council be **RECOMMENDED** to increase the staffing budget by £71,000 and to increase the planning income target for 2022/23 onwards by £71,000; and
3. It be noted that a further (phase 3) report will be presented to the Hub Committee at its next meeting to be held on 7 December 2021.

***HC 39/21 TENANCY STRATEGY REVIEW 2021**

Consideration was given to a report that sought approval of an updated Tenancy Strategy for 2021.

During discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) A lengthy discussion ensued with regard to housing disposals in the Borough and, whilst it was acknowledged that the Council had limited powers in this respect, it was noted that the Chief Executive would reflect the concerns raised by Members at an upcoming meeting with his counterparts from the three largest Registered Social Landlords in the Borough. Furthermore, it was agreed that the issue of housing disposals would be included as part of the Housing Options paper that was to be presented to the next Hub Committee meeting on 7 December 2021 (Minute *HC 37/21 above refers);
- (b) Officers confirmed that the Council's Environmental Health service had a role to play in the event of poor quality housing standards being found within the Housing Stock of a Registered Social Landlord.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the updated Tenancy Strategy (as set out at Appendix 2 of the presented agenda report) be approved; and
2. authority be delegated to the Head of Housing, in consultation with the lead Hub Committee Member for Homes, to make any necessary minor amendments prior to formal publication.

***HC 40/21 FUSION LIFESTYLE – LEISURE CONTRACT SUPPORT UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report that presented the performance of the Fusion contract to date; wider market trends; and the financial information on Fusion's performance in 2021.

In debate, the following points were raised:-

- (a) In light of Members wishing to ask questions on aspects of the exempt appendices, it was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** and when put to the vote declared **CARRIED** 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.'

Once all Members were content that they had no further questions on the exempt appendices, it was then **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** and when put to the vote declared **CARRIED** that: 'the press and public be re-admitted to the meeting'.

- (b) Some Members expressed their concerns over aspects of Fusion's current performance that included:

- the general cleanliness within the Leisure Centres;
- the attitude of some staff members; and
- the apparent lack of any promotion or marketing campaigns to encourage increased Centre membership.

As a result of these concerns, coupled with an imminent performance meeting being held between Council officers and Fusion representatives, the following alternative recommendation was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** and when put to the vote was declared **CARRIED**:-

1. *That the performance of the Fusion contract to date; wider market trends; and the financial information on Fusion's performance in 2021 be noted; and*
2. *That consideration of the contract variation and changes to the management fee profile be deferred pending further discussions with Fusion and that a further report be presented by the Director of Place and Enterprise to the next meeting of the Hub Committee.*

- (c) It was agreed that reference to a sample of the monitoring results of both the water quality and air handling units within the Centres would be included as part of the agenda report to be presented to the next meeting of the Hub Committee;
- (d) Members noted that there was a commitment to re-establish the Leisure Centre Task and Finish Group during this Council Administration.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the performance of the Fusion contract to date; wider market trends; and the financial information on Fusion's performance in 2021 be noted;
2. consideration of the contract variation and changes to the management fee profile be deferred pending further discussions with Fusion and that a further report be presented by the Director of Place and Enterprise to the next meeting of the Hub Committee.

HC 41/21 PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER – ALCOHOL AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

A report was considered that sought to recommend to Council that an Alcohol and Anti-Social Behaviour Public Space Protection Order should be made in relation to an area within the West Devon Borough.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) Some concerns were raised that adoption of the Order may unduly raise public aspirations especially when considering the current resource pressures on both the Police and the Borough Council;
- (b) It was noted that adoption of the Order would enable for the removal of alcohol from individuals and groups in that area who were deemed to be creating a disturbance and/or public nuisance;
- (c) Whilst noting that there were other areas within Tavistock that were generating a number of instances of Anti-Social Behaviour, Members also recognised that this report had been presented in response to a direct request from Tavistock Town Council;
- (d) Members emphasised the need for a communications and public awareness strategy to be adopted to underpin this Order.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** to agree the Tavistock Meadows Alcohol and Anti-Social Behaviour Public Space Protection Order 2021 (as set out in Appendix A of the presented agenda report).

***HC 42/21 WRITE-OFF REPORT**

The Committee considered a report that informed Members of the proposal to write-off a series of debts with a value of more than £5,000 for the period from 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021.

In discussion, the lead Hub Committee Member for Communications highlighted the recently adopted Consultation and Engagement Strategy and felt that this agenda item was an example of a matter that could warrant further clarification to the general public. In expanding upon the point, the Member felt that the adopted Strategy required greater recognition in the Council's Committee report template.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. it be noted that, in accordance with Financial Regulations, the Section 151 Officer has authorised the write-off of individual West Devon Borough Council debts totalling £50,262.73 as detailed in Tables 1 and 2 of the presented agenda report; and
2. approval be given to the write-off of individual debts in excess of £5,000 (totalling £12,357.71) as set out in Table 3 of the presented agenda report.

HC 43/21 REPORTS OF OTHER BODIES

(a) Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 5 October 2021

(i) Devon Home Choice Review

It was **RESOLVED** that the Council continue to be a member of Devon Home Choice.

(ii) Lamerton Housing Report

It was **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** to adopt a position to lobby Central Government and our local MPs to close the loophole that allows Small Business Rates Relief to second homeowners who rent their home out for 140 or more days per year.

(The meeting terminated at 3.30 pm)

Chairman

(NOTE: THESE DECISIONS WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE FROM THURSDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2021, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MINUTES HC 38/21 PARTS 1 AND 2, HC 41/21, HC 43/21(a)(ii) WHICH ARE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNCIL MEEITNG TO BE HELD ON 30 NOVEMBER 2021, UNLESS CALLED IN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULE 18)

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Hub Committee Forward Plan

About the Forward Plan

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

About the Hub Committee

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

- Leader of the Council – Cllr N Jory
- Deputy Leader of the Council, with specific responsibility for Enabling Inclusive and Accessible Services – Cllr R Cheadle
- Lead Hub Member for the Economy - Cllr P Crozier
- Lead Hub Member for the Natural Environment - Cllr L Daniel
- Lead Hub Member for Resources and Performance - Cllr C Edmonds
- Lead Hub Member for Leisure, Health and Wellbeing - Cllr A F Leech
- Lead Hub Member for the Built Environment - Cllr C Mott
- Lead Hub Member for Communities - Cllr T Pearce
- Lead Hub Member for Housing – Cllr B Ratcliffe

Further information on the workings of the Hub Committee, including latest information on agenda items, can be obtained by contacting Democratic Services on 01803 861105 or by e-mail to democratic.services@swdevon.gov.uk

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



Forward Plan from December 2021

Portfolio Area	Report Title and Summary	Lead Member / Officer	Documents to be considered in making decision	Date of Decision	Consultees and means of consultation
Leader	<p>Title: Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals 2022/23</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that presents for consultation a set of draft Revenue Budget proposals for 2022/23.</p>	Cllr Jory / Lisa Buckle	Report of Strategic Lead of Finance	7 December 2021	
Housing	<p>Title: Housing Options Paper</p> <p>Purpose: To present a report that sets out some potential options in response to the Housing Crisis in West Devon.</p>	Cllr Ratcliffe / Chris Brook	Report of Director of Place and Enterprise	7 December 2021	
Natural Environment	<p>Title: Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan – Six Month Review</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that sets out the six-monthly progress review into the Council’s adopted Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan</p>	Cllr Daniel / Drew Powell	Report of Director of Governance and Assurance	7 December 2021	
Resources & Performance	<p>Title: Revenue Budget Monitoring Report to Month 7</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that presents the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report to Month 7.</p>	Cllr Edmonds / Lisa Buckle	Report of Section 151 Officer	7 December 2021	
Resources & Performance	<p>Title: Capital Programme Monitoring Report to Month 7</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that presents the Capital Programme Monitoring Report to Month 7.</p>	Cllr Edmonds / Pauline Henstock	Report of Head of Finance	7 December 2021	



Portfolio Area	Report Title and Summary	Lead Member / Officer	Documents to be considered in making decision	Date of Decision	Consultees and means of consultation
Built Environment	Title: Planning Service Improvement – Phase 3 (to include Planning Enforcement) Purpose: To consider a report that presents Phase 3 of the Planning Service Improvement Plan. Of particular note, this Phase includes an update on the Planning Enforcement Service.	Cllr Mott / Drew Powell	Report of Director of Governance and Assurance	7 December 2021	
Leader	Title: Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals 2022/23 Purpose: To recommend to Full Council for adoption a draft Revenue and Capital Budget for 2022/23	Cllr Jory / Lisa Buckle	Report of Section 151 Officer	1 February 2022	
Economy	Title: Regeneration and Investment Strategy Purpose: To consider a report that presents a draft Regeneration and Investment Strategy.	Cllr Crozier / Chris Brook	Report of Director of Place and Enterprise	1 February 2022	
				8 March 2022	

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Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **7 December 2021**

Title: **Planning Improvement Plan – Phase 3 Case Management Resources and Enforcement**

Portfolio Area: **Adapting Our Built Environment – Cllr Caroline Mott**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Date next steps can be taken: Upon the expiry of the Scrutiny Call-in Period – 15 December 2021.

Author: **Pat Whymer** Role: **Head of Development Management**

Contact: patrick.whymer@swdevon.gov.uk

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Hub Committee:

- 1. Notes the changes proposed within Administration/Business support (Case Management) for Development control and the progress that has been made within planning enforcement service, and**
- 2. RECOMMENDS to Council that authority be delegated to the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Lead Member for Adapting Our Built Environment and the Director of Strategic Finance, to recruit additional staffing where there is a clear and demonstrable increase in planning applications and/or demand on the service, provided that the increase in staffing can be adequately covered by the additional income generated.**

1. Executive Summary

1.1. On 21 September 2021, the Hub Committee adopted the Planning Improvement Plan (minute HC.30/21 refers).

1.2. A further phase 2 report, was considered by the Hub Committee on 2 November (Minute HC.30/21 refers). As a result, the Hub Committee recommended to Council that four additional planning

specialists and two additional legal specialists be added to the establishment. These new, permanent roles to be funded from the additional planning income being generated as a result of the increase in applications and demand.

- 1.3. This report considers whether the Council can react more efficiently to an increase in the demands on the DM service and whether the process of having to formally seek the approval of Members to increase resources, when demand clearly requires it, could be streamlined. The report proposes a method of doing this going forward which is included in the recommendations.
- 1.4. This report considers the need for additional administrative/business support (case management) for the service and management arrangements to deliver the best outcomes and service performance.
- 1.5. An update on the performance within the enforcement team is also provided which demonstrates that improvements are being made to the delivery of the service.

2. Strategic Context

- 2.1. The Council's new Corporate Strategy – 'A Plan for West Devon' - sets out a range of themes and associated aims supported by Thematic Delivery Plan which have now been adopted by Members. The DM and Enforcement Service forms part of the wider planning function alongside, for example, the Joint Local Plan, Strategic Planning and Neighbourhood planning teams, which are essential to deliver against our strategic aims.
- 2.2. The recently adopted Planning Improvement Plan sets out the Council approach to improving service performance and therefore support 'A Plan for West Devon'. A key part of this is establishing a stable and skilled team with the capacity to deliver the service efficiently and in line with demand.

3. Background

- 3.1. Development Management and Planning Enforcement are key services delivered by the Council. The services are receiving year on year increases in applications and reported planning breaches.
- 3.2. It is recognised that the quality and speed of the service being provided at present needs to improve and hence the adoption of the Planning Improvement Plan.

3.3. The previous reports focussed on securing the additional specialist posts needed to manage the increased demand on the services, it is recognised that this is only one strand of the improvement needed. It is equally important that each component part of the wider planning service works together.

4. Demand and Capacity

4.1. As set out in the report to the Hub Committee on 21 September, there has been a significant rise in applications received over the past two years which equates to a 12% increase. This trend has continued into 2021 and it is predicted that demand will continue to rise.

4.2. As set out above the resource required with regards to the planning specialists and legal support was previously considered by the Hub Committee. Further work has now been undertaken and it has been identified that additional administrative/business support (case management) for the wider Development Management function is needed.

4.3. There is a need to retain within the team, on a permanent basis, three posts that have been filled by temporary Agency in response to the increase in the volume of work. These three posts will be funded by the re-allocation of existing vacant posts within the wider organisation and therefore there are no budget implications.

4.4. As a general point, it is important to note at this stage that demand on the service may increase or potentially decrease. We will continue to monitor application numbers and will adjust staffing levels, up or down, accordingly and in line with the available budget.

4.5. In addition, it is proposed that delegated authority be given to the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Lead Member for Adapting the Built Environment and the Director of Strategic Finance, to recruit additional staff where there is a clear and demonstrable increase in planning applications and/or demand on the service, provided that the increase in staff can be adequately covered by the additional income generated.

5. Enforcement Update

5.1 At the beginning of September 2021 the Enforcement Team had 627 Open cases. The Team was made up of 6 permanent full time staff one of which was absent due to long term illness. The Enforcement Specialist role has been vacant following the departure of the previous post holder and filling the vacancy is challenging. In view

of this vacancy we have a temporary experienced enforcement officer working within the team.

5.2 An enforcement workshop with the Planning Advisory Service took place on the 27 September, with members of the enforcement team. This meeting and subsequent advice from PAS was both positive and helpful. The team are working through the advice provided.

5.3 At the beginning of November 2021 the total number of open cases has reduced to 597. The Team is the same as it was in September with the exception that the member who was away in September has now left the Council and we will now be recruiting to this vacancy. I am pleased to report that more cases have been closed than received at a time when the team has a full time vacancy that is not being covered by temporary staff.

5.5 Since September a number of Enforcement Review meetings (12) have taken place with Ward Members and these will continue.

5.4 Despite numerous attempts to recruit, the Enforcement Specialist role has not been permanently filled and the management of the Team is currently being undertaken by Helen Smart alongside her role as the DM Case Management Team leader. As this report is being drafted, proposals are being finalised to realign a small number of posts to support the wider management of the service. These operational changes will be communicated when finalised.

6. Proposed Way Forward

6.1. The addition of the three Case management posts identified in this report, will help secure measurable, sustained improvement in performance at no additional cost.

6.2 The Enforcement Team to continue closing more cases than we receive, and will continue with a priority to focus on progressing all cases that are in excess of 36 months old. It is anticipated that as the experience of the team grows we will be able to reduce the number of open cases to below 550 in the New Year and to continue to reduce the overall number during next year. Given the volume of cases we are currently receiving it is expected that the team should have between 350-450 open cases at any one time.

8. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	It is a requirement of the Council's Constitution that any increases to the staffing establishment to be an ultimate decision for Full Council.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	The report recommends employing three additional permanent posts within DM Case Management. These are posts re-allocated from other parts of the organisation and there are no financial implications
Risk	Y	That the Council fails to deliver a Service that meets the expectations of Members and our Customers
Consultation and Engagement Strategy	N	There has been no external consultation and engagement with regard to this report
Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	All
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	N	No direct carbon or diversity impacts arise from 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:

None

Approval and clearance of report

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

Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **7 December 2021**

Title: **Month 7 Revenue Budget Monitoring
2021/2022**

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

Wards Affected: **All**

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

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

Author: **Pauline Henstock** Role: **Head of Finance Practice
and Deputy S.151 Officer**

Lisa Buckle **Corporate Director for
Strategic Finance
(S151 Officer)**

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Hub Committee RESOLVES to:-

- i) NOTE the forecast income and expenditure variations for the 2021/22 financial year and the overall projected deficit of £33,000 (0.5% of the total Budget £7.302 million), which is very close to a break-even position.**
- ii) RECOMMEND to Council to apply up to £80,000 from the Salary Savings Earmarked Reserve in 2021/22 to support additional salary costs in 2021/22, as detailed in section 3.3.**

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This report enables Members to monitor income and expenditure variations against the approved budget for 2021/22, and provides a forecast for the year end position.
- 1.2 The gross service expenditure budget for 2021/22 was set at £23 million (£7.302 million net). This report identifies a projected deficit of £33,000 which is 0.5% of the overall Budget set for 2021/22 of £7.302 million. This is very close to a break-even position.

- 1.3 **Salaries** – salary costs are predicted to be on target after applying a contribution of £80,000 from the Salary Savings Earmarked Reserve. This will be applied as part of the closure of the 2021/22 Accounts. Members will recall that these monies were set aside in 2020/21 to recognise the salary pressures that would arise in 2021/22 following the impact of the pandemic (Minute HC 68).

2. Background

2.1 Regional and national context

- 2.2 The Covid-19 pandemic has drawn into sharper focus the financial challenges faced by Local Authorities which have existed for some years. There remains outstanding a number of Local Authority Government reviews into Local Authority funding to reset the way local Councils are funded and the mechanism for the distribution of funding.

2.3 Financial Monitoring arrangements

- 2.4 The Council’s financial procedure rules require that reports must be made on budget monitoring on a regular basis to the Hub Committee as part of the Council’s arrangements for budget management.

3. Outcomes/outputs

- 3.1 **Budget overview** - Table 1 below provides an analysis of the projected variances against budget.

TABLE 1: 2021/22 BUDGET FORECAST

	2021/22 Budget expenditure /(income)	Budget variations			Note
		%	£000	£000	
	£000		£000	£000	
APPROVED BUDGET				7,302	
Reductions in expenditure/additional income					
Customer Service & Delivery					
Planning income	(402)	7%	(30)		A
Land Charges income	(95)	10%	(10)		B
Savings on staff and Member travel and expenses	91	33%	(30)		C
Homelessness prevention costs	93	54%	(50)		D
Governance and Assurance					
Garden Waste income	(245)	9%	(21)		E
Trade Waste income	(15)	160%	(24)		F

Other Comprehensive Income & Expenditure					
Business Rates Pooling gain	(135)	22%	(30)		G
Sub total of variations				(195)	
Increases in expenditure/reductions in income					
Customer Service & Delivery					
COVID-19 expenditure	n/a	n/a (no budget)	114		H
Planning salaries	348	9%	30		I
ICT Support Contracts	498	6%	30		J
Council Tax Collection income	(102)	20%	20		K
Place and Enterprise					
Car Parking Income (net loss is £69,000 as Government compensation of £46,000 is projected as Note P)	(1,147)	10%	115		L
Joint Local Plan Contribution	n/a	n/a (no budget)	25		M
Governance & Assurance					
Waste & Recycling – 3 Weekly Waste Trials	n/a	n/a	50		N
Other Comprehensive Income & Expenditure					
Investment income	(105)	77%	80		O
Sub total of variations				464	
PROJECTED OUTTURN				7,571	
Government grant funding anticipated from the income guarantee scheme for sales, fees and charges for April to June 2021 (mainly to compensate for loss of car parking income in the first quarter)				(46)	P
Transfer from Earmarked Reserve: Transfer funding from the COVID-19 Losses Earmarked Reserve (to fund COVID-19 expenditure of and net losses on car parking income				(190)	Q
Sub-total				7,335	
PROJECTED DEFICIT FOR 2021/22				33	

There is projected to be an overall deficit of £33,000 when compared against the Revenue Budget set for 2021/22. This is very close to a break-even position.

Notes

- A. **Planning income** – additional income of £30,000 has been received as at 31 October 2021. For the purposes of the 2021/22 projection it has been assumed that income will be on budget for the remainder of the year. However, this is a volatile area which can be very difficult to forecast given the impact of large applications so there is every likelihood that the income will fluctuate as the year progresses. The Planning Improvement Plan report approved at the Hub Committee meeting on 2nd November 2021 recommended that this additional income is utilised to fund additional staffing costs in planning for 2021/22 (note I).
- B. **Land Charges income** – income is currently anticipated to exceed the 2021/22 target by £10,000 which equates to 10% of the annual income budget of £95,000.
- C. **Savings on staff and Member travel and expenses** – due to Covid 19, it is currently anticipated that a saving of up to £30,000 could be achieved in 2021/22. These savings are due to staff and Members working from home.
- D. **Homelessness Prevention** – homelessness prevention costs are currently anticipated to be underspent by £50,000 in 2021/22.
- E. **Garden Waste Income** – income is currently anticipated to exceed the 2021/22 target by £21,000 which equates to 9% of the annual income budget of £245,000.
- F. **Trade Waste Income** - income is currently anticipated to exceed the 2021/22 target by £24,000 which equates to 160% of the annual income budget of £15,000.
- G. **Business Rates Pooling gain** – the latest Business Rates Pooling Gain forecast indicates that a Pooling Gain of around £165,000 will be achieved in 2021/22. This is £30,000 higher than the budgeted amount of £135,000.
- H. **COVID-19 expenditure** – One-off items of direct Covid 19 expenditure such as extra housing costs, ICT and remote working, waste, cleaning costs and community support costs. These costs are included on the monthly DELTA Government returns completed.
- I. **Planning salaries** – additional temporary staffing cost within the Development Management Service is anticipated to cost £30,000 in 2021/22. This can be met from the additional planning income generated by the service as shown in note 'A' above. At the Hub Committee meeting on 2nd November 2021 it was recommended to fund six additional posts (shared with South Hams) from additional planning income.

- J. **ICT Support Contracts** - There are additional costs in respect of ICT support contracts mainly due to,
- Above inflation increases, e.g. Microsoft Licensing
 - Additional costs for new licenses, laptops and accessories due to an increase in the number of users on our network
 - The acquisition of remote diagnostics software as a result of the increase in remote working
 - Disability Access legislation for the website has required the purchase of tools for monitoring compliance and enhancing access
- K. **Council Tax Collection income** – summons costs recovered in respect of Council Tax and Business Rates are currently anticipated to be 20% down on the 2021/22 budget.
- L. **Car Parking income** - as at the end of October 2021 there was a shortfall of £115,000 in car parking income. For the purposes of the 2021/22 projection, it has been assumed that income will be on budget for the remainder of the year. This will be partly offset by the extension of the Government income guarantee scheme for sales, fees and charges into the first quarter of 2021/22 and projected Government compensation of £46,000, as shown in note 'P' below. Therefore the net loss on car parking income would be £69,000 for 2021/22.
- M. **Joint Local Plan Contribution** - a cost pressure of £25,000 has been identified in relation to the 2021/22 Joint Local Plan contribution. There is currently no budget for this and it is proposed to consider building this into the 2022/23 revenue budget. This has been funded from monies set aside in the JLP Earmarked Reserve in previous years, which is now depleted.
- N. **Waste and Recycling** – The Revenue Budget for 2021/22 included potential additional income of £50,000 in 21/22 and a further £75,000 in 22/23 for income from the possibility to move to a three weekly waste collection. It was stated that this was dependent on the outcome of the results from the three weekly trials. As set out within a separate report to the Hub Committee on 21 September, it was agreed that the trial of the three weekly residual (black sack) collections was not extended to the whole of the Borough in Spring 2022 and this recognised the potential impact of making a major service change at a time when significant structural changes are expected in the waste industry and other external pressures, including the national LGV driver shortage.
- O. **Investment income** – due to the historic low interest rates (base rates are 0.1%), investment income is currently anticipated to be 77% down which equates to a shortfall of £80,000 in 2021/22. Further options for fixed term deposits will continue to be explored with the Council's treasury management advisers.

- P. **Government Grant Funding for Income Losses** – in line with 2020/21 the Government have extended their income guarantee scheme to help compensate Councils for losses of sales, fees and charges income during the first quarter of 2021/22. The Government will continue to compensate Councils for their income losses above the first 5% of their budgeted income from sales, fees and charges. Income losses above the first 5% will be compensated by the Government paying for 75 pence in every pound of the losses thereafter. Due to the recovery of some key income streams in 2021/22 this has been estimated at £46,000 for April to June 2021, which is mainly for the loss of car parking income.
- Q. **Transfer from Earmarked Reserves** – At the Hub Committee meeting on 21st September 2021 it was recommended to utilise funding of £190,000 from the COVID-19 Losses Earmarked Reserve in 2021/22, to fund COVID-19 expenditure in 2021/22 and the projected net losses on car parking income in 2021/22 (HC 28/21).

3. Other items to be considered in the 2021/22 Budget

- 3.1 This monitoring report includes an update on the position regarding the savings and additional income that were identified in the 2021/22 budget setting process, set out in Appendix B.
- 3.2 **Leisure** - A report on Leisure will be considered by the Hub Committee at the 1 February 2022 meeting.
- 3.3 **Salaries** - salary costs are predicted to be on target after applying a contribution of £80,000 from the Salary Savings Earmarked Reserve. This will be applied as part of the closure of the 2021/22 Accounts. Members will recall that these monies were set aside in 2020/21 to recognise the salary pressures that would arise in 2021/22 following the impact of the pandemic (HC 68).

4. Review of Earmarked Reserves

- 4.1 The Council annually undertakes a review of the level of its Earmarked Reserves as part of the budget setting process. Budgeted contributions to and from Earmarked Reserves were part of the 2021/22 Budget reports.
- 4.2 A schedule of Earmarked Reserves is attached at Appendix A, which shows Earmarked Reserves have a projected balance of £5.386 million at 31 March 2022 currently.

4.3 Although our Earmarked Reserves appear to have increased substantially overall in 2020/21, an amount of £2.61m of this is due to a technical accounting adjustment where Councils were compensated for the business rates holidays that were announced by the Government for the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors in 2020/21 (this funding is in the S31 Compensation Grant Reserve). This temporary increase in reserves will reverse back out again in the 2021/22 Accounts, to fund the deficit on the Collection Fund. Therefore this is not money which is available for the Council to spend and it is important that this is not misinterpreted in the Accounts, as this is a national issue.

4.4 The Council's level of Unearmarked Reserves currently stands at £1.294 million. The deficit of £33,000 would go into Unearmarked Reserves at the year end, in accordance with normal accounting practice. This gives a predicted year end balance at 31.3.2022 of £1.261 million for Unearmarked Reserves.

5. Prudential Indicators

5.1 The prudential code indicators were approved in the Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategy report to the Council on 30 March 2021. The indicators are monitored during the year through the normal revenue and capital monitoring processes. All Treasury Management limits have been adhered to.

6. Income and Reserves

Income monitoring is an integral part of financial management. Current income forecasts are as follows: Income monitoring is an integral part of financial management. Below shows the current income (surpluses)/shortfalls already experienced for April to October 2021. The table also shows the latest 2021/22 projections for the major streams of income.

Service	Deficit/ (Surplus) April – October 2021 £'000	Projected Income 2021/22 £'000	Income Budget 2021/22 £'000	Deficit/ (Surplus) £'000	Deficit/ (Surplus) %
Car Parking	115	(1,032)	(1,147)	115	10%
Planning Applications & Advise	(30)	(432)	(402)	(30)	(7%)
Employment Estates	-	(327)	(327)	-	-
Garden Waste	(168)	(266)	(245)	(21)	(9%)
Trade Waste	(24)	(39)	(15)	(24)	(160%)

Service	Deficit/ (Surplus) April – October 2021 £'000	Projected Income 2021/22 £'000	Income Budget 2021/22 £'000	Deficit/ (Surplus) £'000	Deficit/ (Surplus) %
Business Rates Pooling Gain	45	(165)	(135)	(30)	(22%)
Licensing	1	(114)	(114)	-	-
Interest & Investment Income	35	(25)	(105)	80	77%
Local Land Charges	(10)	(105)	(95)	(10)	(10%)
TOTAL	(36)	(2,505)	(2,585)	80	3%

7. Management Actions

7.1 The table below sets out the relevant management actions for the revenue expenditure and income variations shown above. It is best practice for the Council to state whether there are any corrective actions that need to be taken for the variances identified in 2021/22.

	Budget variations overspend/ (underspend) £000	Management Action
Reductions in expenditure/additional income		
Planning income	(30)	This will be kept under review during 2021/22. The Planning Improvement Plan report approved at the Hub Committee meeting on 2 nd November 2021 (HC 38/21) that this additional income is utilised to fund additional staffing costs in planning in 2021/22.
Land Charges Income	(10)	Income levels will be kept under review in 2021/22.
Staff and Member travel and expenses	(30)	The projected underspend will be kept under review during the year.
Homelessness prevention costs	(50)	Homelessness prevention costs will be kept under review in 2021/22.

	Budget variations overspend/ (underspend) £000	Management Action
Garden Waste	(21)	Income levels will be kept under review in 2021/22
Trade Waste	(24)	Income levels will be kept under review in 2021/22
Business Rates Pooling Gain	(30)	This will be reviewed again following the Business Rates Pooling forecast for Qtr 3.
Increases in expenditure/reductions in income		
Covid Expenditure	114	This expenditure will be kept under close review and will be included in the Government DELTA returns.
Planning salaries	30	The Planning Improvement Plan report approved at the Hub Committee meeting on 2 nd November 2021 (HC 38/21) recommended to fund this additional salary cost from additional planning income in 2021/22.
ICT Support Contracts	30	A cost pressure of £30,000 will be considered to be built into the 2022/23 budget.
Council Tax collection income	20	Recovery of summons costs will be kept under review in 2021/22.
Car Parking Income	115	Income levels will be kept under review in 2021/22.
Joint Local Plan Contribution	25	A cost pressure of £25,000 will be considered being built into the 2022/23 budget.
3 weekly waste trials	50	A cost pressure for the £50,000 has been built into the 2022/23 Budget.
Investment Income	80	A cost pressure for £80,000 has been built into the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2022/23 for the reduction in treasury management income.

8. Options available and consideration of risk

8.1 At this early stage it is important to note that these forecasts can change over the course of the year. Managers can seek out opportunities to reduce any overspends, whilst considering the risk of any adverse impact on the customer experience.

9. Proposed Way Forward

9.1 Revenue budget monitoring will continue on a regular basis and further reports will be brought to the Hub Committee each quarter.

10. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Council is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs. As part of those arrangements, the Council is under a duty to monitor its budgets throughout the financial year and to take appropriate action to deal with any deterioration in the financial position revealed by the regular monitoring.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	<i>The report identifies a projected deficit of £33,000 which is 0.5% of the overall budget set for 2021/22 of £7.302 million. This is very close to a break-even position.</i> As part of Grant Thornton's external audit of the Statement of Accounts for 2020/2021, they have concluded that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.
Risk	Y	1) Budget variances – continual monthly budget monitoring at all levels within the Council ensures early identification of variances. Reporting to the Hub Committee provides an opportunity for Members to identify and instigate remedial action where appropriate. 2) Resource Planning – the Hub Committee takes into account any significant issues when developing the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. These are identified in the

		Management Actions section of the report (Section 7).
Supporting Corporate Strategy		The budget monitoring process supports all of the Delivery Plans within the Council's strategic vision, 'A Plan for West Devon'.
Consultation and Engagement Strategy		External consultation and engagement has not been undertaken with regard to this report.
Climate Change – Carbon / Biodiversity Impact		<p>A report was presented to Council on 8th December 2020 'Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan update'.</p> <p>In March 2021, Council approved to set up an Earmarked Reserve for £200,000 for the Recovery Plan and Corporate Strategy.</p> <p>Further detail is set out in the Council's 'A Plan for West Devon' strategic vision.</p>
<i>Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications</i>		
Equality and Diversity		None directly arising from this report.
Safeguarding		None directly arising from this report.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		None directly arising from this report.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		None directly arising from this report.
Other implications		None directly arising from this report.

Supporting Information

Appendix A – Schedule of Reserves (Earmarked Reserves and Unearmarked Reserves).

Appendix B – Savings/Additional income schedule

Background Papers:

None

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RESERVES - PROJECTED BALANCES						APPENDIX A
	Cost Centre	Opening Balance 01.04.2021 £000's	Additions to Reserve 2021/22 £000's	Predicted Spend 2021/22 £000's	Projected Balance 31.03.2022 £000's	Comments
EARMARKED RESERVES						
Specific Reserves - General Fund						
2016/17 Budget Surplus Contingency	W0848	86	0	(51)	35	This is the Budget Surplus from 2016/17 which was put into an Earmarked Reserve. Commitments mainly relate to the Capital Programme £50k
Broadband Community Support	W0932	50	50		100	As per the report to the Hub Committee on 1st December 2020, Council approved the creation of a Broadband Community Support Earmarked Reserve, to be financed by transferring £50k from the existing Business Rates Retention Earmarked Reserve in 2020/21 and a further £50k from the Business Rates Discretionary fund (Additional Restrictions Grants, ARG Scheme) in 2021/22
Car Parking Maintenance	W0833	484	0	(158)	326	The commitments include Brook Street Car Park
COVID-19 Losses	W0930	221	281	(190)	312	On 16th February 2021 Council approved to transfer the COVID-19 LA Support Grant (4th tranche of £151K and the bank reconciliation adjustment of £69K) into a COVID Earmarked Reserve. In addition it was recommended to transfer the fifth tranche of COVID funding of £281,404 into this Reserve in 2021/22. HC 28/21 (Month 4 Revenue Budget Monitoring report), Council approved to use funding of £190,000 from the COVID-Losses Earmarked Reserve in 2021/22, to fund COVID-19 expenditure in 2021/22 and the projected net losses on car parking income in 2021/22
Economic Grant Initiatives	W0914	26	0	(4)	22	
Elections	W0903	20	20	0	40	
Environmental Health Initiatives	W0857	20	0	0	20	
Financial Stability	W0859	454	0	0	454	This reserve was created in 2018/19 from the Business Rates Pilot funding. This funding was set aside to assist to smooth out future years' funding variations or reductions, in particular any changes from the Fair Funding Review (this has been delayed and is unlikely to happen until 2023/24).
Flood Works	W0915	15	0	0	15	
Grounds Maintenance	W0901	48	0	(26)	22	The commitment relates to an Electric ride on mower
Homelessness Prevention	W0924	173	0	(35)	138	This reserve has been created following underspends on Homelessness Prevention Costs in previous years. Commitment of £30k re Corporate Strategy, Improving Homes Delivery of needs assessment
ICT Development	W0836	39	25	(41)	23	Commitments mainly relate to the New IT Procurement, Hub Cttee Jan 20 Min Ref HC73 (£65k)
Innovation Fund (Invest to Earn)	W0850	399	0	(267)	132	Commitments mainly relate to the upgrading of Hayedown Depot and £85k in respect of detailed design, specification and tendering of the Brentor Community Housing Scheme (Hub Committee 16/3/21). This reserve originated from New Homes Bonus funding.
Leisure Services	W0855	58		(44)	14	Commitments relate to Capital Programme Funding.
Maintenance Fund (Estates)	W0927	242	0	0	242	
Management, Maintenance & Risk Management	W0861	302	118	0	420	This is a relatively new reserve set up to manage the ongoing maintenance costs of the Council's Investment Property Portfolio. The contributions to the reserve equate to 10% of the rental income on an annual basis.
New Homes Bonus (NHB)	W0804	452	293	(375)	370	The NHB is used to support the funding of the revenue budget and the Capital Programme. The commitments relate to £192,772 to fund the 2021/22 revenue budget and £182,000 to fund the capital programme
Outdoor Sports & Recreation Grants	W0852	16	0	0	16	
Planning Policy and Major Developments	W0840	147	0	0	147	This reserve is for all planning matters and is also to meet appeal costs.
Recovery Plan and Corporate Strategy	W0864	200	0	(190)	10	Hub Committee 21.9.21 - Use of £190,000 of this Reserve for 'A Plan for West Devon'.
Revenue Grants	W0821	912	0	(33)	879	This reserve comprises of government grants received for specific initiatives or new burdens and are held in the reserve for accounting purposes. The annual contribution of £32,500 from this reserve relates to the funding of three housing posts which were made permanent in the 2020/21 budget process and are funded from the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant
Salary Savings	W0863	80		(80)	0	This is a new reserve set up to hold salary savings from 2020/21 to be ringfenced to support salary costs in 2021/22. (Hub 16/3/21). Some work had to be postponed in 2020/21 due to the extra work pressures of the pandemic and this work will need to be carried out in 2021/22 to maintain and enhance service delivery and address recommendations from internal audit reports.
Support Services Trading Opportunities	W0856	31	0	(16)	15	This reserve was created from external work carried out in other Councils e.g. HR work with Councils also embarking on a Transformation Programme.
Strategic Change (T18)	W0925	67	0	(10)	57	The commitments are £10,000 for Kilworthy Park marketing.
Vehicle Replacement	W0931	298	50	(251)	97	This is a new reserve set up to fund the Council's vehicle replacement programme (Council 4 Dec 2018). £50K a year is contributed to this reserve.
Waste & Cleansing Options Review	W0853	176	0	(6)	170	
Other Reserves below £15,000 (combined)		56	0	(3)	53	
Sub Total excluding the Business Rates Reserves		5,072	837	(1,780)	4,129	
Business Rates Retention	W0824	1,260		(89)	1,171	This relates to a timing issue on the accounting adjustments required for the localisation of business rates. This reserve also deals with any volatility in Business Rate income e.g. due to appeals. Commitments relate to the Town Centre Support Initiative and £30,000 for the Audio Visual Equipment in the Guildhall, Tavistock (Hub Committee 8/12/20)
S.31 Compensation Grant (Business Rates)	W0866	2,609		(2,523)	86	This is a new reserve set up to hold the business rates S31 grants received in 2020/21 to offset the business rate reliefs given to businesses during lockdown. Under current Collection Fund accounting rules, the S31 grants received in 2020/21 will not be discharged against the Collection Fund deficit until 2021/22 onwards.
TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES		8,941	837	(4,392)	5,386	
TOTAL UNEARMARKED RESERVES	W0950	1,294	0	(33)	1,261	Note: This Unearmarked Reserve has a minimum balance of £900,000 (set by Members as part of the Budget Process). The projected deficit for 2021/22 of £37,000 (as set out in this report) would be funded from this Unearmarked Reserve.
TOTAL REVENUE RESERVES (EARMARKED AND UNEARMARKED RESERVES)		10,235	837	(4,425)	6,647	

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Summary of Savings and Additional Income from the 2021/22 Budget Setting Process

APPENDIX B

The table below summarises the savings and additional income that were included in the 2021/22 Budget Setting process and indicates whether the saving/additional income is on track to be delivered.

	Savings and Additional Income for the 2021/22 Budget	Income/Savings Target for 2021/22 (£)	Latest Projection for 2021/22 (£)	Narrative
1	Income from Investment Properties (£300k is in the base budget for 2021/22)	20,000	20,000	This additional income will be achieved in 2021/22. In 2020/21, the Council received 98% of rental income (£1.1 million) on its four investment properties.
2	Re-procurement of contracts (e.g. savings from Leisure Contract)	117,000	Nil	A report on Leisure is on the Hub Committee Forward Plan for a further report on 1 February 2022 and any financial implications arising from Member decisions within the report will be built into the next Budget Monitoring report.
3	Income from three weekly trials (Hub Committee 15th September 2020)	50,000	Nil	The Revenue Budget for 2021/22 included potential additional income of £50,000 in 21/22 and a further £75,000 in 22/23 for income from the possibility to move to a three weekly waste collection. It was stated that this was dependent on the outcome of the results from the three weekly trials. As set out within a separate report to the Hub Committee on 21 September, it was agreed that the trial of the three weekly residual (black sack) collections was not extended to the whole of the Borough in Spring 2022 and this recognised the potential impact of making a major service change at a time when significant structural changes are expected in the waste industry and other external pressures, including the national LGV driver shortage.
4	Increase in Garden Waste income	40,000	61,000	Additional income of £21,000 is currently anticipated in 2021/22.
5	Reduction in Pension Employer secondary rate contributions (due to a reduction in the actuarial deficit at 31.3.2019 - based on 17 year deficit recovery period)	80,000	80,000	This saving will be achieved in 2021/22.
6	Public Conveniences - business rates savings	18,000	18,000	Legislation has been enacted so that Public Conveniences no longer have to pay Business Rates so this saving will be achieved.
7	Kilworthy Park - reduction in operating costs	10,000	10,000	This saving will be achieved in 2021/22.
8	Reduction in ICT contracts	8,000	0	A cost pressure of £30,000 is currently anticipated in 2021/22.
9	Implement e-billing in council tax	1,200	Nil	The aim is to offer an e-billing service to Council Tax payers and this is a project which is currently being progressed.
	TOTAL	£344,200	£189,000	

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NOT FOR PUBLICATION

This report contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (applies to Appendices A and B)

Report to: **Hub Committee**
Date: **7 December 2021**
Title: **Capital Budget Monitoring 2021/2022**
Portfolio Area: **Performance & Resources – Cllr C Edmonds**
Wards Affected: **All**

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

Author: **Clare Scotton** Role: **Finance Business Partner**
Pauline Henstock **Head of Finance Practice**

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RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Hub Committee resolves to endorse the contents of the Report.

1. Executive summary

1.1 The report advises Members of the financial position as at 31st October 2021 for the purposes of budget monitoring.

1.2 All capital projects are within the individual capital budgets approved by Members. The total approved capital budget is **£4,321,493** of which £2,090,000 has been profiled into 2021/22. £622,526 of this allocation has been spent to date (Appendix A).

2. Background

2.1 The capital programme for 2021/22 was approved by Council on 16 February 2021 (CM36 and HC56 refer). This report provides an update on the Capital Programme.

3. Outcomes/outputs

Members are requested to note the following updates on Capital Projects:

3.1 Community Project Grants (previously Village Hall & Community Project Grants)

The Council has a Community Grants programme that can support capital schemes across the Borough for things such as large sports equipment, repairs to village halls or large scale tree planting. The maximum typical grant available to any scheme is £5,000 or up to 50% of the project's costs, whichever is the lower.

3.2 Affordable Housing

The budget for Affordable Housing in 2021/22 is £50,000. The budget brought forward from previous years is £189,000 giving a total of £239,000.

In recent times the capital programme has facilitated affordable housing developments in rural areas by providing a sum of money, normally between £10,000 and £15,000 per plot, to enable the development to proceed. These schemes are typically on exception sites and therefore do not necessarily rely on cross subsidy from open market properties although the JLP allows for this now. Evidence from a Registered Provider (RP) is provided to ensure additional money is required to make the scheme viable. Money is normally required where there are abnormalities on the site or there is a shortage of public subsidy.

This budget is anticipated to be required to assist with the redevelopment of the hostel in Tavistock. The planning application has now been submitted and a future report will be provided to Members.

3.3 Private Sector Renewals including Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of DFG applications significantly reduced in the first part of last financial year. Following the relaxing of the lockdown measures, the number of applications has increased beyond levels expected in a "normal" year. This may result in a number of grant applications that have been approved but waiting for work to commence due to shortages in labour and materials.

3.4 Community Housing Schemes

The Community Housing Strategy was put in place to support the development of homes accessible to those with local connections for whom the cost of market housing (to purchase and rent) is beyond their reach. Due to the current property market, smaller lower cost housing is being sold at unaffordable local prices.

The Brentor Community Housing scheme planning application pack is now complete in readiness for submission to Dartmoor National Park Authority for their consideration in the usual way. However, before submitting the application, we are finalising the last stages of land assembly. The application will be submitted thereafter at the earliest opportunity. Subject to a successful planning application, the Council has approved 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.

3.5 Waste Fleet

It is envisaged that the budget will be utilised in 2021/22. Expenditure to the end of October (month 7) is £19,137 leaving a balance of £305,863.

3.6 Hayedown Depot – upgrade and new drainage

The depot upgrade and drainage are being considered by Engineers as part of the Fire Prevention Plan, a legal requirement for the site. Initial indications are that the budget may be insufficient but further value engineering and design considerations need to be undertaken. Members will be kept updated when further information is available.

3.7 Parklands Leisure Centre – contribution to moveable floor

The moveable floor at Okehampton, Parklands Leisure Centre was a Sport England requirement of lottery funding that was levered in to finance a large part of the building.

Since Parklands was built, there have been difficulties with the operation of the moveable floor. This money has been set aside within the capital programme as a partnership contribution to the cost of an engineering solution if the floor breaks down. There have been several repair works over the past few months but the floor is now working as it should. It is felt prudent to leave the budget in at this point.

3.8 Tavistock Viaduct

As part of the Amended Budget proposals for 2020/21, Members approved reducing the budget from £100k to £20k. This was following a Condition Survey being undertaken on the Viaduct which advised that the initially proposed extensive repair works would not now be required during 2020/21 and the capital budget can be limited to further vegetation clearance and some drainage improvements.

Further to the approval of a £40K capital budget for the Tavistock Viaduct Walk at Council in February 2020, a walkover geotechnical assessment of the cutting was undertaken by specialists in early 2021. Following clearance of strips of vegetation and trees to expose the rock face, further rope-access inspections will be undertaken this winter, focussing on relatively higher risk areas first including some scaling of loose rock where necessary. The budget will continue to be utilised this financial year to facilitate this work and should be carried forward into future financial years as this work will be phased over the coming years, in part due to seeking to avoid any major vegetation removal in any one year.

3.9 Car Park Resurfacing

Officers have identified a number of car parks across the Borough which are in need of resurfacing. A budget of £30,000 per annum has been built into the capital programme budget to be funded by a £30,000 contribution annually from the Car Park Maintenance Reserve.

3.10 Green Homes Grant

In July 2020 the Government announced a £2 billion Green Homes Grant (GHG) scheme to save households money, cut carbon and create jobs. The Council, as part of a consortium with South Hams DC, submitted a bid and have been awarded a total sum of £683,500 (WDBC share).

The grant will be used to deliver external wall insulations and air source heat pumps for eligible households and will be delivered during 2021/22. Due to major supply chain difficulties nationally and locally, we are reviewing our approach to delivering these grants.

The installations will reduce fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions from the households benefitting from the grants. A range of metrics including lifetime financial and carbon savings will be calculated and reported back at the end of the project.

The full report was presented at Hub on 20th October 2020, minute ref HC 31.

3.11 New Payroll Solution

The procurement process has now taken place for a joint Payroll System with South Hams District Council. The high quality system will have the added benefit of recording individuals' objectives.

3.12 Replacement of IT Hardware

Following extensive analysis of performance requirements, a number of platforms and configurations were considered, including cloud. A replacement for the existing servers and storage has been purchased and the new hardware will be installed and configured throughout the autumn. This will provide an excellent foundation for delivering digital services over the coming years.

3.13 S106 Deposits

An update on S106's will be provided in the next report as part of providing this information on a bi-annual basis.

4. Options available and consideration of risk

4.1 This is considered on a project by project basis as part of the project appraisal document and initial business case for each capital project.

5. Proposed Way Forward

5.1 This is considered on a project by project basis.

6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance		<p>Statutory powers are provided by the S1 Localism Act 2011 general power of competence.</p> <p>The capital programme is implemented in line with the Council's legal requirements, which are examined on a project-by-project basis. To date there are no undue legal concerns.</p> <p>The public interest has been assessed and it is considered that the public interest will be better served by not disclosing the information in the Appendices A and B. Accordingly this report contains exempt Information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.</p>
Financial Implications to include reference to Value for Money		<p>All capital projects are within the individual capital budgets approved by Members. The total approved capital budget is £4,321,493 of which £2,090,000 has been profiled into 2021/22. £622,526 of this allocation has been spent to date (Appendix A).</p> <p>The regular monitoring of the Capital Programme ensures the Council has arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.</p>

Risk		<p>The Council demonstrates that capital investment contributes to corporate priorities, provides value for money and takes account of the revenue implications of the investment. Regular monitoring of the capital programme and consideration of new pressures enables Members to control the programme and secure appropriate mitigation where problems arise.</p> <p>There is regular quarterly monitoring of the Capital Programme to Members where any cost overruns are identified at an early stage.</p>
Supporting Corporate Strategy		The Capital Programme supports all of the Thematic Delivery Plans within 'A Plan for West Devon'.
Consultation and Engagement Strategy		External consultation and engagement has not been undertaken with regard to this report.
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact		<p>The Council declared a Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency on 23 July 2019 and a Climate Change Action Plan was presented to Council in December 2019.</p> <p>Further detail is set out in the Council's 'A Plan for West Devon' strategy.</p>
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		This matter is assessed as part of each specific project.
Safeguarding		This matter is assessed as part of each specific project.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		This matter is assessed as part of each specific project.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		This matter is assessed as part of each specific project.
Other implications		None

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Exempt Appendix A – Details of capital expenditure to 31st October 2021

Exempt Appendix B – Details of Exempt schemes approved as part of the 2021/22 Capital Budget

Background Papers:

None

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Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **7 December 2021**

Title: **Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals for 2022/23 to 2024/25**

Portfolio Area: **Cllr N Jory – Budget Setting Process**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Author: **Lisa Buckle** Role: **Corporate Director for Strategic Finance**

Contact: Email: lisa.buckle@swdevon.gov.uk

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Hub Committee:

- i) Notes the forecast budget gap for 2022/23 of £40,296 (0.6% of the Net Budget of 21/22 of £7.3million) and the position for future years.**
- ii) Notes the timescales for closing the budget gap in 22/23 and future years, to achieve long term financial sustainability.**
- iii) Notes the current level of Unearmarked and Earmarked Reserves set out in Section C**
- iv) Notes the forecast Capital Programme Proposals for 2022/23 of £780,000 and the proposed financing of the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix D.**
- v) Requests the views of the Hub Committee on the draft Revenue Budget Proposals and the draft Capital Budget Proposals for 2022/23**

vi) Requests the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the draft Revenue Budget Proposals and the draft Capital Budget Proposals for 2022/23, at the 18 January 2022 meeting.

It is RECOMMENDED to Council that:

vii) West Devon Borough Council continues to be part of the Devon Business Rates Pool for 2022/23, subject to there being no announcements within the Finance Settlement (expected to be announced in mid December), which in the opinion of the S151 Officer (in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Hub Committee Member for Finance), would change this recommendation.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is based on a financial forecast over a rolling three year timeframe to 2024/25. The Council has chosen a three year timeframe for its MTFS, as this dovetails to the timescales of the Corporate Strategy, 'A Plan for West Devon'.
- 1.2 The Council, along with other local authorities, has faced unprecedented reductions in Government funding. Between 2009/10 and 2020/21, the Council's Core Government funding has reduced by £3 million. The Council now receives **no main Government Grant (Revenue Support Grant)** – this has been reduced to zero.
- 1.3 West Devon has continued to work in partnership with South Hams District Council which has allowed West Devon to achieve annual savings of £2.2 million and more importantly protect all statutory front line services. Between both Councils the annual shared services savings being achieved are over £6 million per annum. However, the Councils continue to face considerable financial challenges as a result of uncertainty in the wider economy and constraints on public sector spending.
- 1.4 It is important to note that this Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the budget strategy for the Council for the next three years, with regular reviews (at least annually) and updates when items are further known or are announced by the Government.
- 1.5 This is the starting point for developing a meaningful three year strategy that sets out the strategic intention for all of the different strands of funding available to the Council. The Council will then be able to rely on this to inform future decisions.

- 1.6 Covid 19 has caused financial strain for all Councils up and down the country where Councils find themselves being caught in a 'perfect storm'. Councils have to manage both the increased costs of coping with Covid19 and supporting vulnerable people in the community and the loss of key income streams such as car parking income, planning income and council tax and business rates income.
- 1.7 The factors affecting the Council's finances are issues affecting the whole Local Government sector. The Council is well-placed to meet the financial challenges arising from Covid19, due to its prudent financial management over previous years.
- 1.8 The key assumptions within this Budget Report are as below. Each of these is described in more detail in Section 3.
- A three year Spending Review for 2022/23 to 2024/25 was announced on 7th September and it is assumed that this in turn will mean there is a three year Local Government Finance Settlement announced in mid December.
 - The business rates baseline reset will be deferred until 2023/24 (with no negative Revenue Support Grant in 2022/23)
 - The Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) will increase in line with inflation – this is essentially the business rates baseline and is the amount of money the Council retains from its share of the business rates income.
 - There will be a phasing in of negative Revenue Support Grant (RSG) as part of the business rates baseline reset with a transition period over three years, to avoid Local Authorities losing/gaining too much in one go
 - It is assumed Council Tax limits for District Councils will remain at the higher of £5 or 1.99% for 2022/23 onwards
 - It is assumed there will be one more year of the New Homes Bonus payments (or a replacement scheme) and that the NHB payments envisaged will be used to finance the revenue base budget and the capital programme
 - A business rates pooling gain of £200,000 has been modelled for 2022/23 with reduced gains for 2023/24 onwards.
 - The Council tax collection rate has been assumed to be 97%
 - Rural Services Delivery Grant has been assumed to continue at the same level
 - No permanent reductions to the Council's income streams (such as car parking income, planning income etc. as a result of the Covid pandemic) have been built into the Base Budget for 2022/23. This will be regularly monitored over the next few months.
 - A 2% pay increase has been modelled from 2022/23 onwards (2% equates to £90,000).

- 1.9 The following table illustrates the predicted budget gap from 2022/23 onwards for the Council as shown in Appendix B:

Budget Gaps	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Total Aggregated Budget Gap £
'New' Budget Gap each year	40,296	478,670	139,224	658,190
*Cumulative Budget Gap	40,296	518,966	658,190	1,217,452

* (Cumulative Budget Gap assumes annual new budget gaps have not been addressed)

- 1.10 **The forecast budget gap for 2022/23 is £40,296. This is 0.6% of the Net Budget of 21/22 of £7.3million.** A cumulative budget gap of £518,966 is predicted for 2023/24 (the £518,966 assumes that the 22/23 budget gap of £40,296 has not been closed). The cumulative aggregated Budget Gap by 2024/25 is £1.2 million, if no action has been taken in each individual year to close the budget gap annually.
- 1.11 The Council awaits the details of the Local Government Finance Settlement announcement in early December, which will enable the Council to further firm up some of the assumptions within the Budget for 2022/23. Further options for Members' considerations of how to close the predicted budget gap of £40,296 will be presented as part of the 1st February 2022 Budget report to the Hub Committee.
- 1.12 As part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy report in September 2021, the Council approved the principle of using funding in the Business Rates Retention Reserve, to smooth out the anticipated volatility in business rates income over the next three years, as set out in 3.21 of the report. The volatility is due to the anticipated business rates baseline reset anticipated in 2023/24 (this will mean the Council will have negative revenue support grant) and the predicted loss of business rates pooling gains at the same time, meaning there is a 'cliff edge' in business rates income.

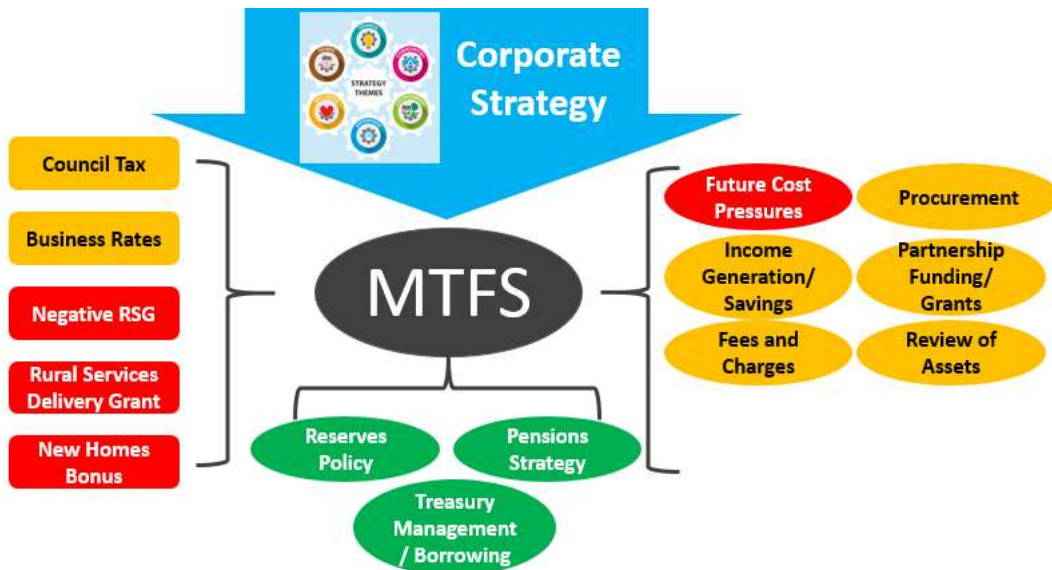
- 1.13 The Medium Term Financial Strategy report (MTFS) in September 2021 identified a budget gap of £78,731 for 2022/23. The table below sets out the changes in this report from the previous report.

	£
<i>Budget gap for 22/23 reported in the MTFS Hub Committee report in September 21</i>	78,731
A Plan for West Devon' – Council 28.9.21 £122,000 cost pressures for 22/23 and £168,000 for 23/24 - See 3.31 for further information	122,000
National Insurance (social care levy of 1.25%) and National Living Wage (NLW) extra cost pressure	40,000
Increase the staffing budget for four planning specialists and two legal specialists (shared with SHDC), to be financed by extra planning income – Planning Improvement Plan (Hub 2.11.21)	71,000
Extra planning income – increase the planning income fee target	(71,000)
<i>Extra financing of the Revenue Budget identified</i>	
Collection Fund Surplus predicted for 22/23 of £152,000 (replaces a collection fund deficit which was previously forecast for 22/23 of £3,435) – see 3.12 for explanation	(155,435)
Lower Tier Services Grant assumed for 22/23 of £35,000 and extra £10,000 assumed on Business Rates income	(45,000)
<i>Budget gap for 22/23 reported in this Hub Committee report in December 21 (Draft Revenue Budget Proposals for 2022/23)</i>	40,296

2 COMPONENTS OF THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

- 2.1 The Diagram below sets out all of the component parts which constitute the make-up of a Medium Term Financial Strategy. Items in Green denote those elements where the Council has a large degree of control over the setting of policies and strategies. Items in Amber denote those components of the MTFS where the Council has a degree of control. Red items signal components where the Council has hardly any control over funding allocations which are decided by the Government and future cost pressures which can largely be outside of the Council's control or influence.

2021/22 Net Budget £7.3 million



2.2 The key assumptions within the MTFS are set out in Section 3.

OVERALL POSITION – BUDGET GAP

2.3 Financial modelling has been undertaken for the next three years to predict the Council’s financial situation for the short and medium term.

2.4 **Appendix A** to the Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out the Budget Pressures forecast for the next three years and the additional savings and income forecast. **Appendix B** illustrates the overall financial forecast for the forthcoming three years. The Council’s Net Budget is £7.3 million in 2021/22.

2.5 A Summary forecast is shown below of the potential budget situation if all of the budget pressures and the savings and income generation in Appendix A were approved. It also shows the situation if the Council Tax is increased by £5 per annum (shown in Appendix B).

2.6 The following table illustrates the predicted budget gap from 2022/23 onwards for the Council **as shown in Appendix B**:

Budget Gaps	2022/23 £	2023/24 £	2024/25 £	Total Aggregated Budget Gap £
‘New’ Budget Gap each year	40,296	478,670	139,224	658,190
*Cumulative Budget Gap	40,296	518,966	658,190	1,217,452

* (Cumulative Budget Gap assumes annual new budget gaps have not been addressed)

2.7 **The forecast budget gap for 2022/23 is £40,296. This is 0.6% of the Net Budget of 21/22 of £7.3million.** A cumulative budget gap of £518,966 is predicted for 2023/24 (the £518,966 assumes that the 22/23 budget gap of £40,296 has not been closed). The cumulative aggregated Budget Gap by 2024/25 is £1.2 million, if no action has been taken in each individual year to close the budget gap annually.

2.8 The Council awaits the details of the Local Government Finance Settlement announcement in early December, which will enable the Council to further firm up some of the assumptions within the Budget for 2022/23. Further options for Members' considerations of how to close the predicted budget gap of £40,296 will be presented as part of the 1st February 2022 Budget report to the Hub Committee.

3 ASSUMPTIONS FOR FINANCIAL MODELLING PURPOSES

3.1 In the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), it has been assumed that the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) will increase in line with inflation.

3.2 The SFA is essentially the business rates baseline and is the amount of money the Council retains from its share of the business rates income. The breakdown of the increase in SFA for 2021/22 is shown below.

3.3 The 'Core Spending Power' is a headline figure used by the Government to represent the key revenue resources available to local authorities, including an estimate of actual and potential council tax. The Council now receives no main Government grant (Revenue Support Grant).

3.4 **Core Spending Power for West Devon increased by 2.6% for 2021/22.** Core Spending Power is the term the Government use to say how much money Councils have to run their services. On looking at the detail below, it can be seen that the extra funding of 2.6% is mainly coming from assumed Council Tax increases in 2021/22.

Table 1 - Core Spending Power (£m)

	2020/21	2021/22	Change £m	Change %
Core Spending Power	7.323	7.515	0.193	2.6%
<i>Breakdown of Core Spending Power:</i>				
Settlement Funding Assessment	1.648	1.648	0.000	0.0%
Assumed Council Tax	4.797	4.931	0.134	2.8%
Other Grants	0.878	0.936	0.058	6.6%
<i>Breakdown of Other Grants:</i>				
New Homes Bonus	0.348	0.293	-0.055	-15.8%
Improved Better Care Fund	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Social Care Grant	0.000	0.000	0.000	
Rural Services Delivery Grant	0.464	0.487	0.023	4.9%
SFA multiplier compensation ^a	0.066	0.086	0.020	30.0%
Lower Tier Services Grant	0.000	0.070	0.070	

(a) Compensation for under-indexing the business rates multiplier

Council Tax

- 3.5 The Council Tax Referendum limits for District Councils for 2021/22 was the higher of 1.99% or £5. An increase in council tax of £5 for the next three years has been modelled for council tax purposes. This would equate to a Band D council tax for West Devon of £246.63 in 2022/23 as shown in Appendix B (an increase of £5 for the year (10 pence per week) which equates to a 2.07% increase. The council tax for 2022/23, the WDBC share, will be set at the Council meeting on 15th February 2022. (A 1% increase in council tax generates £49,000 of extra council tax income).

Council agreed on 28 September 21 to set the strategic intention to raise council tax by the maximum allowed in any given year, without triggering a council tax referendum, to endeavour to continue to deliver services. The actual council tax for any given year will be decided by Council in the preceding February. In the Spending Review announced in October 2021, it was indicated that the council tax referendum limits for District Councils are likely to remain the same as previous years e.g. the higher of a £5 increase or 1.99%.

- 3.6 The table below shows how an average Band D council bill is made up for West Devon Borough Council for 2021/22, compared to 2020/21. Of an average Band D Council Tax within the Borough of £2,166.58, an amount of £241.63 is the element of a council tax bill set by West Devon Borough Council. Therefore 11pence of every £1 paid (11%) in council tax is received by West Devon Borough Council to pay for our services. The rest of the council tax bill is set by Devon County Council, the Fire, the Police and Town and Parish Councils to fund the services they provide.

Precepting Authority	Band D 2020/21	Band D 2021/22	£ Increase	% Increase	Date Approved
West Devon Borough Council	£236.63	£241.63	£5.00	2.11%	16 Feb 2021
Devon County Council	£1,439.46	£1,511.28	£71.82	4.99%	18 Feb 2021
Police & Crime Commissioner	£221.64	£236.56	£14.92	6.73%	5 Feb 2021
Fire & Rescue	£88.24	£90.00	£1.76	1.99%	19 Feb 2021
Average Parishes/Towns	£80.90	£87.11	£6.21	7.68%	
TOTAL	£2,066.87	£2,166.58	£99.71	4.82%	

The largest Parish Precepts in 2021/22 are **North Tawton (£193.45)**, **Tavistock (£181.24)** and **Okehampton Town (£133.93)**, with the smallest precepts being **Bondleigh (£3.40)** and **Gidleigh (Nil)** for a Band D property.

- 3.7 A council tax collection rate of 97% has been assumed for 2022/23. This may need to be revisited in future budget reports depending on the payment profiles being experienced in latter months of the year.
- 3.8 The District Council is responsible for collecting all the Council Tax debt of approximately £43m as West Devon BC is the Billing Authority. After keeping 11% of the council tax collected to run the Council's services, the rest is paid over to Devon County Council, the Police, the Fire and Town and Parish Councils. The collection rate for Council Tax for West Devon was 97.33% for 2020/21. This was 1.63% higher than the national average of 95.7%.
- 3.9 It has been assumed that the number of properties within the Borough will increase by 20 per annum from 2022/23 onwards. A low figure has been assumed to partly offset the impact of Council Tax Support on the Taxbase.
- 3.10 In 2021/22 the Government set no council tax referendum principles for Town and Parish Councils. It has not yet been announced by the Government whether any referendum principles will apply to Town and Parish Councils in 2022/23 onwards.

Collection Fund Surplus for 2022/23

- 3.11 On an annual basis, the Council calculates the Collection Fund surplus or deficit on the Collection Fund. The Collection Fund is a Statutory Statement that forms part of the Annual Accounts each year and collates the position in terms of Income from Council Tax (actual amounts of council tax collected from council taxpayers) and the payments made to precepting authorities (DCC, Police, Fire, WDBC) and calculates an annual surplus or deficit after some adjustments for items such as write offs and bad debts. The annual surplus/deficit is distributed on an annual basis to precepting authorities.
- 3.12 Due to the pandemic in 2021/22 a small collection fund deficit was distributed to precepting authorities (WDBC share of the deficit was £9,771). Council Tax collection rates held up well in 2020/21 with 97.33% being collected in West Devon, which was 1.63% higher than the national average of 95.7%. A collection fund surplus of £1million has been calculated to be distributed for 2022/23 (with a WDBC share of the collection fund surplus of £152,000).

Business Rates and Negative Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

- 3.13 It has been assumed that the Business Rates Reset will be delayed to 2023/24. Whilst this change is not confirmed by MHCLG, a reset based on the current taxbase would appear very unlikely.
- 3.14 A three year settlement (with no negative Revenue Support Grant in 2022/23) is the most likely scenario now. This means the Council wouldn't have to forego some of its business rates income (£182,000) by paying some of it back to Government in the form of 'negative government grant' in 2022/23. Negative RSG is effectively the Council's further predicted funding cuts.
- 3.15 It is anticipated there will be a phasing in of negative RSG as part of the business rates baseline reset in 2023/24, with a transition period over three years, to avoid Local Authorities losing/gaining too much in one go. The modelling assumes negatives RSG of £182,000 in 2023/24 and £227,500 in 2024/25. Some of the negative RSG could be offset by growth.
- 3.16 Estimates have been made of the business rates baseline funding levels for 2022/23 onwards and the relative deductions for negative RSG. For example in 2022/23, the £1.69m is the amount the Council retains from its business rates income collected of £10.6 million (the Council keeps about 16p in every £1 collected of business rates to fund its services).
- 3.17 **Volatility of Business Rates income – Business Rates Retention Reserve**
- 3.18 The Business Rates Retention (BRR) Earmarked Reserve was set up in 2013/2014 to cover any possible funding issues from the accounting arrangements of the localisation of business rates and to smooth the volatility from business rates income over a period of years.
- 3.19 In 2017/18 the Business Rates Retention Reserve had a balance of £509,550 and this has increased to £1.26million at 31.3.2021. A sum of £0.5m needs to be retained in the reserve to manage the cost of appeals, arrears, write offs and general fluctuations in business rates income.
- 3.20 It is recommended that the Council uses funding from the Business Rates Retention Earmarked Reserve to smooth the volatility in business rates income over the next three years.
- 3.21 The volatility is due to the business rates baseline reset anticipated in 2023/24 (this will mean the Council will have negative revenue support grant in 23/24) and the predicted loss of business rates pooling gains at the same time in 23/24. *The table below shows that it is modelled to take £75,000 funding from this reserve in 22/23 to 24/25. This would reduce the business rates retention reserve by £225,000 over the next 3 years.*

3.22 There is a risk that the Government may introduce a more aggressive business rates tariff in 22/23 to account for the fact that the baseline reset is highly likely to be delayed to 23/24. If this happened, it would be recommended that a higher amount of funding from the business rates retention reserve is used in 22/23, to offset the higher tariff rate and the ensuing lower business rates income. More will be known on this when details of the Draft Finance Settlement are announced in mid December.

Business Rates Income	2022/23 (£m)	2023/24 (£m)	2024/25 (£m)
		Baseline Reset	
Business Rates Income	1.70	1.74	1.75
Less: Negative Revenue Support Grant (RSG)		(0.182)	(0.228)
Anticipated Pooling Gain	0.200	0.175	0.150
Funding proposed to be taken from the Business Rates Retention Reserve to smooth the volatility in business rates income	0.075	0.075	0.075
Total Business Rates Income	1.975	1.808	1.747

3.23 The Council responded to the Government consultation on the Call for Evidence on Business Rates Reform. A joint response was also sent by the Devon Business Rates Pooling partners. The 2020/21 collection rate for West Devon for business rates was 91.53%. The national average was 93%.

Devon Business Rates Pool

3.24 It is recommended that West Devon Borough Council continues to be part of the Devonwide Business Rates Pool for 2022/23. A business rates pooling gain of £200,000 has been modelled for 2022/23 with lower gains for 2023/24 onwards when the baseline reset is scheduled to happen.

Rural Services Delivery Grant

3.25 Rural Services Delivery Grant has been modelled to continue for 2022/23 onwards at previous levels (£85m nationally – WDBC share of £487,296) and the methodology for distribution is assumed to remain unchanged from 2021/22. The Council will continue to lobby on the basis that the £85m should be increased. This is Government grant to recognise the additional cost of delivering services in rural areas.

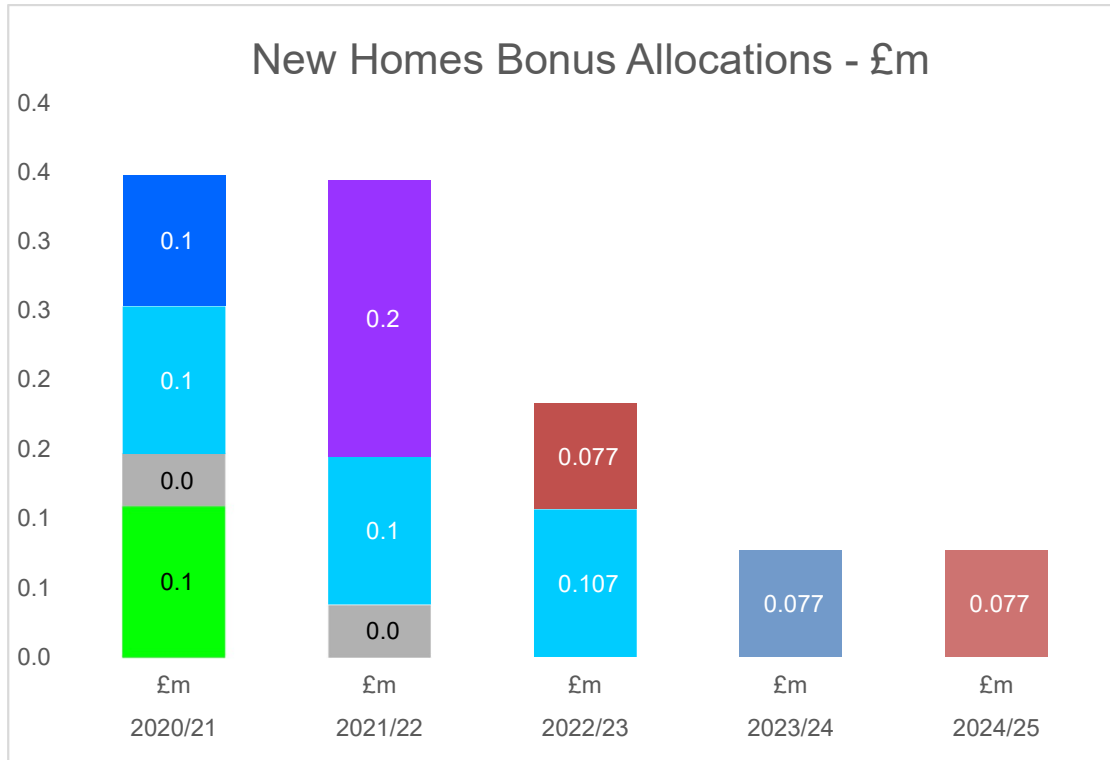
New Homes Bonus (NHB)

- 3.26 The New Homes Bonus (NHB) scheme is being phased-out and the future Spending Review will propose a replacement scheme (for consultation). An additional one-off NHB payment in 2022/23 is still a real possibility. In 2021/22 the NHB allocation for West Devon was £292,772.
- 3.27 The latest modelling predicts an allocation of around £184,000 for 2022/23 (from either NHB or a replacement scheme). The modelling in this Budget report assumes that funding of £150,000 from NHB in 2022/23 will fund the revenue base budget (although the NHB scheme is due to be replaced, it is assumed that a successor scheme will be implemented that will also be based on housing growth). The other £30,000 of predicted NHB in 2022/23 is to fund capital expenditure.

The NHB modelling is shown in the table below.

New Homes Bonus	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
2017/18 allocation	0.1				
2018/19 allocation	0.0	0.0			
2019/20 allocation	0.1	0.1	0.107		
2020/21 allocation	0.1				
2021/22 allocation		0.2			
2022/23 Forecast Based on 2020/21 Share			0.077		
2023/24 Forecast Based on 2020/21 Share				0.077	
2024/25 Forecast Based on 2020/21 Share					0.077
Total Allocation	0.3	0.293	0.184	0.077	0.077

Up until 2020/21, allocations earned in a year were paid for a four year period. From 2020/21 onwards, only a single year was paid plus some 'legacy payments' as shown in the diagram above. For example in 2021/22, an allocation of £0.2m was earned for 21/22, plus legacy payments for previous years. Amounts for 2022/23 onwards have been forecast based on Revenue Support Grant (RSG) share. The colours shown below correspond to the same colours shown in the table above. The Council receives 80% of the average national council tax (1,898) for each property growth over the baseline, this equates to £1,518 per property.



Other assumptions within the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

- 3.28 The last pay award offer for 2020/21 was 2.75%. A 2% pay increase has been modelled from 2021/22 onwards (2% equates to £90,000). The Medium Term Financial Strategy is not an expression of Council Policy on pay awards, but a means of ensuring an appropriate provision is made as part of the overall financial planning of the Council.
- 3.29 The Consumer Prices Index (CPI) was 3.1% in September 2021. RPI was 4.9%. The budget report includes cost pressures for inflation and increases on goods and services.
- 3.30 The predicted interest rate forecast from our treasury management advisors, Link Services, is that interest rates (Bank Base rate) could increase from 0.1% to 0.25% in December 2021. It is then further predicted to increase to 0.5% in June 2022, 0.75% in March 2023, 1% in March 2024 and 1.25% by March 2025.

‘A PLAN FOR WEST DEVON’

- 3.31 ‘A Plan for West Devon’, the Council’s strategic vision, sets out projects and schemes that the Borough Council think will help our communities to thrive. There is a separate report on this Hub Committee agenda. The Strategy sets out our longer term ambition. To support this ambition, the Council has developed delivery plans which set out the priorities for each of the next three years. This will enable the Council to ensure its resources are aligned to supporting Members’ priorities. The delivery plans have been developed by Lead Members in consultation with officers from across the Council.
- 3.32 The majority of activities set out in the delivery plans can be delivered through refocusing and reprioritisation of existing resources however, in order to realise the ambition set out in the strategy, some of the activities will require additional resources.
- 3.33 The cost pressures identified in the ‘A Plan for West Devon’ report (Council 28 September 2021) are £122,000 for 2022/23 and £168,000 for 2023/24. This has been built into the cost pressures in this budget report.

OTHER BUDGET ITEMS

- 3.34 On 22 September 2020, Council considered a report on strategic leisure options. It was agreed to continue with the Fusion contract as being the most appropriate means of supporting health and wellbeing objectives within the Borough. A further report will be presented to the 1st February 2022 meeting of the Hub Committee on Leisure.
- 3.35 The Planning Improvement Plan report (Hub Committee 2.11.21) recommended increasing the staffing budget for four planning specialists and two legal specialists (shared with SHDC) by £71,000, to be financed by extra planning income. This has been built into the budget report.
- 3.36 The Council will be reviewing core service delivery through on-going service reviews and will bring reports back to Members at the appropriate point, linking back to the corporate strategy.

5 FEES AND CHARGES

- 5.1 During the 2022/23 Budget setting process (Hub Committee, 2nd February 2021), Members approved the following:

‘delegated authority be given to the relevant Head of Practice, in consultation with the relevant lead Hub Committee Member, to adjust Fees and Charges within their service area by inflation at suitable periodic intervals, with reports being presented to the Hub Committee as appropriate’.

The Head of Finance will co-ordinate this work with the relevant Extended Leadership Team (ELT) leads and the relevant Hub Committee Members for inflationary increases.

- 5.2 No permanent reductions to the Council’s income streams (such as planning income, car parking income) as a result of the Covid pandemic, have been built into the Base Budget for 2022/23. The budgeted income targets for these income streams are still the same level as they were in 2019/20 (prior to the pandemic).
- 5.3 This will be regularly monitored over the next few months. The Revenue Budget Monitoring report shows that the net loss on car parking income is predicted to be £69,000 for 2021/22 (after claiming Government compensation for lost income of £46,000 through the sales, fees and charges compensation scheme). Planning income is predicted to be above the budgeted level by £30,000.

6 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND TIMESCALES

- 6.1 The Council will continue to assess various options for closing the budget gap for 2022/23 onwards, and in the longer term, to achieve long term financial sustainability and further options will be presented to Members.
- 6.2 Making the best use of our resources and setting a balanced budget annually is within the ‘Delivering Quality Services’ Draft Delivery Plan of the Council’s long term strategic vision, ‘A Plan for West Devon’.
- 6.3 The Council’s latest revenue budget monitoring report for Month 7 (end of October) shows a predicted deficit of £33,000 (0.5% of the total Budget of £7.302 million) which is very close to a break-even position for the 2021/22 year. A separate report is on this Hub Committee agenda.

7 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND PRUDENTIAL BORROWING

- 7.1 The Capital Programme is set by the Council and may be funded by sale proceeds from the disposal of assets (capital receipts), external grants and contributions, directly from revenue or from borrowing. The Head of Finance invited capital bids from the Extended Leadership Team. The Capital Budget Proposals for 2022/23 are attached in Appendix D.
- 7.2 Capital projects have been assessed on the following criteria:
- Health and Safety compliance
 - Essential to keep operational assets open
 - Fit with the Council's Delivery Plans for 'A Plan for West Devon'
 - To rationalise service delivery or service improvement
 - To generate income, capital value or to reduce revenue costs
- 7.3 The Draft Capital Budget Proposals for 2022/23 total £780,000. The projects are set out in Appendix D alongside the suggested financing proposals of the Capital Programme.
- 7.4 **Investment Property Strategy** – The Council has agreed an Investment Property strategy. To date, Investment Properties have a value of £19.83 million in aggregate as at 31.3.2021.
- 7.5 Purchases made within the strategy are capital expenditure. An income projection of £300,000 from the net ancillary income from investments in Investment property has been included within the 2021/22 Base Budget.
- 7.6 The Council's Asset Base is £46 million at 31 March 2021. The Council will continually review and challenge its asset base in order to deliver the optimum value for money from the Council's Assets.

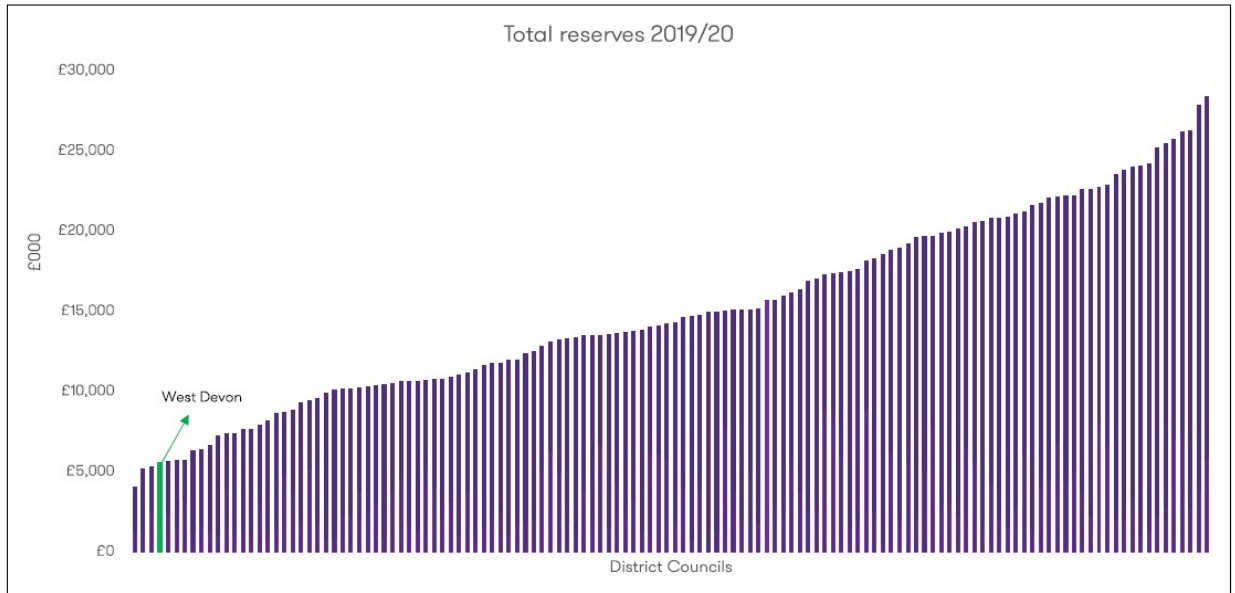
8 Earmarked and Unearmarked Reserves Policy

- 8.1 Unearmarked Reserves have increased by £75,000 in 2020/21 and total £1.294 million at 31 March 2021.
- 8.2 Earmarked Reserves have increased by £3.957 million in 2020/21 and total £8.941 million at 31 March 2021. This is mainly due to the new Earmarked Reserve set up in 2020/21 to hold the S31 Business Rates compensation grants (£2.609m) which will be released to the Collection Fund to smooth the impact of the Business Rates deficit over the next 3 years. Therefore this is not money which is available for the Council to spend. A schedule of Earmarked Reserves is attached at Appendix C.

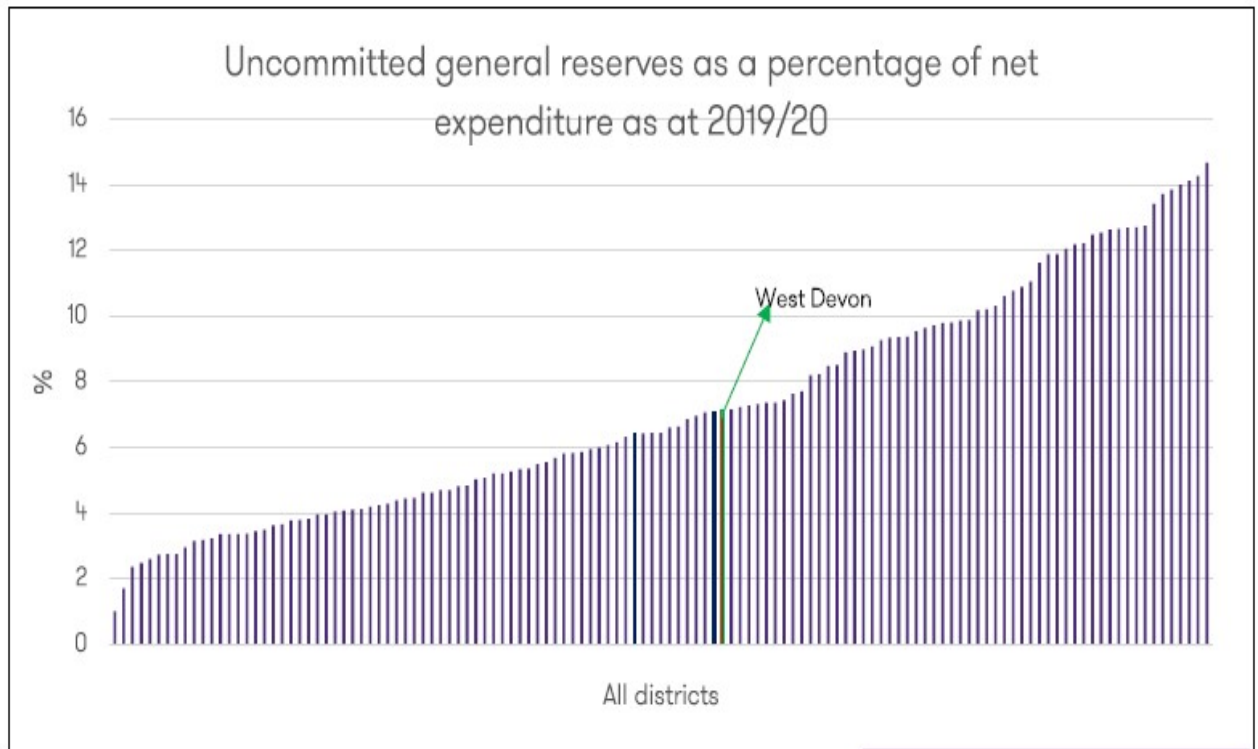
Reserve levels will be kept under constant review and will be reviewed throughout the budget setting process to consider commitments against Earmarked Reserves (set out in Appendix C), their unallocated balance

and the contributions to/from Earmarked Reserves for 2022/23 (set out in Appendix A).

- 8.3 At the Audit Committee meeting on 2nd November 2021, Grant Thornton presented their Annual Audit report for 2020/21. As part of their annual audit, Grant Thornton have benchmarked the Council's total reserves against all other District Councils, based on the 2019/20 Outturn data. These charts demonstrate that the Council is at the lower end of District Councils, which may be expected given the relative size of the Council.



- 8.4 At Council on 16.2.21, Members have set a minimum balance for Unearmarked Reserves of £900,000, based on a risk assessment basis and a sensitivity analysis. The current level of £1.294m is still above the minimum level set of £900,000. Grant Thornton also benchmarked the level of the Council's Unearmarked Reserves against all other District Councils. West Devon is in line with the midpoint as shown below.



- 8.5 Legislation does not prescribe how much the minimum level of reserves should be. The Section 151 Officer is tasked with recommending the minimum level of reserves required as part of the budget setting process having regard to elements of risk in the Council's finances (this was recommended at £900,000 being the minimum level in February 2021). Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the S151 officer to report on the adequacy of the Council's financial resources on an annual basis.

9 NEXT STEPS AND PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

- 9.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (Hub Committee 21st September 2021) is the starting point for developing a meaningful three year strategy that sets out the strategic intention for different strands of funding available to the Council.
- 9.2 Officers will continue to work with the Hub Committee and the results of this will be incorporated into future Budget reports. An all Member Budget Workshop took place on Tuesday 16th November. For Members' information, a 'Glossary of Terms' used in Local Government Budgeting is attached at Appendix E.
- 9.3 The Council awaits the details of the Government's Local Government Finance Settlement which will enable the Council to further firm up some of the assumptions within the Revenue Budget Proposals for 2022/23. A further update will be presented to the Hub Committee on 1st February 2022. Further options for Members' considerations of how to close the predicted budget gap of £40,296 will be presented as part of this report.

9.4 The table below shows the budget timetable for the budget meetings for the 2022/23 Budget.

7th December 2021	Hub Committee – To consider draft proposals for the Revenue and Capital Budget for 2022/23.
18 January 2022	Overview & Scrutiny Committee - To consider draft proposals for the Revenue and Capital Budget for 2022/23.
1 February 2022	Hub Committee – To recommend Final Budget Proposals to Council for 2022/23
10th February 2022 (9am)	Date which Council Procedure Rule 16 applies
15th February 2022	Full Council – To approve Final Budget Proposals for 2022/23 and set the WDBC share of the Council Tax
22 February 2022	Council Tax Resolution Panel – to agree the Council Tax Resolution for 2022/23 (This is WDBC share plus all other precepting authorities share).

Note 1- Council Procedure Rule 16 states that ‘Where a member intends to move a motion or amendment in relation to the Budget, the text of that motion or amendment must be put in writing and submitted to the Head of Paid Service by 9am on the third working day before the meeting, in order that officers may have sufficient time to consider and advise the Council of the financial implications of any such motion or amendment’. As per the timetable above, this would need to be submitted by 9am on Thursday 10th February 2022.

10. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance		<p>The Hub Committee is responsible for recommending to Council the budgetary framework. It is the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the Budget proposals being proposed by the Council on an annual basis. In accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules, Council must decide the general level of Reserves and the use of Earmarked Reserves.</p> <p>The preparation of the Budget report is evidence of whether the Council has considered and taken into account all relevant information and proper advice when determining its financial arrangements in accordance with statutory requirements, and in particular, that it will set a lawful budget.</p>
Financial implications to include reference to value for money		<p>The forecast budget gap for 2022/23 is £40,296. This is 0.6% of the Net Budget of 21/22 of £7.3million. A cumulative budget gap of £518,966 is predicted for 2023/24 (the £518,966 assumes that the 22/23 budget gap of £40,296 has not been closed). The cumulative aggregated Budget Gap by 2024/25 is £1.2 million, if no action has been taken in each individual year to close the budget gap annually.</p> <p>The Council awaits the details of the Local Government Finance Settlement announcement in mid December, which will enable the Council to further firm up some of the assumptions within the Budget for 2022/23. Further options for Members' considerations of how to close the predicted budget gap of £40,296 will be presented as part of the 1 February 2022 Budget report.</p> <p>As part of Grant Thornton's external audit of the Statement of Accounts for 2020/2021, they have concluded that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.</p>
Risk		Each of the budget options taken forward by Members will consider the risks of the option.

Supporting Corporate Strategy		The majority of activities set out in the Council's delivery plans can be delivered through refocusing and reprioritisation of existing resources however, in order to realise the ambition set out in the strategy, some of the activities will require additional resources. This is further explained in 3.30 to 3.33.
Consultation and Engagement Strategy		External consultation on the Council's Budget Proposals will be undertaken prior to the Budget being agreed by Council in February 2022. The Budget supports all of the Thematic Delivery Plans within the Council's strategic vision, 'A Plan for West Devon'. There was a public consultation on the Plan during the Summer.
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact		A report was presented to Council on 8 th December 2020 'Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan update'. In March 2021, Council approved to set up an Earmarked Reserve for £200,000 for the Recovery Plan and Corporate Strategy. Further detail is set out in the Council's 'A Plan for West Devon' strategic vision.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		Equality Impact Assessments are completed for the budget proposals.
Safeguarding		None directly arising from this report.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		None directly arising from this report.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		None directly arising from this report.
Other implications		None directly arising from this report.

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Appendix A – Budget pressures and savings

Appendix B – Modelling of the Budget Position

Appendix C - Schedule of Earmarked Reserves

Appendix D – Capital Programme Proposals for 2022/23

Appendix E – Glossary of Terms in Local Government Finance

Background Papers:

None

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WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

BUDGET PRESSURES

	BASE 2021/22 £	Yr 1 2022/23 £	Yr 2 2023/24 £	Yr 3 2024/25 £
Waste collection, recycling and cleansing contract (estimate)	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000
Triennial Pension revaluation (increase in Pension Employer primary rate contributions)	0	0	75,000	0
Inflation on goods and services	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000
Increase in salaries - increments and pay and grading	40,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Salaries - provision for pay award at 2% (£90,000) from 2022/23 onwards, total pay of £4.5m	79,000	90,000	90,000	90,000
Increase the staffing budget for four planning specialists and two legal specialists (Planning Improvement Plan) Posts are shared with South Hams District Council, to be financed by extra planning income (Hub Committee 2 November 2021)	0	71,000	0	0
A Plan for West Devon - Council 28.9.21 -£122,000 cost pressure for 22/23 and £168,000 for 2023/24	0	122,000	46,000	(168,000)
Reduction in Housing Benefit administration subsidy	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
National Insurance and National Living Wage (social care levy of 1.25% and NLW increases)	20,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
Reduction in treasury management income	0	80,000	0	0
Community composting groups	0	10,000	0	0
SLT/ELT Restructure - redundancy/pension strain costs	0	0	(25,000)	0
Housing Benefit overpayment recoveries	135,000	0	0	0
TOTAL IDENTIFIED BUDGET PRESSURES	434,000	643,000	456,000	192,000

WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Contribution to Earmarked Reserves
(This line shows the annual contributions into the Reserve)

	BASE 2021/22 £	Yr 1 2022/23 £	Yr 2 2023/24 £	Yr 3 2024/25 £
Contribution to IT Development Reserve (£50K per annum)	25,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Contribution to Planning Reserve (£25K per annum)	0	25,000	25,000	25,000
Contribution to Elections Reserve (20K per annum)	0	20,000	20,000	20,000
Contribution from Business Rates Retention Reserve to smooth the volatility in business rates income from the baseline reset		(75,000)	(75,000)	(75,000)
Contribution from the Flexible Homeless Government Grant for three housing posts (wdbc share of costs)	(32,500)	(32,500)	(32,500)	(32,500)
Contribution to Vehicles Replacement Reserve (£50K per annum) - Minute CM42	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Total Contribution to Earmarked Reserves	42,500	37,500	37,500	37,500

SAVINGS AND INCOME GENERATION IDENTIFIED

	BASE 2021/22 £	Yr 1 2022/23 £	Yr 2 2023/24 £	Yr 3 2024/25 £
Income from Investment properties (£300,000 is in the Base Budget for 2021/22)	20,000	0	0	0
Re-procurement of contracts (e.g. savings from Leisure contract)	117,000	0	TBA	TBA
IT FIT Project - software savings	0	70,000	10,000	0
Efficiencies gained from IT and digital communications	0	20,000	100,000	
Extra recycling income	0	60,000	0	0
Extra planning income (to fund four planning specialists and two legal specialists) - Planning Improvement plan - Hub Committee 2 November 2021	0	71,000	0	0
Income from three weekly trials (Hub Committee 15th September 2020)	50,000	(50,000)	0	0
Increase in Garden Waste income	40,000	0	0	0
Reduction in Pension Employer secondary rate contributions (due to a reduction in the actuarial deficit at 31.3.2019 - based on 17 year deficit recovery period)	80,000	0	0	0
Public Conveniences (£18K business rates savings in 2021/22)	18,000	0	0	0
Kilworthy Park - reduction in operating costs	10,000	0	0	0
Senior Leadership Team - Interim arrangement (£34,000) - Restructure (£60,000) as per July 2019 Council report	0	0	0	0
Additional Employments estates income	0	50,000	0	0
Reduction in ICT contracts	8,000	0	0	0
E-billing for Council Tax	1,200			
TOTAL SAVINGS AND INCOME GENERATION	344,200	221,000	110,000	0

Figures shown in Grey are those which have changed since the Medium Term Financial Strategy report in September 2021

Modelling assumptions: Assumes Council Tax is increased by £5 annually	BASE	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3
	2021/22 £	2022/23	2023/24 £	2024/25 £
Modelling for the financial years 2022/23 onwards				
Base budget brought forward	7,211,895	7,301,695	7,683,399	7,550,729
Budget pressures (as per Appendix A)	434,000	643,000	456,000	192,000
Predicted one-off shortfall from the 2020-21 Amended Budget in 2020-21				
Savings already identified (as per Appendix A)	(344,200)	(221,000)	(110,000)	0
Projected Net Expenditure:	7,301,695	7,723,695	8,029,399	7,742,729
Funded By:-				
Council Tax income - Modelling a £5 increase in council tax each year (Taxbase 21/22 = 20,239.51 Band D Equivalent properties) - assumes a 1% reduction in council tax collection rates	4,890,473	4,996,603	5,102,933	5,209,463
Collection Fund (Deficit)/Surplus	(9,771)	152,000	150,000	150,000
Localised Business Rates	1,673,223	1,700,000	1,743,000	1,750,000
Business Rates Tariff/Top Up Adjustment amount (Negative Revenue Support Grant change to baseline need assumed to start in 2023/24)	0	0	(182,000)	(227,500)
Business Rates Pooling Gain	40,000	200,000	175,000	150,000
Funding from Rural Services Delivery Grant	487,296	487,296	487,296	497,042
Funding from New Homes Bonus	192,772	150,000	77,000	77,000
Funding from Lower Tier Services Grant	70,202	35,000	35,000	35,000
Less: Contribution to Earmarked Reserves	(42,500)	(37,500)	(37,500)	(37,500)
Total Projected Funding Sources	7,301,695	7,683,399	7,550,729	7,603,505
Budget gap/(surplus) per year (Projected Expenditure line 4 - Projected Funding line 14)	0	40,296	478,670	139,224
Actual Predicted Cumulative Budget Gap	0	40,296	518,966	658,190
Aggregated Budget Gap (if no action is taken in each individual year to close the budget gap annually)	0	40,296	559,262	1,217,452
Figures shown in Grey are those which have changed since the Medium Term Financial Strategy report in September 2021				
Modelling Assumptions: (Assumes an increase in Band D Equivalent properties of 20 per annum - This is low due to the anticipated impact of higher levels of Council Tax Support envisaged)				
Council Tax (Band D) (an increase of £5 per annum has been modelled)	241.63	246.63	251.63	256.63
Council TaxBase	20,239.51	20,259.51	20,279.51	20,299.51

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RESERVES - PROJECTED BALANCES						APPENDIX C
	Cost Centre	Opening Balance 01.04.2021 £000's	Additions to Reserve 2021/22 £000's	Predicted Spend 2021/22 £000's	Projected Balance 31.03.2022 £000's	Comments
EARMARKED RESERVES						
Specific Reserves - General Fund						
2016/17 Budget Surplus Contingency	W0848	86	0	(51)	35	This is the Budget Surplus from 2016/17 which was put into an Earmarked Reserve. Commitments mainly relate to the Capital Programme £50k
Broadband Community Support	W0932	50	50		100	As per the report to the Hub Committee on 1st December 2020, Council approved the creation of a Broadband Community Support Earmarked Reserve, to be financed by transferring £50k from the existing Business Rates Retention Earmarked Reserve in 2020/21 and a further £50k from the Business Rates Discretionary fund (Additional Restrictions Grants, ARG Scheme) in 2021/22
Car Parking Maintenance	W0833	484	0	(158)	326	The commitments include Brook Street Car Park
COVID-19 Losses	W0930	221	281	(190)	312	On 16th February 2021 Council approved to transfer the COVID-19 LA Support Grant (4th tranche of £151K and the bank reconciliation adjustment of £69K) into a COVID Earmarked Reserve. In addition it was recommended to transfer the fifth tranche of COVID funding of £281,404 into this Reserve in 2021/22. HC 28/21 (Month 4 Revenue Budget Monitoring report), Council approved to use funding of £190,000 from the COVID-Losses Earmarked Reserve in 2021/22, to fund COVID-19 expenditure in 2021/22 and the projected net losses on car parking income in 2021/22
Economic Grant Initiatives	W0914	26	0	(4)	22	
Elections	W0903	20	20	0	40	
Environmental Health Initiatives	W0857	20	0	0	20	
Financial Stability	W0859	454	0	0	454	This reserve was created in 2018/19 from the Business Rates Pilot funding. This funding was set aside to assist to smooth out future years' funding variations or reductions, in particular any changes from the Fair Funding Review (this has been delayed and is unlikely to happen until 2023/24).
Flood Works	W0915	15	0	0	15	
Grounds Maintenance	W0901	48	0	(26)	22	The commitment relates to an Electric ride on mower
Homelessness Prevention	W0924	173	0	(35)	138	This reserve has been created following underspends on Homelessness Prevention Costs in previous years. Commitment of £30k re Corporate Strategy, Improving Homes Delivery of needs assessment
ICT Development	W0836	39	25	(41)	23	Commitments mainly relate to the New IT Procurement, Hub Cttee Jan 20 Min Ref HC73 (£65k)
Innovation Fund (Invest to Earn)	W0850	399	0	(267)	132	Commitments mainly relate to the upgrading of Hayedown Depot and £85k in respect of detailed design, specification and tendering of the Brentor Community Housing Scheme (Hub Committee 16/3/21). This reserve originated from New Homes Bonus funding.
Leisure Services	W0855	58		(44)	14	Commitments relate to Capital Programme Funding.
Maintenance Fund (Estates)	W0927	242	0	0	242	
Management, Maintenance & Risk Management	W0861	302	118	0	420	This is a relatively new reserve set up to manage the ongoing maintenance costs of the Council's Investment Property Portfolio. The contributions to the reserve equate to 10% of the rental income on an annual basis.
New Homes Bonus (NHB)	W0804	452	293	(375)	370	The NHB is used to support the funding of the revenue budget and the Capital Programme. The commitments relate to £192,772 to fund the 2021/22 revenue budget and £182,000 to fund the capital programme
Outdoor Sports & Recreation Grants	W0852	16	0	0	16	
Planning Policy and Major Developments	W0840	147	0	0	147	This reserve is for all planning matters and is also to meet appeal costs.
Recovery Plan and Corporate Strategy	W0864	200	0	(190)	10	Hub Committee 21.9.21 - Use of £190,000 of this Reserve for 'A Plan for West Devon'.
Revenue Grants	W0821	912	0	(33)	879	This reserve comprises of government grants received for specific initiatives or new burdens and are held in the reserve for accounting purposes. The annual contribution of £32,500 from this reserve relates to the funding of three housing posts which were made permanent in the 2020/21 budget process and are funded from the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant
Salary Savings	W0863	80		(80)	0	This is a new reserve set up to hold salary savings from 2020/21 to be ringfenced to support salary costs in 2021/22. (Hub 16/3/21). Some work had to be postponed in 2020/21 due to the extra work pressures of the pandemic and this work will need to be carried out in 2021/22 to maintain and enhance service delivery and address recommendations from internal audit reports.
Support Services Trading Opportunities	W0856	31	0	(16)	15	This reserve was created from external work carried out in other Councils e.g. HR work with Councils also embarking on a Transformation Programme.
Strategic Change (T18)	W0925	67	0	(10)	57	The commitments are £10,000 for Kilworthy Park marketing.
Vehicle Replacement	W0931	298	50	(251)	97	This is a new reserve set up to fund the Council's vehicle replacement programme (Council 4 Dec 2018). £50K a year is contributed to this reserve.
Waste & Cleansing Options Review	W0853	176	0	(6)	170	
Other Reserves below £15,000 (combined)		56	0	(3)	53	
Sub Total excluding the Business Rates Reserves		5,072	837	(1,780)	4,129	
Business Rates Retention	W0824	1,260		(89)	1,171	This relates to a timing issue on the accounting adjustments required for the localisation of business rates. This reserve also deals with any volatility in Business Rate income e.g. due to appeals. Commitments relate to the Town Centre Support Initiative and £30,000 for the Audio Visual Equipment in the Guildhall, Tavistock (Hub Committee 8/12/20)
S.31 Compensation Grant (Business Rates)	W0866	2,609		(2,523)	86	This is a new reserve set up to hold the business rates S31 grants received in 2020/21 to offset the business rate reliefs given to businesses during lockdown. Under current Collection Fund accounting rules, the S31 grants received in 2020/21 will not be discharged against the Collection Fund deficit until 2021/22 onwards.
TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES		8,941	837	(4,392)	5,386	
TOTAL UNEARMARKED RESERVES	W0950	1,294	0	(33)	1,261	Note: This Unearmarked Reserve has a minimum balance of £900,000 (set by Members as part of the Budget Process). The projected deficit for 2021/22 of £37,000 (as set out in this report) would be funded from this Unearmarked Reserve.
TOTAL REVENUE RESERVES (EARMARKED AND UNEARMARKED RESERVES)		10,235	837	(4,425)	6,647	

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Appendix D

Proposed Capital Projects 2022/23					
Priority Criteria					
Statutory Obligations	1	Compliance, H&S, DDA			
	2	Essential to keep Operational Assets open			
Strategic Plan	3	Fit with the Council's Delivery Plans for 'A Plan for West Devon'			
Good Asset Management	4	Rationalise service delivery or service improvement			
	5	Generate income, capital value or reduce revenue costs			
Service	Site	Project	Lead officer	Proposed 2022/23 £'000	Priority code / notes
Place Making	Community Project Grants		RS	30	1,3,4
Affordable Housing			AR	50	3,4,5
Commercial Services		Waste Fleet Replacement	SM	50	1,2,3,4
IT		New IT equipment for the Council Chamber	NH	70	2, 3, 4
Public Sector Renewals (inc Disabled Facility Grants)			IL	580	1, 3
Totals				780	

TO BE FINANCED BY:-		

New Homes Bonus funding (from the 2022/23 allocation) - to fund community project grants (If a NHB allocation is not made in 22/23 in the Finance Settlement, this will need to be revisited)	30	
Revenue Grants Earmarked Reserve (Homelessness Revenue Grant)	50	
Revenue contribution from the Vehicles and Plant Earmarked Reserve (see Appendix A)	50	
Revenue Grants Earmarked Reserve (New Burdens funding for the administration of the Covid Business Grants)	70	
Better Care funding (Government grant scheme)	580	
Total financing for the Capital Programme	780	

Glossary of terms – Local Government Budgeting

Balances - the cash which the authority uses in the normal course of its business to aid cash management and meet contingencies not otherwise provided for. These are also known as Reserves.

Base Budget - the budget from the previous year is taken forward to create the initial budget for the next year before inflation and other adjustments such as budget pressures and savings are added/deducted.

Billing Authorities - the tier of local authority who are responsible for the billing and collection of 'Council Tax' and 'Business Rates' in its local area. In two-tier areas this is the District Council. West Devon Borough Council is a Billing Authority.

Budget - The Council's aims and policies set out in financial terms, against which performance is measured. Both capital and revenue budgets are prepared each financial year.

Budget Gap - where the estimated expenditure is higher than the estimated income in a budget, there is said to be a 'budget gap'. A **Cumulative Budget Gap** assumes annual new budget gaps have not been addressed and is used purely for modelling the overall budget position.

Business Rates – National Non-Domestic Rates ('NNDR') – the tax raised on non-domestic properties, based each year on a 'Business Rates Multiplier' applied to an assessment of the value of the property. This is the means by which local businesses contribute to the cost of local services. The level of business rates is set by the Government. Business rates are collected by District Councils (such as WDBC) and a proportion is paid over to Central Government, with the remainder retained locally and shared between the District Councils and the County Council. WDBC is also part of a Business Rates pool so business rates are pooled with all Devon Councils.

Business Rates Baseline Funding Level – the amount of 'Business Rates' income the Government believes a local authority needs to deliver local services. This is the Council's share of the 'Business Rates' income.

Business Rates Reset – this is the mechanism used by Government to redistribute the 'Business Rates' growth retained by some councils back into the Business Rates system. This could have a significant impact on the business rates retained by the District Council. The Business Rates Reset has been delayed twice and the current budget modelling has assumed that it will be delayed until at least 2023/24. Whilst this change is not confirmed by the Government, a reset based on the current tax base would appear very unlikely.

Business Rates Retention - the system under which the Council is able to keep a proportion of the 'Business Rates' raised in any year in excess of a baseline measure.

Business Rates Tariff - a local authority must pay a levy (tariff) if its individual 'Business Rates Baseline' is greater than its baseline funding level. Conversely a local authority will receive a **Business Rates Top-Up** if its baseline funding level is greater than its 'Business Rates Baseline'. District Councils such as WDBC are normally 'Tariff Authorities' and County Councils such as DCC are 'Top-Up' Authorities.

Business Rates Multiplier - the annual amount established by central government used in the calculation of the 'Business Rates' bill. This amount is multiplied by the businesses rateable value to derive the size of the 'Business Rates' bill for the year. For 2022-23 the small business multiplier will remain at 49.9 pence.

Business Rates Pool - an agreement between neighbouring councils to add together to combine their 'Business Rates' activities in a pool. This is designed to maximise the ability for councils to retain 'Business Rates' locally. West Devon Borough Council is part of the Devon Business Rates Pool. It is recommended that WDBC continues to be part of the Devonwide Business Rates Pool for 2022/23. A 'Business Rates' pooling gain of £200,000 has been modelled for 2022/23 with lower gains predicted for 2023/24 onwards when the 'Business Rates Reset' is scheduled to happen.

Capital Expenditure - expenditure either on the acquisition of a fixed asset (e.g. land, buildings, vehicles), or expenditure which adds to and not merely maintains the value of an existing fixed asset.

Capital Financing - the Council's arrangement for meeting the cost of 'Capital Expenditure' covering grants, 'Capital Receipts' and charges to revenue over the period that will benefit from the expenditure. Capital Financing includes borrowing to fund the Capital Programme, made up of principal repayments and interest (similar to a mortgage). Borrowing can only be used to fund capital expenditure, borrowing cannot fund revenue expenditure.

Capital Programme – this provides details on the planned expenditure on capital projects over a period of years, and the resources available to fund those schemes.

Capital Receipts - the proceeds of sale from the disposal of assets such as land and buildings. They can be used to finance new capital expenditure, but not revenue.

Capping - Government power to limit an authority's budget requirement and hence the 'Council Tax' that it sets. This terminology has been superseded by council tax referendum criteria.

CIPFA - The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy - the accountancy body primarily concerned with public services that issues guidance on accounts preparation for local authorities.

Collection Fund - a separate, statutory, account maintained by 'Billing Authorities' such as WDBC into which 'Council Tax' receipts are paid, and from which 'Precepting Authorities' are paid. A Collection Fund is also maintained for the collection and re-distribution of 'Business Rates'.

Core Spending Power – this is the term the Government use to say how much money Councils have to run their services. It's a headline figure used by the Government to represent the key revenue resources available to local authorities, including an estimate of actual and potential 'Council Tax'.

Council Tax - a local tax on domestic properties set by local authorities and based on the value of the property within eight bands, A to H. The 'Council Tax' value of each band is expressed as a proportion of band D.

Council Tax Base - the number of properties in a local authority area from which it is estimated 'Council Tax' will be collected, expressed as the number of equivalent band D properties using pre-set ratios. The tax base can increased by building new homes as well as by increasing the 'Council Tax' Band D amount itself.

Council Tax/Collection Fund Surplus or Deficit - a surplus/deficit arising from either more or less 'Council Tax' being collected than expected by District Councils. This would be as a consequence of variations in collection rate or variations to the estimated increase in the number of properties. The annual surplus/deficit is distributed on an annual basis to 'Precepting Authorities'.

Council Tax Requirement - the amount of funding required to be raised from 'Council Tax' to meet the expenditure plans of the authority after taking into account all other funding sources such as business rates income.

Earmarked Reserves – these are amounts of money which have been set aside for a specific purpose to meet future spending plans or contingencies.

Fees and Charges - income raised by charging users of services directly for services used e.g. car parking income, planning income.

General Fund the council's main revenue account which includes day to day income and expenditure on the provision of services.

General Fund Balance – also known as '**Unearmarked Reserves**' - the surplus or deficit on the 'General Fund' at a particular date arising from all transactions up to that date, showing the ability of the Council to fund future revenue expenditure (surplus) or the requirement to make savings or raise additional income (deficit). At Council on 16 February 2021, Members have set a minimum balance for Unearmarked Reserves of £900,000, based on a risk assessment basis and a sensitivity analysis.

Gross Expenditure - the total cost of providing services before the deduction of government grants or other income.

Local Government Finance Settlement - the annual announcement by Government of the amount of grant funding to be provided for the forthcoming year. The provisional settlement is usually announced in mid-December, with a final settlement confirmed in mid to late January. A three year multi-year spending review is anticipated for 2022/23 to 2024/25.

Lower Tier Authorities - Shire District Councils in a two-tier area, who act as 'Billing Authorities' such as West Devon Borough Council.

Lower Tier Services Grant - this is a new grant introduced in 2021/22 provided specifically to lower tier authorities. It is currently anticipated that this grant will continue for 2022/23 albeit at a lower amount.

Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) - this sets out the budget strategy for the Council for the next three years. The Council has chosen a three year timeframe for its MTFS, as this dovetails to the timescales of the Corporate Strategy, 'A Plan for West Devon'. The Council will then be able to rely on this to inform future decisions.

Negative RSG – Negative Revenue Support Grant – This is effectively negative government grant, the Council's further predicted funding cuts. The Council would have to make a payment to Government of some of its business rates income, hence the term 'negative'. The latest budget modelling assumes negative RSG of £182,000 in 2023/24 and £227,500 in 2024/25. Some of the negative RSG could be offset by growth.

Net Expenditure - the cost of providing a service after the deduction of specific government grants and other sources of income but excluding the use of reserves.

NNDR – National Non-Domestic Rates – see **Business Rates**

New Homes Bonus - The New Homes Bonus (NHB) scheme was introduced in 2011 to provide an incentive for local authorities to encourage housing growth in their areas. The aim of the NHB was to provide a financial incentive to reward and encourage local authorities to help facilitate housing growth. The Council receives 80% of the average national council tax (£1,898) for each property growth over the baseline, this equates to £1,518 per property. The NHB is being phased-out and the Government Spending Review announcement in October 2021 was silent on whether there will be an additional one-off NHB payment in 2022/23. It is thought that this is still a real possibility. In 2021/22 the NHB allocation for West Devon was £292,772. Although the NHB scheme is due to be replaced, it is assumed in the latest budget modelling that a successor scheme will be implemented that will also be based on housing growth.

Precept – the levy made by ‘Precepting Authorities’ including the County Council on ‘Billing Authorities’ (West Devon Borough Council), requiring it to collect the required income from Council Tax payers on their behalf.

Precepting Authorities – these bodies do not collect ‘Council Tax’ directly but instruct ‘Billing Authorities’ such as WDBC to do it on their behalf. For West Devon Borough the Major Precepting Authorities for ‘Council Tax’ are Devon County Council, Devon & Cornwall Police & Crime Commissioner and Devon & Somerset Fire Authority. The Local Precepting Authorities are Town and Parish Councils.

Prudential Code - this is a code of practice agreed between Government and CIPFA that regulates local council capital spending and financing. The Code allows local authorities to set their own borrowing limits based upon affordability, sustainability and prudence.

PWLB - Public Works Loans Board - a statutory body operating within the United Kingdom Debt Management Office, which is an Executive Agency of HM Treasury. Its function is to lend money from the National Loans Fund to local authorities and other prescribed bodies, and to collect the repayments.

Reserves - amounts of money put aside to meet certain categories of expenditure. Reserves can be ‘Earmarked’ and ‘Unearmarked’.

Revenue Expenditure - comprises the day to day costs associated with running the Council’s services and financing the Council’s outstanding debt. The costs such as staff salaries, contract expenditure and general running expenses (heat, light and utilities) are financed from income.

Revenue Support Grant (RSG) - the main grant paid to councils by the Government. The amount of this grant has been severely reduced since 2010 and the Council no longer receives any RSG. Between 2009/10 and 2020/21, the Council’s Core Government funding has reduced by £3 million. The Council now receives no main Government Grant (Revenue Support Grant) – see **Negative Revenue Support Grant**.

Rural Services Delivery Grant - This is Government grant introduced to recognise the additional cost of delivering services in rural areas. Rural Services Delivery Grant has been modelled to continue for 2022/23 onwards at previous levels (£85m nationally – West Devon Borough Council share of £487,296)

Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) - this is essentially the ‘Business Rates Baseline’ and is the amount of money the Council retains from its share of the ‘Business Rates’ income. In the ‘Medium Term Financial Strategy’ it has been assumed that the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) will increase in line with inflation.

Section 151 Officer (S151 Officer) – the responsible financial officer. Every council, by law will designate an individual officer as having legal responsibility over providing effective financial management and advice across the Council. The post holder must be a qualified member of one of the main accountancy bodies in the UK. This is currently Lisa Buckle.

Unearmarked Reserves – see **General Fund Balance**

Upper Tier Authorities – in two-tier areas, this is the County Council (This is Devon County Council in the WDBC area).

Report to: **Hub Committee**
Date: **7 December 2021**
Title: **West Devon Housing Challenges**
Portfolio Area: **Homes – Cllr Barry Ratcliffe**
Wards Affected: **All**

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

Date next steps can be taken: Upon the expiry of the Scrutiny Call-in Period

Author: **Chris Brook** Role: **Director of Place & Enterprise**

Contact: Chris.brook@swdevon.gov.uk

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is RECOMMENDED that the Hub Committee:

Part 1

- 1. Approves the amendments to the Tenants incentive downsizing scheme set out at Appendix 1.**
- 2. asks the Director of Place and Enterprise to write to the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to lobby for the changes to the broad market areas, second homes business rate loophole and supported exempt accommodation regulations identified in the report**
- 3. Supports the work of the 5-year Housing Strategy and reinforces the importance of partnership working.**

Part 2

- 1. agrees to commence preparation of a new South Hams & West Devon Homeless Strategy for 2022-2027**
- 2. agrees to focus on four specific client groups for the new Homelessness Strategy: Single households, families, households with additional needs and Rough Sleepers.**
- 3. approves the proposed consultation approach in addition to the adopted consultation and engagement strategy.**

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The pandemic, coupled with already established housing challenges in West Devon has led to an increase in concerns for our residents about access to affordable, good quality housing in the borough.
- 1.2. The Council has established high ambitions through the recently adopted Plan for West Devon, the 2021 Housing Strategy, Better Homes Better Lives and the emerging homeless strategy. The accompanying delivery plans have robust actions to ensure the Council is responding as best it can to the housing challenges facing residents.
- 1.3. The significant issues in the Borough are:
 - Affordable housing delivery
 - sustainability of rural villages
 - lack of good quality and affordable private sector rented accommodation
 - delays and shortages in the construction industry
 - Opportunities for people requiring specialist accommodation because of age or disability
 - Factors such as access to care services and delays in adaptations impacting people's ability to remain living independently.
 - Access to good quality temporary accommodation
- 1.4. Not all of these issues are within the gift of the Local Authority to address solely. However, through lobbying, influencing, and working in partnership with statutory and voluntary organisations we can seek to make a difference where we can. This report will set out what actions the council may wish to consider taking in relation to each of the challenges.
- 1.5. The second part of this report is concerned with the formation of a new homeless strategy for 2022-2027

2. Background

- 2.1 The affordability of housing in England, the South West and here in West Devon has over a number of years, become a significant issue for our communities. Not only is the issue of affordability felt by those looking to purchase, but also there is a severe lack of rented stock in the private rented market and high demand in the affordable/social rented category. Many of these issues have been exacerbated by the pandemic and changing trends towards rural living and second homes.
- 2.2 By way of example, on the 10th November 2021 there were only 2 3-bedroom properties for rent in Okehampton (both significantly more than the local housing allowance) 1 3-bed in Hatherleigh (also above local housing allowance) and no 3-bed homes in Tavistock available to rent privately through Right Move. On the same date, there was one property available through Devon Home Choice in

- the whole of West Devon – which was a 2-bedroom flat in Okehampton.
- 2.3 As a largely rural area, West Devon has additional challenges such as transport and access to services. Devon County Council’s current campaign to recruit new carers has highlighted the 2000 vacancies across the County in domiciliary services and care homes. This is felt keenly in more rural areas where the cost of transport is often prohibitive to careers in care.
- 2.4 At a recent South West regional meeting of Homes England, NHS and Local Authorities, the NHS stated that its lower paid staff could not afford homes, nor could they get a home through the housing waiting list which continues to get longer (see Figure 2). The NHS also said that its consultants, who can afford homes, could not take new jobs in the area as they could not find a property to rent whilst they found a house to buy. Therefore, the issue is one of both affordability and supply of rented stock and it is affecting the fabric of the region and the sustainability of our communities.
- 2.5 Since 2002, the ratio of median house prices to median earnings in the West Devon has gone from 6.8 to nearly 10 (see figure 1 below). However, the amount a bank or building society will lend has not materially changed over that period, leading to the need for greater deposits required for those looking to acquire a home.
- 2.6 The median salary in the West Devon in 2020 was £27,000 and the average house price was £255,000. A typical mortgage would therefore require a deposit of £147,000, which is beyond the means of the vast majority of people to save.
- 2.7 Despite this the Joint Local Plan (JLP) is exceeding its housing delivery targets (664 more than forecast by 2020), has a 5.8-year land supply and the delivery of 83 more affordable homes than our policy position requires since the start of the plan period. The current market-led system for delivering homes is still not solving the problem.
- 2.8 As with all structural problems, it is a combination of numerous interrelated issues for which there is no silver bullet:
- Foreign investment (pension funds etc.) account for as much as half of all new homes bought in prime London areas. The commodity price is of no interest to these funds, only the increase in value and return they generate, pushing up London prices.
 - London’s housing market and high salary earners who are cash rich buyers are recognising more value in alternative, desirable locations elsewhere in the Country. This ripples outwards and sets the cost of housing across England.
 - Living preferences have changed, away from urban areas putting a disproportional pressure on rural housing markets. A trend accelerated during the post-Pandemic period.
 - Often the places most desirable for people wishing to escape more urban lifestyles are rural by nature. Coupled with rural planning constraints and local reluctance for new development, many local people feel squeezed out of the village they have lived in all their

life because they simply cannot afford to live there. This is threatening the very fabric of our rural communities.

- The visitor economy provides a strong commercial driver towards holiday lettings accompanied by a government crackdown on financial incentives for traditional landlords, whilst the holiday-let market has been largely ignored. Whilst this is not felt as acutely in West Devon as it is for our coastal neighbours it has further reduced availability of long-term rented accommodation (see Figure 3), and is very real for some villages in the Borough.
- Land prices for new homes reflect the wider sales trends for existing homes, which continually lifts the baseline price for a new home.
- Developers prefer to build larger homes that sell for more money. This results in higher levels of under occupation and excess living space. Without smaller homes being built, there is little opportunity for downsizing and limited options for younger people and working-age families.

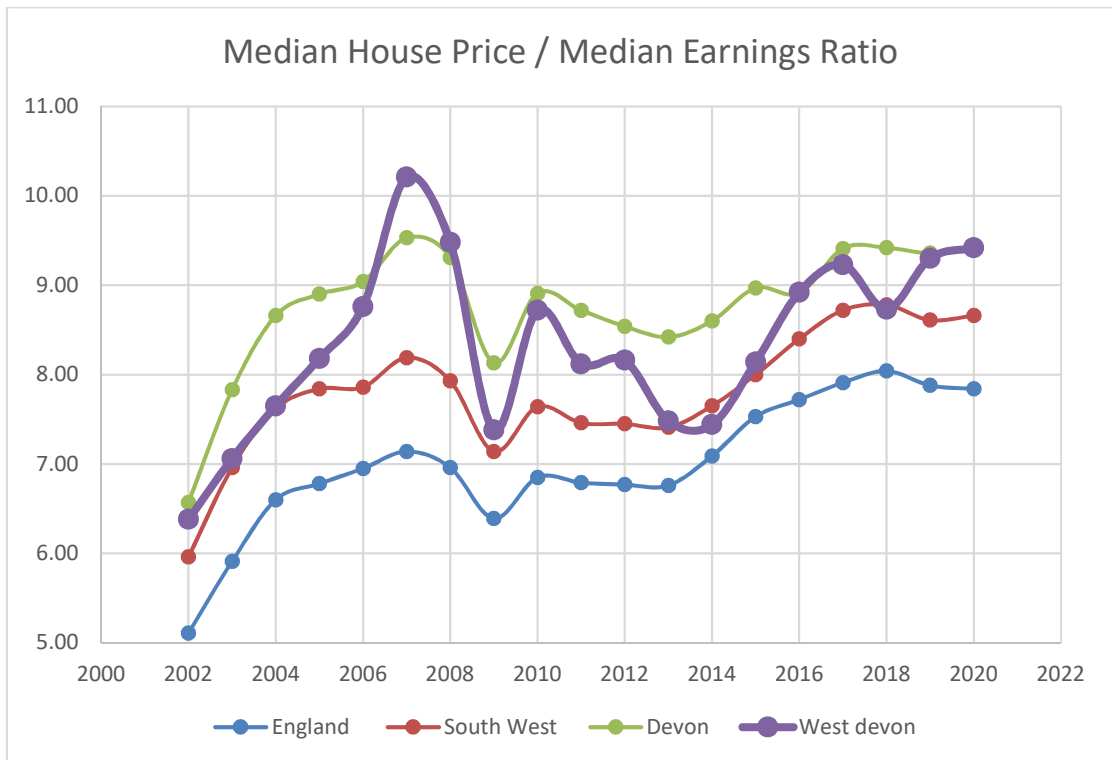


Figure 1

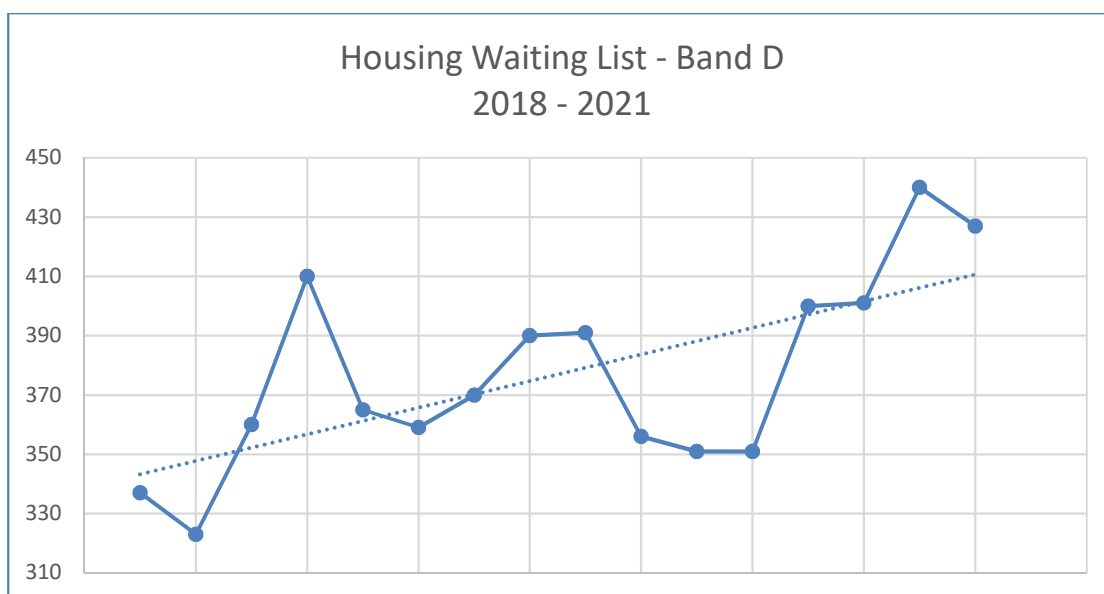


Figure 2 – Housing Waiting List

4. Outcomes/outputs

Lobby for positive change & fairness

- 4.1. Members could lobby on second homes loophole, better regulation and oversight of supported accommodation of leasehold properties, and disposal of public sector assets to be used locally if there is a need and profit not be the primary driver.
- 4.2. The visitor economy provides £65.4m into the local West Devon economy each year and is one of the largest employment sectors (10%). It is possible to support and enhance this, yet ensure that those whose businesses prosper from it within the accommodation sector contribute to the cost of providing the services they depend on.
- 4.3. To illustrate this, second homes that currently avoid council tax by electing to pay for business rates (if they are available to let for more than 140 days) mean that the Council receives about 50% less money than would be the case through Council Tax. Worse still, the Parish and Town Councils receive no income. A change to Section 66(2B) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 to stop second homes being eligible for business rates would ensure a fair flow of funding at a local level to deliver the services they rely upon.

Maximising the delivery of affordable homes through policy

- 4.4. The JLP affordable housing threshold is a very powerful tool. As set out in the background section above, the existing policy is being very effective and delivering 30% of new homes as affordable, but rightly the ambition of this Council is to do more and go further.
- 4.5. To be successful to implement the members expectation in two years' time when the JLP is reviewed, officers commit to working up the necessary evidence base and housing need analysis to ensure that the members will have a choice in the future to go further than the JLP currently does. It will remain a choice, because the cost of

delivering affordable housing has to be balanced against all of the other requirements and to increase delivery of one area will reduce another.

Opportunities to support Landlords & Tenants of the Private Sector

- 4.6. The Council is keen to support private landlords and there are multiple actions about landlord engagement within the Housing Strategy. We have surveyed our local landlords and as a result propose the following actions:
- Establish a registration opportunity for landlords to sign up for updates
 - Promote our own Seamoor Lettings option through social media, Localities van livery, envelope advertising during mailshots and via a dedicated website.
 - Producing a bi-annual information update bulletin – to include Environmental Health, licensing, deposit, Energy performance certificate information etc. to be e-mailed to all registered landlords
 - Create 'Tenancy Packs' with checklists and advice on how to start and end a tenancy lawfully to be provided via the website and/or on registration.
 - Promote landlord/tenant advice service to encourage tenants to suggest the registration scheme to their Landlords

Seek broad market area boundary reforms

- 4.7. A Broad Market Area (BMA) is an area *'within which a person could reasonably be expected to live having regard to facilities and services for the purposes of health, education, recreation, personal banking and shopping, taking account of the distance of travel, by public and private transport, to and from those facilities and services.'*
- 4.8. In West Devon, there are three Broad Market Areas, which are Plymouth, which incorporates areas to the south of the Borough; Exeter, which is the majority of the north of the Borough; and North Cornwall and Devon Borders, which includes areas such as Lifton and Lewdown. The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) is a rate within the BMA that is the 30th centile of all the rents – including RP's affordable and social rents.
- 4.9. In 2012, the Government delinked the LHA rates from prevailing rent levels and then LHA rates were frozen for 4 years from 2016. In 2020, there was an inflationary increase, but this did not address the rises in rents during that period.
- 4.10. The LHA rates are strongly influenced in the south of the Borough by Plymouth City and in the north by the city of Exeter. For example, the 3-bed housing allowance in Okehampton would be £823 and in Tavistock it would be £693. This does not reflect the local property market and by way of comparison the 2-, 3-bed properties in Okehampton were in the region of £950 whilst the only comparable property available in the south of the Borough was available in Mary Tavy at £1350 a month. Accommodation that is within the BMA is rare

in the north and almost unheard of within the south of the Borough and this is further impacted on the availability of accommodation for our local residents.

- 4.11. It is incredibly challenging to rent privately for those who require assistance through Housing Benefit or Universal Credit.
- 4.12. It is therefore suggested that the Council should lobby Government for a reassessment of the LHA annually and also an annual inflationary increase and to further explore the impact of a Broad Market Area.

Working with Partners

- 4.13. The Council already works closely with its Registered Provider partners particularly with Livewest (our stock transfer landlord and the largest provider of social housing in the Borough) who attend the Overview & Scrutiny Committee annually to answer Members' questions and to provide a strategic report.
- 4.14. Members have been increasingly concerned about the numbers of stock disposals of properties in very poor state of repair that will not meet decent homes standards or green homes without a significant level of investment that is not always possible.
- 4.15. Members are rightly concerned by the loss of the last few units of social housing in a village with no prospect of them being replaced in the same vicinity. Under the terms of the stock transfer agreement, the Council does not have the power to block such sales. However, the Council will continue to challenge Registered Providers on disposals and will carry on the conversations about replacement properties being provided locally. The Council will consider whether it or another Registered Provider could take on the property.
- 4.16. Keeping a record of the locations where disposals occur and the tenure of the housing when it was last occupied will assist the Council in its understanding of housing need.
- 4.17. Where the Council can positively influence is through incentivising social housing tenants to downsize, freeing up underused larger accommodation for families on the waiting list. There are currently 27 households registered on Devon Home Choice who would like to downsize. The Council has a policy of providing one off payments to encourage downsizing (Min CM*/* refers). The existing policy has been invoked 3 times in the past three years to 2021 at a cost of £5000; an average of £1666/yr.
- 4.18. However, it is recommended as part of this report that the payment is increased from £1000 plus £500 per bedroom to up to £5000 in areas of high demand and the amendments to the policy in Appendix 1 are adopted.
- 4.19. Following the adoption of the policy, targeted communication will be sent to those households looking to downsize, including offering home visits and other targeted measures to overcome the barriers to downsizing.

- 4.20. There will also be closer interaction and engagement with our Registered Providers at both a strategic and operational level. On the 12th November the Head of Housing met the larger Registered Providers with stock in our area and discussed how the Council and they could work together in the future, both in terms of new housing; existing stock; and the priorities they have made collectively as the Homes for the South West Group and how the Council can align with them to ensure delivery in its area.
- 4.21. In terms of new development opportunities, the council could commit to supporting our Registered Provider partners to prioritise planning applications where this is Affordable Housing-led. This will make the journey through planning more streamlined and enable properties to be developed quicker subject to the usual planning process.
- 4.22. Officers should be able to explain the wider benefits of development or redevelopment to the Council and public in order to explain the 'knock on' effect that this route of property creation brings. If new accommodation is being brought forward in one area, what positive effects to health and wellbeing could this have and how this generate would generate turnover in the existing stock and increase its availability. However, this can all be accomplished whilst working within the NPPF and JLP guidelines.

Providing capital funding where it is needed; taking a big picture view – Section 106 agreements

- 4.23. Affordable housing is often delivered on site as part of new development, but sometimes off-site contributions are taken in lieu. This is a case by case decision taken at the time of the planning application and informed by the housing team.
- 4.24. Subject to an audit trail showing the relationship to the development and need, the obligations on developers in a Section 106 Agreement, the legal contract that enables the financial contribution, will be worded in such a way as to ensure that the money can be spent where there is need across the Borough.
- 4.25. That need is well understood and as set out above, will continue to be refined and updated by further housing need analysis and the emerging future JLP evidence base.
- 4.26. Insofar as the Council is permitted by law to do so, Members are asked to formally recognise a principle that supports the allocation of affordable housing contributions based on need first, proximity to the planning application location second, and support it within their communities.

Specialist Accommodation provision

- 4.27. The Council has, through an investigation involving its Legal and Housing Benefits teams, been instrumental in shaping the national debate on supported housing providers who lease property from pension investment companies and take full advantage of the more

generous levels of housing benefit this type of accommodation can command. This has been in no small part down to the lobbying the Council took in relation to this issue, which resulted in the issue being escalated to the Prime Minister's policy team. The Council should take pride in the role it has played, but continue to lobby for better regulation of lease based models, and exempt supported accommodation.

4.28. During this investigation, it became apparent that West Devon has a need for accommodation for people with learning difficulties and significant mental health illnesses that would be better suited to their needs. These range from shared houses to independent flats in a core and cluster model. The Council is working very closely with Devon County Council to establish the exact need and whether we can bring forward some specialist accommodation for people with learning difficulties in the Okehampton area. The Council owns a significant piece of land in the area that it bought with the intention of building homes. With the proposed school, improved transport links and the ability to access job and volunteering opportunities there is a chance to do something very positive for this client group within the Borough. Members will be kept apprised of this as the joint working continues before being asked for formal approval in due course.

4.29. The Council has been clear with its priority to improve temporary accommodation for people facing homelessness within the Borough and an application for the redevelopment of Springhill Flats is due to be considered by the Development Management and Licensing Committee on the 14th December 2021. If approved this will provide 11 units of purpose built self-contained accommodation for people in a central location. Currently temporary accommodation options are B&B's and holiday-let properties, which are far from ideal, often out of the Borough and expensive and poor value for money to the taxpayer. If planning permission is granted, Members will be asked to consider a full business case.

5. A holistic approach

5.1. Better Homes, Better Lives is the Council's 5-year plan setting the ambition around how the Council can tackle the issues set out in this paper. It includes a number of specific actions in the accompanying Action Plans (AP) that will address the concerns raised. Of particular note are the following:

5.1.1. Seek to expand our own in house private letting service, Seamoor Letting (AP page 18)

5.1.2. Develop and promote an intermediate housing register specifically for key workers (AP page 18)

5.1.3. Support encourage and offer management services to HMOs (AP page 19)

5.1.4. Address under occupation and overcrowding in social housing stock through the Tenants Incentive scheme (AP page 20)

5.1.5. Purchase land to support strategic housing delivery (AP page 3) this can also encompass challenging other public authorities on land disposals around 'capital receipts and social wellbeing'. Which would have the wider longer-term benefit.

4 Proposed Way Forward

- 1) It is recommended that Members accept the proposed actions of this report.
- 2) Members may wish to instruct the Director of Place and Enterprise to write to Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities setting out the housing issues they wish to lobby for.

PART 2

Homeless Strategy

1. Executive summary

- 5.2. The Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities to review homelessness, and the influencing factors that cause homelessness, and to develop a strategy that addresses the findings of the review.
- 5.3. The Joint South Hams and West Devon Homeless five year Strategy was last published in 2017 and is in its final year. A review of the achievements made over the lifetime of the strategy and a review of current and likely future needs and trends has been conducted and is summarised in Appendix 1.
- 5.4. As a result of this review, four key areas of housing need have been identified: Single Households, Families, and Households with additional needs and Rough Sleepers.
- 5.5. It is proposed that the Council approves the development of a Joint Homelessness Strategy for 2022-27 that looks to address these identified needs. This report proposes that consultation is conducted with Members and Stakeholders to ensure the strategy is robust and an accurate reflection of current need.
- 5.6. The strategy will form part of the suite of plans focusing on the priority of Homes, aligned with the priorities of Better Lives for All, the Housing Strategy "Better Homes, Better Lives" and the points of the Housing Crisis declaration of the 23rd of September 2021

2. Background

- 2.1 The current Joint Homelessness Strategy 2017-22 will end shortly and requires renewal. The Homelessness Act 2002 places a legal duty on local authorities to review homelessness and the influencing factors for the area and produce a strategy that addresses local need.
- 2.2 The review of the progress made under the current strategy (Appendix 1) has identified significant differences in the opportunities and challenges experienced by four main groups within our communities. These are Single

households, Families, Households with additional needs and Rough Sleepers.

- 2.3 In order to address the varying challenges experienced by these groups, it is proposed that the new strategy focusses on solutions for each of these different groups.
- 2.4 The impact of the pandemic on local housing need has been significant and this Strategy comes at an opportune time to take into account the additional challenges the council and our residents are facing.

3. Outcomes/outputs

- 3.1 If the recommended areas for focus are approved it is proposed that the Council consults with stakeholders, members and the public to inform the content and shape priorities of the new 2022-27 Strategy.
- 3.2 The outcomes of the consultation will support the development of the Joint Homelessness Strategy 2022-27, which will be brought to members for adoption in April 2022.
- 3.3 This strategy will contribute to the delivery of the Corporate Strategy theme 'Improving Homes – Every resident has access to a quality and safe home'. Through identifying and seeking to address the barriers that our residents may encounter when looking to achieve this.

4. Options available and consideration of risk

- 4.1 The Council could choose not to use the proposed four areas of focus as its framework for the Homelessness Strategy.
 - a. Officers will need to return to the review to seek to identify alternate options for areas of focus. It is felt that alternate focus areas will not deliver the best outcomes for our communities.
- 4.2 The Council chooses not to produce a Homelessness Strategy.
 - a. It is a legal requirement for the Local Authority to produce a strategy to address homelessness and to conduct a review which informs this. To not have a current Homeless strategy is therefore unlawful
- 4.3 The Council produces a Homelessness Strategy without engaging with stakeholders, members or residents for consultation
 - a. This would be contrary to the adopted Corporate Engagement Strategy and could result in a missed opportunity for interested parties to contribute meaningfully to homelessness in the Borough.
- 4.4 The council produces a Homeless Strategy based around the four areas of need identified as part of the review. Consultation with members, stakeholders and residents takes place to inform the final strategy outcomes.
 - a. This will result in a robust and well informed strategy document which accurately reflects local need and maximises the opportunities for partnership working.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 The Council produces a Homeless Strategy based around the four areas of need identified as part of the review. Consultation with members, stakeholders and residents takes place to inform the final strategy outcomes
- 5.2 Agreement of the four key areas for focus: Single households, families, households with additional needs and Rough Sleepers
- 5.3 Delivery of a presentation over Teams to members and stakeholders to outline our initial findings following review to ensure the various elements currently impacting on homelessness and housing need are clearly laid out and understood.
- 5.4 Present a survey monkey to all members and stakeholders to enable responses to the identified needs and proposals for the way forward to be commented upon.
- 5.5 Present a public survey monkey seeking feedback on the areas of need and proposed solutions to be publicised through social media.
- 5.6 Reach out directly to households with lived experience of homelessness to complete the survey monkey with an officer.

Publication of the final draft of the document to be approved by members in April 2022.

6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	
Legal/Governance	Y	<p>The Council has powers across all of its functions to help shape and boost housing provision whether by providing houses itself (Housing Act 1985 section 17) or through a housing company (Local Government Act 2003 section 95 or Localism Act 2011 section 1); facilitating delivery by others by land assembly (Local Government Act 1972 and Town and Country Planning Act 1990 section 226); bringing vacant properties back into use (Housing Act 2004); or more strategically, through planning policy; and the grant of planning permissions and planning agreements (Town and Country Planning Act 1990 section 106).</p> <p>The Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities to review homelessness, and the influencing factors that cause homelessness, and to develop a strategy that addresses the findings of the review.</p>
Financial implications to include reference	Y	The revised Downsizing policy if successful will continue to require funding, up to an estimated

to value for money		<p>£20k per annum from the affordable housing reserve.</p> <p>Proposals for both Springhill & the specialist accommodation provision will be subject to separate business plans and further reports to the Hub Committee.</p> <p>It is important to note that Local Authorities still receive a prevention of homeless grant from central Government. As most of the of the homeless strategy actions are designed around homeless prevention and early intervention, the larger costs of temporary accommodation and rehousing will wherever possible be negated. This by far not only offers the best service for the customer but is the most efficient in terms of the Local Authority</p>
Risk	Y	<p>It is a statutory requirement to have a current Homelessness Strategy. Failure to produce one would need to be explained to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.</p> <p>Failure to consult effectively on the content of the Homelessness Strategy could result in poor quality ill-informed goals</p> <p>Lack of consultation with stakeholders is likely to result in poor engagement with these services when trying to deliver partnership projects. This will have a negative impact on outcomes for those facing homelessness and housing need</p>
Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	Both Homes & Wellbeing are corporate themes supported by this report. The Council also has its targets of the Housing Strategy Better Homes, Better Lives.
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	Y	<p>Positive impact should the Council deliver low carbon, high quality homes.</p> <p>In relation to the Homeless strategy where possible all consultation will be conducted via Teams or Zoom to minimise travel.</p> <p>Survey monkey will be used to reduce the need for paper consultation surveys.</p>
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	Y	The key document underpinning this report is the Housing strategy Better Homes Better Lives which was subject to an equality impact assessment that will be refreshed as required.
Safeguarding	Y	Whilst no direct implications for this report, some of the proposed activity supports the needs of very

		vulnerable people. The corporate safeguarding policy will underpin all action in relation to this.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	Devon & Cornwall Police will be invited to contribute to the development of the Homeless strategy and will remain significant partners during the delivery of relevant actions in the action plan.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Y	This report proposes actions that will directly positively impact the health and wellbeing of our residents
Other implications		None at this stage.

Supporting Information

None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Downsizing policy

Appendix 2 – Review of the Homeless Strategy 2017-2022

Background Papers:

Better Homes, Better Lives – South Hams & West Devon Housing Strategy 2021-2026

Tenant's Incentive Scheme

1 Introduction

- 1.1 There is a shortage of affordable housing, particularly family housing, available in the West Devon area. This situation is clearly evidenced by both Borough wide and Parish housing needs surveys.
- 1.2 One of the priorities of the Housing Strategy is to meet affordable housing needs. To maximise the use of the existing social rented housing stock is a key element within this, as seen in other Council Policy e.g. the allocations policy and banding under the Devon Home Choice policy.
- 1.3 It is recognised that moving house, particularly for the elderly, can be difficult, stressful and costly and that barriers to moving to more appropriate accommodation can often be emotional as well as practical or financial.

2 Key Objectives

- 2.1 To maximise the use of the existing social rented housing stock in the West Devon area. There is an acknowledged, but largely unquantifiable level of under occupation within the stock and work to better identify the level is critical to the scheme.
- 2.2 To free up family sized units within the existing social rented housing stock by offering an incentive to move to smaller accommodation. The incentive to include a package of support where appropriate.
- 2.3 To increase the amount of family sized accommodation available.
- 2.4 To find out more about barriers to tenants moving from large accommodation. To find out more about their rehousing needs.

3 Policy

- 3.1 The Council will offer the Tenant's Incentive to households seeking to move within RP (Registered Social Landlord) housing stock who meet the following criteria:
 - Are an existing Housing Association tenant on an Assured tenancy, living in the West Devon Borough area and whose Housing Association landlord confirms that the nomination rights for the property being vacated will be given to West Devon Borough Council.
 - Are in a family sized house – 2 bedrooms or larger
 - Want to move to a property that is at least 1 bedroom less
 - Are registered on Devon Home Choice

- Where the move will not result in overcrowding

3.2 The Scheme will be administered via the Housing Register. Those tenants indicating that they wish to move to a smaller property will be awarded a high housing need or medium housing need band dependent on the number of bedrooms being released, to enable them to apply for suitable properties advertised with Devon Home Choice. It will be made clear that the band will only apply if they bid for appropriate smaller properties.

3.2 The Incentive will be set at a standard rate of:

- £1,000 fixed payment, and
- £500 per bedroom released

For example:

- Household A who moves from a 3 bedroom house to a 1 bedroom property will receive £2,000 in total. This is made up of the £1,000 fixed payment and £1,000 for releasing 2 bedrooms.
- Household B who moves from a 2 bedroom house to a 1 bedroom property will receive £1,500 in total. This is made up of the £1,000 fixed payment and £500 for releasing 1 bedroom.

3.3 Where recognised local pressures on existing housing stock exists discretionary payment may be offered to increase the award total to up to £5000. The decision on whether a tenant is offered this discretionary top up will be agreed by two officers.

3.4 These incentive payments could be used by the household in any way they wish but are intended to help with removal expenses, carpeting, furnishing or to clear outstanding rent arrears..

3.5 All units freed up by the Tenant's Incentive Scheme will be advertised via Devon Home Choice. West Devon Borough Council will advertise these properties in accordance with their assessment of housing needs within the Borough. RPs may not add any restrictions to the advert that will make it difficult or impossible for the property to be let to a family in housing need unless agreed by the Borough Council.

3.6 Payment can only be made once to any tenant. If a tenant downsizes and then wishes to downsize again (i.e. if they downsize to a two bedroom property and then downsize at a later date to a one bedroom property) they are only eligible for payment of the incentive following the first move. If an applicant requires a larger property within two years of having received a payment for downsizing they will

normally have to repay the incentive in full. The Housing Advice Team Leader may agree that repayment be waived in exceptional circumstances. This must be fully documented in the applicants file.

- 3.7 The Scheme will be marketed locally and within RPs to maximise take up from existing tenants who are under occupying. It will be made clear that this is a limited offer until the remainder of the budget is spent.

4 Monitoring

- 4.1 Outcome monitoring will take place in order to meet the objective of learning about the barriers to moving, especially for the elderly – feedback to be sought following the move by a housing officer.
- 4.2 The scheme is financed through the Social Housing Grant capital allocation and will be monitored quarterly.

5 Policy Review

- 5.1 The policy will be reviewed annually.
- 5.2 Feedback will be sought from RPs and the support agencies.

6 Diversity and Equal Opportunities

- 6.1 West Devon Borough Council is committed to reflecting the full diversity of the community it serves and to promoting equality of opportunity for everyone.
- 6.2 This policy and all associated documentation and leaflets can be made available in large print, Braille, tape format or in any other languages, on request.

September 2021

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The 2017-22 Joint Homelessness Strategy set out the priorities for tackling homelessness in South Hams & West Devon. The strategy was framed around four themes:

- Understanding the true cost of homelessness
- Access to services
- Access to housing
- Health and wellbeing

A review of the progress made against these priorities has been conducted to support the development of the 2022-27 Homelessness Strategy.

Priority 1: Understanding the True Cost of Homelessness

Key Aims	Progress made
Ensure we establish a solid evidence base which informs practice across all sectors and clearly illustrates the true cost of homelessness in South Hams and West Devon.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented a new bespoke housing system which enables cross examination of data collected from homeless applicants. • Data sharing agreements established with Children’s services and improved referral routes and working practices established to better track trends and identify need among care leavers and families.
Monitor the impact of welfare reform, and ensure that this informs future strategic priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted use of Discretionary Housing Payments to ensure homelessness is central to the approach of the housing benefit • Close working with Environmental Health on energy improvements, property adaptations and reduction in housing running costs.
Recognise the continuing pressures on the Councils’ budgets and how best to target resources in the most meaningful way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted partnership working practices with social landlords to ensure tenants with rent arrears are identified at an early stage and supported and homelessness prevented. • Bespoke financial advice service in place to ensure customers receive tailored advice and are supported to access services. Contract has delivered financial gains of £211,021 in South Hams and £76,544 in west Devon in the period April 2020 – July 2021. • Tenants incentive Scheme revised and regularly promoted to ensure best use of existing stock
Ensure partnerships with other agencies demonstrate value for money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing review with DCC regarding the supported Living contract. • Joint bid with TDC to secure funds for rough sleepers and 3 joint posts to ensure best VFM • Close monitoring of Homemaker Contract
Ensure access to good quality financial advice to help tackle poverty, poor quality housing and homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procured a new contract with Homemaker to deliver Income Maximisation, budgeting, benefits and debt advice • Extended the contract to 5 days a week in response to the Covid Impact on people’s finances.

Priority 2: Access to Services

Key Aims	Progress made
Offer advice and assistance in a range of formats, so the customer can choose how they communicate with their Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented bespoke online portal account system to facilitate communication and document sharing. • Expanded offer of telephone assessment services to ensure customers in remote locations are not required to travel to access services. • Updated and maintained web pages to ensure information is available in plain English and includes links to additional support resources • Worked closely with the Devon Home Choice partnership to enable more effective access to the Devon Home Choice system via an app designed specifically for phone us.
Ensure our most vulnerable customers are able to access advice services effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed close relationships with support services to ensure vulnerable customers are able to access support with making homeless applications. • Communication software technology ensure that calls and assessments with customers can include support workers or family members in the same call.
Work with partners to ensure that we are able to offer services at the time and place our customers need them most	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication software technology ensure that calls and assessments with customers can occur at a time and location that best suits the customer and their support network. • Training delivered to multiple partner agencies to ensure a good basic understanding of housing and homelessness exists across a wide range of agencies. Enabling basic advice and information to be sourced from a wide range of places and to ensure excellent referral routes where additional support and advice is needed.
Readily and regularly consult with our customers and stakeholders to make sure we get our services right	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly attending community groups including Caring Town, The Hub and ROOF. • Consult yearly with stakeholders on the progress of the strategy and the future needs for local housing. • Introduced a G&T Forum to engage with the Traveller communities to find out their needs and we can do to meet these.

Priority 3: Access to Housing

Key Aims	Progress made
Increase the supply, standard and options for people who face homelessness within our area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased promotion and communications program to support the recruitment of local landlords to the Seamoor property scheme. • Capital grant funding secured to enable purchase of 4 one bedroom homes to improve housing options for single homeless rough sleeping or at risk of.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established Disabled Adaptation Panel which has been instrumental in securing the most appropriate housing options for those in need of adapted housing for XX households Developed a bespoke website to advertise rented accommodation options through SeaMoor and part ownership housing options available locally. Appointed a project officer to Established a perpetrator housing programme to support victims of domestic abuse to remain in their own home and alternate housing be sought for the perpetrator.
Develop innovative options for our Rough Sleeper Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint bid with TDC to secure Outreach workers, personal budgets and housing first options. Successfully implemented the TAS worker to help support rough sleepers with moving on Successfully bid for funding for an additional support worker for the Leap Pad project Successfully bid for £250K toward the purchase of 4 units of Leap Pad accommodation. Improved communication and partnership working with Local Charities and 3rd sector organisations to ensure that a holistic approach is taken to meeting Rough Sleepers support and engagement needs.
Continue the downward use of temporary accommodation for homeless households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The use of temporary accommodation has fluctuated throughout the 5 year strategy. Reductions in stays in temporary accommodation were achieved in the initial 3 years of the strategy. Supported by input from out temporary accommodation support workers. However, subsequently the Covid pandemic has impacted on the availability of accommodation for applicants to move to resulting in longer stays in temp. This has been caused by a combination of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delays in building development due to lockdown measures Reduction in movement across the social and private housing sector due to a stay in evictions and a limitation on movements. Demand for holiday accommodation in the district has led to an increase in use of rental accommodation for holiday use.

Priority 4: Health and Wellbeing

Key Aims	Progress made
Work in partnership with our voluntary and statutory sectors to holistically address people's needs as	Appointed a dedicated Vulnerable Person's Officer and a Rough sleeper outreach worker to work alongside our housing advice officers to facilitate excellent links to partner agencies to include joint working on homeless cases.

fully as possible.	
Ensure we adequately protect and safeguard the most vulnerable members of our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed internal Safeguarding procedures and rolled out training to ensure safeguarding is 'Everyone's responsibility' • Developed good working relationships with Hospital discharge coordinators, prison release officers, probation, domestic abuse, adult and children's social work and mental health. • Engaged closely with children's services
Enable early help, to avoid crisis and tackle homelessness at its root cause.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed referral routes with Hospital discharge coordinators, prison release officers, probation, domestic abuse, adult and children's social work and mental health social care, local police and registered providers to ensure early identification of households at risk of homelessness.

Rough sleeper strategy	
Increase our knowledge of the number of people sleeping rough by building on the annually required rough sleepers estimate by introducing a quarterly rough sleeper estimate. This will ensure that the service delivery can respond more quickly to need.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced monthly rough sleeper counts/estimates • Introduced a next working day response to reports of people sleeping rough wherever possible.
The very nature of homelessness means a large proportion of the people requiring housing advice and homeless services will be vulnerable and may need additional support to enable them to access services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced TAS worker • Introduced Outreach workers • Introduced specialist Drug and Alcohol Outreach workers • Introduced a multiagency hub
Housing options for those with a history of rough sleeping need to be innovative and reflect the needs of the individual. The Local Authority seeks to achieve this through the provision of multiple housing options which will be tailored to meet the needs of the individual.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduced the Leap Pad (Housing First) accommodation model • Worked with Private Landlords to encourage them to accept tenants with a history of chaotic behaviour and rough sleeping • Worked with Social Landlords in line with the Where's Cathy ethos to encourage them to accept tenants with a history of chaotic behaviour and rough sleeping
Tackling homelessness takes more than just the provision of a house, if we are to maximise the opportunities for our most	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed a multi-agency hub in partnership with Teignbridge District Council comprised of outreach workers, a hub coordinator, drug and alcohol support services, MH services, probation and adult social care to

vulnerable people. Often, poor health, addictions and unhealthy lifestyles mean that people are unable to secure, and maintain, accommodation for themselves or their families.	ensure that all potential solutions are considered around the clients support needs and to ensure a client centred approach to developing those plans.
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Proposed way forward

Our Joint Housing Strategy 2022-27 will seek to meet the identified housing needs of those people in our community. In order to do so we have identified four priority groups around which our strategy will be framed allowing us to focus on the challenges that each group experiences and to best meet the resulting need. These groups are Single/couple households, Families, Households with additional needs and Rough Sleepers.

The Housing Picture

In South Hams, 8.2% of properties are second homes, with up to 50% in some areas. In West Devon 2.1% are second homes. In 2019 there were 67 properties identified as being long term empty in South Hams and 27 in West Devon.

Since 2016/17, South Hams has enabled 483 units of new affordable housing and 95 units in West Devon

Average house price in South Hams is £440,139; a 25% increase since 2016 (Sept 2016 - £331,625) and the average house price in West Devon is £306,203; a 22% increase (Sept 2016 - £239,160) (Source - Land Registry 2020)

Average salary in South Hams £30,160 in 2020, an increase of 9% since 2016. In West Devon the average salary is 22,048, an increase of 11% since 2016. (Source: ONS 2020)

The ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile gross earnings has correspondingly increased such that it is now 11 times the average earnings in South Hams and 10.42 in West Devon. (ONS).

The People Picture - Between April 2018 – March 2021 South Hams has had 1914 approaches and West Devon 1159.

Single and couple households

Of those 78% and 75% respectively have been from households requiring one bedroom or shared accommodation.

For those requiring one bedroom accommodation the average case duration was 82 days.

Within the same time period 32% of approaches have been from those aged 18-34 years old; for whom the shared accommodation rate applies. In West Devon this figure was 38%. The main reason for approach within this age group was 'Asked to leave by friends or family' and 'Sofa Surfing'.

43% of one bedroom households in the South Hams secured housing outside the district. In West Devon 33% of one bed households were housed outside the borough.

Of those single households who were housed in shared accommodation only 35% were able to source shared accommodation within the South Hams, with 59% successfully securing shared accommodation in West Devon.

Families

Within the same time period in South Hams 427 families approached for assistance and 291 in West Devon. The primary reason for approach across both local authorities for families was 'receipt of a Section 21 notice' with the second most common reason being 'fleeing domestic abuse'.

On average it has taken more than 4 weeks longer to secure housing for families (average 113 days) than for those requiring one bedroom accommodation.

In the South Hams 76% of families successfully secured housing within the district of South Hams. In West Devon 63% families were housed within the borough.

Additional Needs

The Disabled facilities grants have successfully supported 334 households in South Hams and 182 households in West Devon to remain in their own home through provision of adaptations.

The Disabled adapted panel has supported 50 households to secure appropriate adapted accommodation through targeted work with RP's on their housing stock as it becomes available.

23 households in South Hams and 21 households in West Devon people still remain on the housing list in need of wheelchair adapted accommodation. A new project has commenced to identify and target those households with a need for other adaptations or specific accommodation types.

In the South Hams 31% of households approaching identified themselves as having additional support needs. In West Devon it was 29%.

Mental Health needs accounted for 54% of those identifying as having additional needs in South Hams and 50% in West Devon. 45% of households in South Hams identified a physical disability support need and 39% in West Devon. Other support needs identified include Drug and/or alcohol misuse, feeling abuse of violence and being a care leaver or young person made homeless.

99 households across the two areas identified themselves as having 3 or more support needs.

The population of the South Hams and West Devon includes an above average proportion of people over the age of 65. The national average being 18.9% whilst in South Hams the figure is 29.2% and in West Devon 28.8%. The proportion of older people in the area means that the demand for carers is high. Devon County Council have identified that across the county they require around 2000 additional care workers to meet the need. The average care worker salary in Devon is £20894, significantly below the District average in the South Hams and below the average for West Devon making housing unaffordable across both areas.

Rough Sleepers

In South Hams 86 rough sleepers were worked with by South Hams, of these 60 identified as having rough slept previously and 9 individuals have had repeat cases with us. In West Devon there were 36 rough sleepers with 27 of these stating they had been homeless before and 4 individuals have had repeat cases.

Successful outcomes were recorded for 37 rough sleepers in the South Hams and for in 16 rough sleepers in West Devon.

Of the 86 rough sleepers approaching South Hams 54% identified themselves as having support needs with 36% identifying mental health as a specific need. In West Devon 40% of rough sleepers identified as having support needs with 27% specifying a physical disability as a support need.

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Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **7th December 2021**

Title: **Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan Update**

Portfolio Areas: **Cllr Lynn Daniel**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Author: **Adam Williams** Role: **Climate Change Specialist**

Contact: **Email: adam.williams@swdevon.gov.uk**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Hub Committee APPROVES the updated Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan (as set out at Appendix A of the presented agenda report).

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and an updated Action Plan was developed and presented to the Council on 8th December 2020 which was then adopted.
- 1.2 An update was provided to Hub on 8th June 2021 and to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22nd June 2021
- 1.3 This report provides the second update on progress on the action plan since its adoption.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan was adopted on 8th December by Council. It was noted that the Action Plan will be a continually evolving document and that delegated authority be granted to the Director of Strategy and Governance, in consultation with the lead Member for Growing Our Natural Environment, to make revisions to the Plan as and when deemed necessary
- 2.2 It was resolved on the 8th December that performance against the Action Plan was to be monitored on a six-monthly basis.

- 2.3 The first update was provided to Hub Committee on 8th June 2021 and to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 22nd June 2021.
- 2.4 At Hub Committee, among other things, officers were asked to raise the matter of proposals for wind and solar energy sites with the Joint Local Plan Team. Officers were informed that a tender to scope out the plan area's capacity for new renewable energy sites was discussed at the JLP Management Board on 6th September 2020 and a paper was subsequently taken to the partnership board in December 2020 for any specific commissioning work needed in the future. Paragraph 151 of the National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that plans should consider 'identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources'.
- 2.5 The issue of onshore wind was also raised by Members at Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Member's attention is drawn to the outcomes of the Devon Citizen Assembly which will also form the basis for actions concerning onshore wind in the final Devon Carbon Plan. 89% of Devon Citizen Assembly supported the principle of onshore wind. Officers of the partnership are currently drafting actions following the recommendations of the Citizens Assembly (topics included onshore wind, retrofitting and encouraging less car use) with a view to sharing drafts at the end of year before a public consultation takes place in spring 2022. Members are assured however, that this does not take away any of the Councils powers was the Local Planning Authority.
- 2.6 Hub members also requested that it would be beneficial if the format of the plan was revised to separate those Actions that were within the control of the Council and those that were not. This has been done and the updated version can be found at Appendix 1.

3. Outcomes/outputs

- 3.1 The report sets out progress to date on delivery of the action plan in line with the adopted strategy.

4. Progress Update

- 4.1 Appendix 1 contains a revised version of the Action Plan with the latest position on each individual action, new actions and changes to actions marked in red. At the 8th June Hub Committee members had requested that the action plan should highlight areas where the Council has a direct role to play or an indirect/influencing role. The revised action attempts to consolidate this with additional columns to identify the level of

influence, key partners and also the level of impact a proposed action is likely to have.

- 4.2 The revised action plan also includes current operational actions as well as various data sources to monitor key metrics related to the strategy and action plan. The appended action plan also colour codes actions based on their status, orange refers to actions in progress, green is completed and red are suggested for deletion.
- 4.3 Key progress has been made in the following areas since June;
- a. The Council benefitted from a funding opportunity to either initiate or enhance their enforcement procedures in association with the minimum energy efficiency standard (MEES) regulations. The Council's application to the PRS MEES Compliance and Enforcement Competition was successful and we (SHDC and WDBC combined) received a grant allocation of £44,331. The work will involve gathering all the available information and data on the private rental housing market, so that we can target the relevant landlords and promote compliance. Improving properties in private rental sector will help the council's climate change agenda. Recruitment of an officer to carry out the work failed – no suitable applications were received– so we are now talking to local energy groups to support delivery of the required work and for energy groups to provide advice to landlords. The Council will retain the enforcement responsibility.
 - b. The Council continues to hold funding under the Government's Green Homes Grant (GHG) scheme and continues to work towards the delivery of the scheme. The grant will be used to deliver energy saving measures for eligible households and will be delivered during 2021/22. However, due to major supply chain difficulties nationally and locally we are reviewing our approach to delivering these grants. The installations will reduce fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions from the households benefitting from the grants. A range of metrics including lifetime financial and carbon savings will be calculated and reported back at the end of the project.
 - c. Monthly Climate and Biodiversity Newsletters have continued to be produced and released monthly and subscriber have grown month on month from 149 in October 2020 to 391 in October 2021. These newsletters are also sent to Town and Parish Councils and added to the updated Climate Change and Biodiversity Website.
 - d. The Community Forum have continued to meet following the last update. Organising and collating events for Great Big Green week, a national week of climate action in September, became a focus for the forum over the summer with 7 events organised by forum members taking place throughout the

Great Big Green week. The next focus of Forum will be to help with the production of a WDBC Town and Parish Council guide/toolkit for Net Zero.

- e. The next engagement campaign with Carbon Savvy, South Hams District Council, Torridge District Council and North Devon Council was developed and took place during the COP26 fortnight (1 November – 13 November 2021). The focus of the campaign was shopping, titled Shop4good, the campaign follows new research that shows consumer interest in sustainability has increased significantly since the pandemic, and suggests consumer buying power may be doing more to help the climate than originally thought. Since shopping makes up a big part of our carbon footprints, the campaign highlights ways to reduce this and tasks participants to consider this impact and complete a carbon emissions footprint calculator to enter a prize draw.
- f. Completed a feasibility study into the Councils role around EV charging as well as reviewing opportunities for solar and battery storage on our car parks.
- g. Completed Carbon Literacy Training for SLT and ELT in partnership with Torbay Council. The next steps will be to collate the commitments made by trainees and include this as part of a revised action plan when the Devon Carbon Plan is completed and adopted.
- h. Worked with the Devon Climate Emergency partnership to secure funding from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) through the South West Energy Hub to include Tamar Energy Fest, run by Tamar Energy Community, as part of the COP26 Regional Roadshow. The Councils Climate Change Specialist was on hand during the event on Saturday 13th November to answer queries and talk about the Councils approach to decarbonisation and the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership.
- i. The Council has entered into The Devon and Torbay Residential Chargepoint scheme. This is a scheme that would enable the Council to install electric charging points at one more location in the Borough with the grant funding. Subject to the necessary surveys being carried out, a 22kW dual charging point will be installed at Pilgrims Drive car park, Bere Alston. Devon Climate Emergency are working on producing a map of all the publically funded charge points in Devon.
- j. Commissioned Exeter University to conduct an update of the Councils Greenhouse Gas emissions, data collection has been completed and is in the process of being analysed. This new baseline will then lead into a new piece of work to develop an Operational Emissions Decarbonisation Plan.
- k. Scoping work started for a 'DEV32 plus' initiative. The climate emergency and need for urgent action towards net zero is an important material consideration in the planning process. This is recognised by the Secretary of State and explicitly

supported in a recent appeal at Dartmouth where the Inspector said *"It seems to me folly to build new houses now that will commit the owners to potentially expensive and disruptive alterations as the UK moves to decarbonise the heating of its housing stock."* He refused the development concluding that there was a *"failure to address positively the challenge of climate change and the failure to demonstrate that there would be a net gain for biodiversity"*.

Current planning policy, at both local and national level, is out of step with the urgency of the climate challenge and we are keen to go further than our current Joint Local Plan (JLP) policies and Supplementary Planning Document. In advance of the plan review we are preparing an interim planning policy document to explain how we will use the climate emergency as a material consideration in the planning process. It will set out exactly what new development should provide in terms of mitigation, adaptation and resilience to positively contribute to a sustainable future in line with the Climate Change Act 2008 and more recent Government announcements. As part of this work additional toolkits such as the Net Zero Carbon Buildings Toolkit which will be produced to support applicants. To ensure the document has appropriate weight in the decision making process it will be subject to consultation and be formally adopted by the JLP Councils.

- l. Completed a borough wide survey with CoCars and CoBikes to review the scope for shared EVs and Bikes for in the area. The next steps will be to discuss opportunities with CoCars and CoBikes.
- m. We have received our Renewable Energy of Guaranteed Origin (REGO) Certificate for our energy supply 2020/2021 certified by the Carbon Trust.

5. Plans for short term (next 6 months)

- 5.1 The Action Plan will continue to be delivered and developed alongside delivery of 'A Plan for West Devon' and supporting thematic plans.
- 5.2 Over the next 6 months we will expect to see a final version of the Devon Carbon Plan now that the Citizens Assembly has concluded which will trigger an update of our own action plan, bringing in actions from that plan as well as its monitoring indicators.

6. Proposed Way Forward

- 6.1 Hub Committee is recommended to note the updates provided within this report and its appendix and support the progress

made so far with a view to being provided a further update in 6 months' time.

7. 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	
Risk	N	
Consultation and Engagement	Y	There has been no direct consultation and engagement with regard to this report however the update includes details of a range of events that have involved engagement with partners and the community, such as our ongoing running of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Community Forum, which aligns with the principles of the West Devon Borough Council Consultation and Engagement Strategy.
Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	Natural Environment, Built Environment, Communities, Homes
Equality and Diversity	N	No direct implications
Safeguarding	N	No direct implications
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	No direct implications
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Y	The provision of energy efficiency measures will have a positive impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of the households.
Other implications		

Supporting Information

Appendices:

A - West Devon Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan Update

Background Documents:

Adopted Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy

ID	Action	Activity	Latest Update	Estimated Completion Date	Potential Impact Level	Direct of Indirect responsibility	Who is mainly responsible	Who else is involved/Partners
1.1	Investigate procuring truly renewable energy.	a. Council to discuss with community energy providers and aid and support them in developing	Attended a session on 17 November by Regen who briefed participants on LA	Ongoing	Medium	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	
		b. The Council to discuss with Western Power Distribution to determine the actions required to increase local network resilience to increase renewable energy capacity in West Devon.	On going, we have a direct contact and participated in a WPD consultation session in September. Devon County Council working with Regen to scope a Devon renewable energy tariff. Officers to monitor and keep pace		Medium	Influence	West Devon Borough Council	
1.2	Explore forming a non-profit green energy company and understand the capacity of renewable energy generation in the area.	a. The Council to discuss with Western Power Distribution and other stakeholders to determine the actions required to increase local network resilience to increase renewable energy capacity in West Devon as a basis of forming a green energy company or advising on network resiliency or as a vehicle to supporting seed funding.	Suggest deletion, other models emerging for green energy procurement emerging resulting in true renewable energy additionality.	2022	Medium	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	
1.3	Review strategic scale solar, wind and hydro energy for both commercial and community energy development.	a. Investigate the allocation of land for renewable energy production within the Joint Local Plan Area. This work will require a call for sites which could take place alongside the plan review due to begin in 2021.	Preliminary work underway and brief developed for potential Joint Local Plan allocations ready for tender	2024	High	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	Joint Local Plan Team
		b. Investigate the issues and capacity for Hydropower in West Devon. Discuss main issues with the Environment Agency and Dartmoor National Park Authority	no progress		High	Influence	West Devon Borough Council	Environment Agency, Dartmoor National Park
1.4	Identify options for how smart renewable heat, power generation and storage could be considered when the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan are reviewed.	a. Appraise the potential for low carbon heat networks, heat pumps, and hybrid boilers, including identifying current potential funding models and barriers to uptake.	Pre-feasibility work identified as next step. Discussion with Local Enterprise Partnership and Growth Hub being progressed to identify a funding source for it to be commissioned at the appropriate time.	Mid 2022	Medium	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	Joint Local Plan Team
		b. West Devon to monitor funding opportunities to commission and collaborate on future appraisals.	ongoing		Medium	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	
1.5	Aim for a higher result in the energy performance certificates.	a. Continue to apply the new guidance on Policy DEV32 contained within the 2020 Joint Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document.	ongoing	2024	Medium	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	Development Management and Joint Local Plan Team
		b. Review policy DEV32 at Plan Review Stage	DEV32 plus initiative started, see action 2.7 for full detail		High	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	Joint Local Plan Team

		c. Monitor Grant opportunities for retro fit work	The Council benefitted from a funding opportunity to either initiate or enhance their enforcement procedures in association with the minimum energy efficiency standard (MEEES) regulations. The Council's application to the PRS MEEES Compliance and Enforcement Competition was successful and we (SHDC and WDDB combined) received a grant allocation of £44,331. The work will involve gathering all the available information and data on the rental market, so that we can target the relevant landlords and promote compliance. Improving properties in private rental sector will help the council's climate change agenda. Recruitment of an officer to carry out the work failed – no suitable applications were received– so we are now talking to local energy groups to do the required work and for energy groups to provide advice to landlords. The Council will retain the enforcement responsibility.	Sep-21	Medium	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	Climate Change Specialist
1.6	Promote and administer grants for home insulation, efficient heating systems and sustainable energy sources for owner occupied and tenanted properties.	a. Raise awareness for grant schemes and the Solar Together scheme as part of a Climate Change communication strategy involving newsletters, web and social media.	Ongoing as per 1.5c. Community Forum have been briefed and asked to help promote where possible and started discussions about building a local supply chain of installers	Review communications activity each year	Medium	Influence	West Devon Borough Council	Climate Change Specialist and Communications
		b. Continue to administer funding as and when it arises			Medium	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	
1.7	Local Energy Support	a. Council to actively support the Local Energy Bill.	new action Q1 2021 - no progress		Medium	Influence	West Devon Borough Council	
		b. Investigate business rates reductions for farmers who wish to use land for renewable energy	new action Q1 2021 - no progress		Medium	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	NFU

ID	Action	Activity	Latest Update	Estimated Completion Date	Potential Impact Level	Direct of Indirect responsibility	Who is mainly responsible	Who else is involved/Partners
2.1	Investigate the Introduction of differential changes to parking permits and in car parks e.g. Higher carbon emission vehicles pay more.	a. Investigate the method and systems needed to introduce (with a view to trialling) the system in selected car parks and/or streets.	The Devon Citizens Assembly included a topic around encouraging less car use in Devon, particularly financial 'carrots and sticks'. On this issue, the assembly stated. Our support for ambitions to reduce emissions by making car use less attractive would increase with the condition... Roads and Mobility Condition 1.1 That there is widespread investment in ensuring that there is a better public and active transport infrastructure across Devon that can be used as a reliable, regular, affordable and integrated alternative, and that significant progress is made on this before the wider implementation of proposals to discourage car use. Agreed by 89% of members. Roads and Mobility Condition 1.2 That there is an independent authority put in place to oversee and ensure accountability in the collection of resources generated by any charging schemes to ensure they are allocated towards public and active travel improvements (and other road emission reduction schemes) and that their findings are regularly reported. Agreed by 74% of members.	Scoping report after the completion of the Citizen Assembly actions in Spring 2022	Medium	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	
2.2	Ensure new housing developments are much more walking and cycling friendly.	a. Major development sites to consider the inclusion off-road cycle routes to link between other cycle routes where connections exist https://www.traveldevon.info/cycle/cycle-routes/cycle-maps/	ongoing		Medium	Direct and Influence	Joint Local Plan Team, Development Management	
2.3	Better bus provision and strategic park and ride facilities to reduce traffic in towns.	a. Investigate the potential for park and ride facilities in the main towns.	Beginning to work on as part of the wider Placemaking strategy around public transport and Active Travel		Medium	Influence	Bus providers	Placemaking team, Assets, Climate Change Specialist
2.4	Increase uptake of cycling in West Devon ((Draft R&R Plan ref 2.12) and Take a lead in encouraging people to maintain the positives from lockdown – less travel, more exercise etc. (Draft R&R Plan ref 2.10) and Take a lead in encouraging people to maintain the positives from lockdown – less travel, more exercise etc. (Draft R&R Plan ref 2.10)	a. Investigate electric bike hire in towns & and key tourist areas in summer to start to change culture.	Completed a borough wide survey with CoCars to survey the interest for shared e-bike and EVs across the borough		Medium	Direct and Influence	West Devon Borough Council	CoBikes, Local Bike Stores, Sustrans

		b. Increase cycle parking at key locations in towns and villages.	no progress		Low	Direct and Influence	West Devon Borough Council	Sustrans, Devon County Council
		c. Development of a bespoke business support offer 'Go Green' grants to reduce carbon footprints. (Draft R&R Plan ref 2.10a)	no progress		High	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	
2.6	Promote the use of Recycled and Sustainable construction materials through input at planning stage for new developments.	a. Continue to apply recently adopted Joint Local Plan Policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance.	ongoing	ongoing	Medium	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Development Management	
		b. Review Joint Local Plan to investigate options for policies amendments to further incentivise or force the use of recycled and sustainable construction materials.	no progress	2024	Medium	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Development Management	
2.7	Monitor and review policies to reduce the carbon footprint of new developments (Policies DEV32, DEV33, DEV34)	a. Continue to apply recently adopted Joint Local Plan Policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance.	ongoing	ongoing	Medium	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Development Management	
		b. Review policies DEV32, DEV33 and DEV34 at Plan Review Stage.	Scoping work started for a 'DEV32 plus' initiative. The climate emergency and need for urgent action towards net zero is an important material consideration in the planning process. This is recognised by the Secretary of State and explicitly supported in a recent appeal at Dartmouth where the Inspector said "It seems to me folly to build new houses now that will commit the owners to potentially expensive and disruptive alterations as the UK moves to decarbonise the heating of its housing stock." He refused the development concluding that there was a "failure to address positively the challenge of climate change and the failure to demonstrate that there would be a net gain for biodiversity". Current planning policy, at both local and national level, is out of step with the urgency of the climate challenge and we are keen to go further than our current Joint Local Plan (JLP) policies and Supplementary Planning Document. In advance of the plan review we are preparing an interim planning policy document to explain how we will use the climate emergency as a material consideration in the planning process. It will set out exactly what new development should provide in terms of mitigation, adaptation and resilience to positively contribute to a sustainable future in line with the Climate Change	2024	High	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Development Management	

		c. Reconsider a Low Impact Development Policy ('One Planet Living Principles')	no progress	2024	High	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Development Management	
2.8	Investigate adaption and resilience methods for new developments.	a. Joint Local Plan Review - this will either form a new policy or a new revision to policy DEV32	Discussion on this topic at Joint Local Plan (JLP) Board in April	2024	High	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Development Management	
2.9	Review the potential for Borough Energy Networks and invest in housing energy saving measures.	a. Review internal processes to create a flow of investment from developer contributions and government grants related to carbon reduction. For example, invest directly into energy saving measures to help improve the efficiency of the existing housing stock	no progress		High	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team	
		b. Commission an appraisal of the Borough's capacity for local District Energy networks.	Align this work with the Joint Local Plan Review as part of a scoping exercise on energy generation in the Borough	2024	Medium	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team	
2.10.	As part of the JLP review, consider an Article 4 Direction that removes permitted development rights on class Q barn conversions.	a. Review the Annual Monitoring Report evidence whether or not there is too much housing delivery in tier 4 settlements (those areas not included in JLP policy TTV1.1-3) If the evidence continues to show more housing delivery in Tier 4 settlements then an Article 4 direction can be proposed and submitted.	no progress	2024	High	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Development Management	
2.11	Allocate sites for renewable energy, in particular strategic scale solar and wind for both commercial and community energy development.	a. Conduct a call for sites during the Joint Local Plan review process.	no progress	2023	High	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Development Management	
		b. Commission an appraisal of the Borough's capacity for more large scale renewable energy.	Preliminary work underway and brief developed ready for tender	2022	Medium	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Development Management	
2.12	Lobby for changes to the National Planning Policy Framework or any such replacement to prioritise carbon reduction target over housing targets.	a. Respond and input into the proposed changes to the Planning System.	Responses to recent Planning White Paper completed as well as input into the Future Homes Standard Consultation	2021	Low	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Development Management	Climate Change Specialist
		b. Continue to engage in national changes to the Planning system	ongoing	ongoing	Low	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Development Management	Climate Change Specialist
2.13	Maximise local and closed-loop recycling to minimise transport impacts and valorise waste materials.	a. Continue to monitor the recycling uptake	updated 2019 figures now available and extracted (see monitoring data tabs)		Medium	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	

		b. Support and encourage Community Small-Scale Anaerobic Digesters through assistance and guidance to access the BEIS Rural Communities Energy Fund	new action Q1 2021 - no progress		Medium	Influence	West Devon Borough Council	Community groups
2.14	Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans to ensure provision of EV charging points where parking spaces are provided in new developments.	a. Continue to condition EV charging on major developments.	ongoing	ongoing	Medium	Direct	Neighbourhood Planning, Development Management	
2.15	Explore installing electric car charging points in the Borough and ensure DCC bids properly represent Town and Parish Councils	a. West Devon Borough Council has joined the Devon Low carbon Energy and Transport Technology Innovator (DELETTI) project which is a partnership with other local authorities and being led by Devon County Council to install electric vehicle charging points (EVCP) in the Council owned car parks. It has committed to delivering electric charging points in the following car parks in phase one subject to the necessary surveys being carried out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tavistock – Bedford car park • Okehampton – Mill Road car park 	DELETTI project progressing. Instructed APSE Energy to conduct a feasibility study for further EV charging points, solar above car parks and battery storage which has been completed	ongoing	Medium	Direct	Devon County Council	West Devon Borough Council
2.16	Make use of funding opportunities to provide employment and community assets across the Borough, particularly where the market is unlikely to provide this, to minimise the need to travel.	a. Access UK Shared Prosperity Fund if and when it's established and reinforce COVID recovery support grants and initiatives.			Medium	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	Devon County Council
		b. Support and promote training opportunities for trademark and retrofit, this has already taken place this year with	Raised awareness of a recent government scheme where tradesmen could apply for free or subsidised training under the Green Homes Grant skills training competition scheme.	ongoing	Medium	Influence	West Devon Borough Council	Central Government, Training providers
2.17	Investigate the creation of a new EP policy to ensure the correct use of litter bins potentially reducing collection need.		Delete?	No updates				

2.18	The Council will support the principles proposed through the English Waste Strategy regarding the Extended Producer Responsibility. The principles support a circular economy approach which will be funded by producers and will lead to better packaging design, improved recycling and better consumer awareness of what can be recycled.	a. Raise awareness as part of a Climate Change communication strategy involving newsletters, web and social media.	extended producer responsibility for packaging and a deposit return scheme for drinks containers now forms part of the Environment Act 2021. Suggest deletion and move to communications		Low	Influence	Communications	Climate Change Specialist
2.19	Support and encourage use of shared EV's, cycles and E-couriers		Discussions have taken place with CoCars who are currently looking to widen the number of locations. A Borough wide survey with CoCars to gauge interest and identify opportunity has been completed. Meeting to discuss next steps arranged for the end of November	2021	Medium	Influence and Direct	West Devon Borough Council	CoCars, CoBikes, Devon County Council
2.20.	Support and encourage 'reuse and repair cafes' and initiatives such as 'Share Shed'	a. Promote existing facilities through communications activity	new action Q1 2021 - no progress		Medium	Influence	West Devon Borough Council	Climate Change Specialist, Communications
		b. Produce educational material to spread awareness of the benefits of reuse, repair and share	new action Q1 2021 - no progress		Medium	Influence	West Devon Borough Council	Climate Change Specialist, Communications

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ID	Action	Activity	Latest Update	Estimated Completion Date	Potential Impact Level	Direct of Indirect responsibility	Who is mainly responsible	Who else is involved/Partners
3.1	Securing tree planting through development proposals and Biodiversity Net Gain from new development including pushing the new Defra Biodiversity Metric 2.0 at pre-app and for new applications.	a. Clear numbers now in a newly adopted Supplementary Planning Document for tree replacement. For new planting, this is tied to a 10% biodiversity net gain requirement as required by the Supplementary Planning Document using the DEFRA biodiversity metric.	Defra has now released version 3.0 of the Metric, along with a 'minor applications' metric. The Environment Bill has now (in November 2021) received royal assent and is now the Environment Act, this now mandating a requirement for 10% Biodiversity Net Gain. Officers are working with other LPAs in Devon to write a Devon Net Gain guidance note to assist the LPA, developers, applicants and consultant ecologists.	2021-2024	Medium	Direct	Development Mangement, Joint Local Plan Team	
		b. Review process and method for spending 10% net gain developer contributions.	Part of Devon Net Gain guidance approach refenced in 3.1.a	2022	Medium	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Placemaking Team	Devon Local Nature Partnership, Devon County Council
		c. Review metrics and policy requirements at Plan Review Stage.	Subject to Joint Local Plan Review Timescales	2024	Medium	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Placemaking Team	
3.2	Support more approaches by communities for tree planting on our land where there aren't any trees and is consistent with land use and not likely to lead to conflict with neighbours or conflict with the outcomes from the Devon Nature Recovery Network Mapping project (DNRN) (i.e. right trees in the right place)	a. Investigate the creation of a formal system whereby someone with an ability to pay for the upfront cost of planting and a contractual arrangement for West Devon to manage as part of its a new grounds maintenance scheme. Seek opportunities to incorporate tree planting or natural regeneration on WDBC owned sites	Officers are developing proposals for natural regeneration on over 5ha of land at two Council owned sites which will include applications to the Forestry Commission's Woodland Creation Offer grant. These sites identified as 'high spatial priorities' for nature recovery and woodland. Officers also hope to incorporate planting of a number of standards on Council owned sites around Tavistock this season.	Ongoing	Medium	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	Devon County Council, Town and Parish Councils, Community Groups

3.3	Develop and adopt a more biodiversity/environmentally conscious Grounds Maintenance procedure.	<p>a. A new Grounds Maintenance procedure with a review of the following. - Fix more carbon in vegetation cover (relaxing cutting regime) whilst managing community expectations and a level of complaint about 'unkempt/untidy' sites, lazy Councils, etc.)</p> <p>- Scrape sites, reseed with wildflower mix, annual cut, use mixes that increase soil carbon sequestration</p> <p>- Look to reduce/eliminate weed killer use on hard surfaces</p> <p>- Assess potential to increase wildlife value balanced against amenity requirements (e.g. for short grass for dog walking/recreation, etc.)</p>	A review of the Grounds Maintenance specification with a view to a more biodiverse conscious approach is anticipated to be undertaken during 2022. This will follow on from a similar review underway in South Hams and will apply learning from this experience.	Report early 2022	High	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	
3.4	Pushing tree planting agenda within Neighbourhood Plans (allocating spaces for woodland creation and sustainable management) Supporting mapping of local ecological networks/corridors within Neighbourhood Plans	a. Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy to be sent to Neighbourhood Plan groups to deliver on actions and provide advice on how to apply findings from the Devon Nature Recovery Network process.	Ongoing	Ongoing	Low	Direct	Neighbourhood Planning, Climate Change Specialist	

3.5	Ring-fencing and promoting a % of Members grant schemes (SCLF/Localities Fund) towards tree planting schemes for community groups, Town and Parish Councils, or money towards a 'Tree Planting grant scheme' (we did this in 2010 for the International Year of Biodiversity)	a. Investigate options with a view to developing a formal process and framework	Potential Deletion	Report update at the end of 2021	Medium	Direct		
3.6	Aim to develop and adopt a Natural Environment Design Guide to support Development Management proposals – establishing the importance of street trees in urban/built environment proposals, trees in new hedge lines, and tree/woodland planting as part of on-site public open space provision.	a. Investigate and review during the Joint Local Plan Review stage and using the outcomes from the Nature Recovery Network Project.	This is now an Interim Devon Carbon Plan proposal (action F2) - Develop a Biodiversity Net-Gain Supplementary Planning Document that can be adopted by local planning authorities	2022	Medium	Influence	Devon County Council	Joint Local Plan Team, Placemaking Team
3.7	Establish natural flood management approaches to increase carbon sequestration, reduce erosion, and deliver improved catchment management.	a. Investigate how the Council can influence this and establish what direct actions the Council can take and what actions the Council can contribute to, for example through partnerships	The Tamar Valley AONB led TAMARA project is working with farmers and landowners, seeking to mitigate climate change and improve water quality and the surrounding water environment, including targetted tree and orchard planting, and hedgerow restoration. The TAMARA project will provide farmer/landowner support alongside the introduction of the new ELMS agri-environment schemes. The Westcountry Rivers Trust (WRT) Tamar Catchment Based Approach seeks to bring together multiple interests in river basin management planning, including aspects of farm advice, reducing point source and diffuse pollution, carbon storage and sustainable storage. The WRT are currently working up a new River Basin Management Plan and Flood Risk Management Plan.		Medium	Influence	Environment Agency, Climate Impacts Group (DCE & DCC), Devon Local Nature Partnership	Assets

3.8	Investigate the potential to apply a % management fee to offsite compensation/Biodiversity Net Gain payments (via s106) to part-fund a new/existing role (there will be an additional pressure) in terms of findings sites to delivery this offsite habitat creation (which the LA could either buy and manage or work in partnership with another, e.g. DWT, RSPB).	a. Review in 2021 once a fund of Biodiversity Net Gain Payments has built.	At present it is considered that the requirement for offsite compensation/Biodiversity Net Gain payments may be less than anticipated. Nonetheless, where appropriate a management fee will be applied to cover offsite contributions/arrangements where they would incur officer input and this secured by section 106. Officers are working with counterparts in other Devon LPAs with respect to a guidance document on Biodiversity Net Gain to assist with a clear and consistent approach.	TBC	Medium	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	Devon Wildlife Trust, RSPB, DCC
3.9	New development led by West Devon Borough Council to aim to be exemplar (e.g. Building with Nature, bird and bat boxes, good design with GI, etc.).		Ongoing	2020-2050	High	Direct	West Devon Borough Council	
3.11	Contribute to the creation of a Devon Nature Network and assist with the recovery of Devon's biosphere.	a. Enable landowners to express an interest in hosting biodiversity net gain initiatives related to development	The North Devon Biosphere have done some initial work on setting up a Natural Capital Marketplace as a means of linking landowners with sites that could facilitate nature recovery/carbon sequestration, with developers/LAs/companies that are looking to offset/invest. Officers will monitor.	Ongoing	High	Influence	Devon Local Nature Partnership, Devon County Council	North Devon Biosphere
		b. Potentially allocate land for Carbon Sequestration as part of Joint Local Plan Review	no progress	2024	High	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Placemaking Team	
		c. Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan reviews to incorporate the principles of the Land Use Framework when setting spatial planning policies and allocating land for development	The first iteration of the Nature Recovery Network map is being launched at the end of November. The role these play in underpinning a Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy will evolve over the coming year/s particularly with the Environment Bill passing into law (now Environment Act 2021) and its requirement for Local Nature Recovery Strategies.	2022	Medium	Influence	West Devon Borough Council	Neighbourhood Planning
		d. Support community land ownership and management by engaging with communities to designate land/farms as community assets under the Community Right to Bid scheme.	suggest deletion - advised this is unlikely to take place with current resources	Ongoing	Medium	Influence	Community Groups, Town and Parish Councils	West Devon Borough Council

3.12	WDBC engages with members of the public and farmers to look at alternatives to using herbicides and pesticides (in particular glyphosate).	a. To form part our communications and outreach work in the first instance	no progress	Ongoing	Medium	Influence	West Devon Borough Council	Communications, Climate Change Specialist, NFU
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ID	Action	Activity	Latest Update	Estimated Completion Date	Potential Impact Level	Direct of Indirect responsibility	Who is mainly responsible	Who else is involved/Partners
4.1	Raise awareness of Climate Change and Biodiversity issues as part of a communication strategy involving newsletters, web updates and social media activity.	a. A new engagement scheme to inform and advise our residents on the following issues;	Monthly Newsletters continue to be created and publish, subscriber counts have risen from 149 in October 2020 to 391 as of October 2021.	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency
		- Encourage individuals to plant wildflowers and maintain environments which encourage pollinators, such as bees, to thrive.	no progress but expected example leading through new GM procedure	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency
		- Encourage individuals to look at the impact of their diet and support the increase in the consumption of in season, locally produced food across Devon	Ran a Carbon Footprint/Lifestyle Campaign with Carbon Savvy, North Devon Council and Torridge in March. Second Campaign called Shop4Good ran between 1 November and 13th November 2021	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency
		- Support individuals to make better transport choices, this will require better infrastructure, however.	Ran a Carbon Footprint/Lifestyle Campaign with Carbon Savvy, North Devon Council and Torridge in March. Second Campaign called Shop4Good ran between 1 November and 13th November 2021	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency
		- Provide advice on choosing truly renewable energy electricity tariffs (rather than REGOS / greenwashing)	no progress	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency

		- Encourage reduced energy consumption at home – install greater insulation, use less hot water, use less heating, turn off electrical appliances when not in use, don't use unnecessary appliances like tumble dryer etc.	Ran a Carbon Footprint/Lifestyle Campaign with Carbon Savvy, North Devon Council and Torrridge in March	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communications	Devon Climate Emergency
		- Inform residents about how they can recycle. Link in more with recycle Devon and all of the other efforts that people are going around the Borough.	Comms recycling activity underway	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communications	Devon Climate Emergency
		- Promote roof and window gardening for those without traditional garden spaces (Draft R&R Plan ref 2.9).	no progress	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communications	Devon Climate Emergency
		- Involve residents about what we are doing with climate change.	Monthly Newsletters continue to be created and publish, subscriber counts have risen from 149 in October 2020 to 391 as of October 2021. New comms strategy being finalised	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communications	Devon Climate Emergency
4.2	Volunteer/support collective action via community groups and provide time and resourcing to Town and Parish Councils.	a. Have a presence at community events.	Climate Change Specialist present at Devon County Show at DCE stand and at Tamar Energy Fest	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communications	Devon Climate Emergency
		b. Develop a 'Community Forum' of stakeholders in the area to discuss actions and collaborate.	Done	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communications	Devon Climate Emergency
		c. Work with Town and Parish Councils over changes to their practices and activity they can do to contribute to local, borough and county action plans.	Work underway on a Town and Parish Guide to Net Zero, developed in collaboration with our Community Forum	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communications	Devon Climate Emergency

Action reference	Action	Activity	latest position	Key Officer/Team
OP.1	Investigate procuring truly renewable energy		Currently on a fixed renewables tariff but this includes nuclear.	Stuart Truss, Laura Wotton
OP.2	Explore installing low water delivery taps/plumbing to all our toilet facilities at Follaton House			Stuart Truss, Laura Wotton
OP.3	Investigate energy efficient measures could be retro-fitted to Council owned properties	Conduct an Energy Audit of Council Buildings to understand the issues associated with each building and determine what fabric measures are required. This area of work will need to be split between operational assets and leased assets to keep manageable		Stuart Truss, Laura Wotton
		Carry out a feasibility study to Investigate alternative heating systems (Biomass boilers, Air/Ground source heat pumps) and additional PV at relevant buildings		Stuart Truss, Laura Wotton
OP.4	Energy Efficiency – light fittings changed to LED			Stuart Truss, Laura Wotton
OP.5	Investigate installing much more sophisticated thermostats for the heating system at Follaton House			Stuart Truss, Laura Wotton
OP.6	Investigate use of electric car between Tavistock and Totnes plus other businee routes			Andy Wilson
OP.7	Explore the use of electric vehicles for all fleet.	Production of a feasibility study and forward fleet plan	ongoing into 2022	Dale Cropper
OP.8	Increase EV charging points at key Council buildings and depots			Emma Widdicombe and Dale Cropper
OP.9	Explore a rolling programme of electric/manual equipment to move away from petrol/generators.	Investigate options as part of Ground Maintenance review		Dale Cropper/Mark Capper
OP.10	Explore a reduction in number of 'cuts' and promoting wild flowers etc.	Production of a Grounds Maintenance review		Rob Sekula/ Mark Capper
OP.11	Embed the Climate and Ecological emergency into day to day function	Carry out Carbon Literacy Training for ELT and SLT	Completed	Adam Williams
		Collate participants proposed actions to include in Operational Action Plan refresh	carry out with wholesale strategy and action plan review upon the completion of the Devon Carbon Plan	Adam Williams
OP.12	Reduce supply chain emissions	Work with top 10 suppliers to explore their approach to carbon reduction	no update	Adam Williams

OP.13	Introduce culture of agile working, working from home & skype meeting to reduce unnecessary travel.	Introduce further advice on working in an agile way to reduce commuting miles for 2021. Suggest that subject to personal circumstances and operational needs, employees reduce commute to office to 1 day a week	ongoing into 2022	Andy Wilson
OP.14	Reduce commuting and business mileage by reviewing internal practices and incentivising greener alternatives	Introduce business train booking account to encourage journeys by rail		Andy Wilson
		Introduce a car sharing scheme publishing on the intranet the intended journey and times		Andy Wilson
		Introduce a company scheme incentivising the purchase of electric cars	Completed	Andy Wilson
		Encourage car sharing by paying 5p per mile if sharing on a business journey		Andy Wilson
		Explore changing the criteria for essential car user allowance, remove minimum mileage requirement and don't reimburse between FH&KP		Andy Wilson
		Investigate electric bikes for some facility servicing. For example, toilet cleaners. This would require having supplies and cleaning kit at each locality.		Stuart Truss
		Reduce business mileage by greater use of technology to reduce need to attend meetings	Since the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2020, the Council has now rolled out Teams functionality to all staff and there is now an understanding that face to face meeting should be reserved for collaborative project work	Mike Ward
		Reduce business mileage by encouraging customer self-service and reduce need for officer/customer to travel		Lesley Crocker
		Encourage/incentivise greater use of cycles for commuting		Andy Wilson
		Identify individual commute and business usage and set reduced targets. Could form part of PCI discussions. Manager to discuss reduction in commuting based on personal and operational needs		Andy Wilson

Tab

- [Area Emissions](#)
- [Renewable Energy](#)
- [Energy performance of buildings](#)
- [Sub regional fuel poverty](#)
- [Local Authority Collected waste](#)
- [How often people cycle](#)
- [EV Vehicles](#)
- [Carbon Sequestration Activity](#)
- [Investment Secured for Nature Intervention](#)
- [Climate Change Newsletter Subscribers](#)
- [Solar Together](#)

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- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-reg>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statist>
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published/updated

- Jun-21
- Sep-20
- Mar-21
- Apr-21
- May-21
- Dec-20
- May-21

Monthly

Definitions
2020 Baseline

Refers to data captured during development of the Climate Change Strategy between June and October 2020

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Local Authority	Year	Industry Electricity	Industry Gas	Industry 'Other Fuels'	Large Industrial	Agriculture	Industry Total	Commercial Electricity	Commercial Gas	Commercial 'Other Fuels'	Commercial Total	Public Sector Electricity	Public Sector Gas	Public Sector 'Other Fuels'	Public Sector Total	Domestic Electricity	Domestic Gas	Domestic 'Other Fuels'	Domestic Total	Road Transport (A)	Road Transport (B)	Road Transport (Minor Roads)	Diesel Railways	Transport Other	Transport Total	Net Emissions: Road	Net Emissions: Rail	Net Emissions: Air	Net Emissions: Marine	Net Emissions: Landfill	Net Emissions: Other	LULUC F Net	Grand Total	Population ('000s)	Per Capita Emission (kg)	Area (km ²)	Emissions per km ² (kt)
West De E07000C	2005	32.2	5.3	22.8	19.1	38.2	117.6	37.7	15.8	0.9	54.4	6.4	8.6	1.7	16.7	65.2	35.3	34.6	135.1	123.0	0.0	45.2	1.3	1.5	171.1	-85.4	33.0	-11.3	-2.2	30.0	0.0	-35.9	459.0	50.5	9.1	1,164.7	0.4
West De E07000C	2006	34.3	5.2	20.7	19.0	36.4	115.6	40.2	15.5	0.8	56.5	6.9	8.4	1.3	16.5	67.2	35.9	35.7	138.9	123.6	0.0	46.6	1.3	3.3	174.7	-86.9	32.3	-13.1	-2.2	30.3	0.0	-39.6	462.6	50.8	9.1	1,164.7	0.4
West De E07000C	2007	33.1	4.7	20.5	18.9	34.1	111.3	38.7	14.1	0.7	53.5	6.6	7.6	1.4	15.6	67.0	33.8	32.6	133.5	117.9	0.0	49.1	1.3	3.2	171.5	-87.1	31.5	-13.6	-2.2	30.6	0.0	-40.8	444.5	51.7	8.6	1,164.7	0.4
West De E07000C	2008	32.4	4.3	16.7	18.9	33.8	106.2	38.0	12.9	0.7	51.6	6.5	7.0	1.1	14.6	64.8	35.9	35.0	135.7	124.3	0.0	49.5	1.3	3.3	178.4	-88.1	31.0	-14.8	-2.2	30.9	0.0	-43.3	443.2	52.6	8.4	1,164.7	0.4
West De E07000C	2009	29.6	3.8	17.2	18.7	33.9	103.1	34.7	11.2	0.9	46.8	5.9	6.0	1.0	12.9	59.9	33.2	33.1	126.2	121.0	0.0	47.4	1.3	3.2	172.9	-88.2	30.5	-15.2	-2.2	31.1	0.0	-44.1	418.0	52.9	7.9	1,164.7	0.4
West De E07000C	2010	26.9	4.3	19.2	20.9	34.0	105.2	31.5	12.7	0.7	44.9	5.4	6.9	0.9	13.2	61.5	36.5	37.6	135.5	119.0	0.0	47.7	1.4	3.2	171.3	-89.2	29.9	-15.5	-2.2	32.2	0.0	-44.9	425.2	53.3	8.0	1,164.7	0.4
West De E07000C	2011	23.9	3.2	15.7	18.5	34.6	95.9	28.8	8.7	0.7	38.2	4.7	5.0	1.2	10.8	57.9	29.4	30.2	117.6	117.4	0.0	46.1	1.3	2.8	167.7	-89.7	29.4	-16.1	-2.2	32.7	0.0	-46.0	384.2	53.7	7.2	1,164.7	0.3
West De E07000C	2012	27.3	3.5	15.5	18.3	34.9	99.5	33.9	8.9	0.5	43.3	5.6	5.4	0.9	12.0	62.1	32.5	30.4	125.0	118.6	0.0	44.7	1.3	2.9	167.5	-87.9	28.9	-17.4	-2.2	33.1	0.0	-45.4	401.8	53.9	7.5	1,164.7	0.3
West De E07000C	2013	26.1	4.4	16.1	20.1	33.6	100.3	33.7	10.3	0.6	44.6	5.7	6.4	0.9	13.0	57.1	34.2	30.3	121.6	116.1	0.0	46.7	1.3	2.6	166.6	-88.8	28.4	-19.2	-2.2	33.1	0.0	-48.7	397.6	54.0	7.4	1,164.7	0.3
West De E07000C	2014	22.3	3.8	17.9	18.3	34.6	97.0	29.3	9.3	0.6	39.2	4.9	5.6	0.9	11.4	48.2	28.7	26.8	103.7	115.6	0.0	49.9	1.3	2.5	169.3	-89.3	27.9	-18.2	-2.2	33.6	0.0	-48.2	372.4	54.3	6.9	1,164.7	0.3
West De E07000C	2015	18.5	3.2	16.9	19.3	35.7	93.6	25.6	7.2	1.0	33.8	4.1	6.1	0.2	10.4	41.4	30.8	26.9	99.2	118.5	0.0	50.4	1.3	2.5	172.7	-90.4	27.5	-20.7	-2.2	34.6	0.0	-51.2	358.6	54.5	6.6	1,164.7	0.3
West De E07000C	2016	15.0	4.2	17.8	19.1	37.3	93.3	20.8	9.2	1.0	30.9	3.2	6.8	0.2	10.3	33.5	32.0	27.2	92.7	121.3	0.0	54.0	1.3	2.7	179.4	-91.0	27.1	-20.0	-2.2	36.3	0.0	-49.8	356.7	54.7	6.5	1,164.7	0.3
West De E07000C	2017	13.7	1.8	18.4	18.3	37.0	89.1	17.6	18.6	0.4	36.6	2.7	13.1	0.3	16.0	29.5	31.2	26.1	86.9	127.5	0.0	54.9	1.3	2.7	186.5	-90.9	26.8	-22.7	-2.2	36.0	0.0	-53.0	362.1	55.3	6.5	1,164.7	0.3
West De E07000C	2018	13.1	1.2	17.2	15.4	36.7	83.7	17.1	11.4	1.1	29.6	2.5	7.9	0.3	10.7	26.4	32.8	27.1	86.2	125.4	0.0	55.9	1.2	2.7	185.2	-90.7	26.3	-23.3	-2.2	36.4	0.0	-53.5	341.9	55.5	6.2	1,164.7	0.3
West De E07000C	2019	11.6	19.7	16.3	1.4	37.9	86.9	15.4	6.8	1.0	23.2	2.3	4.8	0.3	7.4	23.7	33.3	27.4	84.4	123.7	0.0	57.5	1.1	2.7	185.0	-90.1	26.1	-23.9	-2.2	36.8	0.0	-53.5	333.4	55.8	6.0	1,164.7	0.3

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