

West Devon Hub Committee



West Devon
Borough
Council

Title:	Agenda								
Date:	Tuesday, 12th April, 2022								
Time:	2.00 pm								
Venue:	Chamber - Kilworthy Park								
Full Members:	<p style="text-align: center;">Chairman Cllr Jory Vice Chairman Cllr Cheadle</p> <p><i>Members:</i></p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td>Cllr Edmonds</td> <td>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

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, Members are invited to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Registerable Interests and Non-Registerable Interests including the nature and extent of such interests they may have in any items to be considered at this meeting;

3. Items Requiring Urgent Attention

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

4. Confirmation of Minutes

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Minutes of meeting held 08 March 2022

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

6. Hub Forward Plan

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7. Amendment of the Off Street Parking Places Order

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8. Housing Strategy Year 2 Update and Homelessness Strategy 2022-27

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9. Revenue and Benefits Service Review Update

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10. Climate Change & Biodiversity Action - Council Net-Zero Update

105 - 118

11. A Plan for West Devon- Quarterly Progress Report

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Agenda Item 4

At a Meeting of the **HUB COMMITTEE** held in the **Council Chamber, Kilworthy Park, Tavistock** on **TUESDAY** the **8th** day of **March 2022** at **2:00 pm**

Present: Cllr N Jory – Chairman
Cllr R Cheadle – Vice Chairman (*via Teams and therefore in a non-voting capacity*)

Cllr P Crozier	Cllr L Daniel
Cllr C Edmonds	Cllr A Leech
Cllr C Mott	Cllr T Pearce
Cllr B Ratcliffe	

In attendance: Chief Executive
Section 151 Officer
Director of Place and Enterprise
Democratic Services Manager
Head of Housing
Head of Development Management
Deputy Section 151 Officer
Head of Strategy and Projects

Other Members also in attendance in a non-voting capacity:
Cllrs Ewings, Sellis, Southcott and Yelland

***HC 67/21 APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence forwarded to this Meeting.

***HC 68/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

***HC 69/21 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Hub Committee meeting held on 1 February 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

***HC 70/21 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

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

***HC 71/21 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 noted that the published Plan incorrectly stated that the '*Regeneration and Investment Strategy*' (Minute HC 74/21 below refers) was within the Economy portfolio area of responsibility when in fact it fell within the Resources and Performance portfolio area. In addition, the published Plan had omitted to state that Cllr Mott was the lead Member with responsibility for Built Environment.

***HC 72/21 RESPONSE TO THE HOUSING CRISIS**

Consideration was given to a report that outlined the start of the response to the issues that were set out in the recent Council decision to declare a Housing Crisis at its meeting held on 15 February 2022.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- (a) the need for ongoing monitoring and progress reporting. Having recently declared a Housing Crisis, the Committee recognised the need for regular monitoring and progress updates to be presented to the membership;
- (b) the need to respond quickly to the Crisis. In citing the time being taken to progress the Springhill project, a Member emphasised the importance of responding and taking action quickly in order to counter the Housing Crisis;
- (c) the 'Step-On' pilot scheme recently adopted by South Hams District Council (SHDC). In highlighting the recent decision taken by SHDC, Members hoped that a similar proposal could be brought forward to a future Hub Committee Meeting;
- (d) consultation and engagement. A Member expressed his frustrations at the lack of reference in the published agenda report to consultation and engagement.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

- 1. the proposed measures to address the Housing Crisis (as set out in the published agenda report) be approved; and
- 2. a letter be sent outlining the Council's lobbying objectives to the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP (Secretary of State for Levelling Up).

HC 73/21 PLANNING IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE: LOCAL VALIDATION LIST AND PLANNING CHARTER

A report was considered that sought to update Members on the progress of two specific actions contained in the adopted Planning Improvement Plan. These actions being: to recommend adoption of both the revised Local Validation List and the Planning Charter.

In discussion, the following points were raised:

- (a) In support of the proposals, the anticipated savings in officer time and increased emphasis on sustainability were particularly welcomed;
- (b) One the team was at full capacity, a commitment was given to Members that, in those instances when planning applications were defined as being 'out of time', then regular progress updates would be given to the planning agent or applicant.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

- 1. Council be **RECOMMENDED** to approve the Local Validation List (as set out at Appendix 1 of the published agenda report);

2. the Planning Charter (as set out at Appendix 2 of the published agenda report) be approved; and
3. authority be delegated to make any minor amendments to the Planning Charter to the Director of Strategy & Governance, in consultation with the lead Hub Committee Member for the Built Environment.

HC 74/21 REGENERATION AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Members considered a report that set out the first Integrated Performance Management report since the Council had adopted its Corporate Strategy ('A Plan for West Devon') that covered the Quarter 3 period (from 1 October 2021 to 31 December 2021).

During discussion, the following points were raised:

- (a) With regard to Section 1.2 of the published agenda report, a Member felt that this was slightly misleading. As a result, the Committee agreed that it should read: *'Borrowing for investment outside of area is no longer an acceptable approach for Council investment'*;
- (b) Whilst supporting the proposed updates to the Regeneration and Investment Strategy, the need to still maintain a close grip on both risk and yield was stressed.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** to:

1. approve the update to the Regeneration and Investment Strategy (as contained in Appendix A of the presented agenda report); and
2. change the title of the 'Invest to Earn Committee' to the 'Regeneration and Investment Committee'.

***HC 75/21 MONTH 10 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2021/22**

Consideration was given to a report that enabled Members to monitor income and expenditure variations against the approved Budget for 2021/22. In addition, the report also provided a forecast for the year-end position.

In discussion, reference was made to:-

- (a) rising fuel costs. Given the current global crisis having a significant impact on fuel costs, a Member questioned whether this would have a consequent impact on the visitor economy this year and car parking income. In acknowledging the point, whilst the income target remain unchanged, the lead Member for Resources gave an assurance that it would be kept under regular review through the quarterly budget monitoring reports;
- (b) local food production. In respect of the Council commitment to local food production, it was noted that supporting the local agricultural industry and reducing the amount of food miles were outlined in the adopted 'A Plan for West Devon'.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the forecast income and expenditure variations for the 2021/22 Financial Year and the overall projected deficit of £43,000 (0.6% of the total Budget of £7.302 million), which is very close to a break-even position, be noted.

***HC 76/21 CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2021/22**

The Committee considered a report that advised Members of the financial position of the Council as at 31 January 2022.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) Members stressed the importance of all local Ward Members being proactive within their local communities and town and parish councils to ensure that Section 106 monies were spent before the prescribed deadline expired.
- (b) With regard to the ongoing issues associated with the moveable floor at Parklands Leisure Centre, Members emphasised the need for a long-term engineering solution to be found.

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

***HC 77/21 EXEMPT ACCOMMODATION UPDATE**

Members gave consideration to a report that sought to endorse the Council's current approach to managing exempt accommodation, which prioritised protecting both vulnerable residents and the public purse.

In discussion, tributes were paid to both the Leader and lead officers for their hard work and tenacity in reaching this point.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the Council's approach to managing exempt accommodation, which prioritises protecting both vulnerable residents and the public purse be endorsed; and
2. the Council continue to engage and lobby at a local, regional and national level to ensure that the Regulations be amended to prevent exploitation of the individual tenants and the Housing Benefit System.

(The meeting terminated at 3.00 pm)

Chairman

(NOTE: THESE DECISIONS WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE FROM THURSDAY, 17 MARCH 2022, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MINUTES HC 73/21 PART 1 AND HC 74/21 WHICH ARE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON 5 APRIL 2022, UNLESS CALLED IN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULE 18)

Hub Committee Forward Plan

About the Forward Plan

This is the provisional forward plan for at least four months starting April 2022. 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 April 2022

Portfolio Area	Report Title and Summary	Lead Member / Officer	Documents to be considered in making decision	Date of Decision	Consultees and means of consultation
Natural Environment	<p>Title: Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan – Council net-zero update</p> <p>Purpose: in accordance with the Council resolution, to consider the six-month review of the Climate Change & Biodiversity Action Plan.</p>	Cllr Daniel / Drew Powell	Report of the Director for Governance and Assurance	12 April 2022	
Communities	<p>Title: Car Parking Orders</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that seeks to amend the Car Parking Order in light of change in legislation.</p>	Cllr Pearce / Emma Widdicombe	Report of the Senior Specialist – Parking & Public Conveniences	12 April 2022	
Housing and Benefits	<p>Title: Revenue and Benefits Service Review</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that presents the findings of the Revenue and Benefits Service Review</p>	Cllr Ratcliffe / Steve Mullineaux	Report of the Deputy Chief Executive	12 April 2022	
Council	<p>Title: Quarter 4 Integrated Performance Management Report</p> <p>Purpose: To consider the integrated performance management report for the Quarter 4 period of 2021/22.</p>	Cllr Jory / Neil Hawke	Report of Head of Strategy and Projects	12 April 2022	
Homes	<p>Title: Housing Strategy Year 2 Action Plan and Draft Homeless Strategy</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that presents the Housing Strategy Year 2 Action Plan and the Draft Homeless Strategy for adoption.</p>	Cllr Ratcliffe / Issy Blake	Report of Head of Housing	12 April 2022	



Portfolio Area	Report Title and Summary	Lead Member / Officer	Documents to be considered in making decision	Date of Decision	Consultees and means of consultation
Council	<p>Title: Annual Report of Achievements 2021/22</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that presents the Council's Draft Annual Report for 2021/22</p>	Cllr Jory / Neil Hawke	Report of Head of Strategy and Projects	7 June 2022	
Built Environment	<p>Title: Planning Improvement: Service Plan Update</p>	Cllr Mott / Drew Powell	Report of Director of Governance and Assurance	7 June 2022	
Communities	<p>Title: Key Partnership Funding</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that presents the approach to funding for our key partners beyond the current three-year funding term (which ends on 31 March 2023).</p>	Cllr Pearce / Neil Hawke	Report of Head of Strategy and Projects	7 June 2022	
Homes	<p>Title: Springhill Project Update</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that presents an update on the Springhill Project.</p>	Cllr Ratcliffe / Laura Wotton	Report of Head of Assets	7 June 2022	
Council	<p>Title: Quarter 1 Integrated Performance Management Report</p> <p>Purpose: To consider the integrated performance management report for the Quarter 1 period of 2022/23.</p>	Cllr Jory / Neil Hawke	Report of Head of Strategy and Projects	12 July 2022	
Resources and Performance	<p>Title: 2021/22 Revenue Outturn</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that presents the final Revenue Outturn figures for 2021/22</p>	Cllr Edmonds / Pauline Henstock	Report of the Deputy Section 151 Officer	12 July 2022	
Resources and Performance	<p>Title: 2021/22 Capital Outturn</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that presents the final Capital Outturn figures for 2021/22.</p>	Cllr Edmonds / Pauline Henstock	Report of the Deputy Section 151 Officer	12 July 2022	



Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **12th April 2022**

Title: **Amendment of Off Street Parking Places Order**

Portfolio Area: **Cllr Terry Pearce**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Date next steps can be taken:

Author: **Emma Widdicombe** Role: **Senior Specialist Parking**

Contact: Emma.Widdicombe@swdevon.gov.uk

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Hub Committee is RECOMMENDED to:

- 1. Authorise the Head of Assets to publish notice of proposals for the West Devon Borough Council (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2022 to consolidate with amendments the current off-street parking places order; the amendments to be made to be to the relevant parts of the Order to reflect changes to legislation in respect of parking enforcement.**
- 2. Request the Head of Assets to prepare a report summarising the representations received in response to the notice of proposals for consideration by the Hub Committee before making a decision whether to make the off-street parking places order as proposed or with modifications.**

1. Executive summary

- 1.1** Following the Government commitment to make the moving traffic enforcement powers under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 (the 2004 Act) available to local authorities outside of London they have now taken the opportunity to consolidate, the existing civil enforcement regimes for bus lane contraventions alongside parking contraventions.

- 1.2 This report seeks to implement these changes of legislation within our Off Street Parking Places Order to ensure, from the 31st May 2022 and thereafter Penalty Charge Notices will be subject to the The Civil Enforcement Of Road Traffic Contraventions (Approved Devices, Charging Guidelines and General Provisions) (England) Regulations 2022 and The Civil Enforcement of Road Traffic Contraventions (Representations and Appeals)(England) Regulations 2022
- 1.3 The forthcoming regulations are legislative changes and must be amended to ensure we are compliant with our enforcement of the Off Street Parking Places Order.
- 1.4 This report also requests that Members consider the recommendations to revoke all previous Parking Orders and consolidate into one new Off Street Parking Places Order (2022)
- 1.5 The recommendations will enable the Council to continue to manage off-street parking in an efficient and effective manner.
- 1.6 Without these updates to the Off Street Parking Places Order, enforcement will not be possible in respect of the additions and changes to the Parking Order.

2. Background

- 2.1 This report seeks to implement the legislative changes due to come into effect on 31st May 2022 following the Government's commitment to make moving traffic enforcement powers under Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 available to local authorities outside of London.
- 2.2 All local authorities undertaking civil enforcement of parking contraventions must ensure the Regulations are amended to ensure they remain compliant with the Regulations.
- 2.3 Although, as a Council we will not be undertaking moving traffic enforcement (this is a Devon County Council on street parking function) in making these powers available, Government have taken the opportunity to consolidate under the 2004 Act the existing civil enforcement regimes for bus lane contraventions, together with parking contraventions. This creates a more cohesive civil enforcement regime, by removing numerous inconsistencies and providing more efficient regime administration.

3. Outcomes/outputs

Legislative Changes

- 3.1 Following the amendment to the Traffic Management Act 2004, all penalty charge notices issued to and including 30th May 2022 will be subject to the current regulatory regime for parking enforcement (currently under 2007 regulations made under the 2004 Act). All local authorities undertaking civil enforcement of parking contraventions must ensure the Regulations are amended to 2022 Regulations.
- 3.2 Any penalty charge notices issued on 31st May 2022 and thereafter will be subject to the 2022 regulations.
- 3.3 The existing regulations will therefore be replaced as per the table below:

Existing Regulations:	To be replaced with:
The Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General Regulations 2007	The Civil Enforcement of Road Traffic Contraventions (Approved Devices, Charging Guidelines and General Provisions)(England) Regulations 2022
The Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (Guidelines of Level of Charges)(England) Order 2007	
The Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (Approved Devices)(England) Order 2007	
The Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) Representations and Appeals Regulations 2007	The Civil Enforcement Of Road Traffic Contraventions (Representations and Appeals)(England) Regulations 2022

- Revocation of Previous Off Street Parking Places Order**
- 3.4 To assist effective management of all Parking Orders, all previous Parking Orders will be revoked and subsequently consolidated into one new Off Street Parking Places Order 2022. This will make interpretation easier and more robust, assist Adjudicators when considering appeals and provide a stronger platform for further changes.

4. Options available and consideration of risk

- 4.1 A 21 day public consultation will be undertaken following the meeting.
- 4.2 The Council must ensure the Off Street Parking Orders are amended with the new Regulations to ensure we can continue to enforce parking restrictions by law.

- 4.3 During the consultation period, customers who wish to object to or comment on recommendations will have the opportunity to do so. Objections will be considered prior to implementation of any changes.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 The proposed amendments to the Off Street Parking Places Order proceed in accordance with the recommendations.
- 5.2 Should the Recommendations be accepted, the following steps will occur:
- a. 21 day consultation commence (April 2022) to which customers will be alerted by notice in the local press, on the Council’s website and in all affected car parks. This will allow customers to make comments on and/or objections to the proposals, should they wish to do so.
 - b. All objections duly made under regulation 8 will be considered and referred to the Hub Committee for further consideration if necessary,
 - c. Otherwise, the detailed implementation of the recommendations should be delegated to the Head of Assets in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for car parking for implementation.
- 5.3 This proposal fits with the following priorities:
 Council
 Communities
 Environment

6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Council has power to provide and to regulate off-street car parks under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 set out the procedures to be followed before and after making any order regulating the use of car parks.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money		If the legislative changes are not made penalty charge notices will not be enforceable through the existing legislation

Risk		The Regulations must be amended to ensure we can continue to enforce parking contraventions That if the Council does not amend and consolidate the existing off-street parking places orders it may have difficulties in taking enforcement action against drivers who park in a hazardous manner or otherwise misuse a car park.
Supporting Corporate Strategy		Council Communities Environment
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact		There are no negative impacts. There may be small positive impacts with customers considering alternative means of transport or care sharing.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		No implications.
Safeguarding		No implications.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		No implications.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		No implications.
Other implications		None.

Supporting Information

Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

None

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Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **12 April 2022**

Title: **Housing Strategy Year 2 Update and Homelessness Strategy 2022-27**

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 Overview and Scrutiny Call-in period

Author: **Sophie Cobbledick** Role: **Senior Housing Specialist**

Contact: **01803 861441** Sophie.cobbledick@swdevon.gov.uk

RECOMMENDATION

It is RECOMMENDED that the Hub Committee:

Part 1 – Housing Strategy Year 2 Action Plan

- 1. That Members review the progress to date on Better Homes, Better Lives**
- 2. That Members endorse the Year 2 Action Plan**

Part 2 - 2022/27 Homelessness Strategy:

- 1. That Members approve the Joint South Hams and West Devon Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 be adopted with effect from the 1st April 2022**
- 2. That Members approve the Joint Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2022-23 be adopted with effect from the 1st April 2022**

Part 1 – South Hams & West Devon Housing Strategy Year 2: Review and Update

Author: Alex Rehaag

Role: Senior Housing Specialist

Contact: 01822 813722 Email: alex.rehaag@swdevon.gov.uk

Executive summary

- 1.1 The Council adopted a new Housing Strategy 'Better Homes, Better Lives' in April 2021. This was a joint plan between South Hams and West Devon. Housing has since been recognised as a priority for both Councils in their separate corporate strategies and further endorsed by the declaration of a Housing Crisis in both South Hams & West Devon.
- 1.2 The first year of the Housing Strategy will shortly be complete. This report contains a review of progress against the themes and priorities to date and a new delivery plan for the second year. Significant achievements in the first year of the Housing Strategy include:
 - Planning consent achieved for the redevelopment of Springhill.
 - The housing of 40 households requiring adaptations through our Disabled Adapted Panel
- 1.3 The new delivery plan contains some further activity around the Housing Crisis declaration actions and the opportunity taken to align the delivery plans of the corporate strategies, housing strategy and housing crisis.

2. Background

- 2.1 Better Homes, Better Lives, was adopted in April 2021, as the Country started to emerge from the covid-19 pandemic. There were still many unknowns about the longer term impacts at that time, hence the need to create a strategy that was able to be flexible to changing needs.
- 2.2 The consequence of the pandemic has had several local impacts, which led in part to the declaration of a housing crisis in the Borough. The availability of private rented accommodation was vastly reduced, as landlords flocked to take advantage of the rising demand for holiday accommodation as opportunities for foreign travel were drastically reduced. The stalled construction and lack of building materials also saw fewer homes built than was anticipated, again leading to an increase in demand. The County also has reported significant difficulties in retaining and recruiting carers for some of our most vulnerable residents particularly in rural areas, leading to challenges in providing care packages. It is important for the Council to be responsive to these changes and to look at creative and innovative solutions to the challenges.

- 2.3 So critical are those challenges to West Devon, that the Council declared a housing crisis in February 2022. Accompanying this was a 15 point plan – a mix of partnership work and direct action and a raft of lobbying activity for campaigns for change to national policy and legislation.
- 2.4 Better Homes, Better Lives is subject to an annual review as documented in the Housing Strategy document with an updated action plan made publically available in the Spring. This will be presented to members alongside the homeless strategy and as closely as possible to the Overview and Scrutiny review of the Housing Theme of “A Plan For West Devon” the West Devon corporate strategy. The Housing Crisis remains a standing item on the Hub committee agenda, allowing for ample opportunity to report on progress.
- 2.5 Attached to this report are:
- Appendix 1 the review of the first year of Better Homes, Better Lives and introduction to year 2
 - Appendix 2 – New action plan Year 2

3 Outcomes/outputs

- 3.1 This report seeks to inform members of the Executive of the progress to date on Better Homes, Better Lives the 5 year housing strategy for South Hams and West Devon. It also seeks endorsement of the Year 2 Action Plan.
- 3.2 Progress on the Action Plan will form the basis of the regular Housing Crisis update reports to the Executive.

4 Options available and consideration of risk

- 4.1 The Council has been clear in its ambition to tackle the housing crisis. A renewed Action Plan demonstrates the steps the Council is taking to address this.

5 Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 That the Executive reviews the progress of the Year 1 Action plan for “Better Homes, Better Lives” and endorses the Action Plan for Year 2.

Part 2 – Joint Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 and 2022-23 Action plan

Author: Sophie Cobbledick

Role: Senior Housing Specialist

Contact: 01803 861441

Email: sophie.cobbledick@swdevon.gov.uk

Executive summary

- 1.1 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 which addresses the findings of the review. The Joint South Hams and West Devon Homelessness five year Strategy was last published in 2017 and has now completed its 5 year span. A review of the achievements made over the lifetime of the strategy and a review of current and likely future needs and trends was conducted as part of the process of developing the new strategy.

- 1.2 Notable achievements identified following the review included The prevention of homelessness for 707 household's between April 2018 and Feb 2022
- 1.3 As a result of this review four key areas of housing need were identified: Single Households, Families, Households with additional needs and Rough Sleepers. These key areas formed the content for the Joint South Hams and West Devon Homelessness Strategy 2022-27
- 1.4 The Content of the Strategy has been developed following extensive and robust consultation with Members, Stakeholders and the public.
- 1.5 The strategy will sit with the Housing Strategy and link with the Corporate Priorities for: Improving Homes - Every resident has access to a quality and safe home and Strengthening our Communities - An area that our communities can be proud of.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities to review homelessness and the influencing factors for the area and produce a strategy which addresses local need.
- 2.2 The review of the progress made under the 2017-22 Homelessness Strategy 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 our 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 Members are asked to approve the Joint South Hams and West Devon Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 be adopted with effect from the 1st April 2022
- 3.2 Members are asked to approve the Joint Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2022-23 be adopted with effect from the 1st April 2022
- 3.3 Officers will report back in 2023 on the progress made against this Action Plan.

4. Options available and consideration of risk

- 4.1 Some actions may require funding. It is important to note that Local Authorities still received a prevention of homelessness grant

from central Government and this is likely to remain for the foreseeable future. For the year 2022-23 West Devon has been awarded £174628 in prevention grant, plus an additional £3442 new burdens funding to support the delivery of the Domestic Abuse Act. We are not making a request for any additional funding to deliver this strategy.

- 4.2 Members will note that our financial advice was contracted to Homemaker for 2018/19 and extended to 2021/22 following successful delivery of the contract. Additional funding received enabled us to extend this service to offer support to those impacted upon by the Covid 19 pandemic. The tender process for the new financial advice contract will commence this year with a contract to be in place by September 22.
- 4.3 Failure to adopt and deliver a Homelessness Strategy will result in the Local Authority not meeting its duty under the 2002 Homelessness Act.

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 That members recommend the adoption of the Joint South Hams and West Devon Homelessness Strategy 2022-27
- 5.2 That members approve the 2022-23 Joint Homelessness Strategy Action plan

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance		<p><u>Part 1 – Housing Strategy</u> As part of the commitment in the Better Homes, Better Lives Housing Strategy document, it was agreed to review progress annually and produce a new delivery plan.</p> <p>Unlike the Homeless strategy it is not a statutory requirement to have a Housing Strategy, however it is a corporate priority for the Council and therefore essential it has a plan for delivery</p> <p><u>Part 2 - Homelessness Strategy</u> 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 which addresses the findings of the review.</p>
Financial implications to		<u>Part 1 – Housing Strategy</u>

include reference to value for money		<p>None as a direct implication of this report. All new initiatives requiring finance will be subject to separate reports</p> <p><u>Part 2 – Homelessness Strategy</u> It is important to note that Local Authorities still receive a prevention of homeless grant from central Government. For the year 2022-23 West Devon has been awarded £174628 in prevention grant, plus an additional £3442 new burdens funding to support the delivery of the Domestic Abuse Act. As most of the 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		<p><u>Part 1 – Housing Strategy</u> The Council has declared a Housing Crisis and has prioritised housing in its corporate strategy. Failure to produce an action plan detailing housing activity would undermine these commitments.</p> <p><u>Part 2 – Homelessness Strategy</u> It is a statutory requirement to have a current Homelessness Strategy. Failure to produce one would need to be explained to the MHCLG.</p>
Supporting Corporate Strategy		Themes: Improving Homes Strengthening communities & Delivering quality Council Services
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact		<p><u>Part 1 – Housing Strategy</u> No direct impacts arising although individual projects will consider their impact.</p> <p><u>Part 2 – Homelessness Strategy</u> No direct impact – individual projects will consider their impact</p>
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		<p><u>Part 1 – Housing Strategy</u> The housing Strategy was subject of an Equality Impact Assessment</p> <p><u>Part 2 – Homelessness Strategy</u> Consultation on the strategy was reflective of the demographic of the area.</p>
Safeguarding		<p><u>Part 1 – Housing Strategy</u> No direct implications as a result of this report</p> <p><u>Part 2 – Homelessness Strategy</u> As the Homeless Strategy Action Plan concerns work with very vulnerable people and one of the priorities is around Health and Wellbeing, the</p>

		corporate safeguarding policy will underpin the work of officers who regularly work with homeless households.
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		<u>Part 1 – Housing Strategy</u> No direct implications as a result of this report <u>Part 2 – Homelessness Strategy</u> Devon & Cornwall Police contributed to the development of the strategy and will remain significant partners during the delivery of relevant actions in the action plan.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		<u>Part 1 – Housing Strategy</u> No direct implications as a result of this report, however there is activity within the action plan that is designed to respond positively to health and wellbeing. <u>Part 2 – Homelessness Strategy</u> The prime concern for the Strategy is around tackling and preventing homelessness which in turn is designed around improving the health and wellbeing of people living in the area.
Other implications		None identified

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Part 1 – Housing Strategy

- Appendix 1 the review of the first year of Better Homes, Better Lives and introduction to year 2
- Appendix 2 – New action plan Year 2

Part 2 Homelessness Strategy

- Appendix 3 Draft Joint South Hams and West Devon Homelessness Strategy 2022 – 27
- Appendix 4 - Joint South Hams and West Devon Homelessness Strategy Action Plan 2022-23

Background Papers:

Part 1 – Housing Strategy

- Better Homes, Better Lives South Hams and West Devon Housing Strategy 2021-2026
- A Plan for West Devon
- Plymouth, South Hams & West Devon Joint Local Plan

Part 2 Homelessness Strategy

- Housing Strategy 2021-26
- A Plan for West Devon

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South Hams & West Devon

Better Homes, Better Lives

Housing Strategy 2021-2026



First year action plan review



South Hams
District Council



West Devon
Borough Council



Introduction

In autumn of 2021 both Councils introduced separate corporate strategies. Both Councils have included Housing as a key corporate objective.

Whilst being a key priority on its own, housing is also reflected in other priorities, particularly in wellbeing, economy and environment. Both Councils have also made declarations of both a climate and housing crisis.

The corporate strategies for both Councils are underpinned by the:

- ◆ Joint Local Plan
- ◆ Housing strategy “Better Homes Better Lives”
- ◆ Joint South Hams and West Devon homelessness strategy

The 5 year **Housing Strategy for South Hams District and West Devon Borough Council**, was adopted in April 2021. It was recognised at the time that the Strategy was required to be flexible enough to respond to the changing housing situation, particularly in light of the impact of the pandemic on our local communities. In recognition of this impact both councils have declared a Housing Crisis and each committed to an action plan aimed at addressing the unique needs of our rural areas. These action plans both supplement and complement the existing Housing Strategy, further strengthening our approach to meeting the needs of our residents.



Corporate Strategy



Strategic Themes

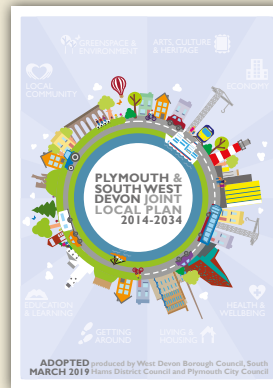


Corporate Strategy



Strategic Themes

Underpinning Documents





Foreword

We are pleased to provide an update from the first year of *Better Homes, Better Lives*, the joint Housing Strategy for South Hams and West Devon.

At the time of adoption the world was starting to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, however this past year has seen many challenges reverberating from this and these are felt acutely in relation to housing. Both South Hams and West Devon have seen huge issues with affordability, availability of property and delays in housebuilding and the increase in short term holiday lets. This has culminated in our housing crisis declarations, and both Councils are determined, through partnership working, direct action and political lobbying to tackle the issue head on.



Improving homes

Better Lives for All and the Housing Strategy

We are focussed on existing housing, and our priority is also to support the delivery of new local homes that are affordable to local people. We want people to be able to continue living in the area that they have grown up, where their employment and support is nearby and where their health and wellbeing is acknowledged. We want to enable local people to live in their homes for as long as possible through the delivery of our services.

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We have declared a Housing Crisis in the South Hams and this strategy will help us to address many of the issues this involves, in particular the growth in the number of second homes and the lack of available accommodation that we face and the impact that this is having on preventing our communities to thrive. We want to increase awareness of the best use of our existing housing stock and how we can support people to live in more appropriate housing for their needs, whether this is downsizing or getting a foot on the housing ladder.

We also understand that energy efficient homes will be a high priority for our residents due to the rising cost of fuel bills and we need to make sure that none of our residents face homelessness and have a secure and safe roof over their head.



Cllr Judy Pearce

South Hams
District Council

Lead Member
for Homes

A Plan for West Devon and the Housing Strategy

We are driving the delivery of new affordable homes for local people in West Devon. These are homes that will meet the various different needs of our communities; the young, the older generation and those that may require specialist housing to live as independently for as long as possible. We are bringing forward a flag ship re-development of our homeless hostel which will provide safe and warm accommodation for those that find themselves in the unfortunate position of not having a roof over their head. Keeping them local to their family, support, schools and jobs.

West Devon has declared a Housing crisis and we are committed to working through the actions contained in this to ensure that our existing stock is of a good standard for our residents to live in. We will encourage those living in larger accommodation than their needs to downsize to more appropriately sized properties to allow families a chance to continue to live in the area they know and love.



Cllr Barry Ratcliffe

West Devon
Borough Council

Lead Member
for Homes



Background

South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council adopted their new *Housing Strategy* “*Better Homes, Better Lives*” in April 2021 which set out the Councils housing ambitions for the next 5 years.

It was essential that the plans had maximum flexibility to ensure it could respond to the housing needs of the District & Borough. As part of the ongoing monitoring; the strategy will be reviewed annually and an updated action plan will be adopted, with a continuing focus on our themes ‘*Housing for Place*’ and ‘*Housing for people*’.

Housing for Place



- Promote balanced and sustainable communities
- Ensuring that homes support the health and wellbeing of the area

Housing For People



- Homes that support the Health & wellbeing of our residents
- Make the best use and improve quality of existing housing



The Councils are pleased to report that progress on the Year 1 Action Plan is good. Despite the pandemic and response required by the councils throughout that time, very few tasks require a revised timescale for completion. Some of the slippage reported can be attributed to delays in terms of building due to the Covid-19 restrictions; which has led to national shortages in materials and a challenging year for the labour market. Similarly, some of the face to face events that were planned for year 1 will now take place in year 2. However, the Councils have an agile working policy, and so despite the rule to work from home, we have continued to work with minimal interruption and delivered our services across the housing team in as normal way as possible.

Declaration of a Housing Crisis

As a reflection of the chronic issues with affordability and availability of accommodation for local residents, both Councils have declared a housing crisis setting out steps they want to tackle the issue locally. Housing is a priority of the corporate strategies **“Better Lives for all”**

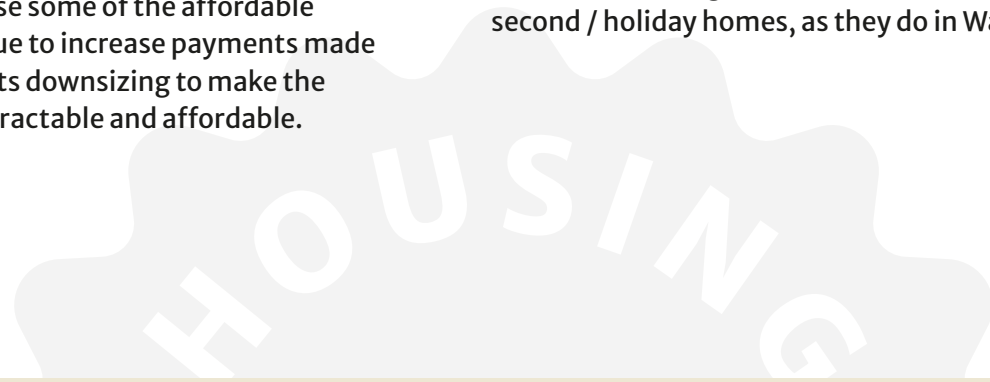
and **“A Plan for West Devon”** and both Council’s have made their position clear, with a raft of measures which include political lobbying for legislative change, direct delivery and introductions of policies and incentives to make best use of housing stock.

The current housing market is challenging, and changes to the economy as a result of Brexit and the pandemic require the Council to react quickly to intervene and assist people in our local area. This includes lobbying for change in legislation and national policy. We can report that people who, only a short while ago, would have been able to resolve their housing need without our assistance are now unable to do so. The lack of affordable housing to rent, while the increase in house prices for those looking to buy is having a lasting impact on our local area. The ability to get a foot on the housing ladder has become more difficult for those just starting out, as has rightsizing and adapting homes for the elderly or those with mobility problems. The Council has introduced initiatives to tackle some of these challenges and whilst it is too soon to measure their success we look forward to reporting on these in the future.

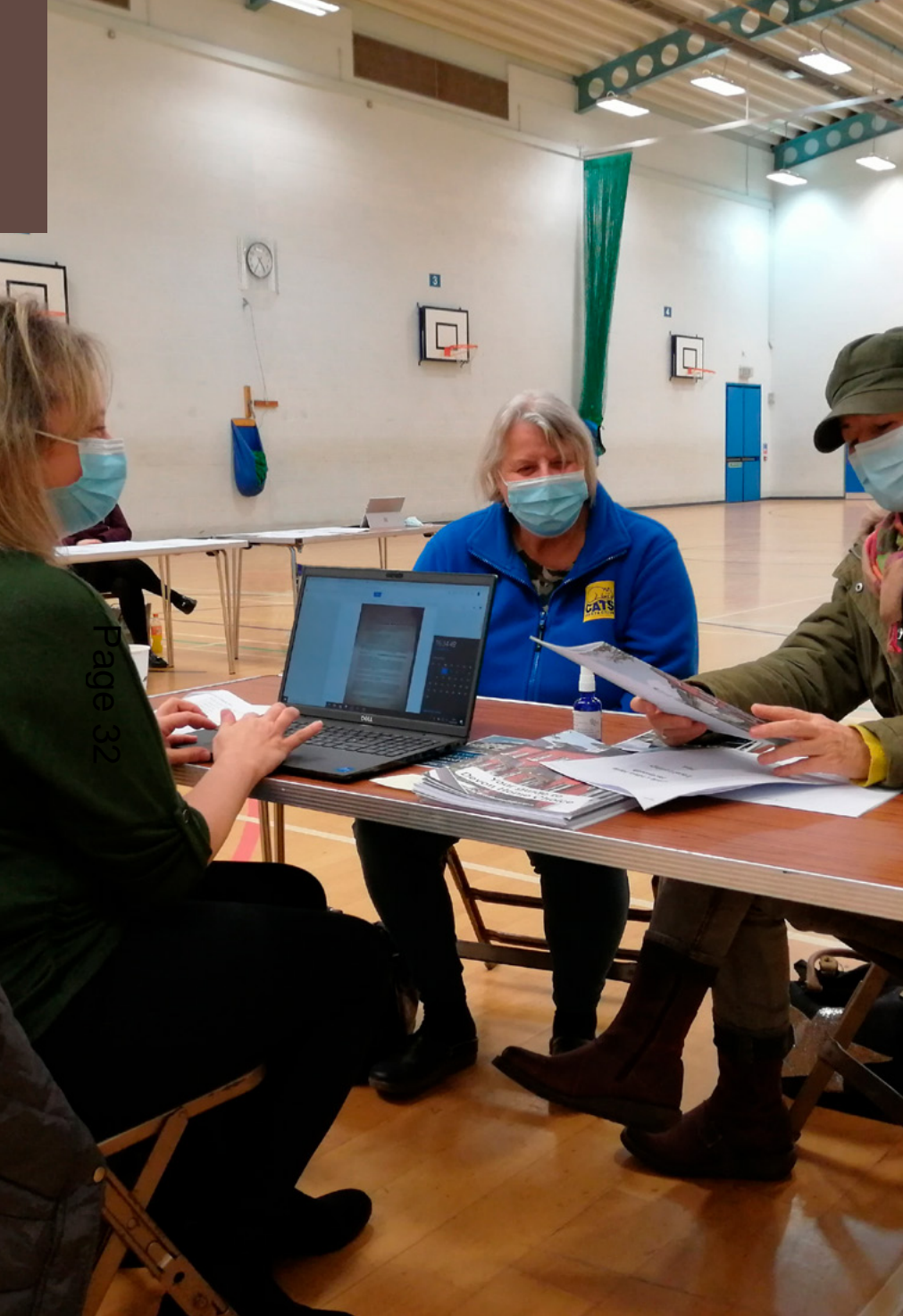




1. The District Council will lobby government, through MPs and the Local Government Association, to allow a Council Tax charge on housing plots with planning permission if they have not been built after a specified period. This would encourage developers to get on and build their sites without delay.
2. They will also lobby Government to review all holiday accommodation. This would ensure that it is properly regulated, complying with local planning policies and taxes. This could include an extension of the 90-day short let legislation, a proper planning class for short lets and proper licencing for them. This would prevent people finding loopholes in the taxation system and prevent too many local homes being converted to holiday accommodation
3. The Council should also immediately review all holiday letting in the District to ensure that the owners are paying the correct amount for the removal of waste and recycling. Businesses should not be on the normal domestic recycling and waste collection.
4. South Hams District Council will also ask the Joint Local Plan project team to review the amounts of affordable housing in the Joint Local Plan and see if this can be increased, so that the percentage of “First Homes” on a development is in addition to the existing requirement for 30% affordable housing.
5. The District Council already runs a letting agency to encourage landlords to make properties available for local families in need. There should be further promotion of this and regular landlord forums to encourage more properties to become available.
6. The District Council works closely with registered providers on many housing projects across the District; they will now be working with them to ensure the best use of those properties, such as to encourage tenants to downsize where possible and make larger properties available for larger households.
7. In addition to this, the District Council is proposing to use some of the affordable housing revenue to increase payments made to those tenants downsizing to make the move more attractable and affordable.
8. The Council is committed to using Section 106 affordable housing contributions as soon as possible, to help fund developments anywhere in the District where the terms of the Section 106 agreements will allow.
9. The Council also wants to campaign for changes to the Broad Market Area, to better reflect the costs of rents in the South Hams.
10. The Council would encourage the development of an exemplar site of low carbon modular housing, to show that developments can be both stylish and great to live in.
11. South Hams District Council also agreed to actively seek opportunities to invest in Council owned social housing with highly sustainable specification.
12. To lobby Government to allow local councils to be able to charge 200% Council Tax on second / holiday homes, as they do in Wales.



1. Demonstrate our commitment to the wellbeing of homeless people in the Borough by providing quality temporary accommodation (such as is proposed at Springhill Tavistock) and reduce the need for less appropriate forms of temporary accommodation.
2. Act where the Council has a land holding and take an interventionist approach to the housing market over the longer- term, where there is demonstrable housing need, leading to improved long term housing outcomes.
3. Recognise the market failures locally around accommodation options for vulnerable people (exempt accommodation), work in close partnership with Devon County Council to provide alternatives – putting people before profit. At the same time lobby national government to make legislative changes to remove the incentives for unscrupulous providers and to protect the needs of this vulnerable group.
4. Recognise the need for extra care accommodation in the Borough (such as proposed at Plymouth Rd) and ensure such schemes are supported to come forward.
5. Actively contribute to ‘Team Devon’s’ housing task force and housing commission to build the case for affordable housing as a key priority in any pan-Devon Page No devolution ask.
6. Lobby government through our MPs and the LGA to review the regulation of holiday accommodation, to ensure all holiday accommodation is suitably regulated and made subject to local planning policies and taxes. We should also appeal for an extension to the 90-day short term let legislation to be extended outside London and lobby DLUC for a separate planning class for short term lets and a proper licensing system to cater for them.
7. As the Council moves towards a review of the JLP, aspire to the highest affordable housing threshold that is sustainable and underpin it in policy.
8. Create a long term strategic partnership with a high quality Registered Provider to see the delivery of affordable-led housing at scale and over the long term in the Borough.
9. Continue to work closely with our main Registered Providers to ensure best occupancy of stock, not just by providing financial incentives for downsizing, but, where a step into home ownership may be possible, supporting tenants to make that move through a deposit grant scheme.
10. Use any Section 106 affordable housing contributions as soon as possible to help fund developments anywhere in the Borough where the terms of the Section 106 Agreement permit this.
11. As agreed at the last Hub Committee meeting, campaign for changes to the Broad Market Area to better reflect the costs of rents in West Devon.
12. Actively seek opportunities to invest in Council owned social housing with high sustainability specification (including modular housing) to support those on low incomes who are unable to afford ‘affordable’ rented housing.
13. Aligned with our Climate Change Emergency, continue to fund (and bid for further national funding) improvements to existing private sector houses within the Borough, recognising that housing is responsible for 40% of national CO2 emissions.
14. Lobby MPs and Central Government to provide an incentive to landowners for the provision of land specifically for Local Needs Affordable Housing. Giving landowners a tax break when providing land for affordable housing where there is an identified need, would, it is believed, help to release land at a reduced cost to support the small scale provision of affordable housing in our rural communities.

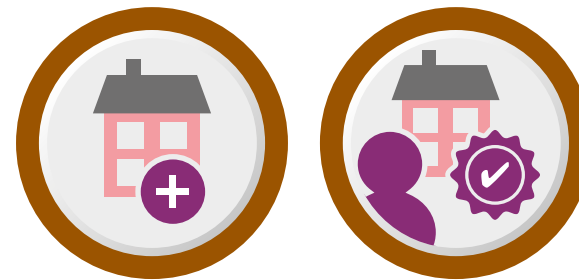


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Affordable Housing Delivery

How did we do in Year 1?

Both councils have performed well with regard to affordable housing delivery through the Joint Local Plan, however, demand for services remains high and the councils continue to work hard to resolve housing need issues cross the district and borough.

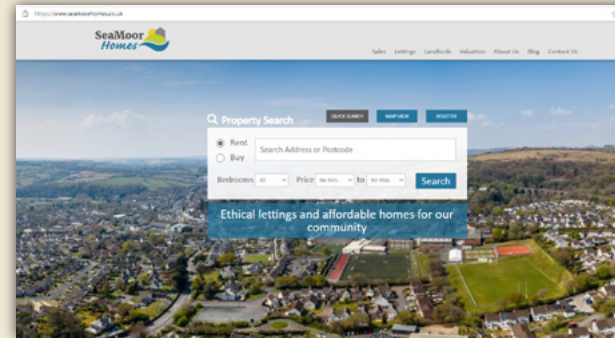
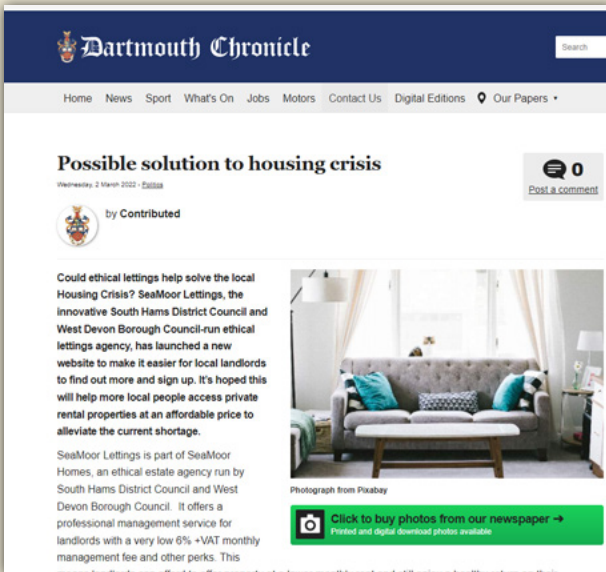




Elmhurst Lodge

Place Priority 1: Promote Balanced and Sustainable communities

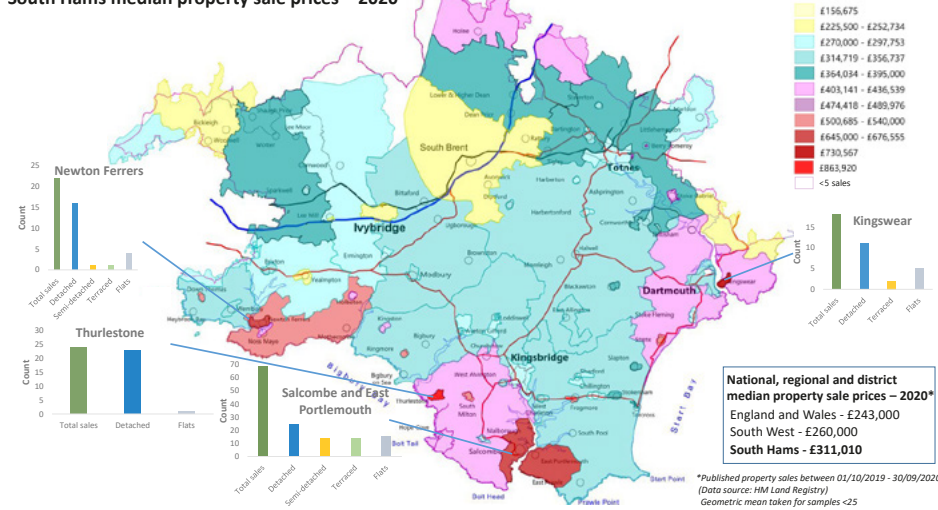
- Achieved a planning consent for a new hostel in West Devon for use as quality temporary housing for households facing homelessness
- Exceeded our affordable housing delivery target to include an additional 86 affordable homes over and above target.
- Step on scheme for South Hams approved to commence 1st April 2022
- Achieved planning on an exception site to deliver a council led affordable housing scheme delivering 8 affordable homes to be managed by South Hams District Council
- Launched our new SeaMoor Homes in-house lettings and marketing website for homes to rent and to buy
- Oversaw completion of purpose built affordable rented scheme for clients with learning and mobility difficulties at Elmhurst Lodge in Dartington and worked alongside partner agencies to ensure accommodation was allocated appropriately to tenants requiring specialist accommodation.



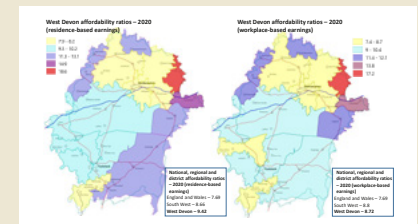
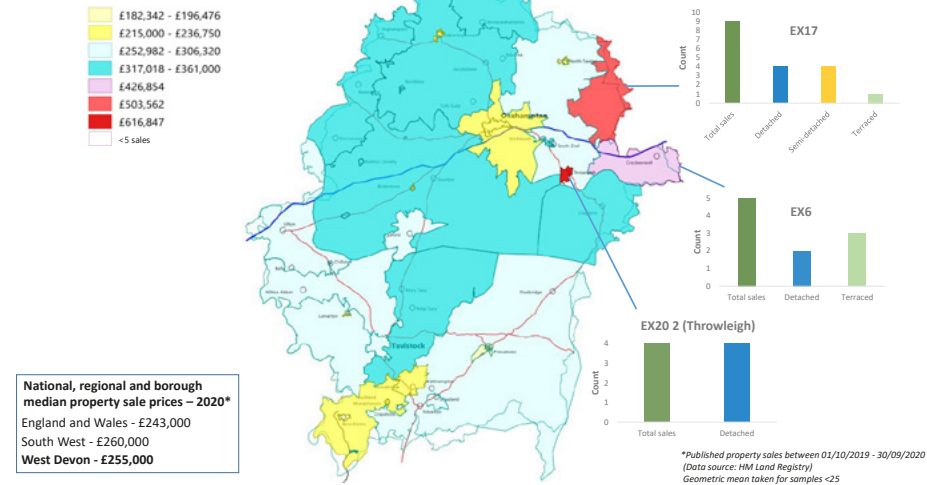
Place priority 2: Promote balanced and sustainable communities

- We have spent over £960,000 from the better care fund in South Hams and over £480,000 in West Devon
- Initiated procurement process to commence scoping of housing scheme for adults with additional needs. Working alongside Ivybridge Town Council.
- Planning granted, subject to a S106, for an Extra Care scheme in Tavistock to meet local needs.
- Commenced scoping of existing council owned stock for use as housing in Okehampton and Tavistock
- Developed a mapping system to illustrate clearly areas of housing need and where information gaps exist. To be managed and populated by our newly appointed Housing Analyst

South Hams median property sale prices – 2020*



West Devon median property sale prices – 2020*



People Priority 1: Homes that support the health and wellbeing of our residents

- Prevented and relieved homelessness for 164 households in South Hams and 97 in West Devon
- Formed a Disabled adapted panel to optimise matching of adapted housing stock to those who need it. 40 households successfully matched to appropriate housing.
- Completed 132 Disabled Facilities Grants in South hams and 95 in West Devon – supporting 227 people to remain in their own homes.
- Committed 1/3 Green Homes Grant to increase energy efficiency in the private rented sector
- Permanently employed a dedicated Rough Sleeper Outreach officer to assist those people sleeping on the streets

People Priority 2: Make the best use of and improve the quality of existing housing stock

- Increased our downsizing incentive for those tenants of Registered Providers who are seeking smaller accommodation, this freeing up larger properties for families on our housing register. Since the revision took place in December 21, 6 households have been supported to downsize.
- Developed Landlord information and tenancy management advice packs, to be rolled out online in 2022
- Intervened in the retaliatory eviction of 3 households to prevent unlawful evictions and ensure landlords provide homes to the required standards.
- Reviewed and implemented a new Tenancy Strategy

Over the last 2 years it has been more difficult to meet some of the actions, particularly where face to face home visits, or forums were required. This is particularly of note around the Gypsy, Traveller and Van Dweller outreach work. The forum previously planned for 2021 has been re booked and will take place in April 2022. Outreach staff have conducted some outreach work with gypsy and travellers where pandemic restrictions allowed. Focus on this area of outreach work will increase as restrictions are lifted and whilst staff safety can be managed.

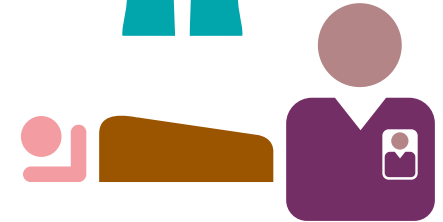
Prevented and relieved homelessness

164

97



Outreach officer employed



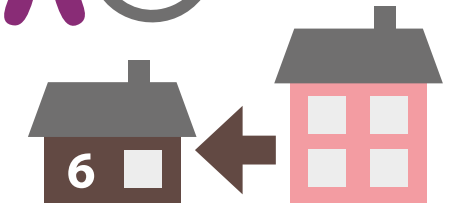
132

95



Disabled Facilities Grants completed

Households supported to downsize



Looking to the future – Year 2

The new action plan continues to focus on *Housing for Place* and *Housing for People* and the priorities under each area. Health and Wellbeing also remains a crucial focus on the services which this strategy seeks to deliver and this in turn is supported by a new 5 year homelessness and rough sleeper strategy that is due to be adopted in April 2022.

The Council continues to focus in year 2 on ensuring that we are not only delivering new housing of the right type for people in the right places, but that we also make best use of existing stock. More than ever we need to work hard to ensure tenants both private and of our Registered Provider partners and homeowners, live in homes that are well maintained, energy efficient and meet their health and wellbeing needs.

We will learn from the successes of our established Disabled Adapted Panel to support more people to continue to live independently for as long as possible in their own home or to empower them to move to more suitable accommodation.

The new 5 year Homelessness strategy will strive to achieve delivery of an excellent homelessness service to ensure that everyone has a safe roof over their head and provide support through our 'street navigators' to assist people with advice and assistance in to a private or housing association tenancy.

We will continue to deliver affordable housing through the Joint Local Plan and through Neighbourhood Plans with an increased emphasis on community engagement to ensure that homes meet the needs of our rural and coastal communities.

As part of the work to tackle the Housing Crisis, both Councils have enhanced the Tenants Incentive downsizing scheme for tenants of our Registered Providers. South Hams additionally launched the 'Step On' pilot scheme to assist tenants of Registered Providers to gain a foot on the shared-ownership ladder by gifting a deposit of up to £5000. This innovative scheme is designed to support people into shared ownership and also to create vacancies in the rented stock to assist with households on the housing register. The scheme launches on the 1st of April, and there is appetite to explore the same initiative in West Devon.

The Councils are also committed to continuing to work closely with our communities to understand and promote services, understand fully local housing need and work to improve our homes and ensure our communities are listened to and supported.





South Hams
District Council

www.southhams.gov.uk



West Devon
Borough Council

www.westdevon.gov.uk



South Hams & West Devon

Better Homes, Better Lives

Housing Strategy 2021-2026



Action Plan 2022-23



South Hams
District Council



West Devon
Borough Council

Action Plan 2022-23

The Joint *Housing Strategy For South Hams and West Devon; 'Better Homes, Better Lives'* was adopted in 2021. This document highlights the priority's for both councils and our high level plans on how we will deliver them. The document was developed with a recognition of the need to be able to respond flexibly to changing needs across both local authority areas.

Both South Hams and West Devon have experienced multiple local impacts, including higher house prices and increased rents, supply and construction and availability of long term let accommodation. As a result, a Housing Crisis was declared in the South Hams in September 2021 and in West Devon in February 2022. Both Councils are determined, through partnership working, direct action and political lobbying to tackle their respective Housing Crisis' head on.



Each Council has produced and committed to a series of actions, tailored specifically to the issues each area is facing. These actions are additional to and complemented by our *Housing Strategy - Better Homes Better Lives* and are highlighted throughout this year's action plan.

For full details of the actions relating to each local authority please refer to the accompanying Review Document.

Housing for Place



- Promote balanced and sustainable communities
- Ensuring that homes support the health and wellbeing of the area

Housing For People



- Homes that support the Health & wellbeing of our residents
- Make the best use and improve quality of existing housing

Place Priority 1: Promote Balanced and Sustainable communities

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
As part of the review of the JLP, a higher affordable housing contribution will be considered. To include the proposal that the number of 'First Homes' is not included in the contribution calculation.	To increase the percentage of affordable housing contributions based on a threshold that is sustainable and underpinned in policy.	Lobbying will be ongoing. Review of the JLP is in 2025	JLP and housing enabling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to drive the JLP affordable homes agenda. Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon
Actively contribute to 'Team Devon's' housing task force and housing commission to build the case for affordable housing as a key priority.	To achieve a Devon wide commitment to the prioritisation of affordable housing.	ongoing	Elected Members Andy Bates Chris Brook Isabel Blake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to drive the JLP affordable homes agenda. Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon
Continue to achieve a minimum of 30% Affordable Housing	Work with the JLP team to maximise the minimum amount of affordable housing delivered on allocated sites.	To align with JLP review	Senior Specialist - Housing Enabling	Through the JLP deliver 7,000 high quality, sustainable and affordable homes during the lifetime of the plan across South Hams and West Devon.
Work with Neighbourhood Planning Groups to ensure partnership approach is achieved from the start	To ensure new and existing groups are supported to ensure their plans are reflective of current needs.	immediate and ongoing	Senior Specialist - Housing Enabling	Work collaboratively with communities in the formation of Neighbourhood Plans to deliver the right development available to meet local needs

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Produce clear guides on Affordable Housing which outline types of Affordable Housing and the delivery process in bringing these forward through planning.	To provide key information regarding the affordable housing aims, needs and achievements in the area. This will provide clear guidance to Town and Parish councils and groups on affordable housing	1 year	Senior Specialist - Housing Enabling	Work collaboratively with communities in the formation of Neighbourhood Plans to deliver the right development available to meet local needs
Look at which Neighbourhood Planning sites are not bringing a plan forward; where it has been identified that a housing need exists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To offer support and advice in bringing neighbourhood plan sites forward. ● Increased delivery of rural affordable housing. 	start immediately	Senior specialist - Housing Enabling, Neighbourhood Planning and Strategic Planning	Work collaboratively with communities in the formation of Neighbourhood Plans to deliver the right development available to meet local needs
Review existing Neighbourhood Plans in the following areas: North Tawton, Bere Ferrers, Milton Abbot, Bridestowe & Sourton, Tavistock newly emerging plan. Consideration to be given to reviewing Staverton and Dartmouth, Kingswear, Bickleigh, Brixton.	To ensure Neighbourhood Plans are reflective of current need and up to date	2 years	Specialists with support from Neighbourhood planning team	Work collaboratively with communities in the formation of Neighbourhood Plans to deliver the right development available to meet local needs

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Develop a method of illustrating where Neighbourhood Plans have been adopted and where they are being developed.	To ensure clarity to both internal and external customers on current status of Neighbourhood Planning.	Already ongoing to be completed by next review	Specialists – Housing Enabling, Neighbourhood Planning and Strategic Planning	Use strategic planning policy to ensure sustainable housing growth.
Investigate the feasibility of appointing a Dedicated Planning Officer to assist with affordable housing projects	To streamline the internal planning and enabling process to ensure timely decisions on planning decisions.	August 2022 to commence trial period	Head of Housing / Head of Development Management	Use strategic planning policy to ensure sustainable housing growth.
Conduct a thorough review of our custom and self build register and policy to ensure we are meeting the statutory requirements. Develop a plot passport for self build plots and consider introducing a tariff for registration.	To encourage and support self build opportunities and housing delivery.	2 years	Senior Specialists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage opportunities for people interested in custom build / self build development, both within community housing schemes and wider housing delivery. ● Support opportunities for self-build.
Continue to work on the establishment of a Community Benefit Society with Registered Provider status	To enable the development and delivery of affordable housing by SHDC.	Ongoing	Senior Specialist Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build genuinely affordable high quality housing for our communities through a cost efficient standardised model. ● Explore the concepts of the Council as a developer and landlord of new housing.

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Conduct an options appraisal of the area to look to identify a Gypsy and Traveller site that best meets needs of the community	A clear understanding of the Gypsy and Traveller and Caravan Dwellers communities.	2 years	Senior Specialist Housing	Promote effective partnership working to meet the needs of Gypsy and Travellers.
Identify a site for Gypsy & Traveller use	To find a suitable site to sit with the JLP review.	within 5 years	Senior Specialist – Housing Enabling	Promote effective partnership working to meet the needs of Gypsy and Travellers.
To develop protocols and policies surrounding the travelling community include mapping system for navigator involvement	To provide a clear illustration of the services and our commitment to this area of work.	1 year	Senior Specialist Housing	Promote effective partnership working to meet the needs of Gypsy and Travellers.
Use Section 106 affordable housing contributions as soon as possible, to help fund developments anywhere in the area where the terms of the Section 106 agreements will allow.	Proactive use of funding, working within legal parameters to support new development that meets housing need.	Ongoing.	Housing Enabling and Assets	Utilise Section 106 Affordable Housing Contributions and other funding available to the Council's in the most effective way Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
<p>Seek opportunities to invest in Council owned social housing with highly sustainable specification; to include Modular housing options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maximise delivery of affordable housing. ● Support those on low incomes who are unable to afford 'affordable' rented housing 	ongoing	Isabel Blake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work creatively with Devon County Council to provide quality specialist adapted housing and housing for people requiring support to live independently, to be managed by SeaMoor Lettings. ● Explore the concepts of the Council as a developer and landlord of new housing. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon
<p>Undertake a full review of all council owned assets and assess suitability for affordable housing. To include provision of 'Supported Accommodation' options.</p>	<p>To take an interventionist approach to the housing market over the longer- term, where there is demonstrable housing need, leading to improved long term housing outcomes.</p>	Autumn 2022	Laura Wotton Isabel Blake	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work creatively with Devon County Council to provide quality specialist adapted housing and housing for people requiring support to live independently, to be managed by SeaMoor Lettings. ● Explore the concepts of the Council as a developer and landlord of new housing. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Continue to work on the Springhill development.	Demonstrate our commitment to the wellbeing of homeless people in the Borough by providing quality temporary accommodation (such as is proposed at Springhill Tavistock) and reduce the need for inappropriate forms of temporary accommodation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Planning granted December 2021 ● Scheme to be tendered for development Spring 2022 	Dan Field Sophie Cobbledick	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Redevelop existing homeless provision in West Devon to ensure good quality accommodation for people when they need it the most ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in West Devon
Define the land we have suitable for development within areas where a housing need can be demonstrated. Subject to Member approval. Initiate procurement process to identify a development partner capable of delivering housing in partnership with us.	Create a long term strategic partnership with a high quality Registered Provider/s to see the delivery of affordable-led housing at scale and over the long term in the Borough and District.	Spring 2023	Director for Place & Enterprise & Head of Housing (RP's)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work creatively with RPs and Homes England and other joint venture partners to draw down investment to deliver more affordable housing including more social rented homes. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis
Investigate the feasibility of incentivising landowners for the provision of land specifically for Local Needs Affordable Housing and seek to lobby MPs and Central Government based on our findings.	Incentivising land owners when providing land for affordable housing where there is an identified need, in order to help release land at a reduced cost to support the small scale provision of affordable housing in our rural communities.	Autumn 22	Housing Enabling Specialist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with parish councils and community groups to develop Neighbourhood Plans to deliver the right type and tenure of housing that meet local needs. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Launch of Step on Scheme to promote shared ownership to social housing tenants	Work closely with registered providers to ensure best use of properties and increase the availability of rental units for those on low income.	1st April Launch of Step on Pilot	Housing Team, Revenues and Benefits and Registered Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage provision of a wide range of housing options including social housing, managed shared accommodation and managed intermediate assured short hold private rental, part ownership and market sale. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams
To lobby Government to allow local councils to be able to charge 200% Council Tax on second / holiday homes.	To ensure contribution to local authority services to is sufficient to sustain local communities	Lobbying activity commenced with a letter to Michael Gove Minister for DHLUC and is ongoing	Isabel Blake	Encourage provision of a wide range of housing options including social housing, managed shared accommodation and managed intermediate assured short hold private rental, part ownership and market sale Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams
Lobby government, through MPs and the Local Government Association, to allow a charge on housing plots with planning permission if they have not been built after a specified period.	To encourage developers to build their sites without delay.	Lobbying activity commenced with a letter to Michael Gove Minister for DHLUC and is ongoing	Enabling team and planning dept	Encourage provision of a wide range of housing options including social housing, managed shared accommodation and managed intermediate assured short hold private rental, part ownership and market sale Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Lobby Government to review all holiday accommodation. This could include an extension of the 90-day short let legislation, a proper planning class for short lets and proper licencing for them. Ensure robust contributions are made to the consultation process proposed on the establishment of a Tourist Accommodation Registration Scheme in England.	To ensure that it is properly regulated, complying with local planning policies and taxes. To prevent loopholes in the taxation system and prevent too many local homes being converted to holiday accommodation	Lobbying activity commenced with a letter to Michael Gove Minister for DHLUC and is ongoing	Isabel Blake	Encourage provision of a wide range of housing options including social housing, managed shared accommodation and managed intermediate assured short hold private rental, part ownership and market sale Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon

Place Priority 2: Ensure that homes support the health and wellbeing of the area

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Complete Housing need surveys to cover key locations in the District and Borough to direct the delivery of affordable housing. Using this data, seek to allocate exception sites and work with plans where sites are stalled.	Ensure community engagement with any emerging plans for housing to reflect local need.	to commence in year 2	Specialists	Plan for future health needs
To encourage affordable housing delivery where there is an identified need through Housing Need Surveys. Target key locations where reviews are due or groups are emerging to ensure that a housing needs survey is undertaken	To ensure information used as part of development of plans is based on current up to date needs assessments. This will assist planning consultation responses.	2 years	Senior Specialist – Housing Enabling	Plan for future health needs
Ensure that the evidence base being built for the JLP review includes data from wider partner agencies to ensure it reflects local need, to include accessibility, learning disability and age related needs.	Ensure that all delivery and need monitoring is holistic and up to date	Ongoing	Plan for future health needs Specialist	Plan for future health needs
Gather information from DCC on current need for Supported/Specialist Housing to inform provision of future specialist / adapted properties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build on the strength of the Disabled Adapted Needs Panel to replicate the success for other specialist needs i.e. Learning Disabilities. ● Create an accurate picture of future need to inform future planning and delivery. 	April 2022 onwards	Specialist – Housing Enabling	Plan for future health needs

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
<p>To work with developers to meet the needs of those requiring Extra Care Housing in West Devon. To include identifying funding opportunities.</p>	<p>To ensure housing is developed to meet local need and enable stock turnover.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Senior Specialist - Housing Enabling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Support an appropriately located planning application for an extra care housing scheme in West Devon ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in West Devon
<p>Look to identify a site on the Councils own land where an exemplar site of low carbon modular housing could be brought forward.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To encourage the development of an exemplar site of low carbon modular housing, to show that developments can be both stylish and great to live in. ● Work with RPs to understand and promote modern methods of construction 	<p>April 2023 to identify a potential scheme</p>	<p>Housing Enabling, Assets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage the development of energy efficient affordable homes to reduce carbon emissions and heating costs ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon

People Priority 1: Homes that support the health and wellbeing of our residents

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Conduct a review all holiday lets in the area to ensure that the owners are correctly registered and accessing appropriate services.	Identify areas with high second homes and identify waste, planning, licensing and repair issues	Summer 2022	Housing Service Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor and actively promote high standards in the rented sector and take appropriate action where standards are not being met, to tackle disrepair, poor housing conditions and criminal landlords. Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams
To work in close partnership with Devon County Council to provide suitable accommodation options for vulnerable people (exempt accommodation). Look to deliver directly a scheme for people with learning disabilities on land owned by the Council.	Work in close partnership with Devon County Council to provide alternatives – putting people before profit.	ongoing	Senior Specialist – Assets & Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pro-actively support independent living and also support people with disabilities to remain in their homes through disabled facility grants and make effective use of the better care fund. Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in West Devon

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Continue to challenge local providers, insisting on robust evidence of service provision prior to a Housing Benefit claim being paid. Lobby national government to make legislative changes to remove the incentives for unscrupulous providers and to protect the needs of this vulnerable group.	To ensure vulnerable individuals are not subject to unfair charging or poor service delivery.	Commenced and ongoing	Housing Service Lead Senior Specialists – Housing & Housing Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pro-actively support independent living and also support people with disabilities to remain in their homes through disabled facility grants and make effective use of the better care fund. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in West Devon
To continue to work with landlords to ensure rental properties meet the required standards. Maintain our webpages and develop a webform so that landlords have clarity over their responsibilities and signposted to help.	To ensure Minimum Energy Efficiency standards in the private rented sector.	Work commenced with Tamar Energy for completion 01/03/2023	Senior Specialist – EH	Monitor and actively promote high standards in the rented sector and take appropriate action where standards are not being met, to tackle disrepair, poor housing conditions and criminal landlords.
Conduct targeted activity to ensure maximum uptake of Green Homes Grant funding.	Complete the phase 1 of Green Home Grant project for low income households	Jul-22	Senior Specialist – EH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure the Private rented sector meets the requirements of The Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Regulations. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in West Devon

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Promote available funding opportunities and bid for further funding, for improvements to existing private sector houses to improve stock condition and positively impact on Climate Change.	To contribute to our commitment to address the declared Climate Emergency and in recognition that housing is responsible for 40% of national CO2 emissions.	Ongoing	Senior specialist – EH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure the Private rented sector meets the requirements of The Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Regulations. ● Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in West Devon
Deliver 2022–27 Homeless Strategy Inc. (Action plan for 2022–23)	Strategy and action plan to be adopted by members in April 22	Apr-22	Senior Specialist – Housing	Meet the priorities of our standalone Homeless Strategy and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
Continue to promote the use of Disabled Facilities Grants to promote independent living and continue to utilise the Better Care fund. Review existing agreements and contracts to ensure best value.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maximise spend and continue to develop further the help available. ● Build on the initial marketing to broaden the message of what help is available. 	Mar-23	Senior Specialist – EH	Pro-actively support independent living and also support people with disabilities to remain in their homes through disabled facilities grants and make effective use of the Better Care Fund.
To expand the activity of the Disabled Adapted Panel to forecast future need before it becomes acute.	To continue partnership working and reduce the wait times in particular for those in need of adapted homes.	May-22	Specialists – Housing Enabling	Pro-actively support independent living and also support people with disabilities to remain in their homes through disabled facility grants and make effective use of the Better Care Fund.

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Further consideration given to creation of a Key Worker Housing register: Develop a universal housing register intended to meet the needs of local people on Low to mid range incomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enable the allocation of intermediate priced housing for those unable to afford full market rents. To meet the needs of those who are key to the sustainability of our communities and economy. 	Autumn 22	Specialist - Housing	Develop and promote an intermediate housing register specifically for key workers with supply from the private rented sector through SeaMoor and property developed by the Councils
Scope and offer a HMO property management package to encourage landlords to provide this form of housing	Increase the number of shared accommodation options	Dec-22	Senior Specialist - Housing	Support and encourage new, high quality and well managed, Houses in Multiple Occupation in the local area, including offering a management service ourselves, whilst licensing all HMOs that are subject to mandatory licensing.
Develop support pages for landlords on our website to increase landlord engagement.	Increase provision of affordable private rented housing.	Landlords forum and communication will be organised by Spring 2022	Housing Team, Communications Team	Deliver Private Rented Sector Landlords' & Letting Agents' Forums and other networking opportunities for private landlords; promoting the events widely and using them to consult the Private Rented Sector on the issues that are affecting them.

People Priority 2: Make the best use and improve the quality of existing housing

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Ensure that the evidence base being built for the JLP review includes data from wider partner agencies to ensure it reflects local need, to include accessibility, learning disability and age related needs.	Ensure that all delivery and need monitoring is holistic and up to date	Ongoing	Specialists	Interrogate new Census data to predict future housing trends and needs.
Using current Census data and other sources, develop a better understanding of; Property sizes across all tenure, current cost of private rented property and data on the high value areas to contribute to future JLP/policy amendments	Contributing to reviews and collating evidence. Mapping of evidence/information to be produced on interactive map to contribute to understanding the Housing Crisis.	Commenced and ongoing	Specialists	Interrogate new Census data to predict future housing trends and needs.
To hold an annual gypsy, traveller forum aimed at consulting on the needs of the travelling community.	To ensure that we are listening to that community.	Annually	Senior Specialist - Housing	Regularly communicate with residents, agencies, partners and our communities to ensure an up to date, two way, understanding of current needs and services.
To develop guidance and publish on our website, the local authority approach to Gypsy, Traveller and Van dweller issues to ensure clarity on the process and actions which will be taken.	To ensure communities understand what, if any, action has been taken on unauthorised encampments.	Autumn 22	Senior Specialist - Housing	Regularly communicate with residents, agencies, partners and our communities to ensure an up to date, two way, understanding of current needs and services.

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Investigate the feasibility of creating a community housing bus for engagement with local people around housing issues	To promote community engagement around SeaMoor Homes, new developments and general housing advice.	1 year	Senior specialist – Housing Enabling	Encourage long-term empty homes back into use.
To encourage Empty Homes back in to use and to investigate Compulsory Purchase Order powers or management orders where applicable	To ensure genuinely ‘Empty Homes’ are brought back into available housing stock.	Mar-23	Senior Specialists – EH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon
To review and update the policy for the Tenants Incentive Scheme	To provide a clear understanding of the policy and procedures for applying for and processing an application for a TIS payment	May-22	Specialists – Housing Enabling / Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote the Tenants Incentive Scheme to encourage and incentivise tenants in social housing to downsize. Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon
Promote Tenants Incentive Scheme widely to ensure maximum take up. Additional housing revenue funding has been allocated to increase payments made to those tenants downsizing to make the move more attractable and affordable.	Encourage family sized accommodation to be returned to available housing stock to meet the needs of local families.	Ongoing	Specialists	Work with our partners to seek re-development opportunities to enhance the current housing stock and to meet the needs of residents. Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis in South Hams & West Devon

Task	Aim	Timescale	Lead Person	Related actions from Housing Strategy and Housing Crisis
Work alongside the VOA to request a review of the Broad Market Area; to better reflect the costs of rents in the South Hams and West Devon. Collection of further data to show the disparity between private rents and the local housing allowance to support continued lobbying for increased frequency of LHA review	Better align local rents with Housing Allowance allocations.	Lobbying activity commenced with a letter to Michael Gove Minister for DHLUC and is ongoing	Housing Service Lead & Senior Specialist Housing Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis
To continue to update and expand the newly launched SeaMoor Homes website	To provide a wide choice of housing options available for people to buy or rent at less than market values and to seek wider opportunities for people to access the home ownership ladder.	1 year	Senior Specialists – Housing and Housing Enabling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek to expand our own in-house private lettings service SeaMoor Lettings. Highlighted as a priority for the Housing Crisis



South Hams
District Council

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West Devon
Borough Council

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South Hams & West Devon

Homelessness Strategy

2022-2027



South Hams
District Council



West Devon
Borough Council



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Foreword

We are pleased to introduce the new 5 year Homeless Strategy for South Hams & West Devon.

The importance of having a home can never be underestimated, with the restrictions and lockdowns implemented in response to the pandemic we collectively can appreciate this more than ever.

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Cllr Judy Pearce

South Hams
District Council

Lead Member
for Homes



Cllr Barry Ratcliffe

West Devon
Borough Council

Lead Member
for Homes

We have all faced significant challenges over recent years, including changes in homelessness legislation, Brexit, and the impact of Covid 19. Working flexibly during the pandemic allowed us to continue to deliver homelessness services throughout lockdown and enabled us to forge new partnerships with community support groups; as well as strengthening existing partnership working relationships.

The importance of maintaining and building upon the partnership working we have worked hard to establish is recognised as being a significant factor in delivering services. In the life of our last strategy, we successfully prevented and relieved the homelessness of 1170 households in South Hams and over 700 households in West Devon. We remain committed to continuing to work alongside our partners to improve the lives of our residents.

As we emerge from the pandemic, it has become clear that the impact on housing need in the area has been significant. In recognition of this a housing crisis has been declared by both West Devon Borough and South Hams District Council. A number of actions formed

the body of this declaration, each action reflecting our commitment to mitigating the effect of increasing housing prices and decreasing availability.

The aims and objectives that shape this homelessness strategy have been designed to build on the progress we have made over the past five years. The strategy reflects the need to proactively address the challenges highlighted by the Housing Crisis action plan and to address the significant challenges impacting our communities currently.

We believe that this strategy compliments our corporate strategies, which both put housing as a priority and our **Joint Housing Strategy “Better Homes Better Lives”**. All clearly outline our ambition with this plan documenting our plans for the next five years with regards homelessness and rough sleeping, and how we intend to work together to improve the lives and homes of the residents of South Hams and West Devon.



Introduction

For many people the term 'homelessness' evokes images of the 'rough sleeper,' however, homelessness and the services provided by the Local Authority are far more complex and widespread than this. This can include people living in insecure, unsuitable or unaffordable housing as well as those required to leave their existing housing, often through no fault of their own.

The Homelessness Act 2002 places a duty on local authorities to review homelessness, and the influencing factors that cause homelessness in their area, and to develop a strategy which addresses the findings of the review.



Improving homes

The Homelessness Strategy is required to:

- Address the levels of homelessness now, and the factors likely to impact on future levels of homelessness, through accurate profiling of the area
- Ensure that there is sufficient accommodation available for people who are, or may become, homeless
- Provide services that help to prevent people from becoming homeless.
- This will include a review of their effectiveness and the identification of new opportunities to support prevention of homelessness
- Ensure that through effective partnership, working support services can be accessed for those people who are, or who may become, homeless – or who need support to prevent them from becoming homeless again
- Promote a cultural change so that homelessness is viewed in a wider context than just lack of accommodation

This strategy aims to build on the achievements from our 2017–22 Joint Homelessness Strategy as well as to address the changing landscape of homelessness and housing need across our area. It has been developed at a time of considerable uncertainty, with the impacts of the Covid-19

pandemic on our communities still not fully understood the strategy has been designed to respond flexibly to the changing housing landscape.

The powerful community response to the pandemic brought with it stronger professional relationships and increased focus on the importance of partnership working. Whilst the responsibility for the Homelessness Strategy rests with South Hams District and West Devon Borough Council, it also aims to bring together all partner agencies to ensure a holistic approach toward addressing homelessness.

The areas of South Hams and West Devon are among some of the most beautiful in the country. Featuring areas of outstanding natural beauty and large swathes of Dartmoor, both areas are highly sought after for those wishing to live in and enjoy the beautiful surroundings. Much of our industry is centred on tourism and we have high proportions of holiday and second home accommodations in many of our towns and villages. Whilst this has always been the case, the Covid 19 pandemic has brought with it increased interest in the area for stay-cation holidays, second home ownership and permanent relocation from cities; with the new opportunities presented by home working. The result has been a sharp increase in house prices and in properties being used as holiday rentals rather than as long term rented housing.

ONS data revealed that in the 12 months leading up to December 2021 the south west experienced the highest rental increases along with West Midlands of 3.1%. In the three months to August 2021, RICS reported that tenant demand was accelerating while landlord instructions remained in decline.

The fall in supply of lettings was most widespread in the Midlands, the East of England and the South West (ONS).

The increase in rental prices and property prices has priced many low income families out of both the homeownership and the private rented market. The South Hams and West Devon Housing strategy 2021 –2026 identifies in details the ways in which South Hams and West Devon will work towards increasing property across all markets.

The pandemic also had significant financial impacts including decreased income under the furlough scheme and changes to benefits that has impacted on people's ability to manage their finances.

This has sharply emphasised the challenges for many people across our area and may lead to further increases in homelessness in our area.

The Strategic Context

The South Hams and West Devon Homelessness Strategy has been developed in response to a number of legal duties and powers and with regard to a both national and local policy. It has also been important to recognise the impact of Covid and the UK's exit from the European Union; which has been significant in the area and will continue to impact on people's lives over the coming five years.

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Legal Framework

- **Housing Act 1996 (as amended)** – Part 7 of the 1996 Housing Act is still the overarching piece of legislation used by councils in determining the way in which they respond to homelessness. The Act has been amended by:
 - The Homelessness Act 2002, which has included notable changes in the way Councils use temporary accommodation, with greater emphasis on the role of prevention.
 - The Homelessness Reduction Act 2018 which imposed new legal duties on councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to support, irrespective of their priority need status, as long as they are eligible for assistance.
- **The Care Act 2014** – The Care Act set a strong expectation that agencies would work together to protect children, young adults and people with care and support needs.
- **Rough Sleeper Strategy 2018** – This new requirement made it a statutory duty to review and publish a plan designed specifically to meet the needs of Rough Sleepers.
- **Domestic Abuse Act 2021** – designed to address the needs of victims of domestic abuse, the act imposes a duty on upper tier local authorities to provide support in safe accommodation.
- **Warm Homes and Energy Conservation Act 2000 (as amended)** – secondary legislation; Fuel Poverty) England) Regulations 2014 set out a fuel poverty target – to ensure as many fuel poor homes as is reasonably practicable achieve a minimum energy rating of Band C by 2030.

Regional Picture

South Hams and West Devon

- South Hams District Council Corporate Strategy – Better Lives For All 2021–2041
- West Devon Borough Council Corporate Strategy – A Plan for West Devon 2021–2041
- Joint Local Plan 2014–2034
- Better Homes, Better Lives – South Hams and West Devon Housing Strategy 2021–2026
- South Hams and West Devon Tenancy Strategy 2021

The two corporate strategies, **Better Lives for All** and **A Plan for West Devon** address the distinct needs of both authorities and frame the council’s vision for both areas and for the Council as an organisation. Both strategies include Homes as a key priority, with the delivery of these priorities being further developed within the South Hams and West Devon Housing Strategy **“Better Homes Better Lives”**.

The key themes for **“Better Homes Better Lives”** are:

Housing for Place

Driving the delivery of new homes that people can afford and meeting the different needs of our communities

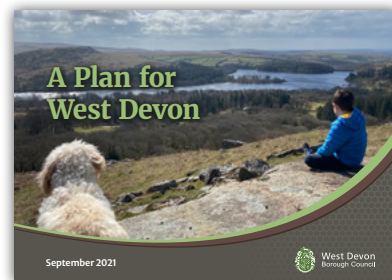


Housing For People

Ensure the best use and improved quality of existing housing.



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Devon County

- Happy and Healthy Communities, Devon's Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2020–25
- Promoting Independence in Devon, 5 Year Plan for Adult Social Care 2018–23
- Children's Services Improvement Plan 2020
- Healthy Lives, Vibrant Communities, Housing Choices, a Joint Strategic Approach to Supporting People to Live Independently in Devon 2020–25
- Domestic Abuse Support in Safe Accommodation in Devon (in consultation)

The importance of collaborative working practices has been a priority for many years, with the Covid-19 pandemic highlighting this further. Inequalities across the county have been accentuated further by the pandemic, with households in rural locations struggling to access services. The commitment to partnership working is central to the success of this Strategy and issues around housing and wellbeing remain central to both Devon County and 2nd tier local authority policy design and delivery.

Devon & Cornwall Housing Options Partnership

All Devon and Cornwall Authorities are committed to working together to improve the consistency and quality of housing options and advice services across the two counties. Held up nationally as an example of good partnership working, the partnership has enabled shared policy and practice development, while also yielding opportunities for Government funding in the form of grants for rough sleeping, debt advice, youth homelessness and working with the private sector.

Devon Homelessness Prevention Panel

All eight local authorities work alongside Devon County Children's Services to address the needs of young people entering and leaving the care system. Through our collaborative work we have developed a number of Joint Working Protocols to ensure best outcomes for young people facing homelessness.

The Local Picture

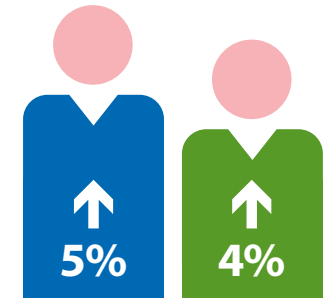
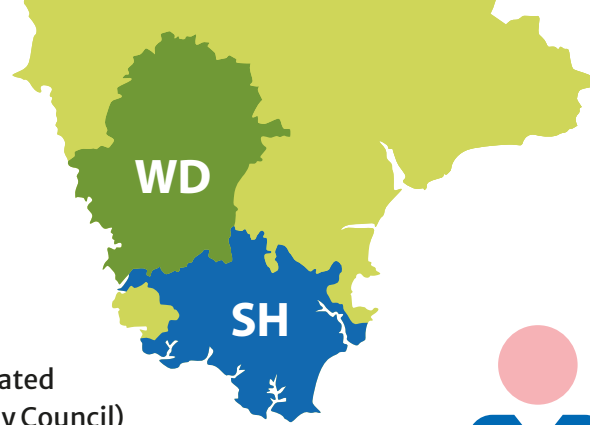
As of October 2021 there were 45,606 properties in South Hams and 26,297 in West Devon. Of the number in South Hams 3,455 were recorded as second homes and 46 empty for over 2 years. A further 73 are uninhabitable. In West Devon there are 538 second homes and 33 properties that have been empty for over 2 years. A further 27 are recorded as uninhabitable. (Source: CTB1 October 2021)

However, these figures have not been updated since the pandemic. (Source: Devon County Council)

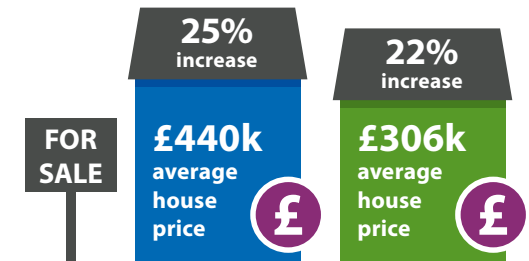
In the years 2016– 20201, the number of affordable homes delivered in South Hams was 615, and in West Devon this was 149.

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)

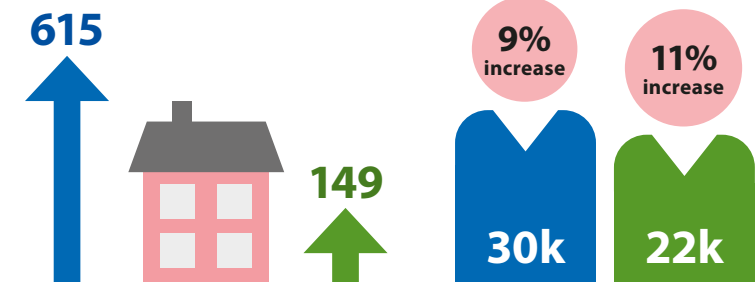
Average salary in South Hams £30,160 in 2020, an increase of 9% since 2016. In West Devon the average salary is 22,048, an increase of 11% since 2016. (Source: ONS 2020)



Population increases



House prices

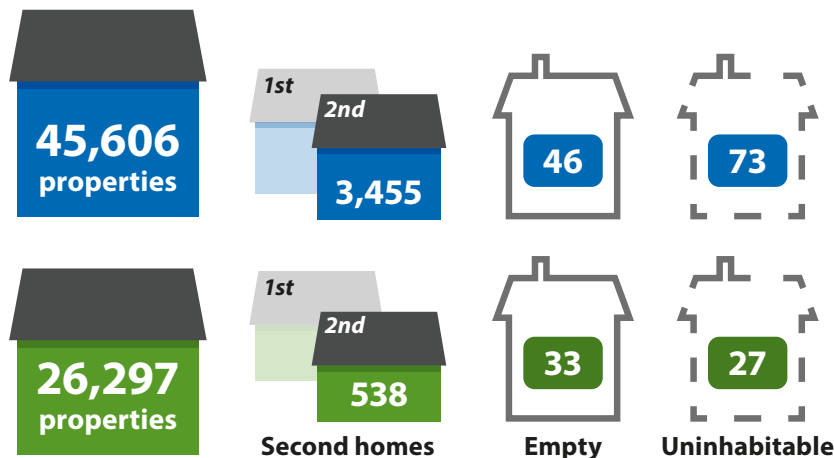


Affordable homes delivered

Average salaries

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In the three years to 2020 the population of South Hams increased by 2606 due to internal migrations with West Devon's population increasing by 810. Demographic projections suggest a 5% increase in population for the South Hams and 4% increase in West Devon.



Our Vision and Objectives

The South Hams and West Devon Strategy has been designed to contribute toward themes in both councils' 20 Year Vision for the areas.

South hams:

Better homes enabling better lives for all

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Strong and Prosperous communities where residents live healthy lives and are empowered to make a positive impact

West Devon:

Every resident has access to a quality and safe home

Every resident is able to live a healthy and active life



Improving homes

Our objectives are to:

Prevent: identify those who are at risk of homelessness and work with them to prevent them from becoming homeless

- Working with partner agencies to enable early identification
- Addressing issues of housing quality and suitability to ensure homes are fit for purpose
- Address issues of affordability

Sustain: Where complex needs are identified to work closely with partnership organisations to ensure that people are supported to sustain their homes long term.

- Work in partnership with support services and achieve high referral rates between organisations to identify and address issues impacting on home management.

Relieve: Where homelessness cannot be avoided, support people to find accommodation

- Provide quality temporary housing to limit the impact of homelessness on health.
- Identify and access support to address the underlying issues contributing to homelessness.

Provide: to improve access to a range of accommodation and support options suitable for household needs.

- Expand the existing portfolio of homes rented through SeaMoor Lettings
- Develop housing management and development options to increase availability of housing.

Key priority groups

To achieve our objectives we have recognised that housing and support options need to reflect the needs of the household to ensure positive outcomes are achieved and repeat homelessness is minimised.

The review of homelessness in South Hams and West Devon has identified that four key groups of people for whom the experience of homelessness and the contributing factors are both complex and unique.

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- ◆ Single households
- ◆ Families
- ◆ Households with additional needs
- ◆ Rough Sleepers

Whilst the experiences and causes of homelessness across these groups is known to overlap, in order to continue to build on the proven track record of prevention work; it is essential that we look to examine and understand the barriers each group experiences when facing a housing need, to ensure best outcomes. Working proactively with our partners we can ensure we are able to offer advice and services that are tailored to the needs of those approaching us.



Group 1: Singles and Couples requiring one bedroom or shared accommodation

Of the 1914 approaches in South Hams and the 1159 approaches in West Devon between 2017–21; 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.

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Within the same time period 32% of approaches made to South Hams 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.

To meet the needs of this group we will:

- **Prevent** – Ensure we increase awareness of services available to people looking to move on from or maintain existing accommodation; to include a provision designed for young people at risk of eviction from the family home.
- **Relieve** – Work with partner agencies to deliver services which support young people facing homelessness.
- **Sustain** – Ensure access to good quality financial and independent living advice and support to ensure people are empowered to sustain their tenancies.
- **Provide** – Work with landlords to increase the supply of shared and one bedroom affordable accommodation access the area. Develop a management service offer to increase provision of HMO accommodation across both areas.

93% people agreed that SeaMoor Lettings should seek to expand the range of housing available to include shared housing options

Group 2: Families

Homeless children are more likely to experience stress and anxiety, resulting in depression and behavioural issues. There is evidence that the impact of homelessness on a child's health and development extends beyond the period of homelessness. (Crisis 2011)

Between 2017–21; 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.

To meet the needs of this group we will:

- **Prevent** – Work with registered providers and private landlords to enable early identification of families at risk of homelessness to enable provision of appropriate support.
- **Relieve** – Ensure our internal working practices and relationships with partner agencies are robust and that we collaborate effectively to support those facing homelessness and/or in temporary accommodation.
- **Sustain** – Work proactively with landlords in both the private and social rented sector to ensure early identification of tenancy sustainment issues including financial issues.
- **Provide** – using the Council's resources, increase the number of affordable private rented and council owned properties available to families, to include quality temporary housing. Maximise the number of properties made available as a result of successful downsizing in the social rented sector.

96% of people agreed that families should be able to access quality temporary housing to minimise the impact homelessness can have on children's health

Group 3: Additional Needs

Many homeless people experience support needs in addition to their immediate need for housing, including: physical ill health, mental health problems, drug and alcohol issues and multiple and complex needs. (Crisis 2011)

Mental Health needs accounted for 54% of those identifying as having additional needs in West Devon and 50% in South Hams. 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 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.

75% strongly agreed that the underlying issues contributing to homelessness should be identified and support provided

98% of people asked agreed that partnership working was important to enable early identification of people in housing need

Since the establishment of 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.

As of September 2021 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.

Over the three years to 2021 31% of households approaching in South Hams identified themselves as having additional support needs. In West Devon it was 29%.

To meet the needs of this group we will:

- **Prevent** – work closely with partner agencies to ensure those in housing need are identified and referred to us quickly to enable early intervention measures can be put in place; including support to downsize or move to more suitable accommodation.
- **Relieve** – ensure provision of quality temporary housing and access to support services to holistically address the needs of those facing homelessness.
- **Sustain** – Deliver an adaptation service to include grant and self funded support aids are made accessible for all. Ensure relevant services are identified and referred to for those requiring additional support to sustain their homes.
- **Provide** – work with Devon County Council to support the delivery of housing for those with support needs through a property management service offer with intensive housing support.

Group 4: Rough sleepers

67% agreed that medium term support should be put in place for rough sleepers who have been housed to help them maintain accommodation

Qualitative research has shown that many single homeless people face significant challenges, which often involve adverse childhood experiences such as trauma, neglect and poverty. (Crisis)

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.

In 2017 the government announced their target to halve rough sleeping by 2022 and ensure that no one has to sleep rough by 2024. This government target aligned with the local authorities commitment to work towards ending rough sleeping across both areas.

The council often has no legal duty to many of the people sleeping rough in the area and where a legal duty has existed due to either not meeting the vulnerability criteria required by the legislation or because they are deemed under law to be intentionally homeless. Historically this has limited the level of work and investment made in this cohort. Conversely living on the streets can create and exacerbate people's vulnerabilities making investment in this cohort more essential:

Issue	Rough Sleepers	General Population
Life expectancy	Age 47	Age 77
Physical Health	78%	37%
Mental Health	44%	23%
Addiction	41%	Not shown

(Crisis)

Over the last 5 years we have seen a significant reduction in people sleeping rough in both South Hams and West Devon. However; in order to keep these numbers consistently low moving forward we need build on what we have achieved.

To meet the needs of this group we will:

- **Prevent** - Work with partners to ensure early identification of Rough Sleepers or people at risk of rough sleeping.
- **Relieve** - Continue our commitment to holistic outreach work and the No Second Night Out ethos.
- **Sustain** - Provide intensive support both in house and with our partners for rough sleepers in accommodation to enable them to manage long term accommodation expectations.
- **Provide** - Develop a range of accommodation and support options for people rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping to make long term accommodation sustainment realistic.

How the Homelessness Strategy was developed

This strategy has been developed following a thorough review of the achievements, outcomes and challenges identified throughout the lifespan of the 2017-22 Homelessness Strategy. This review also took into account the current economic climate, issues arising following the impact of the Covid pandemic and the lessons learned during the lockdown periods; where support provision and partnership working were paramount in protecting the vulnerable.

We have also looked at the people who access our services and the challenges our customers are facing. In order to improve how we tackle homelessness in our communities we recognise the importance of continuing to strengthen our relationship with partner agencies to ensure early intervention to prevent homelessness; as well as an holistic approach to meeting the needs of our customers.

The Strategy went to public consultation on the 9th February – 23rd March 2022. The views of the public and partner organisation were sought as part of this process and have been incorporated into the final document.

We used the following methods of consultation:

- Online survey
- Social media polls
- Elected member consultation event
- Consultation with stakeholders and partner agencies including:
 - Adult services
 - Children's' services
 - Mental Health Services
 - Devon & Cornwall Police
 - Together (Drug & Alcohol services)
 - Health care providers
 - Local volunteer groups

How the Homeless strategy and Delivery Plan will be monitored

The life of this homeless strategy is intended to be five years.

Annually we will publish our progress to date and a refreshed Action Plan. The development of each annual action plan shall include consultation with members and stakeholders to ensure that the strategy is kept relevant and that all partner agencies and local people, through their elected representatives, have the opportunity to help to develop and influence a holistic approach to tackling homelessness across the area.

The delivery of the Action Plan will rely on the resources of both Councils and their partners, working together to achieve positive outcomes, for people in South Hams and West Devon.



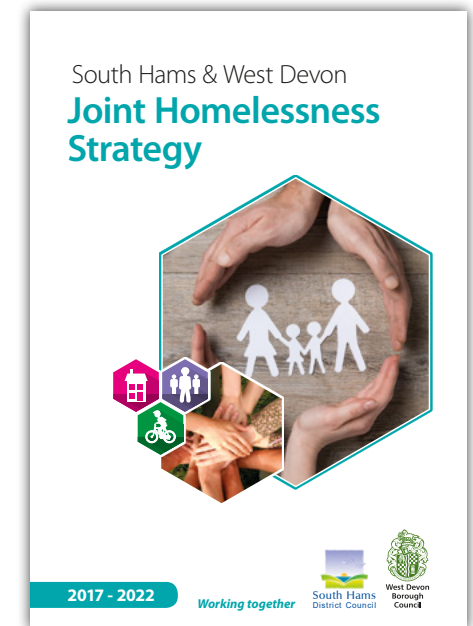
The Review of the 2017–22 Joint Homelessness Strategy Objectives and Outcomes

The 2017–22 Joint Homelessness Strategy set out the priorities for tackling homelessness in South Hams & West Devon.

The strategy was framed around four priorities:

- 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

Objectives	Outcomes
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"> Use of food banks has shown a steady rise in demand – referral routes established with food banks to ensure support services can be identified and offered to address the root causes of food poverty. Support service provision increased to address the changing needs of those on low incomes in the face of the pandemic and furlough schemes.
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. 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.
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

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Objectives	Outcomes
<p>Offer advice and assistance in a range of formats, so the customer can choose how they communicate with their Council</p>	<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.
<p>Ensure our most vulnerable customers are able to access advice services effectively</p>	<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.
<p>Work with partners to ensure that we are able to offer services at the time and place our customers need them most</p>	<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.
<p>Readily and regularly consult with our customers and stakeholders to make sure we get our services right</p>	<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

Objectives	Outcomes
<p>Increase the supply, standard and options for people who face homelessness within our area</p>	<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. ● Established Disabled Adaptation Panel which has been instrumental in securing the most appropriate housing options for those in need of adapted housing for 40 households. ● Developed a bespoke website to advertise rented accommodation options through SeaMoor and part ownership housing options available locally. ● Appointed a project officer to support the delivery of the Housing Strategy Better Homes, Better Lives. ● 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.
<p>Develop innovative options for our Rough Sleeper Community</p>	<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.

Objectives	Outcomes
<p>Continue the downward use of temporary accommodation for homeless households</p>	<p>The use of temporary accommodation has fluctuated throughout the 5 year strategy. Various elements have impacted on the success of this aim including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Funding was secured in 2019 for 2 temporary accommodation support (TAS) workers. The role was a success resulting in a reduction in temp costs of £28,900 ● Funding ended for these roles in 2020 <p>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:</p> <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

Objectives	Outcomes
<p>Work in partnership with our voluntary and statutory sectors to holistically address people’s needs as fully as possible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Appointed a dedicated Vulnerable Person’s Officer; and ● Appointed 2 Rough sleeper outreach workers to work alongside our housing advice officers to facilitate excellent links to partner agencies to include joint working on homeless cases.
<p>Ensure we adequately protect and safeguard the most vulnerable members of our community</p>	<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 and contributed to the development of joint working protocols to ensure quality joint working. ● Seconded a senior specialist on behalf of all Devon 2nd Tier local authorities to deliver targeted training and support to the Children’s services’ MASH team over the period of one year.
<p>Enable early help, to avoid crisis and tackle homelessness at its root cause</p>	<p>Developed referral routes and delivered training in homelessness to ensure early identification of housing needs and risk of homelessness to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hospital discharge coordinators ● prison release officers ● probation ● domestic abuse support services ● Adult and children’s social work ● Mental health social care ● Police ● Registered providers

Rough Sleeper Strategy Review

Objectives	Outcomes
<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Established monthly rough sleeper counts/estimates ● implemented a next working day response to reports of people sleeping rough wherever possible.
<p>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.</p>	<p>Introduced dedicated specialist support staff:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TAS worker ● Outreach workers ● Specialist Drug and Alcohol Outreach workers
<p>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.</p>	<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
<p>Tackling homelessness takes more than just the provision of a house, if we are to maximise the opportunities for our most vulnerable people. Often, poor health, addictions and unhealthy lifestyles mean that people are unable to secure, and maintain, accommodation for themselves or their families.</p>	<p>Developed a multi-agency hub in partnership with TDC comprised of outreach workers, a hub coordinator, drug and alcohol support services, MH services, probation and adult social care to ensure that all potential solutions are considered around the clients support needs and to ensure a client centred approach to developing those plans.</p>



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South Hams & West Devon

Homelessness Strategy



Action Plan 2022-23

2022-27



South Hams
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Action Plan 2022-23

The Joint South Hams and West Devon Homelessness Strategy 2022-27 sets out our aims and objectives over the next 5 years. This Homelessness Strategy Action Plan outlines our work plan for the year 2022-23 and how this work plan contributes to the priorities and objectives identified in the Strategy document.



**Improving
homes**

Singles & couples (S&C)

- **Prevent** – Ensure we increase awareness of services available to people looking to move on from or maintain existing accommodation; to include a provision designed for young people at risk of eviction from the family home.
- **Relieve** – Work with partner agencies to deliver services which support young people facing homelessness.
- **Sustain** – Ensure access to good quality financial and independent living advice and support to ensure people are empowered to sustain their tenancies.
- **Provide** – Work with landlords to increase the supply of shared and one bedroom affordable accommodation access the area. Develop a management service offer to increase provision of HMO accommodation across both areas.

Objective	Action	What will we do?	Resource
S&CP1	Maintain strong links and develop streamlined referral routes for agencies working with young people to identify those at risk of homelessness	Regular training and refresher sessions to be delivered to agencies to ensure thorough understanding of council services	Specialist staff time
S&CP2	Contribute to the development of a Care Leaver protocol to support care leavers to plan for their housing needs	DCHOP & Children's services project work	Housing and legal Staff time & DCC staff time
S&CR	Contribute to the development of a young persons protocol to ensure clear pathways and positive outcomes for young people asked to leave home	DCHOP & Children's services project work	Housing and legal Staff time & DCC staff time
S&CS	Expand on the existing advice services available through establishment of self help advice & budgeting tools on our website	Web page development	Vulnerable person's officer & communications team staff time
S&CPr1	Investigate the feasibility of using Local Authority owned properties as shared accommodation provision	Costings of property conversions and rental income and management implications and costs	Housing & assets staff time
S&CPr2	Develop an HMO management service offer through Seamoor Lettings to encourage landlords to provide this type of accommodation.	Produce a fully costed service spec for promotion to landlords.	Staff time – Housing and environmental health

Families (F)

- **Prevent** – Work with registered providers and private landlords to enable early identification of families at risk of homelessness to enable provision of appropriate support.
- **Relieve** – Ensure our internal working practices and relationships with partner agencies are robust and that we collaborate effectively to support those facing homelessness and/or in temporary accommodation.
- **Sustain** – Work proactively with landlords in both the private and social rented sector to ensure early identification of tenancy sustainment issues including financial issues.
- **Provide** – using the Council’s resources, increase the number of affordable private rented and council owned properties available to families, to include quality temporary housing. Maximise the number of properties made available as a result of successful downsizing in the social rented sector.

Objective	Action	What will we do?	Resource
FP1	Develop streamlined referral route for private landlords to refer households at risk of homelessness or where tenancy sustainment issues exist	Create a dedicated contact portal for landlords	L6 Housing officer
FP2	Raise awareness of landlord and tenant rights and responsibilities to minimise unintentional breaches.	Develop support and advice pack relating to different aspects of tenancy management	L6 Housing officer
FP3	Improve information available on our webpages relating to financial hardship and affordability issues including self-help advice on our Webpages	Create and maintain a data base of support agencies and available services on our website	Vulnerable customer officer
FR1	Enable homeless families to access holistic local support options to promote the wellbeing of children in emergency housing	Create and maintain a data base of support agencies and available services on our website for officers and residents to access.	Vulnerable customer officer supported by housing advice team
FR2	Investigate the feasibility of the introduction of a dedicated support worker to provide holistic support to those in temporary accommodation	Conduct a value for money exercise and business plan if the post is evidenced to be a positive contribution	Senior Housing Specialist and Housing Advice Team Leader

Objective	Action	What will we do?	Resource
FS1	Identify funding options to enable families to access essential items and meet essential costs to prevent financial hardship	Vulnerable Customer Officer to work with partner agencies to identify and apply for funding.	Vulnerable customer officer
FPr1	Set up the proposed Community Benefit Society to enable in-house property development opportunities	Finalise inquiries on development of rules and progress with registration	Housing Senior Specialist
FPr2	Develop and embed the policies and practices required to meet registered provider status for the CBS to enable the lettings of properties developed in house	Work alongside consultants to develop and embed appropriate policies and procedures	Housing Senior Specialist



Additional Needs (AN)

- **Prevent** – work closely with partner agencies to ensure those in housing need are identified and referred to us quickly to enable early intervention measures can be put in place; including support to downsize or move to more suitable accommodation.
- **Relieve** – ensure provision of quality temporary housing and access to support services to holistically address the needs of those facing homelessness.
- **Sustain** – Deliver an adaptation service to include grant and self funded support aids are made accessible for all. Ensure relevant services are identified and referred to for those requiring additional support to sustain their homes.
- **Provide** – work with Devon County Council to support the delivery of housing for those with support needs through a property management service offer with intensive housing support.

Objective	Action	What will we do?	Resource
ANP1	Promote the Downsizing support scheme with partner agencies to ensure those with additional needs are supported to engage in the process of downsizing	Ensure wider understanding of the scheme through promotion and training	Communications team and housing staff
ANP2	Expand the work undertaken by the Disabled Adapted Panel to identify those with less urgent housing needs to prevent customers reaching crisis point (Band C-D)	DAP officers to work on accurate reporting and data gathering to target resources	Housing Enabling specialist
ANR1	Continue to work with Assets to ensure that the Springhill Temporary Accommodation development is capable of meeting a wide range of housing needs	Contribute to decision making on design elements to ensure fit for purpose	Senior Housing Specialist
ANS1	Work with registered providers to ensure customers requiring adaptations in their homes are supported to access these through a referral to us	Cross reference data held on the housing register with that held by RP's	Housing enabling specialist
ANPr1	Work with Adult and Mental Health services to scope current unmet need for supported housing – with a view to working in partnership to meet this need.	Work with partners to consider suitable locations for specialist housing development	Senior Housing Specialist and Senior housing enabling specialist
ANPr2	Through increased multi agency contact and attendance at outreach events, ensure a collaborative approach to finding housing solutions is embedded within local authority culture	Review attendance at meetings and events to ensure a housing presence across all agencies	Vulnerable customer officer & L6 Housing officer

Rough Sleepers (RS)

- **Prevent** – Work with partners to ensure early identification of Rough Sleepers or people at risk of rough sleeping.
- **Relieve** – Continue our commitment to holistic outreach work and the No Second Night Out ethos.
- **Sustain** – Provide intensive support both in house and with our partners for rough sleepers in accommodation to enable them to manage long term accommodation expectations.
- **Provide** – Develop a range of accommodation and support options for people rough sleeping or at risk of rough sleeping to make long term accommodation sustainment realistic.

Objective	Action	What will we do?	Resource
RSP1	Identify people who are at risk of rough sleeping to avoid them spending any time on the streets	Partner agencies to identify people with insecure accommodation and /or support needs who may be at risk of rough sleeping.	Rough Sleeper Outreach worker
RSR1	Respond to reports of people sleeping rough within one working day	Provide an Outreach Team to respond to reports of rough sleeping and proactively seek out anyone sleeping rough	DLUHC bid pending 2 officers plus engagement funding
RSR2	Ensure tailored support is available for people who are rough sleeping, at risk of rough sleeping or have a history of rough sleeping.	Introduce a Re-settlement worker. Work with Together, Adult Social Care, Probation, The Mental Health Team and any other relevant agencies to deliver support when and where it's needed.	Multi agency Hub and support contract pending bid with DLUHC
RSS1	Ensure support provided to rough sleepers extends to after they have accessed housing	Gain commitment from partner agencies to continue to provide support. Resettlement support officer role pending DLUHC funding	partner agency and housing support staff
RSPr1	Ensure a range of accommodation options are available for different levels of support need	Deliver 4 units of accommodation for the Leap Pad project in South Hams	Senior Housing Specialist



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Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **12 April 2022**

Title: **Revenue and Benefits Service Review Update**

Portfolio Area: **Resources - Cllr Edmonds**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Date next steps can be taken: **12 April 2022**

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

Contact: Steve.mullineaux@swdevon.gov.uk

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Hub Committee:

- (i) **Recognise the achievements of the Revenues & Benefits Team in maintaining core service delivery, whilst also ensuring that businesses and residents were supported throughout the pandemic through the administration of business grants, personal grants such as Track and Trace and administering benefits schemes.**
- (ii) **Endorse the approach taken following the Revenues & Benefits Review and the subsequent Implementation Plan.**
- (iii) **Note the progress of the Revenues & Benefits Implementation Plan and request a further update in six months' time.**
- (iv) **Endorse the recruitment of a Head of Service for Revenues and Benefits, which will be funded on a self-funding basis. To further note that the next iteration of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) will increase both the annual staffing budget by £30,000 (wdbc's share of the staffing cost) and the annual income from council tax by £30,000 (to reflect the anticipated increase in council tax collection rates by at least 0.5%).**
- (v) **Endorse that in addition the stretching targets that the new Head of Service will be set, will mean that the Council will continue to improve collection rates across council tax and business rates generating significant further income for the Borough Council.**

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update Members on the service review that was undertaken last year across the Revenues & Benefits Service, the reasons why this has taken place and what actions have been taken since then to implement the recommendations of the Review.
- 1.2. The purpose of the Revenue & Benefits Service Review has been to:
 - ensure that the Councils' joint Revenue & Benefits Service is working effectively, efficiently and in accordance with legislation and best practice;
 - maximise the Councils' resources and to ensure financial stability whilst ensuring that our customers are being supported in the best possible way;
- 1.3. The Review and subsequent Revenues & Benefits Implementation Plan strives to improve customer service, whilst maximising financial recovery and ensuring our customers are being supported in the best possible way.
- 1.4. A key recommendation of the Revenues & Benefits Implementation Plan is to recruit a Level 3 Head of Service for Revenues and Benefits. This post would be self-funded from having a performance target to increase the council tax collection rates by at least 0.5% in each Council, improving recovery rates, reducing aged debt and delivering service improvements across the Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefit services,

2. Background

- 2.1. Existing workloads throughout the pandemic did not reduce and the team have administered 12 different business grant schemes and 2 schemes for individuals, processing the following volumes of work.
 - 27,200 individual business grant awards
 - 2,200 test and trace claims
 - Over 750 household support claims
 - The team will also be responsible for processing the Government's recently announced Council Tax Energy Rebate (£150) which will involve automated, manual claims and the setting up and administering of a discretionary scheme. This will involve working on over 50,000 council tax accounts across both Authorities.
- 2.2. The Council's Corporate Strategy, 'A Plan for West Devon' sets out a range of themes and associated aims supported by Thematic Delivery Plans. The Revenue & Benefits Review is a specific action in the Delivery Plans and further supports the strategic aims of maximising, and making the best use of, the Council's resources to enable the delivery of the strategic aims and, at the same time, enhancing the customer experience, access and engagement.

- 2.3. Within this strategic context, the Review has set a programme of improved performance, strategic oversight and management of all aspects that contribute to the Revenues & Benefits Service which have been collated in the Improvement Plan (the Plan) enabling:
- Redefining Service ambitions and ensuring financial sustainability through effective collection and recovery
 - Delivering our services fairly and effectively to those who need them, when they need them
 - Ensuring that customers can access any benefits / discounts / reliefs to which they are entitled
- 2.4. Until October 2021, the Revenues & Benefits Service formed part of the wider Housing, Revenues & Benefits service area with overall responsibility for all three services sitting under one Head of Service. Following the prioritisation of Homes in the Corporate Strategy and the declaration of the Housing Emergency, the existing Head of Service is now solely leading the Housing Service. Revenues and Benefits do not currently have a Head of Service. One of the outcomes from the Revenues and Benefits Service Review is that it is recognised that it is essential to recruit a Head of Service for Revenues and Benefits as set out in 3.3 below.
- 2.5. The Revenues & Benefits Service is responsible for delivering the following:
- Billing and collection of council tax and business rates
 - Improving collection rates and reducing debt levels
 - Administration of housing benefits
 - Administration of the council tax support scheme and other discretionary welfare schemes
 - Prevention and detection of fraud within these Services
 - Recovery across Revenues & Benefits
 - Government returns for council tax, business rates and housing benefit subsidy (including an annual external audit review on the annual housing benefit subsidy claim).
- 2.6. The current staffing across both service areas comprises the following:
- 2.6.1. The Benefits team currently have 11.9 full time equivalents (FTE's)
- 2.6.2. The Revenues team currently have 15.2 FTE.
- 2.6.3. We also have a further 6 FTE shared across the services supporting the additional workload and helping to deliver a number of the actions within the review.
- 2.6.4. Together this represents 10% of the total office based workforce.
- 2.7. The Revenues and Benefits service has responsibility for the following key services:
- The administration and collection of Council Tax (£46m for West Devon and £84m for South Hams, being £130m in total across both Councils. This is the total council tax billed including the precepts for DCC, Fire, Police and Towns and Parishes)
 - The administration and collection of Business Rates (£10m for West Devon and £29m for South Hams, being £39m in total across both Councils)
 - The administration of Housing Benefits (£9m for West Devon and £13m for South Hams, being £22m in total across both Councils)

- The administration of the Council Tax support scheme (£3.8m for West Devon and £5.8m for South Hams, being £9.6m in total across both Councils).

3. Service Review

3.1. Prior to the Review, the Councils' internal auditors identified areas across council tax, business rates and housing benefits in which there was scope for improvement and set out a series of recommendations in their 2020/2021 reports.

3.2. The recent Covid-19 work on business support grants highlighted the reliance on key individuals within the organisation with regards to Business Rates. The business grants team have administered business grants totalling £33m in West Devon and £85m in South Hams over the last two years. The information gathered from the work on the business grants has vastly increased the corporate knowledge and potential for further collection of business rates but there are issues with capacity. Whilst the two (L4) senior specialists have an in depth knowledge of their respective service areas, there is a significant gap and little resilience within the wider team regarding professional expertise.

3.3. Housing Benefits

3.3.1. Whilst it was always anticipated that the full migration to Universal Credit would reduce the workload for the Housing Benefit team, changes in the Governments migration plan and the way Universal credit changes to capture changes to individuals earnings on a weekly basis has resulted in more work not less. In 2021/22 the team have processed across both Councils:

- Almost 2,300 new claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support.
- 14,000 changes to existing Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction Claims.
- Paid out almost £150,00 of additional discretionary housing payments for those people in arrears or in urgent need of additional support.
- Received 304,000 Universal Credit and Pension changes, of which approximately 121,000 would have required a manual review.

3.3.2. Despite this increasing workload the team continue to prioritise process new claims for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Support. The tables on the following page shows that the Council continues to deliver consistent performance to ensure that those who need support and financial assistance receive this as soon as possible.

Table 1 - Housing Benefit New Claims (National Target is 24 Days)

(Data based on District Councils only and excludes Metropolitan Boroughs and Unitaries)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Worst	46	62	35	39
Bottom Quartile	24	23.25	19	21
Median (Second Quartile)	20	20	16	17
Third Quartile	17	16	13	13
Best	4	4	3	5
South Hams	24	20	14	17
West Devon	23	19	15	18
Average (Mean)	20.7	20.1	16.2	17.2

Table 2 - Change in Circumstances to existing claims (National Target is 11 days)

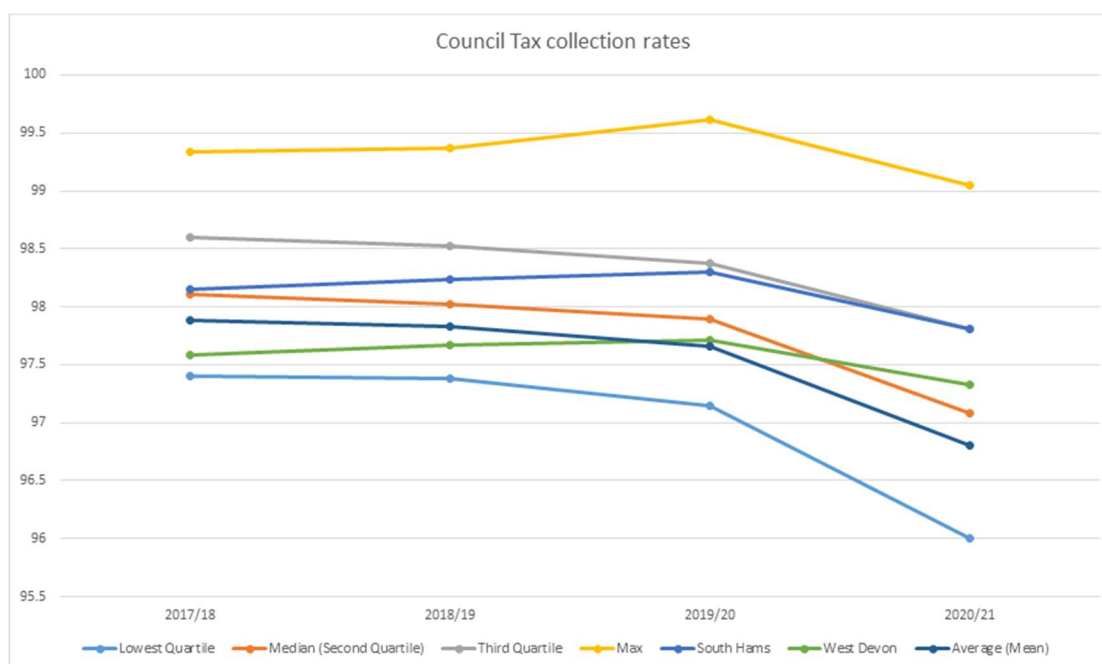
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Worst	20	23	13	21
Bottom Quartile	8	7	5	5
Median (Second Quartile)	6	5	4	4
Third Quartile	5	4	3	3
Best	2	2	1	1
South Hams	7	5	4	4
West Devon	7	5	5	4
Average (Mean)	6.5	5.9	4.5	4.3

3.4. Collection rates for council tax and business rates

3.4.1. Despite the unprecedented additional workload that the Revenues & Benefits service has needed to administer in response to the pandemic (starting in March 2020), the Councils have maintained good collection rates, particularly for council tax. In the last financial year 2020/21, council tax collection rates held up well in both Councils, with 97.33% being collected in West Devon and 97.81% in South Hams. This was well above the national average and slightly above the 2nd quartile. The following table and graph demonstrates this.

Council Tax collection rates (Data based on District Councils only and excludes Metropolitan Boroughs and Unitaries)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Lowest Quartile	97.4	97.38	97.15	96.0075
Median (Second Quartile)	98.11	98.02	97.89	97.085
Third Quartile	98.6	98.52	98.37	97.81
Max	99.34	99.37	99.62	99.05
South Hams	98.15	98.24	98.3	97.81
West Devon	97.58	97.67	97.71	97.33
Average (Mean)	97.89	97.83	97.66	96.81

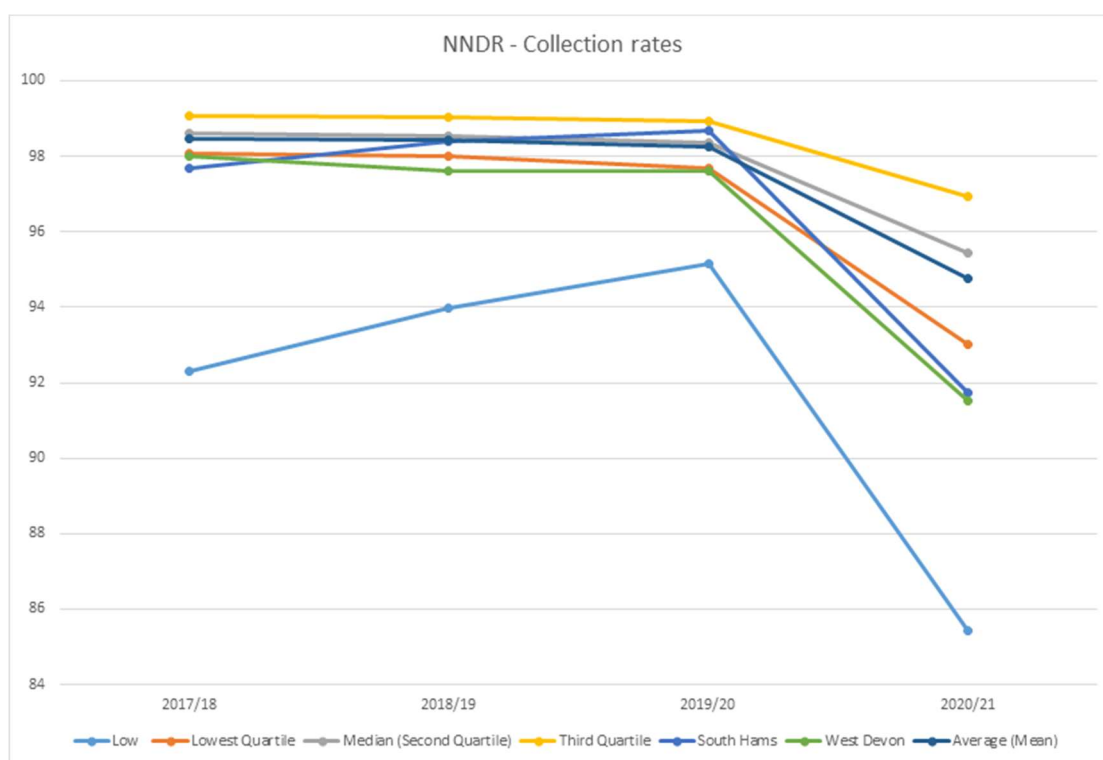


3.4.2. The new Head of Revenues and Benefits will have specific and stretching targets to improve Collection rates for each of the next 3 years. A 0.5% increase in collection rates in each year will move the Council's performance to top quartile. A 0.5% increase generates an additional £30,000 of additional council tax income.

3.4.3. Business rates collection rates were 91.53% in West Devon for 2020/21 and 91.74% in South Hams. These were in the lower quartile in comparison to other Councils although we are aware that there are a number of different methodologies for reporting business rates collection rates. This is thought to be due to a technical accounting issue of how older year's payments are currently accounted for.

Business Rates (NDR) collection rates (Data based on District Councils only and excludes Metropolitan Boroughs and Unitaries)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Lowest	92.31	93.97	95.17	85.43
Lowest Quartile	98.09	98	97.7	93.01
Median (Second Quartile)	98.62	98.52	98.35	95.43
Third Quartile	99.08	99.02	98.92	96.94
Max	99.99	99.99	99.94	99.81
South Hams	97.68	98.4	98.67	91.74
West Devon	98	97.61	97.62	91.53
Average (Mean)	98.47	98.42	98.25	94.78



3.4.4. The new Head of Revenues and Benefits will have specific and stretching targets to improve Business Rates Collection rates to ensure that the Council achieves second quartile performance by the end of 2023/24. This will generate up to an extra £75,000 of business rates income per annum for the Council.

3.5. The Scope of the Revenues & Benefits Service Review

3.5.1. The aims of the Service Review were to provide:

- An adaptable single service that can flex resources when and where needed.
- Assurance that all statutory and legislative requirements are being met
- Implementation of a clear succession and development/training plan
- A delivery plan that increases collection rates (from 2nd quartile to top quartile for council tax for example) and maximises income with a business intelligence function that can focus on investigating tax avoidance.
- A joined up service that uses and shares data with other Council services in a lawful way
- A consistent and efficient service that is simple and easy for customers to use, and prevents customers from accruing significant overpayments or arrears.
- The best use of our technology to underpin all of these aims.

3.6. Outcomes from the Review

3.6.1. The outcomes from the review can be summarised as follows:

- An Implementation Plan informed by the recommendations of the Review and the Audit Reports, which has clear actions, ownership and target dates.
- A clearer management structure with a Head of Service with direct responsibility and accountability for the service.
- To embed the Council's Performance Management Framework to ensure all members of the team are clear as to their roles, responsibilities, objectives and targets underpinned by a clear customer focus and continuous improvement objective.
- Clear Service Delivery Plans informed by a 'A Plan for West Devon' that sets out the purpose of the Revenues & Benefits service within a clear strategy for the next five years showing how we measure performance to show what good is, with a plan for continuous improvement
- Maximise technology in order to enable maximum efficiencies across the Service and to support service delivery
- Review of policies and processes across both Services to ensure clarity, efficiency, and consistency
- To have a service-wide Recovery Policy that further increases collection rates of council tax and business rates and reduces debt levels
- Good communications within and across the team, the wider organisation, Members and Customers
- Ensure a consistent and efficient Service that is simple and easy for customers to use.

4. Progress to Date

4.1. We have an Implementation Plan which incorporates the recommendations from the Review and the recommendations from the council tax, benefits and business rates Audit Reports for 2020-2021.

4.2. We have set up a Project Team comprising the Business Manager, Senior Specialists from Revenues & Benefits and the Service Improvement Manager, together with an additional resource on secondment to support the implementation of the review, which meets weekly to discuss actions against the Implementation Plan and reports in to the Director of Service Delivery.

4.3. There has been improvement in a number of areas as follows:

4.3.1. **Internal Relationships and communications:** we have already improved communications through weekly meetings both within and across the teams, alongside the weekly Project meetings, which has the outcome of improved team morale, consistent & timely messages and improved involvement and constructive challenges from team.

4.3.2. **Data Sharing:** it is recognised that significant efficiencies will be delivered through the sharing of data across the teams and with the wider organisation and we are working with the Data Protection Officer to facilitate this exchange of information in a lawful way to ensure that the Council has a holistic view of development; from the planning process through to occupation and the links to other services such as the refuse and recycling collections.

4.3.3. **Recovery:** the team is reviewing recovery processes so that these work for us more effectively and increase the potential areas of recovery. The recovery backlog that arose during the pandemic is now being addressed, and we are revisiting our enforcement agency contract to ensure that it works effectively for us and our customers, and identifying wider value services that the enforcement agencies can offer due to economies of scale without further cost to the Council. This review of the recovery process has also enabled proactive networking and building of relationships with other councils with the benefits of sharing good practice and benchmarking.

4.3.4. The team has also started to capture newly built properties at the point of completion, rather at the point of occupation and therefore increasing income to the Council.

4.3.5. **Capacity:** In addition to the recruitment of the Head of Service we are reviewing our resource requirements for the whole service and will be looking at the gaps in skills and resources across the 3 areas. A key priority is Business Rates.

4.3.6. **Service Delivery Plans:** we are working on Plans for each Service which will underpin the Thematic Delivery Plans providing the detail on the purpose of the Services, our priorities in the short, medium and long term, and how we will measure that continuous progress, whilst keeping the maximisation of resources and the customer as the focus of what we do.

4.3.7. **Improving accuracy at first point of contact:** Ensuring that all relevant information is captured at first point of contact, ensuring accurate information from the start and avoiding double handling.

4.3.8. **Checks to void accounts (Revs):** these are council tax and business rates accounts, by determining who should be billed we can bill and collect more quickly.

4.3.9. **E-billing (Revenues):** We are including notifications on our web forms to invite customers to sign up to e-billing when are ready to go live. This will have the benefit of automated billing and enables the customer to access on line at their convenience whilst reducing our costs and driving channel shift.

5. Proposed Way Forward

5.1. It is proposed that we recruit and appoint a Head of Service for Revenues & Benefits, on a self-funding basis, as the most effective way to ensure:

- transparent Leadership and Accountability for the Services
- delivery of the priorities and actions in the Thematic and Service Delivery Plans
- delivery of Service improvements and performance set out in the Implementation Plan.
- Identification of all single points of failure, capacity issues and providing more flexing of resources and the effective delivery of the Service
- maximise income streams from council tax and business rates and that benefits are easily accessible to those that need them

5.2. The cost of a Level 3 Head of Service for Revenues & Benefits is £75,000 (salary with on-costs) with a split of the cost of 40% wdbc and 60% shdc (WDBC cost £30,000 and SHDC cost £45,000).

5.3. It is proposed that this lead role is self-funding, provided through improvements in council tax receipts from an increase in council tax collection rates by at least 0.5% in both Councils.

There will be further benefits from reduced write-offs and from savings from the increased take up of E-billing and increased Direct Debit take up.

5.4 Recommendation 4 of the report asks the Hub Committee to note the recruitment of a Head of Service for Revenues and Benefits, which will be funded on a self-funding basis. To further note that the next iteration of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) will increase both the annual staffing budget by £30,000 (wdbc's share of the staffing cost) and the annual income from council tax by £30,000 (to reflect the anticipated increase in council tax collection rates by at least 0.5%).

5.5 In addition, the stretching targets that the new Head of Service will be set, will mean that the Council will continue to improve collection rates across council tax and business rates generating significant further income for the Borough Council. This will also be aligned to the resetting of the Business Rates baseline to maximise business rates income.

5.6 The risks of not appointing a Head of Revenues & Benefits are:

- Less corporate and strategic awareness and knowledge and capacity to deliver on Corporate Strategy and Delivery Plan aims

- This would be the only front line Service area (with a vast customer base and responsibility for the Councils' largest income streams from council tax and business rates) without a Head of Service
- A lost opportunity to maximise the Councils' income from their share of the council tax and business rates billed and collected
- No voice at an Extended Leadership level with a consequent increase in management and leadership by the senior specialists, which decreases their focus on delivering the Service (With the Level 4 Specialists effectively becoming 'acting heads of service' for a proportion of their time)
- The Level 4 senior specialists would report directly to Director of Customer Services and Delivery

5.7 It is proposed to bring a further update report to Members in six months time, when we will have recruited to the Head of Service role, who will have embedded further improvements in accordance with the Improvement Plan and who will have had an opportunity to further assess and influence the structure of the Service and the delivery of those services.

6 Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Revenue & Benefits Review is a specific action in 'A Plan for West Devon' Delivery Plan and further supports the strategic aims of maximising and making the best use of the Council's resources to enable delivery of the strategic aims and, at the same time, enhancing the customer experience, access and engagement.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	<p>The recruitment of a Head of Service for Revenues and Benefits, will be funded on a self-funding basis.</p> <p>The next iteration of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) will increase both the annual staffing budget by £30,000 (WDBC's 40% share of the staffing cost for a Level 3 Head of Service) and the annual income from council tax by £30,000 (to reflect the anticipated increase in council tax collection rates by at least 0.5%).</p> <p>In addition, the stretching targets that the new Head of Service will be set, will mean that the Council will continue to improve collection rates across council tax and business rates generating significant further income for the Borough Council.</p> <p>As such income will increase in 2023/24 by a further £105,000. This made up of a further 0.5% increase in Council tax collection rates and £70,000 from increased Business Rate Collection. The latter will also be aligned to the resetting of the Business Rates baseline to maximise business rates income.</p>

Risk	Y	That the Council fails to implement the recommendations of the Revenues and Benefits Service Review. That the Council fails to deliver a Revenues and Benefits Service that meet the expectations of Members and our customers
Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	Quality Council Services; ensuring that we make the best use of the budget available to us to ensure value for money
Consultation and Engagement Strategy	N	External consultation and engagement has not been undertaken with regard to this report.
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	N	No direct carbon or diversity impacts arise from this report
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity		None
Safeguarding		None
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		None
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		None
Other implications		None

Supporting Information

Appendices:

None

Background Papers:

None

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Appendix A contains exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972

Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **12 April 2022**

Title: **Climate Change and Biodiversity Action – Council net-zero update**

Portfolio Areas: **Cllr Lynn Daniel**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Author: **Drew Powell** Role: **Director of Strategy and Governance**

Adam Williams **Climate Change Specialist**

Chris Brook **Director of Place and Enterprise**

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

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive:

- 1. NOTES the progress on plans aligned to the aim of the Council being net-zero by 2030 and increasing biodiversity on its own land by 10% by 2025;**
- 2. RECOMMEND to Council to delegate authority to the S151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Hub Committee Member for Finance, to approve and agree the lending terms to Fusion Leisure for a loan of up to £300,000 to facilitate solar panel installation across both WDBC Leisure Centres over the remaining term of the leisure contract, in accordance with treasury management advice;**
- 3. RECOMMEND to Council to delegate authority to the S151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Hub Committee Member for Finance, to update the Council's Capital Strategy, Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23 for a £300,000 loan**

provision to Fusion Leisure for the solar installation, in accordance with treasury management advice.

1. Executive Summary

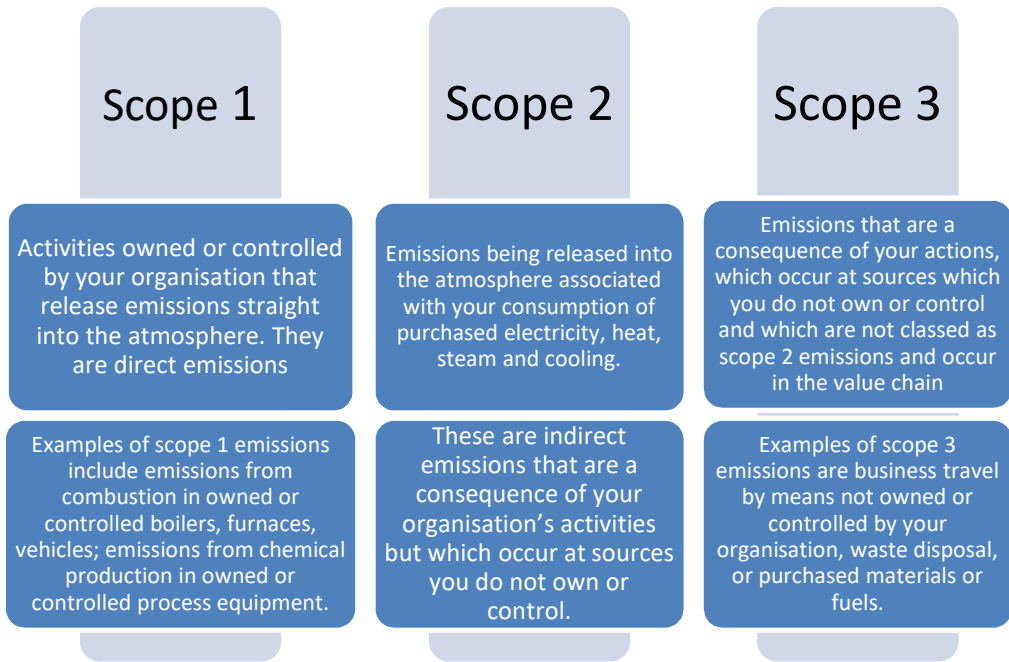
- 1.1 The Council declared a Climate Change and Biodiversity emergency in 2019 and subsequently developed and adopted a Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy ('the Strategy') and Action Plan in December 2020 (minute 28/20 refers).
- 1.2 The Council has approved an earmarked reserve of £200,000 for general climate change activity within the 'Plan for West Devon' to support delivery against the aims set out in the Strategy and this is being allocated against projects.
- 1.3 The following report sets out progress and the potential carbon savings (or biodiversity net gain) from significant projects aligned to two of the three Councils adopted aims. Namely, Aims 1 and 3, reducing its carbon footprint to net-zero by 2030 and increasing biodiversity on its own land by 10% by 2025.
- 1.4 The project to convert both our light vehicle fleet and our ferries to electric will save in the order of 23.4 tCO₂e (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) which equates to 21% of the emissions that the Council has direct control over (which are scope 1 and 2 emissions).
- 1.5 A further key proposal contained within the report is the business case to invest a further £300,000, in the form of a loan to Fusion Leisure (as the chosen provider for the Councils' leisure facilities), to install solar arrays on the two leisure centres within the Borough. This will reduce carbon emissions, save Fusion around two thirds of its energy bill costs and add to Fusion's financial resilience by lessening their exposure to energy price rises. The savings that Fusion will make on their energy costs will enable them to repay the annual costs of the borrowing repayments as the savings are predicted to be in excess of the loan repayment illustrated in Appendix A.
- 1.6 The report also provides an update on the latest estimate of the Council's Greenhouse gas emission inventory; effectively the Council's Carbon Footprint.

2. Background

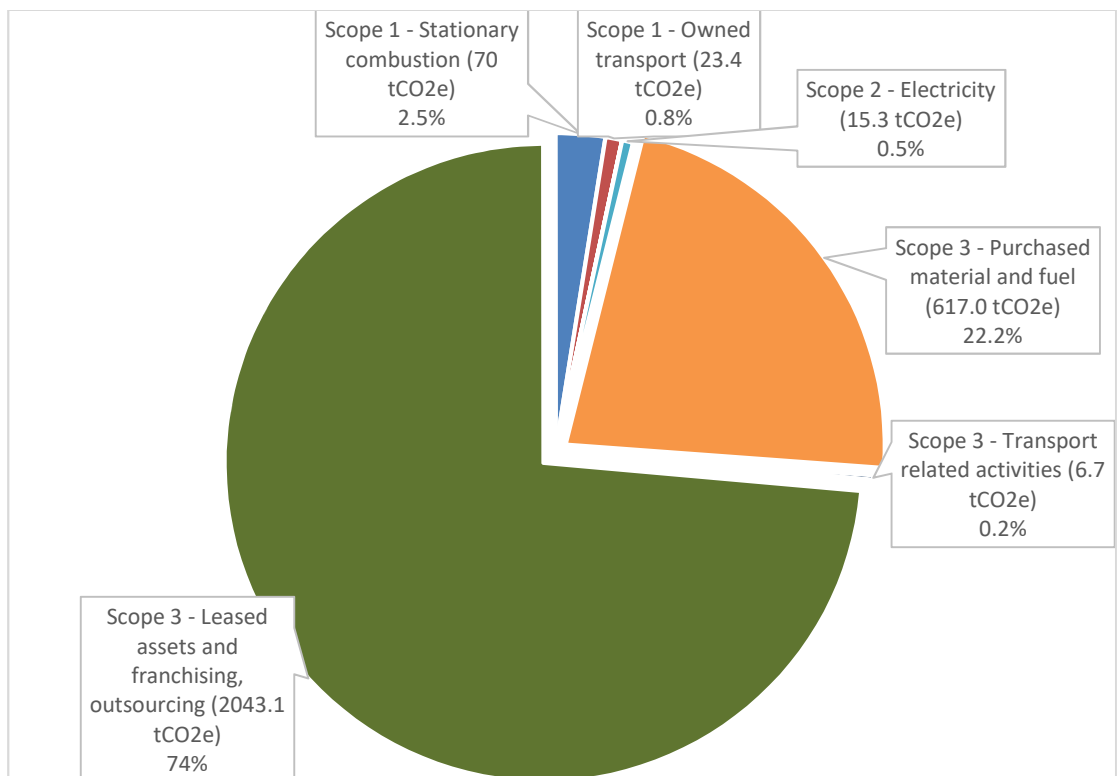
- 2.1 The Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan was adopted on 4th December by the Council. It was noted that the Action Plan will be a continually evolving document and that delegated authority be granted to the Director of Governance and Assurance, in consultation with the Hub Member for Climate

Change and Biodiversity, to make revisions to the Plan as and when deemed necessary

- 2.2 The Council adopted the following aims;
1. That the Council aim to reduce its organisational carbon emissions to net-zero by 2030;
 2. That the Council commit to working with partners through the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group to aim to reduce the Borough of West Devon carbon emissions to net-zero by 2050 at the latest; and
 3. That the Council aim for a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain in the habitat value of its green and wooded public open space by 2025.
- 2.3 It is recognised that identifying and reducing the Council's own carbon emissions will have a number of direct and indirect impacts on the wider ambition of adapting to and mitigating against the impacts of climate change.
- 2.4 For example, the Council plays an important role in community leadership and setting the right example regarding the impact of its own activities can play an important role securing behaviour change and raising awareness of the climate emergency.
- 2.5 West Devon Borough Council Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Carbon Footprint) 2020/21**
- 2.6 West Devon Borough Council commissioned a second study into our greenhouse gas emissions ('carbon footprint') last year following a review of our data internally and changes to our practices, and more clarity into our own fuel uses.
- 2.7 The Council has committed to reducing operational carbon emissions to Net Zero by 2030. This target applies to the whole council operation, from scopes 1, 2 and 3.
- 2.8 It is widely recognised that reducing Scope 1 and 2 emissions is far easier, relatively, than reducing Scope 3 emissions. As a result some authorities have set targets based solely on reducing Scope 1 and 2 emissions. Our aim as set out above (3.2) is challenging and, as our work continues with Exeter University, we will set out a trajectory, based on carbon budgets, outlining the contribution each project will have in achieving our adopted aim. A further report will be brought to the Hub Committee in due course.
- 2.9 The graphic below illustrates the differences between the emissions scopes;



2.10 The chart below shows our emissions breakdown for 2020/2021



- 2.11 The total greenhouse gas emissions for West Devon Borough Council in 2020/2021 (as set out in the pie chart above) was 2775.7 tonnes of Carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e). Carbon dioxide equivalent or CO₂e is a measure used to compare the emissions from various greenhouse gases on the basis of their global-warming potential.
- 2.12 To work out the carbon emissions of an activity, an activity is multiplied by an emissions factor related to that activity. As an illustration, the 2020/2021 emissions factor for gas is 0.23314 kgCO₂e per kWh. Taking the gas consumed by Kilworthy Park that year which was 213784.14 kWh, it is then multiplied by the emissions factor of 0.18455 which gives you a CO₂e figure of 39,453 kgCO₂e or 39.45 tonnes CO₂e. This represents approximately 42% of our Scope 2 electricity emissions (see chart in 3.5 above) The CO₂e emissions factors are published yearly by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy.
- 2.13 The biggest proportion of the Council's greenhouse gas emissions relate to its activities under Scope 3 – essentially the emissions over which we have least control. Out of the 2043.1 tCO₂e from leased assets, franchising and outsourcing, 178.6 tCO₂e are attributed to our leisure centres energy use alone. As we own the leisure centres (leased to Fusion) we are, unusually for Scope 3, able to directly act to reduce these emissions as set out further in this report.
- 2.14 At the moment, the most detailed way to calculate procurement and purchasing emissions doesn't reflect the true nature of the emissions. It is a standard calculation that doesn't account for whether or not your supplier has any carbon saving measures in their own operations. This approach therefore negates our ability to reduce emissions by, for example, procuring goods and services from net-zero suppliers.
- 2.15 We are actively working with partners to investigate ways to better account for purchasing so we can have greater influence over the resultant carbon emissions.

3. Reducing our Carbon Emissions – Practical Actions

- 3.1 Exploring Scope 3 further, our transport related activities (commuting and business mileage) were much less than normal because of COVID-19 enforced lockdowns. By way of comparison, if we were operating as we were before lockdown, the emissions for the year would have been circa. 95.8 tCO₂e for

commuting, compared to the reported 6.7 tCO₂e arising from our working practices during the pandemic.

- 3.2 This is a clear example of what can be achieved through relatively straightforward actions such as increased remote working. We will continue to support and further develop our ability to support this approach whilst retaining an emphasis on customer focussed, efficient services.
- 3.3 The combined total of Scope 1 and 2 emissions (those we have greatest influence on) is 108.7 tCO₂e.
- 3.4 Influencing these emissions will require a range of actions including conducting energy audits on all of our assets and, for example, retrofitting them in line with the recommendations of the audit.
- 3.5 A key action that we are progressing is converting our fleet to EV. We are in the process of appointing an EV Project Officer through an internal secondment whose responsibility will be to produce a forward fleet plan and kick-start the transition of our light vehicle fleet to electric.
- 3.6 For clarity, the table below illustrates some of the savings for the projects currently underway;

Scope	Scope Total (tCO₂e)	Action	Potential saving (tCO₂e)	% reduction of overall carbon footprint
1	93.4	EV Fleet Transition	20	0.7% (21.4% of our total Scope 1)
3	2667.7	Embedded Remote Working	89	3.2% (3.3% of Scope 3)
3	2667.7	Solar Panels for Leisure Centres (see 6 below)	53	1.9% (1.98% of Scope 3)

- 3.7 As for some of the other actions that have already been taken against scope 1, 2 and 3 already, our solar PV on Kilworthy Park resulted in export credits which offset 0.7 tCO₂e in 2020/2021.
- 3.8 Furthermore, the energy supply for Kilworthy Park and 20 Plymouth Road are supplied by genuine renewable energy supplies (with a verified Renewable Energy Guarantee of Origin

Certificate) and have therefore been discounted from our emissions in 20/21.

- 3.9 In addition, we continue to promote our EV salary sacrifice scheme to staff and explore the potential for renewable energy on our land and buildings.

4. Organisational practices

- 4.1 Following the Carbon Literacy Training carried out in collaboration with Torbay Council and South Hams, our Council is now accredited as a bronze level Carbon Literate Organisation. A Carbon Literate Organisation (CLO) is an organisation that has been accredited by The Carbon Literacy Project as having a substantial commitment to Carbon Literacy.



- 4.2 What this means in reality is the extended leadership team understand the importance of the climate emergency and how their own service areas can contribute to change both organisationally and across the district.
- 4.3 Now that the understanding is in place we are developing a decision making tool to better inform projects and policy at development stage to ensure that they align with the need to reduce carbon emissions and improve biodiversity.
- 4.4 Embedding these principles at the early stages of the decision-making process will help deliver against our adopted aims as set out in 2.2, above.

5. Aim 3 – Biodiversity

- 5.1 As for aim 3, our target to increase biodiversity on our own green spaces will be reliant on changes to our Ground Maintenance Procedure. An approach to this will be subject to a report in the coming months
- 5.2 One action that has been taken on this is a natural regeneration project at land at Harrowbeer Lane, Yelverton, and Bedford Bridge

near Horrabridge which was subject to a report to Hub Committee in February.

- 5.3 Subject to successful completion and considering the sites in the context of the Defra Biodiversity Metric calculator, woodland creation (including scrub as a successional habitat), could result in a 'biodiversity net gain' at the sites of around 80% after around 5 years through creation of new habitat.

6. Leisure Centres – Solar Panel Installation

- 6.1 As the chosen provider for the Councils' leisure facilities, Fusion Leisure have been actively encouraged by the Council to work in partnership to support the energy reduction targets and reduction of carbon footprint for the facilities.
- 6.2 Fusion Leisure are a high energy user. In 2022, the leisure centres in West Devon and South Hams are forecast to use 2,000,000 kWh electricity, at a cost of around £300,000. Broadly, this equates to circa 667,000 kWh in West Devon.
- 6.3 Fusion is the bill payer for the utilities at all leisure centres and will directly benefit from the cost savings which will result from purchasing less electricity from the grid.
- 6.4 Fusion Leisure have been working with a number of solar installers to understand the cost of solar panel installation across the leisure centres in West Devon, namely Meadowlands (Tavistock) and Parklands (Okehampton).
- 6.5 The anticipated costs as of February 2022 were circa £250,000 to install solar arrays on the roofs of these two leisure centres.
- 6.6 It is proposed, in order to secure the carbon benefits, that the Council loan a capital sum to Fusion Leisure, to facilitate installation of solar panels, with repayments being made over the remaining term of their leisure contract (19 years remaining).
- 6.7 It is proposed to provide the loan from WDBC to Fusion Leisure at a commercial rate (above the PWLB interest rate), to recognise the benefits of the scheme for both parties. An illustration is attached in Appendix A.
- 6.8 The solar schemes are forecast to generate approx. 229,000 kWh per annum which equates to just over a third of the energy (electrical) requirements of the centres.
- 6.9 The project will reduce carbon emissions by circa 130,000 kg CO₂e (53 tCO₂e), as detailed below:
- Meadowlands Leisure Centre 17,150kg CO₂e (17 tCO₂e)

- Parklands Leisure Centre 35,867kg CO2e (36 tCO2e)

6.10 As an illustration, the CO2 emissions from the leisure centres in 2020/2021 was 178.6 tCO2e, this includes electricity and gas use.

6.11 Fusion Leisure anticipate a programme of works of circa 12 months to complete installations.

6.12 The pricing in the construction sector is currently extremely volatile and inflation is a challenge for cost certainty. As such, a delegation to agree the actual loan amount to Fusion is necessary.

6.13 The installation of solar arrays will reduce carbon emissions, save Fusion around two thirds of its energy bill costs and add to Fusion's financial resilience by lessening their exposure to energy price rises. The savings that Fusion will make on their energy costs will enable them to repay the annual costs of the borrowing repayments as the savings are predicted to be in excess of the loan repayments illustrated in Appendix A.

6.14 The savings in Fusion's electricity bill (before price rises – i.e. at the time of quotation) are in the region of £40k across both centres.

6.15 It is recommended to Council to delegate authority to the S151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Hub Committee Member for Finance, to update the Council's Capital Strategy, Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23 for a £300,000 loan provision to Fusion Leisure for the solar installation, in accordance with treasury management advice.

7. Conclusion

7.1 A range of projects are coming forward, through 'A Plan for West Devon' and the adopted Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy that will significantly reduce the Council's Scope 1 and 2 emissions and contribute towards a reduction in the Scope 3 emissions.

7.2 The Council has already approved a budget of £200,000 to deliver a range of projects and grants aligned with the adopted strategy and it is proposed to further the Council's commitment to its adopted aims by providing a loan of £300,000 to Fusion Leisure.

8. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The public interest test has been applied to Appendix A and the public interest lies in non-disclosure.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	<p>It is recommended to Council to delegate authority to the S151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Hub Committee Member for Finance, to approve and agree the lending terms to Fusion Leisure for a loan of up to £300,000 to facilitate solar panel installation across both WDBC Leisure Centres over the remaining term of the leisure contract.</p> <p>A loan is to be provided from WDBC at a commercial rate (above the PWLB interest rate) to Fusion Leisure, to recognise the benefits of the scheme for both parties. An illustration is attached in Appendix A.</p> <p>It is also recommended to Council to delegate authority to the S151 Officer, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Hub Committee Member for Finance, to update the Council's Capital Strategy, Investment Strategy and Treasury Management Strategy for 2022/23 for a £300,000 loan provision to Fusion Leisure for the solar installation, in accordance with treasury management advice.</p>
Risk		TBC
Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	Natural Environment, Built Environment, Communities, Homes
Consultation and Engagement Strategy	N	External consultation and engagement has not been undertaken with regard to this report.

Climate Change- Carbon/ Biodiversity Impact	Y	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.
Equality and Diversity		No direct implications
Safeguarding		No direct implications
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		No direct implications
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		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:

EXEMPT Appendix A – Loan model illustration

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Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **12 April 2022**

Title: **A Plan for West Devon –Quarterly Progress Report**

Portfolio Area: **Cllr Neil Jory
Leader**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Date next steps can be taken: **NA**

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

Contact: Neil.Hawke@swdevon.gov.uk

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Hub Committee:

- (i) Recognise the progress in achieving our plans as adopted in the Plan for West Devon;**
- (ii) Endorse the proposed Key Performance Indicators as set out in Appendix B; and**
- (iii) Commence work with Lead Officers on refining the 2023/24 delivery plans in order to be considered by Council in Autumn 2022**

1. Executive summary

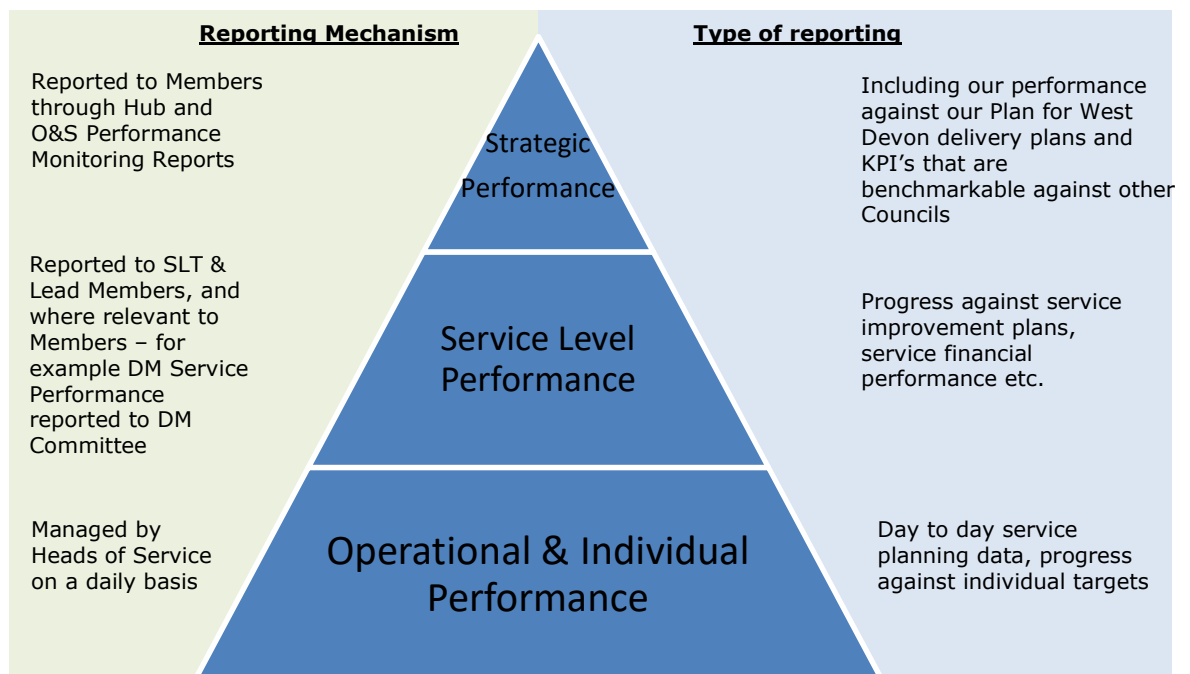
- 1.1. Our corporate strategy, A Plan for West Devon, was adopted in September 2021 and already it is shaping the decisions the Council makes and enabling us to prioritise delivery of those key actions as set out within the delivery plan.
- 1.2. Positive progress has continued to be made in delivery of those actions, with this report setting out the progress made in Q4 of 2021/22 (January to March)
- 1.3. This report also sets out a revised suite of operational Key Performance Indicators for Hub Committee to consider.

2. Proposed way forward

- 2.1. The Quarter 4 Integrated Performance Management Report is set out in Appendix A to this report. This will be the second report since the implementation of our enhanced performance management reporting process.
- 2.2. Monitoring and driving performance against our strategy ensures that as a Council we are delivering on our vision of A Plan for West Devon. It is recommended that the Hub Committee recognise the significant progress against our plans for the strategy.

Key Performance Indicators

- 2.3. A key component of supporting our vision is ensuring quality and responsive services. It is therefore important that we also take steps to monitor and report performance in key services, consider service performance on a regular basis (including monitoring of progress against service improvement plans) and that we monitor and support our employees to deliver for our communities.
- 2.4. There are three levels of performance management that we will employ.



- 2.5 This report proposes a suite of KPI's (Appendix B) at the 'Strategic Reporting' Level. These are measures that we can easily benchmark against other Councils and will give our residents the opportunity to compare our performance against others. The Hub Committee are asked to consider and highlight any further areas where they would like additional reporting. If agreed, these KPIS measures will be reported to Hub on a Quarterly basis through the Integrated Performance Management report and Overview and Scrutiny on a 6 monthly basis for a more in-depth analysis of performance (as per the current arrangement).
- 2.6 The KPI's will be reviewed and refined on a regular basis to ensure they remain relevant.
- 2.7 It is recommended that the Hub Committee approve the KPI's as set out at Appendix B

Further Development of A Plan for West Devon Delivery Plans

- 2.8 The current Plan for West Devon delivery plan includes specific actions for 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24. Work will commence with Hub Leads and Advisory groups during the coming months to develop further detail to populate the 2023/24 delivery plan so that it can be considered alongside the budget development in the autumn. This will ensure that we have a clear focus for delivery during the first year following the May 2023 elections.
- 2.9 Following the elections, work will commence in the summer 2023 to develop the next three year delivery plan.
- 2.10 It is recommended that the Hub Committee Members commence work with Lead Officers in late spring to refine the 2023/24 delivery plans for consideration by Council in autumn 2022.

3 Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	Providing performance updates in respect of our strategic priorities contributes to Principle F of the CIPFA Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework. This principle is about managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management. Implementation of a Quarterly report is a significant step forward in increasing transparency of the work of the Council and in enabling the Hub Committee to monitor the progress of or strategic plan.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	This report does not include any direct financial implications however it does provide a high level overview of the financial performance of the Plan for West Devon Programme
Risk	Y	This report sets out the current strategic risk profile of the Council.
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		None
Safeguarding		None
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		None
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		None
Other implications		None

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Supporting Information

Appendices:

Appendix A – Plan for West Devon Integrated Performance Management Report
Appendix B- Draft KPI's 2022/23

Background Papers:

Q1 Integrated Performance Management Report <<insert link>>

Plan for West Devon Strategy and Delivery Plans www.westdevon.gov.uk/plan-for-west-devon



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A Plan for West Devon – Progress Update

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Quarter 4 2021/22 (Jan – Mar 2022)



*A Plan for
West Devon*

A Plan for West Devon – Progress Update

Page 3 – Introduction from Leader

Page 4 – Performance on a Page



Page 14 - Strategy Project Spend

Page 15 – Key Performance Indicators



Page 5 – Our Performance by Theme

- Page 6 – Communities
- Page 7 – Community Wellbeing
- Page 8 – Homes
- Page 9 – Economy
- Page 10 – Natural Environment
- Page 11 - Built Environment
- Page 12 – Inclusive Services
- Page 13 - Resources



Page 16 – Strategic Risk Assessment

Page 18 – Next Steps



West Devon
Borough Council



A plan for West Devon

Introduction

Our Plan for West Devon was adopted in September 2021 and we continue to make significant progress against the actions which will contribute towards our longer term vision for the area.



This report set out our performance for the period January – March 2022 and I am very pleased that we've remained on track against the majority of actions. Our plan is ambitious and we live in times that require us to regularly adapt our services to meet external challenges (such as Covid 19).

During this period, we have also watched events unfold in Ukraine. We are already seeing far reaching impacts of this and locally we have been taking steps to step up a team to prepare our local support plan for Ukrainian guests being sponsored in West Devon.

In addition to recognising progress against our strategy, our efforts have been applauded on a national level with a Gold Award for our customer ICT improvement programme and with a Highly Commended award for our local land charges service – great work for the staff involved!

Looking ahead, we will now be focusing on year 2 of our delivery plan and opportunities coming forward for the potential of a Devon Devolution Deal with Government

Cllr Neil Jory

Cllr Neil Jory

Leader West Devon Borough Council

During this reporting period we have:-



Received a Gold Award for our online customer improvement programme and were highly commended for our local land charges service

Provided grants to 32 community led schemes supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of our residents across the borough



Been successful in securing government funding towards a new Changing Places Facility at Made-Well in Hatherleigh

Set a balanced budget for the coming year, ensuring we can continue to provide responsive services



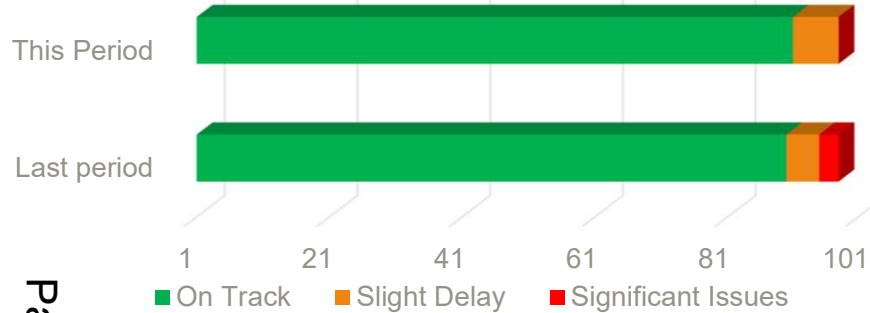
West Devon
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A plan for West Devon

Section 1 – Performance on a page

Status of specific actions in A Plan for West Devon



There are a total of 98 actions to be delivered within the 2021/22 delivery plan. Good progress has been made with the majority on track to deliver as planned.



Spend against approved strategy programme 2021/22

Agreed Strategy Budget 2021/22	£235,500
Spend to Date	£158,525
Forecast to year end	£158,525
Forecast Variance	(£76,975)

Overall we are on track with delivering our priorities within the agreed budget for the year. There is an underspend primarily due to delays in on-boarding new employees and maximising government grants instead of using Council reserves.



Performance against Key Performance Indicators – number of KPI's by status



Risk Management Profile – Average Risk Score across Strategic Risks

Average Strategic Risk Score <u>last</u> Period	Average Strategic Risk Score <u>this</u> period
12	12.8

The average risk score for our strategic risk register has increased very slightly, largely due to an increased risk of Covid-19 impacting on our services



Section 2 – Performance against the Council’s Priorities







Delivering on our Plan for West Devon

This section of the report sets out the performance under each of the Council’s theme areas. The themes underpin our overall ambition for West Devon.

Each year for the next three years, we have set out a number of specific deliverables in our Thematic Delivery Plan.

The table to the right sets out how many of those are currently on track, how many are slightly off track and how many are at risk of not being delivered as planned.

More detail per theme can be seen on the following pages.

Overall Performance Against Actions				
Status		Total Actions Within Category	% of overall actions	Compared to previous Quarter
	This action is on track with good progress being made. There are no significant risks which require action and we are on track to deliver as planned	91	93%	
	There are some issues or risks which are requiring management but a plan is in place to bring back on track	7	7%	
	There is a significant risk that we cannot deliver this activity as planned. Regular monitoring and support from Lead Member and Senior Leadership Team is required	0	0	
	This activity is not yet due to start in the current year	0		NA/ First report
	Totals	98	100%	





Our communities and the voluntary sector have all continued to work together on supporting each other through the ongoing pandemic. While our teams continue to support this effort, I am pleased that we have continued to make good progress in delivering our plans for 2021/22 including:-

- Awarded all funding from the 68 Plymouth Road and Okehampton S106 funds to community schemes – majority of which will be actually spent in 2022/23
- Agreed to reinstate quarterly Parish Links Meetings to ensure we continue with communication between public bodies working within the area
- Continued to work on a plan for better public sector / Voluntary sector in the future – through our links with Team Devon.
- Developed an events forward plan to enable our participation in key events and also to ensure that we take steps to actively promote events



Cllr Terry Pearce

Lead Member for strengthening communities



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Focus Area	Total Actions 2021/22	On Track	Slightly off track but plan in place	Risk that unable to deliver on time	Not yet due to commence
Empowering our communities to enhance their area	11	11			
Supporting the voluntary sector in responding to community needs	4	4			

Key Risks / Issues

- In the coming weeks we will be working hard to ensure we can respond to the needs of our communities that are welcoming Ukrainian refugees to the area. This will likely require a joined up approach with the voluntary sector to ensure we can meet their needs. Team Devon are already having discussions with the CVS around what this support may look like.

Focus for next Quarter

- Consider options for funding of key partners beyond the current funding arrangement – report scheduled for Hub Committee in June 2022
- Hold first of our relaunched Links meetings to continue our close working with Town and Parish Councils and ensure a unified approach to resolving local issues – early May 2022
- Launch our community events fund – April 2022



West Devon Borough Council



A plan for West Devon



Many of the actions within the wellbeing plan require us to work closely with partners such as Public Health, Citizens Advice, Devon County Council and others. It is pleasing that during this period we have continued to build effective working relationships across these groups with some of the key activities delivered in the past quarter being:-

- Awarded over £30,000 to 32 community led projects that are delivering projects to support the Health and Wellbeing of our residents
- Commenced discussions with Devon County Council on a co-ordinated approach to rural poverty
- Worked with Made-Well in Hatherleigh to secure government funding to deliver a new Changing Places facility to be delivered in the next 12-24 months
- Ensured continuing provision of leisure services within the borough through providing
- Adopted a new Playing Pitch Strategy for the borough



Cllr Tony Leech

Lead Member for enhancing community wellbeing



Focus Area	Total Actions 2021/22	On Track	Slightly off track but plan in place	Risk that unable to deliver on time	Not yet due to commence
Reducing Health Inequalities & rural poverty	3	2	1 (CW1.1)		
Leisure provision that meets residents needs	5	5			
Mental Health and Wellbeing	3	3			

Key Risks / Issues

- CW1.1 Rural Poverty Pilot is slightly behind track although good progress is being made with partners to scope a pilot. This action will be rolled forward for an agreed plan to be agreed in Q1 2022/23
- There is a real concern that as the cost of living impacts worsen and with the conflict in Europe, more of our residents will experience a worsening physical and mental health. Our 'Vulnerability Officer' continues to attend Health and Wellbeing alliance meetings to identify opportunities to join up support.

Focus for next Quarter

- Receive report on the mental health and wellbeing for young people delivered during the summer and work with partners to consider the plan for the coming financial year
- Work with the Community Mental Health Framework (CMHF) to assist design and implementation of services and ensure we understand how the Council services can fit
- Work with partners at Public Health to identify an appropriate location for a pilot rural poverty scheme





During this period, Council formally declared a Housing Crisis within the Borough in recognition of the struggles to access suitable homes. In declaring a crisis, we have also worked quickly to scope out our high level response and begin to shape an action plan. We have also:

- Carried out a public consultation on our draft homelessness strategy 2022/2027
- Prepared draft tender documents for the construction of Spring Hill (homelessness accommodation)
- Taken steps to plan our support for the Homes for Ukraine Scheme – working alongside Team Devon for a joined up approach.
- Formulated our year 2 housing strategy (Better Homes, Better Lives) delivery plan for consideration by Members in April
- Presented evidence to a parliamentary inquiry which show why West Devon believe some unscrupulous landlords are exploiting the exempt accommodation benefits system.



Cllr Barry Ratcliffe
Lead Member
for improving
homes



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Focus Area	Total Actions 2021/22	On Track	Slightly off track but plan in place	Risk that unable to deliver on time	Not yet due to commence
Housing for Place	3	3			
Housing for People	6	5	1 (IH1.5)		

Key Risks / Issues

- Having declared a Housing Crisis, it is important that our capacity meets our ambition. Our Head of Housing is currently considering the best way to structure the team to support this response and will set these proposals out in due course.
- Action IH1.5 is slightly off track in respect of Design and costing a package of support for HMO Management and promoting it to landlords. We will roll this action forward to 2022/23

Focus for next Quarter

- Adoption of our homelessness strategy for the next 5 years
- Support 'Homes for Ukraine' sponsors and families
- Further developing our intelligence to inform future policy and decision making
- Scope and schedule housing needs surveys for Princetown and North Tawton for 2022



West Devon
Borough Council



A plan for West Devon



The past quarter has continued to be challenging for many businesses within the Borough and shortly before Christmas Government announced additional grant schemes to support those hit hardest. That said, while taking steps to ensure we can efficiently deliver these grants to businesses, we've made good progress against our delivery plan including:-

- Concluded our programme of EU funded high street and visitor economy support measures which has seen an investment of around £80,000 in a wide range of schemes including promotion of West Devon as a whole and not just our high streets.
- Awarded £207,693 to local businesses and groups for projects that will make a positive impact on the economy in West Devon through our Community Recovery Fund
- Commissioned a survey of Okehampton businesses and, as a result, made a recommendation to Okehampton TC to create a BID
- Commenced discussions around 11 prospective Town Centre Travel Hubs, led by Dartmoor National Park, including Okehampton, Tavistock, Yelverton and Princetown



Focus Area	Total Actions 2021/22	On Track	Slightly off track but plan in place	Risk that unable to deliver on time	Not yet due to commence
Promote Destination West Devon	8	8			
Helping West Devon Towns and Businesses thrive	7	7			
Respond to opportunities to enhance the economy	2	2			

Key Risks / Issues

Two activities we're previously reported as 'Risk that unable to deliver on time' :-
 TE1.4 – Eco-Museum. This was subject to being awarded funding through the Community Renewal Fund. Plans have been revised and the team are now working towards re-submitting the bid to the next funding round – for which we are currently 'on-track'
 TE1.11 – West Devon Transport Hub. This was subject to being awarded funding through the Levelling up fund Tranche 1. Having been unsuccessful, the team have received constructive feedback and have revised plans to resubmit in the next funding window – for which we are currently 'on-track'

Focus for next Quarter

- Enhancing engagement with the farming community in respect of our Digital connectivity ambitions
- Progress preparatory work in respect of the Eco-Museum bid to Community Renewal Fund second round
- Commence work to submit a bid to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund – anticipated to open for applications in June





Good progress is being made on delivery of the specific actions within the year one delivery plan for Natural Environment (in addition to all of the actions within our specific Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan). During this period we have:-

- Launched a campaign encouraging uptake of our garden waste collection scheme
- Commenced a consultation (across the Joint Local Plan area) on climate change measures for all new developments
- Progressed plans for Land near Yelverton and Horrabridge which could be in line for natural woodland regeneration
- Promoted our £600,000 scheme to reduce home energy consumption in West Devon through awarding of Green Home Grants
- Advertised a post for dedicated resource to progress our plans around EV Fleet.



Cllr Lynn Daniel
Lead Member
for growing
our natural
environment



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Focus Area	Total Actions 2021/22	On Track	Slightly off track but plan in place	Risk that unable to deliver on time	Not yet due to commence
Working towards net zero	4	3	1 (NE1.1)		
Making the best use of our incredible natural environment	6	6			

Key Risks / Issues

NE1.1 - Work progresses on the EV fleet replacement but a lack of existing EV charging infrastructure, limited range of some EV's and the large area covered by some vehicles represents a challenge in terms of ensuring that service delivery remains efficient with an EV fleet. The lead officer has also been required to support another key area of the Council and as such we are recruiting (via secondment) a replacement.

Focus for next Quarter

- Continue work in supporting nature mapping to support the development of Nature Recovery Strategies
- Appointment of officer to lead the delivery of the EV fleet replacement (NE1.1)



West Devon
Borough Council



A plan for West Devon



During this quarter, we've spent much time considering how we can improve our Council Planning Service to better support the built environment in to the future. This has consisted of the Planning Advisory Service working with our officers to recommend and implement changes to our processes and already increasing our planning officer capacity by recruiting additional staff which will ultimately improve our customer experience.

- Conducted surveys of Okehampton businesses on their views of a Business Improvement District or Chamber
- Approved an increase in capacity within our Planning Team as part of our ongoing Planning Improvement Plan
- Developed a planning service charter setting out what you can expect when engaging with the planning team and also begun to take steps to simplify the process by recommending that we adopt a Local Validation list



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Focus Area	Total Actions 2021/22	On Track	Slightly off track but plan in place	Risk that unable to deliver on time	Not yet due to commence
Celebrating our heritage and ensuring its protected	4	3	1 (BE1.1)		
Planning infrastructure for the future	4	4			

Key Risks / Issues

- BE1.1 – there have been delays with appointing a dedicated resource to support the review of Conservation Area Plans. We are now proposing to advertise and recruit in early 2022/23 – this action is therefore carried forward to the second year plan.
- Previously we reported BE1.8 (Ability to deliver on Okehampton Transport Hub) as Risk due to unsuccessful outcome of bid submission. There are however future funding rounds and we are pleased to have secured a meeting with Government to understand why our initial bid was not accepted. Plans have therefore been revised and we consider this brings it back on track

Focus for next Quarter

- Progress Milton Abbot, Chillaton and Kelly Neighbourhood Plan Referendums
- Recruitment of dedicated officer to support Conservation Area Appraisals





Over the past couple of years, how our customers access our services has changed (much of which was forced by Covid-19 restrictions closing our receptions). During the last quarter we have:-

- Carried out a public consultation seeking your views on our homelessness strategy
- Reviewed our customer service functions and develop a draft set of recommendations which Members and Officers will be working through in more detail in the coming weeks.
- Begun work to develop a framework for our future customer access strategy
- Recommended that we adopt a Planning Charter setting out clearly what our customers can expect when interacting with the Council
- Had our online accessibility recognised by winning a gold award for customer transformation at the iESE awards and being highly commended for providing an effective Land Charges Service – voted on by our customers



Focus Area	Total Actions 2021/22	On Track	Slightly off track but plan in place	Risk that unable to deliver on time	Not yet due to commence
Being a listening and accessible Council	10	9	1 (IA1.2)		

Key Risks / Issues

Action IA1.2 – Our work to develop a customer access strategy has been delayed and we therefore propose rolling this action forward in to Year 2 of the delivery plan – and for a customer access strategy to be adopted by June.

Focus for next Quarter

- Consider the outcome of the customer contact review and recommendations from that.
- Publish a public report on Council achievements during the year
- Scope, with the Lead member, a Residents Satisfaction Survey for roll out in Summer 2022





Work has continued on delivering our ambitions for enabling our residents to do as much as possible online and to ensure that all of our staff are supported to deliver the best possible service to our residents. During this quarter we have:-

- Set a balanced budget for the Council for the year ahead – ensuring that we can continue to provide responsive services
- Continued work on testing a new planning online system
- Implemented our new 'one view of the customer' system enabling integration between phone and online transactions
- Following a review of our Revenues and Benefits service, commenced recruitment for a new Head of Service to drive forward our service improvement plans
- Worked collaboratively with other Devon Councils through 'Team Devon' to draft proposals to Government for greater powers to be devolved to us.



Cllr Chris Edmonds
Lead Member for maximising our resources



Focus Area	Total Actions 2021/22	On Track	Slightly off track but plan in place	Risk that unable to deliver on time	Not yet due to commence
Value for money of existing services	5	4	1 (R1.1)		
Finance fit for the future	13	12	1 (R1.6)		

Key Risks / Issues

- Action R1.1 - There have been delays to the go-live of our new planning portal and back office system. We have mitigated this by extending the current contract with our current provider by 12 months. This has been funded from the project contingency budget.
- Action R1.6 - We had anticipated that the Government would give Local Government a 3 year finance settlement however this has not been the case and so uncertainty remains about funding beyond next financial year.

Focus for next Quarter

- Seeking agreement from Council on the 2022/23 budget
- Finalising new KPI's for managing service performance for April 2022
- Subject to acceptance of proposals, commence dialogue with Government on a 'Devon Deal'



Section 3 – Programme Spend

Ensuring that we make the best use of the funding available to us

Alongside the adoption of our Plan for West Devon, we have developed a Thematic Delivery Plan which includes resourcing requirements over and above our business as usual services. This section sets out the financial performance against the agreed Strategy budgets.

Theme	Agreed Budget 2021/22	Spend to Date	Forecast spend to year end	Notes
Communities	£0	£0	£0	
Community Wellbeing	£10,000	£11,102	£11,102	Mental Health Support for young people during August / Sept 2021 – awaiting impact report. Slight overspend but covered within existing budgets.
Homes	£30,000	£7,306	£7,306	Delays in recruiting officer however this is reserve funded and therefore can be carried forward with no impact on Council 'bottom line'
Economy	£152,000	£116,617	£116,617	Currently forecasting an underspend due to utilising the increased funding received through the Governments Welcome Back Fund & delays in on-boarding staff resource.
Natural Environment	£27,500	£7,500	£7,500	Feasibility study (APSE) of renewable energy on Council land. £20,000 of this budget was unearmarked for specific purposes and can carry forward)
Built Environment	£0	£0	£0	
Inclusive Services	£0	£0	£0	
Resources	£16,000	£16,000	£16,000	Cost for implementation of new HR /Payroll system –work underway. Note that this is only the element of funding identified within the strategy – additional capital funding is secured within existing years budget.

While we're forecasting an underspend against programme activities, this funding is in reserves and so there will be no impact on the Councils bottom line. This funding will remain allocated to deliver actions that are now carried forward to Year 2 of the delivery plan.



Section 4 – Key Service Performance

Ensuring that our services meet the needs of our residents and businesses



The following section sets out how we are performing in some of our key service areas. These measures are deemed to be important in supporting our delivery of key activities within A Plan for West Devon.

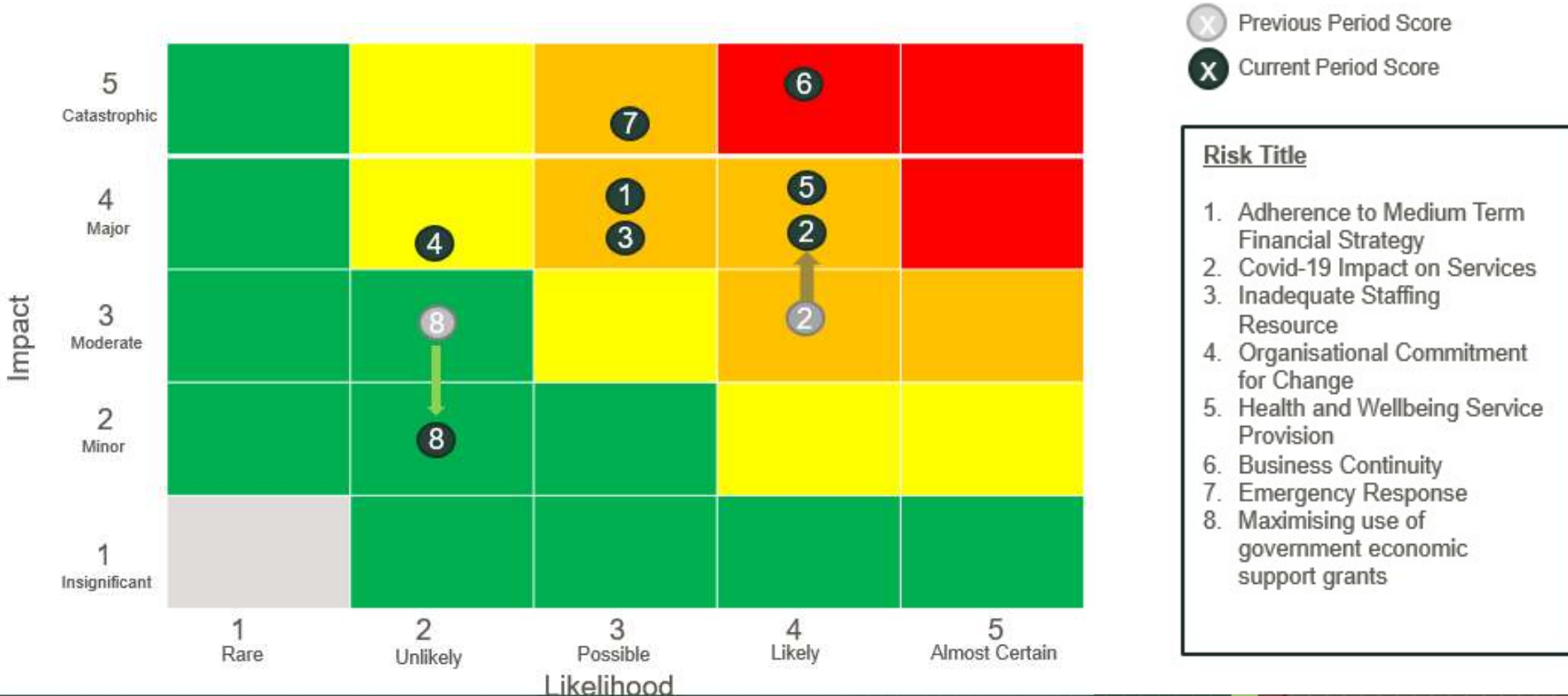
We are currently reviewing the KPI's with a revised set proposed to Hub Committee alongside this report.



Section 5 - Strategic Risks March 2022

The following section sets out an overview of the current strategic risks and on the following pages we provide detail for those that are within the 'Red' scoring. Each Council service area has their own risk register and where a risk reaches a level that it can no longer be managed by that service area alone, it escalates to the Strategic Risk Register.

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Risk Title: (6) Business Continuity 

What is the risk? The risk is that we do not develop and keep maintained robust processes to ensure business continuity in the event of a significant event occurring, e.g. Failure to ensure the continuous availability of critical IT systems leading to inability to deliver key council services.

What is causing the risk? Developing and maintaining robust Business Continuity Plans requires significant and sustained focus. During Covid-19 response, the Councils risk profile has changed as we have relied much heavier on working in different ways (for example more staff working from home the majority of time) and with significant pressures being placed on some of our key delivery partners/ contractors. Work is required to update our BCP's to the changing environment that we are operating in.

While we would typically see our Business Continuity risk score reduce at this point of the year (due to decreased risk of storms and seasonal flu workforce impacts), we are currently seeing a significant increase in Covid cases across Devon and this is beginning to impact our staff with a number of staff currently

What is the level of risk?

Impact	Likelihood of risk occurring	4 (<i>Likely</i>)
	Financial	5 (<i>Catastrophic</i>)
	Service Quality	5 (<i>Catastrophic</i>)
	Reputation	4 (<i>Major</i>)
	Legal / Regulatory	2 (<i>Minor</i>)
	Health and Safety	3 (<i>Moderate</i>)
	Morale / Staffing	3 (<i>Moderate</i>)

- What are we doing to reduce the risk?**
- Having two HQ locations is main mitigating factor - however an outage of power/ICT at either location would lead to a serious disruption of service.
 - Agile working further reduces reliance on two office buildings.
 - Locality workers can be despatched more easily to ensure customer engagement can be maintained during any incident.
 - Business Continuity plans have been updated - priority areas - ICT Networking - Payroll & Creditors Payments; other plans need to be made more robust – further work underway for the new year
 - Continuing to encourage staff to work from home where possible and to continue with informal Member meetings on teams to reduce chance of spreading Covid

Current Update (March 2022) West Devon was impacted by two significant and closely timed storms during this period but our services were largely unaffected. Some higher risk activities were temporarily halted during the day of Storm Eunice but quickly resumed as it passed.

While we would typically see our Business Continuity risk score reduce at this point of the year (due to decreased risk of storms and seasonal flu workforce impacts), we are currently seeing a significant increase in Covid cases across Devon and this is beginning to impact our staff with a number of staff currently having Covid. Many continue to work from home but we will continue to monitor the impact. As a result we have taken the decision to delay our in person staff briefings (which would have been the first in over two years), and continue to encourage individuals to demonstrate caution when on Council duties.

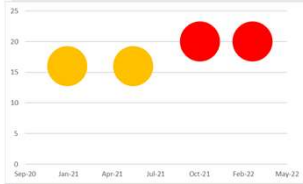
Overall Scoring

Risk Score (Current)



Likelihood 4 x Impact 5





























Risk Score History



Risk Direction



Next Steps

January	February	March	April	May	June
<p> 6thth Jan Resources Advisory Group</p> <p> 10th Jan Environment Advisory Group</p> <p> 11th Jan Homes Advisory Group</p> <p> 18th Jan Built Env Advisory Group</p> <p> 25th Jan Inclusive Services AG</p>	<p> 1st Feb Quarter 3 Integrated Performance Management Report (Oct/Nov/Dec)</p> <p> 1st Feb – Wellbeing AG</p> <p> 8th Feb – Community AG</p> <p> 15th Feb Wellbeing Thematic Update</p> <p> Environment Thematic Update</p> <p>O&S</p>	<p>Audit Plan for West Devon Strategic Risk Update</p> <p> 8th March Economy Advisory Group</p> <p> 22nd March Economy Thematic Update</p> <p>O&S</p>	<p> 12th April Quarter 4 Integrated Performance Management Report (Jan-March)</p> <p> 19th April Homes Advisory Group</p> <p> 26th April Homes Thematic Update</p> <p>O&S</p>		<p> Annual Report of Achievements 2021/22</p> <p>Hub</p> <p> Inclusive Services Advisory Group</p> <p> Inclusive Services Thematic Update</p> <p>O&S</p>
July	August	September	October	November	December
<p> Quarter 1 Integrated Performance Management Report (Apr-Jun)</p> <p>Hub</p> <p> Built Env Advisory Group</p> <p> Built Env' Thematic Update</p> <p>O&S</p>	<p>Advisory Group workshops - Refine 2022/23 Delivery Plans</p>	<p>Audit Plan for West Devon Strategic Risk Update</p>	<p> Community Advisory Group</p> <p> Community Thematic Update</p> <p>O&S</p>	<p> Quarter 2 Integrated Performance Management Report (Jul-Sept)</p> <p>Hub</p> <p> Efficient Services Advisory Group</p> <p> Efficient Services Thematic Update</p> <p>O&S</p>	<p> Environment Advisory Group</p> <p> Environment Thematic Update</p>

Appendix B - Proposed Draft Key Performance Indicators 2022/2023 (West Devon)

Satisfaction	Why it's important	Frequency of Reporting to SLT / Lead Member	Target	Benchmarked against
% Of Customers completing a process and reporting a positive satisfaction with the process (online and on phone)	This assesses how satisfied our customers are following a transaction with the Council.	Monthly		
LGA Resident Satisfaction Survey	This will provide us with insight in to how satisfied residents are with West Devon as a place to live	Annual		Other councils carrying out the LGA model survey
Institute of Customer Service	This will be an annual survey of residents that have transacted with the Council and enable us to benchmark against other organisations	Annual		IOCS carry out the benchmarking for us

Efficiency	Why it's important	Frequency of reporting to SLT / Lead Member	Target	Benchmarked against
DM: Processing of Major Planning Applications % determined in time (with extensions)		Monthly		2020/21 annual figures LG Inform Plus
DM: Processing of minor applications % determined in time (with extensions)		Monthly		2020/21 – annual figures LG Inform Plus
Planning Enforcement cases outstanding		Quarterly		Need to understand what level is reasonable – get a feel from PAS as to proportion of planning applications you'd expect would end up with enforcement action
Processing speed Housing Benefits (new claims) Avg days	It is important that we are efficient at processing housing benefits to ensure our residents quickly receive the support they need.	Quarterly		LG Inform Plus

Staff turnover Rate (Total number of leavers / total workforce in period * 100	It is healthy for an organisation to have a turnover, although a turnover that is too high could indicate dissatisfaction amongst staff.	Quarterly		LG Inform Plus can be used to benchmark
Average no of missed collections per 100,000 collections of household waste	This demonstrates how efficient our contractor, FCC, is in delivering this core function.	Monthly		LG Inform Plus
% of household waste set for reuse, recycling or composting	This demonstrates how effectively we are nudging our residents to reuse, recycle or compost	Monthly		2020/21 LG Inform Plus
% of complaints responded to within timescales	When our customers remain dissatisfied with the service received by the Council, many will complain. This measure sets out how efficient we are at responding to our customer complaints within agreed timescales (currently 20 working days)	Monthly		New measure

Organisational Carbon Footprint – in a years time