

West Devon Hub Committee



West Devon
Borough
Council

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|------------|-----------|-----------|--|
| Title: | Agenda | | | | | | | | |
| Date: | Tuesday, 31st January, 2023 | | | | | | | | |
| Time: | 2.00 pm | | | | | | | | |
| Venue: | Chamber - Kilworthy Park | | | | | | | | |
| Full Members: | <p style="text-align: center;">Chairman Cllr Jory Vice Chairman Cllr Edmonds</p> <p><i>Members:</i></p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td>Cllr Cheadle</td> <td>Cllr Ratcliffe</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Crozier</td> <td>Cllr Vachon</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Leech</td> <td>Cllr Wood</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Mott</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | Cllr Cheadle | Cllr Ratcliffe | Cllr Crozier | Cllr Vachon | Cllr Leech | Cllr Wood | Cllr Mott | |
| Cllr Cheadle | Cllr Ratcliffe | | | | | | | | |
| Cllr Crozier | Cllr Vachon | | | | | | | | |
| Cllr Leech | Cllr Wood | | | | | | | | |
| Cllr Mott | | | | | | | | | |
| 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 | 1 - 6 |
| Minutes of meeting held 13 December 2022 | |
| 5. Public Questions | |
| A period of up to 15 minutes is available to deal with issues raised by the public | |
| 6. Hub Committee Forward Plan | 7 - 10 |
| 7. Revenue Budget Monitoring Report to Month 7 2022/23 | 11 - 24 |
| 8. Capital Programme Monitoring Report to Month 7 2022/23 | 25 - 32 |
| 9. Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals for 2023/24 | 33 - 72 |
| 10. Write-off Report 2021/22 | 73 - 82 |
| 11. Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023/24 and Other Council Tax Discounts and Premiums | 83 - 92 |
| 12. Housing Crisis Update - Summary Reports of Actions | 93 - 124 |
| 13. UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund | 125 - 134 |
| 14. Q3 Intergrated Performance Management Report | 135 - 160 |

Agenda Item 4

At a Meeting of the **HUB COMMITTEE** held in the **Council Chamber, Kilworthy Park, Tavistock** on **TUESDAY** the **13th** day of **DECEMBER 2022** at **2.00 pm**

Present: Cllr N Jory – Chairman
Cllr C Edmonds – Vice Chairman

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| Cllr R Cheadle | Cllr P Crozier |
| Cllr C Mott | Cllr B Ratcliffe |
| Cllr P Vachon | Cllr L Wood |

In attendance: Chief Executive
Deputy Chief Executive
Section 151 Officer
Director of Strategy and Governance
Monitoring Officer
Democratic Services Manager
Deputy Section 151 Officer
Customer Service Improvement Manager
Head of Environmental Health (via Teams)
Head of Housing
Principal Environmental Health Officer
Head of Revenues and Benefits
Assistant Director - Planning

Other Members also in attendance in a non-voting capacity:
Cllrs Leech (via Teams) Southcott (via Teams), Moyse, Pearce, Renders and Yelland

- *HC 59/22 APOLOGIES**
Apologies for this meeting were received from Cllr A F Leech, who joined the meeting via Teams in a non-voting capacity
- *HC 60/22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be discussed but there were none made.
- *HC 61/22 MINUTES**
The Minutes of the Hub Committee meeting held on 1 November 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.
- *HC 62/22 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**
It was noted that no Public Questions had been received in accordance with the Hub Committee Procedure Rules.
- *HC 63/22 HUB COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN**
Members were presented with the latest version of the Hub Committee Forward Plan that set out items on the agenda for Hub Committee meetings for the next four months and noted its content.

In discussion, it was agreed that it would be timely for a review of 'A Plan for West Devon' to be presented to a meeting of the Hub Committee during the early months of 2023 and the Leader committed to liaising with lead officers to update the Plan accordingly.

HC 64/22 DRAFT REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET PROPOSALS 2023/24

The Committee considered a report that set out the draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals for 2023-24.

In discussion, the following points were raised:

- a) The Section 151 Officer informed that Central Government had just published a Policy Statement on the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2023/24 to 2024/25. In summarising its contents, the officer committed to providing a detailed breakdown to all Members outside of this meeting;
- b) A Member sought clarity on the Council's involvement in the administration of Devon County Council's Better Care Fund. In reply, it was confirmed that these Funds were passported to the Council and administered in the form of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs). The primary purpose of DFGs was to make adaptations to properties so as to enable residents to remain living independently within their own homes;
- c) A Member queried the use of New Homes Bonus Funding by the Council and why this was not being directed towards the delivery of Affordable Housing Projects. In reply, it was noted that Section 106 Monies and other funding streams (such as Housing Reserves) were available to support Affordable Housing development and that the New Homes Bonus funds were currently used to support other Capital Bids and the Revenue budget. In recognition of the recently declared Housing Crisis, the Leader stated that this current budgeting practice would be kept under review;
- d) Members wished to put on record their thanks to the Section 151 Officer and her Finance Team for the monumental effort in producing these budget papers.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

- i) the forecast budget gap for 2023/24 of £137,296 (1.6% of the Projected Net Budget of 23/24 of £8.69million) and the position for future years be noted;
- ii) the timescales for closing the budget gap in 23/24 and future years, to achieve long term financial sustainability be noted;
- iii) the current level of Unearmarked and Earmarked Reserves set out in Appendix C of the presented agenda report be noted, as well as the net contributions to Earmarked Reserves modelled for 2023/24 (set out in Appendix A of the presented agenda report);

- iv) the outline initial proposals for the Capital Programme for 2023/24 of £905,000 as set out in Appendix D of the presented agenda report be noted (with Full Business Cases to be presented to Members as part of the January 2023 budget cycle of meetings);
- v) the views of the Hub Committee on the draft Revenue Budget Proposals and the outline capital bids for 2023/24 be noted;
- vi) the views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the draft Revenue Budget Proposals and the draft Capital Budget Proposals for 2023/24, be requested at its meeting taking place on 17 January 2023;
- vii) **Council be RECOMMENDED** that West Devon Borough Council continue to be part of the Devon Business Rates Pool for 2023/24, subject to there being no announcements within the Finance Settlement (expected to be announced in mid-December), which in the opinion of the S151 Officer (in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Hub Committee Member for Resources), would change this recommendation.

***HC 65/22 CUSTOMER ACCESS STRATEGY & CONTACT CENTRE UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report that provided a progress update on the Council's Customer Access Strategy

During the ensuing debate, the following points were raised:

- (a) Although not forcing all residents to interact with the Council digitally, the improved effectiveness of the online service would encourage those who preferred to conduct their business with the Council online to do so. As a result, this would release capacity and improve effectiveness for those residents who preferred to contact the Council by telephone or book an appointment to visit in person;
- (b) Data had shown during the recent trial of the opening of the Kilworthy Park Reception that there had been very little usage. Consequently, it was proposed that the opening hours be further reduced and that it be opened on a Tuesday only, but that an appointments system be implemented to ensure the delivery of an effective service to residents. The importance of a robust Communications Strategy and clear advertising of all methods of accessing Council Services was emphasised;
- (c) It was noted that the proposal to offer a Home Visiting service was to be launched imminently and would offer the most vulnerable amongst the Council's residents the opportunity to meet with Council staff in their own homes. Support was expressed for the introduction of this initiative;
- (d) At this point, the Hub Advisory Group had expressed no appetite for the Council to operate a Virtual Reception facility, although Members were aware that this facility was to be trialled by South Hams District Council (SHDC) in the New Year. The Committee stated that it would view this trial with interest and, should the results of the SHDC trial merit it, it was felt that consideration should be given to implementing a similar facility at Kilworthy Park;

- e) It was requested that a progress report on the Strategy should be brought to a Hub Committee meeting during the summer of 2023 and that the Forward Plan should be updated accordingly;
- f) A Member expressed his personal view that a call answer target of five minutes was too long and an appropriate target would be three minutes. When questioned, officers advised that, for October 2022, the average call waiting time had been two and a half minutes.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the Customer Access Strategy principles and approach (as set out in section 3 of the published agenda report) be approved;
2. the approach and actions to implement the Customer Access Strategy (as set out in section 4 of the published agenda report) be endorsed;
3. the actions taken to improve the Contact Centre performance (as set out in Appendix A of the published agenda report) be noted.

***HC 66/22 COST OF LIVING CRISIS: PLANS FOR HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND ALLOCATION**

Members were presented with a report that provided information on the latest round of Government funding and set out a range of options for how the fund could be administered to best help those in the most need.

In his Introduction, and to help reduce damp and mould in homes, the lead Hub Committee Member felt that 'Clothes Airers' should be added to the goods listed for distribution that were set out in Recommendation 3 of the presented agenda report.

During discussion the following points were raised;

- a) In agreement with the views of the lead Member, an addition to Recommendation 3 was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** (and when put to the vote declared **CARRIED**) that 'Clothes Airers' be added to the goods listed for distribution;
- b) Clarity was sought on how actual need would be assessed so as to ensure that those most in need would be helped. In reply, it was confirmed that the Council had a range of options at its disposal and that, as a result of the Government's guidance on the administration of the Fund being less prescriptive, the Council was able to react on a case-by-case basis;
- c) A Member queried the use of the EPC energy rating certificate as a potential marker for providing help as not all properties would hold one. In response, it was confirmed that it would not be essential for households to hold a certificate in order to receive a grant payment;
- d) Members once again stressed the need for the Fund to be widely publicised so that those who could most benefit were made aware of it. In reply, it was confirmed that, through discussions with Devon County Council, the message would be promoted through schools. In addition, it was suggested that display screens within GP Surgeries could be utilised to further increase awareness.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. officers be instructed to take immediate steps to progress support payments of £650 to working age households receiving council tax reduction and not receiving passported benefits on 1 December 2022;
2. officers be instructed to take immediate steps to progress support payments of £300 to households in receipt of council tax disabled band reduction on 1 December 2022;
3. officers be instructed to work with partners to distribute slow cookers and cookbooks, electric blankets, clothes airers, warm clothing and sleeping bags to households based on need. (It is recommended that £10,000 from the Fund be ring-fenced for this purpose);
4. the use of the balance of the funding for an open application process from low income households most in need of support be approved.

***HC 67/22 HOUSING CRISIS – CHANGES TO FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND ENFORCEMENT POLICIES**

The Hub Committee considered a report that sought approval for the implementation of two updated Council Policies.

During debate the following issues were raised:

- a) A Member queried whether or not there was a risk of some Landlords withdrawing their properties from the rental market in view of the more stringent requirements contained within the new Policies. In reply, it was confirmed that the Council would work closely with Landlords to offer advice and support but that, whilst there was a risk that some rental accommodation could be lost, this should be balanced against the importance of ensuring that our residents lived in safe and healthy accommodation;
- b) The Committee questioned the replacing of gas boilers and associated infrastructure on a 'like for like' basis and asked whether or not a greener (and more sustainable) solution should be utilised. In response, it was stated that not all properties were currently suitable for the installation of solutions such as Solar PV panels or heat pumps so, in the short term, resolving the problem was key. However, in the future (and as technology improved), this position would be subject to ongoing review.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the:

1. existing 2019-2022 Homes Assistance Policy be updated with the revised Better Care Fund Financial Assistance Policy 2022;
2. electrical safety standards Civil (Financial) Penalty Policy be approved and implemented so allowing officers to impose fines where necessary to landlords and improve Private Rented Properties; and

3. energy efficiency standards Civil (Financial) Penalty Policy be approved and implemented, so allowing officers to impose fines where necessary to landlords and improve Private Rented Properties.

(The meeting terminated at 3.05 pm)

Chairman

(NOTE: THESE DECISIONS WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE FROM THURSDAY 22 DECEMBER 2022, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MINUTE HC 64/22 (PART vii) WHICH IS A RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON 21 FEBRUARY 2023 UNLESS CALLED IN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES).

Hub Committee Forward Plan

About the Forward Plan

This is the provisional forward plan for at least four months starting January 2023. 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 Resources and Performance – Cllr C Edmonds
- Lead Hub Member 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 Wood
- 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 P Vachon
- 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 January 2023

| Portfolio Area | Report Title and Summary | Lead Member / Officer | Documents to be considered in making decision | Date of Decision | Consultees and means of consultation |
|-------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Resources and Performance | <p>Title: Revenue Budget Monitoring Report to Month 7 2022/23</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that presents the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report to Month 7.</p> | Cllr Edmonds / Lisa Buckle | Report of Section 151 Officer | 31 January 2023 | |
| Resources and Performance | <p>Title: Capital Programme Monitoring Report to Month 7 2022/23</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that presents the Capital Programme Monitoring Report to Month 7.</p> | Cllr Edmonds / Pauline Henstock | Report of Section 151 Officer | 31 January 2023 | |
| Leader | <p>Title: Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals</p> <p>Purpose: To consider a report that seeks to recommend to Council the draft Revenue and Capital Budget proposals.</p> | Cllr Jory / Lisa Buckle | Report of the Section 151 Officer | 31 January 2023 | |
| Resources and Performance | <p>Title: Write-off Report 2021/22</p> <p>Purpose: The Council is responsible for the collection of: Housing Rents, Sundry Debts including Housing Benefit Overpayments, Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates. The report informs Members of the debt written off for these revenue streams.</p> | Cllr Edmonds / Lisa Buckle | Report of Strategic Lead of Finance | 31 January 2023 | |
| Leisure, Health and Wellbeing | <p>Title: Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023/24 and Other Council Tax Discounts</p> <p>Purpose: To recommend to Council the adoption of an updated Council Tax Reduction Scheme.</p> | Cllr Leech / Geni Hotchkiss | Report of the Head of Revenues and Benefits | 31 January 2023 | |



| Portfolio Area | Report Title and Summary | Lead Member / Officer | Documents to be considered in making decision | Date of Decision | Consultees and means of consultation |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------|--|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | Title: Housing Crisis – Standing Agenda Item | | | 31 January 2023 | |
| Economy | Title: UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural Fund Delivery Purpose: To consider a report that presents an update on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. | Cllr Crozier / Chris Shears | Report of the Senior Specialist – Economic Development | 31 January 2023 | |
| Resources and Performance | Title: Quarter 3 Integrated Performance Management Report 2022/23 Purpose: To consider a report that sets out the Integrated Performance Management report for Quarter 3 of 2022/23. | Cllr Edmonds / Neil Hawke | Report of the Head of Strategy and Projects | 31 January 2023 | |
| | Title: Housing Crisis – Standing Agenda Item | | | 7 March 2023 | |
| Resources and Performance | Title: Revenue Budget Monitoring Report to Month 10 2022/23 Purpose: To consider a report that presents the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report to Month 10. | Cllr Edmonds / Lisa Buckle | Report of Section 151 Officer | 7 March 2023 | |
| Resources and Performance | Title: Capital Programme Monitoring Report to Month 10 2022/23 Purpose: To consider a report that presents the Capital Programme Monitoring Report to Month 10. | Cllr Edmonds / Pauline Henstock | Report of Head of Finance | 7 March 2023 | |
| Resources and Performance | Title: Write-off Reports Q1 and Q2 2022/23 Purpose: The Council is responsible for the collection of: Housing Rents, Sundry Debts | Cllr Edmonds / Lisa Buckle | Report of Strategic Lead of Finance | 7 March 2023 | |



| Portfolio Area | Report Title and Summary | Lead Member / Officer | Documents to be considered in making decision | Date of Decision | Consultees and means of consultation |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | including Housing Benefit Overpayments, Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates. The report informs Members of the debt written off for these revenue streams. | | | | |
| Leisure, Health and Wellbeing | Title: Council Tax Discretionary Discount Policy Purpose: To consider a report that seeks to consider a revised Council Tax Discretionary Discount Policy. | Cllr Leech / Geni Hotchkiss | Report of the Head of Revenues and Benefits | 7 March 2023 | |
| Leader | Title: 'A Plan for West Devon' Year 3 Delivery Plan Purpose: To consider a report that presents the draft Year 3 Delivery Plan for approval. | Cllr Jory / Drew Powell | Report of Director Strategy and Governance | 7 March 2023 | |
| | | | | 11 April 2023 | |
| Inclusive and Accessible Services | Title: Customer Access Strategy Review Purpose: To consider a progress report on the Council's Customer Access Strategy. | Cllr Cheadle / Steve Mullineaux | Report of the Deputy Chief Executive | Mid 2023 | |
| Leader | Title: Draft Annual Report of Achievements Purpose: To consider a report that presents the Council's draft Annual Report of Achievements for 2022/23 | Cllr Jory / Neil Hawke | Report of the Head of Strategy and Projects | June 2023 (Date TBC) | |
| Inclusive and Accessible Services | Title: Customer Journey Purpose: To consider a report that provides an update on the Customer Journey. | Cllr Cheadle / Steve Mullineaux | Report of the Deputy Chief Executive | July 2023 (Date TBC) | |

Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **31 January 2023**

Title: **Month 8 Revenue Budget Monitoring
2022/2023**

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

Wards Affected: **All**

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

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

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

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

Contact: pauline.henstock@swdevon.gov.uk
lisa.buckle@swdevon.gov.uk

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Hub Committee RESOLVES to NOTE the forecast income and expenditure variations for the 2022/23 financial year and the overall projected deficit of £85,000 (1.1% of the total Budget £7.770 million). This is very close to a break-even position.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 This report enables Members to monitor income and expenditure variations against the approved budget for 2022/23 and provides a forecast for the year end position.
- 1.2 The gross service expenditure budget for 2022/23 was set at £24 million (£7.770 million net). This report identifies a projected deficit of £85,000 which is 1.1% of the overall Budget set for 2022/23 of £7.770 million. This is a slight increase from the overall budget monitoring position reported at Month 5, when a deficit of £70,000 was forecasted.

2. Background

2.1 Regional and national context

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

2.3 Financial Monitoring arrangements

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

3. Outcomes/outputs

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

TABLE 1: 2022/23 BUDGET FORECAST

| | 2022/23 Budget expenditure /(income) | Budget variations | | £000 | Note |
|---|---|--------------------|-------|--------------|------|
| | | % | £000 | | |
| | £000 | | £000 | £000 | |
| APPROVED BUDGET | | | | 7,770 | |
| Reductions in expenditure/additional income | | | | | |
| Customer Service & Delivery | | | | | |
| Recycling income | (325) | 74% | (240) | | A |
| Garden Waste income | (245) | 12% | (30) | | B |
| Trade Waste income | (15) | 200% | (30) | | C |
| Savings on staff and Member travel and expenses | 91 | 33% | (30) | | D |
| Housing benefit overpayment recoveries | n/a | n/a (no budget) | (70) | | E |
| Place and Enterprise | | | | | |
| Employment Estates income | (378) | 8% | (30) | | F |
| Homelessness prevention costs | 93 | 65% | (60) | | G |
| Other Comprehensive Income & Expenditure | | | | | |
| Investment Income | (25) | 1860% | (465) | | H |
| Sub total of variations | | | | (955) | |
| Increases in expenditure/ reductions in income | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|---------|-----------------|-------|--------------|---|
| Customer Service & Delivery | | | | | |
| Additional salary costs | 4,544 | 0.9% | 40 | | I |
| Pay award | 90 | 267% | 240 | | J |
| ICT Support Contracts | 483 | 10% | 50 | | K |
| Waste contract inflation | 80 | 144% | 200 | | L |
| Additional waste contract costs | 1,650 | 22% | 370 | | M |
| Waste, recycling and cleansing contract – increase in number of properties | 2,476 | 4% | 110 | | N |
| Place and Enterprise | | | | | |
| Car Parking Income | (1,147) | 8% | 90 | | O |
| Governance & Assurance | | | | | |
| Planning income | (473) | 25% | 120 | | P |
| Other Comprehensive Income & Expenditure | | | | | |
| Sub total of variations | | | | 1,220 | |
| Application of Government Grants | | | | | |
| Homelessness Prevention Grant | n/a | n/a (no budget) | (180) | (180) | Q |
| PROJECTED OUTTURN | | | | 7,855 | |
| PROJECTED DEFICIT FOR 2022/23 | | | | 85 | |

There is projected to be an overall deficit of £85,000 when compared against the Revenue Budget set for 2022/23.

Notes

- A. **Recycling income** – income is currently anticipated to exceed the 2022/23 target by £240,000 in 2022/23, which equates to 74% of the annual income budget of £325,000.
- B. **Garden waste income** – income is currently anticipated to exceed the 2022/23 target by £30,000 which equates to 12% of the annual income budget of £245,000.
- C. **Trade waste income** - income is currently anticipated to exceed the 2022/23 target by £30,000 which equates to 200% of the annual income budget of £15,000.
- D. **Savings on staff and Member travel and expenses** – following Covid 19, it is currently anticipated that a saving of up to £30,000 could be achieved in 2022/23.
- E. **Housing Benefit overpayment recoveries** – it is currently anticipated that income from Housing Benefit overpayment recoveries of £70,000 will be achieved in 2022/23. The budget was reduced to zero in 2021/22 following the introduction of DWP Real Time Information referrals and the expectation that recovery will reduce year on year as collection becomes more difficult.

- F. **Employment Estates income** – employment estates income is currently projected to be over budget by £30,000 in 2022/23 due to high occupancy rates and regular rent reviews.
- G. **Homelessness Prevention Costs** – homelessness prevention costs are currently anticipated to be underspent by £60,000 in 2022/23.
- H. **Investment income** – investment income is currently anticipated to be up by 1860%, which equates to additional income of £465,000 in 2022/23. This follows the recent increases in interest rates as the Bank of England (base rate is currently 3.5%) looks to tackle surging inflation.
- I. **Salaries** – there are additional staffing costs of approx. £40,000. This is mainly due to new posts in relation to the Housing Delivery team, as per the report to the Hub Committee on 7th June 2022, and the additional cost of five agency staff in the Legal team. The social care levy of 1.25% has been ceased from November 22 and the next monitoring report will quantify the impact of this on the overall salary position.
- J. **Pay award** - the impact of the proposed employer's pay offer for 2022/23 of £1,925 on all NJC pay points, is significantly higher than the current budget provision of £90,000 (3%). The proposed pay award will result in additional salary costs of approx. £240,000.
- K. **ICT Support Contracts** - There are additional costs in respect of ICT support contracts mainly due to,
- Above inflation increases, e.g. Microsoft Licensing
 - Additional costs for new licenses, laptops and accessories due to an increase in the number of users on our network
 - The acquisition of remote diagnostics software as a result of the increase in remote working
 - Disability Access legislation for the website has required the purchase of tools for monitoring compliance and enhancing access
- L. **Waste contract inflation** - the impact of the current rate of inflation for 2022/23 (12.2%) is significantly higher than the current budget provision of £90,000 (3%). This will result in additional contract costs of £200,000 in 2022/23. Contract inflation is based on the latest published indices for fuel inflation, wage inflation and consumer price index (CPI).
- M. **Waste and Recycling** – there are additional costs in 2022/23 relating to the uplift in the waste and recycling contract sum, effective from 1 July 2022. Further detail is set out in the Hub Committee report of 12 July 2022, 'Waste and recycling services contract update'.
- N. **Waste, recycling and cleansing contract – increase in number of properties** - it is anticipated that there will be an uplift in the waste

collection, recycling and cleansing contract costs of £110,000 in 2022/23 to reflect the increase in the number of properties across the Borough over the last two financial years. The number of properties has increased from 26,140 in March 2021 to 26,679 in October 2022. Going forward an annual cost pressure for additional properties of £50,000 has been built into the base budget for 2023/24.

- O. **Car Parking income** – There is a projected loss of car parking income of £90,000 out of total budgeted income of £1,147,000 (8%). Even though tariffs were increased by 4% in March 2021, Covid continues to have an impact on income. Town centre car parks have not made a full recovery as expected. We consistently see a drop in income each month compared to 2019/20 income levels. The months of April and May 2021 and January and February 2022 were particularly affected, when covid cases were high. These months saw the car parks biggest drop in income. However, it is acknowledged this figure could fluctuate during the year depending on parking levels during the winter months.
- P. **Planning income** – a planning income shortfall of £120,000 is currently anticipated for 2022/23. However, this is a volatile area which can be very difficult to forecast given the impact of large applications so there is every likelihood that the income will fluctuate as the year progresses.
- Q. **Homelessness Prevention Grant (Government Grant)**– as set out in the grant conditions, this Government grant is ring-fenced for 2022/23. This will be applied against costs (e.g. salary costs of the homelessness service) incurred in reducing temporary accommodation numbers and complying with the Homelessness Reduction Act.

3. Other items to be considered in the 2022/23 Budget

- 3.1 This monitoring report includes an update on the position regarding the savings and additional income that were identified in the 2022/23 budget setting process, set out in Appendix B.

4. Review of Earmarked Reserves

- 4.1 The Council annually undertakes a review of the level of its Earmarked Reserves as part of the budget setting process. Budgeted contributions to and from Earmarked Reserves were part of the 2022/23 Budget reports. In addition a report on Earmarked Reserves was considered by the Audit and Governance Committee on 22 November 2022.
- 4.2 A schedule of Earmarked Reserves is attached at Appendix A, which shows Earmarked Reserves have a projected balance of £6.707 million at 31 March 2023 currently.
- 4.3 The Council's level of Unearmarked Reserves currently stands at £1.490 million. The deficit of £85,000 would go into Unearmarked Reserves at the year end, in accordance with normal accounting

practice. This gives a predicted year end balance at 31 March 2023 of £1.405 million for Unearmarked Reserves.

5. Prudential Indicators

5.1 The prudential code indicators were approved in the Capital, Investment and Treasury Management Strategy report to the Council on 5 April 2022. The indicators are monitored during the year through the normal revenue and capital monitoring processes. All Treasury Management limits have been adhered to.

6. Income and Reserves

Income monitoring is an integral part of financial management. Current income forecasts are as follows: Income monitoring is an integral part of financial management. Below shows the current income (surpluses)/shortfalls already experienced for April 2022 to November 2022. The table also shows the latest 2022/23 projections for the major streams of income.

| Service | Deficit/ (Surplus) April – November 2022 £'000 | Projected Income 2022/23 £'000 | Income Budget 2022/23 £'000 | Deficit/ (Surplus) £'000 | Deficit/ (Surplus) % |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| Car Parking | 80 | (1,057) | (1,147) | 90 | 8% |
| Planning Applications & Advice | 117 | (353) | (473) | 120 | 25% |
| Employment Estates | (20) | (407) | (377) | (30) | (8%) |
| Garden Waste | (20) | (275) | (245) | (30) | (12%) |
| Trade Waste | (30) | (45) | (15) | (30) | (200%) |
| Business Rates Pooling Gain | - | (200) | (200) | - | - |
| Licensing | (1) | (114) | (114) | - | - |
| Interest & Investment Income | (170) | (490) | (25) | (465) | (1860%) |
| Local Land Charges | (2) | (95) | (95) | - | - |
| Recycling Income | (159) | (565) | (325) | (240) | (74%) |
| TOTAL | (205) | (3,601) | (3,016) | (585) | (19%) |

7. Management Actions

7.1 The table below sets out the relevant management actions for the revenue expenditure and income variations shown above. It is best practice for the Council to state whether there are any corrective actions that need to be taken for the variances identified in 2022/23.

| | Budget variations overspend/ (underspend) £000 | Management Action |
|---|---|--|
| Reductions in expenditure/additional income | | |
| Recycling income | (240) | Additional income of £190,000 has been built into the 2023/24 budget. |
| Garden waste | (30) | Additional income of £60,000 is included in the 2023/24 budget proposals. |
| Trade waste | (30) | Additional income of £30,000 has been built into the 2023/24 budget. |
| Staff and Member travel and expenses | (30) | The £30,000 underspend has been built into the 2023/24 budget. |
| Housing Benefit overpayment recoveries | (70) | An income target of £40,000 has been built into the 2023/24 budget. |
| Employment Estates income | (30) | Additional income of £50,000 has been built into the 2023/24 budget. |
| Homelessness Prevention Costs | (60) | This will be kept under close review in 2022/23. |
| Investment income | (465) | Additional income of £375,000 has been built into the 2023/24 budget. |
| Increases in expenditure/reductions in income | | |
| Salaries | 40 | This will be kept under close review in 2022/23. |
| Pay award | 240 | A budget provision of £360,000 has been built into the 2023/24 budget. |
| ICT Support Contracts | 50 | This will be kept under close review in 2022/23. |
| Waste contract inflation | 200 | A cost pressure of £345,000 has been built into the 2023/24 budget. |
| Additional waste contract costs | 370 | A cost pressure of £400,000 has been built into the 2023/24 budget. |
| Waste, recycling and cleansing contract uplift – increase in number of properties | 110 | An annual cost pressure of £50,000 has been built into the 2023/24 budget. |

| | Budget variations overspend/ (underspend) £000 | Management Action |
|---|---|---|
| Car Parking Income | 90 | The income target has been reduced by £150,000 in the 2023/24 budget. |
| Planning income | 120 | This will be kept under close review in 2022/23. |
| Application of Government Grants | | |
| Homelessness Prevention Grant | (180) | Additional income of £180,000 has been built into the 2023/24 budget. |

8. Options available and consideration of risk

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

9. Proposed Way Forward

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

10. Implications

| Implications | Relevant to proposals Y/N | Details and proposed measures to address |
|--|---------------------------|---|
| Legal/Governance | Y | The Council is required to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs. As part of those arrangements, the Council is under a duty to monitor its budgets throughout the financial year and to take appropriate action to deal with any deterioration in the financial position revealed by the regular monitoring. |
| Financial implications to include reference to value for money | Y | <i>The report identifies a projected deficit of £85,000 which is 1.1% of the overall budget set for 2022/23 of £7.770 million. This is very close to a break-even position.</i> As part of Grant Thornton's external audit of the Statement of Accounts for 2021/2022, they will assess the arrangements the Council has in place for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| | | The outcome of Grant Thornton's work in this area will be reported to Members at the Audit Committee meeting on 14 March 2023. |
| Risk | Y | 1) Budget variances – continual monthly budget monitoring at all levels within the Council ensures early identification of variances. Reporting to the Hub Committee provides an opportunity for Members to identify and instigate remedial action where appropriate. 2) Resource Planning – the Hub Committee takes into account any significant issues when developing the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy. These are identified in the Management Actions section of the report (Section 7). |
| Supporting Corporate Strategy | | The budget monitoring process supports all of the Thematic Delivery Plans within the Council's strategic vision, 'A Plan for West Devon'. |
| Consultation and Engagement Strategy | | External consultation and engagement has not been undertaken with regard to this report. |
| Climate Change – Carbon / Biodiversity Impact | | A report was presented to Council on 8 th December 2020 'Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan update'. In March 2021, Council approved to set up an Earmarked Reserve for £200,000 for the Recovery Plan and Corporate Strategy. Further detail is set out in the Council's 'A Plan for West Devon' strategic vision. |
| <i>Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications</i> | | |
| Equality and Diversity | | None directly arising from this report. |
| Safeguarding | | None directly arising from this report. |
| Community Safety, Crime and Disorder | | None directly arising from this report. |
| Health, Safety and Wellbeing | | None directly arising from this report. |
| Other implications | | None directly arising from this report. |

Supporting Information

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

Appendix B – Savings/Additional income schedule

Background Papers:

None

This page is intentionally left blank

| RESERVES - PROJECTED BALANCES | | | | | APPENDIX A |
|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| | Opening Balance 01.04.2022 £000's | Additions to Reserve 2022/23 £000's | Predicted Spend 2022/23 £000's | Closing Balance 31.03.2023 £000's | Comments |
| EARMARKED RESERVES | | | | | |
| Specific Reserves - General Fund | | | | | |
| Affordable Housing (Revenue) | 0 | 172 | | 172 | This is a new reserve set up as part of the 2022/23 Budget setting process and has been created from a one off contribution from the New Homes Bonus funding in 2022/23 (£172,084). |
| 2016/17 Budget Surplus Contingency | 86 | | (51) | 35 | This is the Budget Surplus from 2016/17 which was put into an Earmarked Reserve. Commitments relate to Capital Programme funding. |
| Broadband Community Support | 50 | | | 50 | As per the report to the Hub Committee on 1st December 2020, Council approved the creation of a Broadband Community Support Earmarked Reserve, to be financed by transferring £50k from the existing Business Rates Retention Earmarked Reserve in 2020/21. |
| Car Parking Maintenance | 534 | | (158) | 376 | The commitments in 2022/23 include Brook Street Car Park. |
| COVID Losses Earmarked Reserve | 254 | | | 254 | This reserve was set up in 2020/21 to protect against future COVID losses. |
| Economic Grant Initiatives | 26 | | (4) | 22 | |
| Elections | 34 | 20 | | 54 | |
| Environmental Health Initiatives | 20 | | | 20 | |
| Financial Stability | 454 | 163 | | 617 | This reserve was created in 2018/19 from the Business Rates Pilot funding. This funding was set aside to assist to smooth out future years' funding variations or reductions, in particular any changes from the Fair Funding Review. A one off contribution of £162,850 was approved as part of the 2022/23 budget (Council Feb 2022). |
| Flood Works | 15 | | | 15 | |
| Grounds Maintenance | 78 | | (10) | 68 | This reserve holds the Grounds Maintenance in year surpluses to be reinvested back into the service. |
| Homelessness Prevention | 244 | | (139) | 105 | This reserve has been created following underspends on Homelessness Prevention Costs. The main commitment in 2022/23 relates to the Housing restructure costs (£101k) - Hub 7/6/22 and £50k for Springhill which is projected to be spent in 2023/24. |
| ICT Development | 25 | 50 | (49) | 26 | Predicted spend in 2022/23 includes the Future IT project |
| Innovation Fund (Invest to Earn) | 378 | | (255) | 123 | This reserve originated from New Homes Bonus funding. Commitments in 2022/23 mainly relate to Capital Programme funding including the upgrading of Havedown Depot. |
| Joint Local Plan | 0 | 25 | (25) | 0 | Contribution to Joint Local Plan |
| Leisure Services | 48 | | (36) | 12 | Commitments relate to Capital Programme funding. |
| Maintenance Fund (Estates) | 361 | | (3) | 358 | |
| Management, Maintenance & Risk Management | 418 | 117 | | 535 | This is a relatively new reserve set up to manage the ongoing maintenance costs of the Council's Investment Property Portfolio. The contributions to the reserve equate to 10% of the rental income on an annual basis. |
| Neighbourhood Planning Grants | 47 | | | 47 | |
| New Homes Bonus (NHB) | 506 | 352 | (390) | 468 | The NHB allocation for 22/23 is £352,084. Projected spend in 2022/23 relates to £150k contribution to the base revenue budget, £30k contribution to the Capital Programme and £172,084 contribution to the Affordable Housing Earmarked Reserve. In 2023/24 there is a commitment of £193k for Springhill. |
| Outdoor Sports & Recreation Grants | 16 | | | 16 | |
| Planning Policy and Major Developments | 146 | 25 | (33) | 138 | This reserve is for all planning matters and is also required to meet appeal costs. The predicted spend for 2022/23 relates to the Planning restructure. The cost of the first three years of this restructure is to be met from additional planning income in the Planning earmarked reserve (Hub 7/6/22). |
| Recovery Plan and Corporate Strategy | 182 | | (172) | 10 | In March 2021 the Hub Committee recommended to Council to transfer £200k of the 2020/21 projected surplus into a new Recovery Plan and Corporate Strategy Earmarked Reserve. Projected spend in 2022/23 relates to 'A Plan for West Devon' commitments. |
| Revenue Grants | 1,417 | 10 | (191) | 1,236 | This reserve comprises of government grants received for specific initiatives or new burdens and are held in the reserve for accounting purposes. A commitment of £49k in 2022/23 relates to the funding of three housing posts which were made permanent in the 2020/21 budget process and are funded from the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant. £80,000 of this reserve has been earmarked to fund the Council's share (40%) of a 2 year fixed term senior role to drive customer service and operational efficiency (Hub 13/9/22 - Medium Term Financial Strategy). |
| Support Services Trading Opportunities | 20 | | | 20 | This reserve was created from external work carried out in other Councils e.g. HR work with Councils also embarking on a Transformation Programme. |
| Strategic Change (T18) | 67 | | (10) | 57 | |
| Tree Maintenance | 17 | | | 17 | A new reserve set up in 2021/22 to hold in year surpluses generated to reinvest back into the Tree maintenance service in future years |
| Vehicle Replacement | 328 | 50 | 0 | 378 | This is a new reserve set up to fund the Council's vehicle replacement programme (Council 4 Dec 2018). £50K a year is contributed to this reserve. |
| Waste & Cleansing Options Review | 658 | | (450) | 208 | Detail is set out in the Hub Committee report of 12 July 2022. The commitments mainly relate to the capital work at Hayedown depot and an additional vehicle. |
| Other Reserves below £15,000 (combined) | 42 | | (10) | 32 | |
| Sub Total excluding the Business Rates Reserves | 6,471 | 984 | (1,986) | 5,469 | |
| Business Rates Retention | 1,087 | | (256) | 831 | This relates to a timing issue on the accounting adjustments required for the localisation of business rates. This reserve also deals with any volatility in Business Rate income. In 2022/23 £75,000 has been earmarked to smooth the volatility in business rates. In addition there are capital programme funding commitments. |
| S.31 Compensation Grant (Business Rates) | 1,631 | 253 | (1,477) | 407 | This is a new reserve set up to hold the business rates S31 grants received in 2020/21 and 2021/22 to offset the business rate reliefs given to businesses during lockdown. Under current Collection Fund accounting rules, the S31 grants received will not be discharged against the Collection Fund deficit until the following year, 2022/23. This reserve is not money which is available for the Council to spend and it is important that this is not misinterpreted in the Accounts, as this is a national issue. |
| TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES | 9,189 | 1,237 | (3,719) | 6,707 | |
| TOTAL UNEARMARKED RESERVES | 1,490 | | (85) | 1,405 | Note: This Unearmarked Reserve has a minimum balance of £900,000 and an operating level of a minimum of £1.25million (set by Members as part of the Budget Process). The projected deficit for 2022/23 of £85k (as set out in the report) would be funded from this Unearmarked Reserve, in accordance with normal accounting practice. |
| TOTAL REVENUE RESERVES (EARMARKED AND UNEARMARKED RESERVES) | 10,679 | 1,237 | (3,804) | 8,112 | |

This page is intentionally left blank

Summary of Savings and Additional Income from the 2022/23 Budget Setting Process

APPENDIX B

The table below summarises the savings and additional income that were included in the 2022/23 Budget Setting process and indicates whether the saving/additional income is on track to be delivered.

| | Savings and Additional Income for the 2022/23 Budget | Income/Savings Target for 2022/23 (£) | Latest Projection for 2022/23 (£) | Narrative |
|----|---|--|--|---|
| 1` | IT FIT Project - software savings | 70,000 | 70,000 | Currently on target to achieve these savings. |
| 2 | Efficiencies gained from IT and digital communications | 20,000 | 20,000 | Currently on target to achieve these efficiencies mainly from savings on postage costs. |
| 3 | Employment Estates - additional rental income | 50,000 | 80,000 | It is currently envisaged that extra employment estates income will be £80,000 in 2022/23. This represents the income target of £50,000 and the additional income of £30,000 projected in Table 1 of the report. |
| 4 | Extra recycling income | 60,000 | 300,000 | It is currently envisaged that extra recycling income will be £300,000 in 2022/23. This represents the income target of £60,000 and the additional income of £240,000 projected in Table 1 of the report. |
| 5 | Extra planning income (to fund four planning specialists and two legal specialists) - Planning Improvement plan - Hub Committee 2 November 2021 | 71,000 | 0 | There is a shortfall in planning income of £117,000 as at 30 November 2022. For the purposes of the 2022/23 projection it has been assumed that income will be on budget for the remainder of the year. However, this is a volatile area which can be very difficult to forecast given the impact of large applications. Therefore this extra planning income of £71,000 has not been achieved to date. |
| | TOTAL | £271,000 | £470,000 | |

This page is intentionally left blank

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

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

Report to: **Hub Committee**
Date: **31 January 2023**
Title: **Capital Budget Monitoring 2022/2023**
Portfolio Area: **Performance & Resources – Cllr C Edmonds**
Wards Affected: **All**

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

Author: **Clare Scotton** Role: **Principal Accountant**
Pauline Henstock **Head of Finance Practice**

Contact: **Tel. 01803 861559** E-mail: clare.scotton@swdevon.gov.uk
Tel. 01803 861377 E-mail: pauline.henstock@swdevon.gov.uk

RECOMMENDATION:

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

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The report advises Members of the financial position as at 30th November 2022 for the purposes of budget monitoring.
- 1.2 A new reporting process is in place and the narrative around capital schemes previously included in this budget monitoring report will now be part of the Integrated Performance Management Update reports (the quarter 3 update is a separate report on this agenda). The capital budget monitoring report will purely focus on capital expenditure against budget.

- 1.3 All capital projects are within the individual capital budgets approved by Members. The total approved capital budget is **£4,539,836** of which £2,001,733 has been profiled into 2022/23. £1,364,043 of this allocation has been spent to date (Appendix A).

2. Background

- 2.1 The capital programme for 2022/23 was approved by Council on 15 February 2022 (CM58). This report provides an update on expenditure the Capital Programme.

3. S106 Deposits

- 3.1 The list of S106 Deposits are shown in Appendix B totalling **£1,488,825.53**.
- 3.2 Some of these S106 Agreements have a clause within the S106 Agreement which states that the Council shall be entitled to use up to a five per cent (5%) part of the total payments and contributions payable pursuant to the provisions of the Agreement, towards the costs to be reasonably and properly incurred by the Council in monitoring compliance with the S106 Agreement and in assessing the details submitted to the Council for approval pursuant to the S106 Agreement.

4. Options available and consideration of risk

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

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 This is considered on a project by project basis.

6. Implications

| Implications | Relevant to proposals Y/N | Details and proposed measures to address |
|------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Legal/Governance | | <p>Statutory powers are provided by the S1 Localism Act 2011 general power of competence.</p> <p>The capital programme is implemented in line with the Council's legal requirements, which are examined on a project-by-project basis. To date there are no undue legal concerns.</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| | | <p>The public interest has been assessed and it is considered that the public interest will be better served by not disclosing the information in the Appendices A and B. Accordingly this report contains exempt Information as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.</p> |
| Financial Implications to include reference to Value for Money | | <p>All capital projects are within the individual capital budgets approved by Members. The total approved capital budget is £4,539,836 of which £2,001,733 has been profiled into 2022/23. £1,364,043 of this allocation has been spent to date (Appendix A).</p> <p>The regular monitoring of the Capital Programme ensures the Council has arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.</p> |
| Risk | | <p>The Council demonstrates that capital investment contributes to corporate priorities, provides value for money and takes account of the revenue implications of the investment. Regular monitoring of the capital programme and consideration of new pressures enables Members to control the programme and secure appropriate mitigation where problems arise.</p> <p>There is regular quarterly monitoring of the Capital Programme to Members where any cost overruns are identified at an early stage.</p> |
| Supporting Corporate Strategy | | <p>The Capital Programme supports all of the Thematic Delivery Plans within 'A Plan for West Devon'.</p> |
| Consultation and Engagement Strategy | | <p>External consultation and engagement has not been undertaken with regard to this report.</p> |
| Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact | | <p>The Council declared a Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency on 23 July 2019 and a Climate Change Action Plan was presented to Council in December 2019.</p> <p>Further detail is set out in the Council's 'A Plan for West Devon' strategy.</p> |
| Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications | | |
| Equality and Diversity | | <p>This matter is assessed as part of each specific project.</p> |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Safeguarding | | This matter is assessed as part of each specific project. |
| Community Safety, Crime and Disorder | | This matter is assessed as part of each specific project. |
| Health, Safety and Wellbeing | | This matter is assessed as part of each specific project. |
| Other implications | | None |

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Exempt Appendix A – Details of capital expenditure to 30th November 2022

Appendix B – S106 Summary WDBC as at 30th November 2022

Background Papers:

None

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

| Class Code | Site | Date Received | Restriction/Committed End Date | Conditions | TOTAL S106 DEPOSITS £ |
|------------|------|---------------|--------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|
|------------|------|---------------|--------------------------------|------------|--------------------------|

Homes and Built and Natural Environment Delivery Plan

Affordable Housing

| | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---------------------------------|--|--------------|
| 2517 | 9 Drakes Park Bere Alston (01994/2011) | 12/01/13 | 10 Years of receipt | Affordable Housing | (11,500.00) |
| 2523 | 6&8 Fore Street, Bridestowe(03113/2012) | 02/07/2013, 15/09/2015 | 10 Years of receipt | Affordable Housing | (5,500.00) |
| 2520 | Land adjacent to Trescote, Bridestowe - 00465/2014 | 22/10/14 | 10 Years of receipt | Affordable Housing | (7,375.00) |
| | Land Adjoining Belle vue - 03222/2012 | | | Affordable Housing | (7,375.00) |
| 2539 | The Beeches, Yelverton - 0302/15 | 22/06/17 | 10 Years | DNP - Affordable Housing | (20,911.90) |
| 2533 | Hannafor, The Crescent, Crapstone -01866/2011 | 17/06/2013 19/09/2013 | None | Affordable Housing 100% | (16,300.00) |
| 2546 | Barns At Hurditch Horn Gulworthy 00358/2010 | 20/06/2019, 21/06/2019 | 10 Years | Affordable Housing | (31,949.81) |
| 2535 | The Old Post Office Highampton (00740/2014) | 22/08/18 | 10 years | Affordable Housing | (6,121.51) |
| 2514 | Melcroft, Lifton - 00546/2013 | 09/02/17 | 10 Years of receipt | Affordable Housing | (7,375.00) |
| 2522 | Land adj Shellsley North Tawton (02914/2012) | 20/02/15 | 10 Years of receipt | 1st & 2nd 50% Affordable Housing | (47,136.72) |
| 2521 | Tricity Works, Holsworthy Road, Okehampton - 02485/2012 | 15/06/14 | 10 Years of receipt | Affordable Housing | (5,500.00) |
| 2512 | Livaton Berns, S Tawton - 00707/2014 | 19/08/2015, 23/08/18 & 05/09/2018 | 10 Years of receipt | Affordable Housing 1st & 2nd 50% | (12,878.30) |
| 2557 | The Highwayman Inn, Sourton (3112/16/Ful) | 26/03/2021 & 15/6/21 | 10 Years | 1st and 2nd Instalment of affordable housing | (87,099.66) |
| 2524 | The Barton, Spreyton (01396/2014) | 04/03/2015, 24/07/2012 | 10 years of first occupation | Affordable Housing | (71,530.17) |
| 2508 | Land adj Serendipity, Tavistock - 00556/2014 | 15/08/17 | Spend wiith 10 Years of receipt | Affordable Housing | (8,261.15) |
| 2510 | Land at 68 Plymouth Road, Tavistock - 03076/2012 | 21/11/17 | 10 Years | Affordable Housing | (12,196.61) |
| 2509 | The Garage, Maudlins Park, Tavistock - 02492/2012 | 11/12/17 | 10 Years of receipt | Affordable Housing | (5,713.00) |
| 2516 | Land Adjacent to rising Hill, Tavistock - 01608/2011 | 19/09/13 | None | Affordable Housing | (8,400.00) |
| 2518 | Land Adjoining Brook Farm Tavistock (00692/2013) | | 10 years of receipt | Affordable Housing | (7,375.00) |
| 2519 | Land at Annan Down Park Drive, Tavistock - 01007/2013 | 30/02/2014, 10/07/2014 | 10 years of receipt | Affordable Housing | (29,125.00) |
| 2503 | Tanglewood, Tavistock - 01191/2013 | 12/11/2014, 24/04/2017 | Spend wiith 10 Years of receipt | Affordable Housing | (16,831.59) |
| 2543 | Land Lower Trendle, Tavistock - 2092/16/Ful | 17/07/2020 | 10 Years | 100% Affordable Housing Contributions | (44,221.13) |
| 2513 | RO 6 Westmoor Park - 00014/2014 | 20/06/19 | 10 Years | Affordable Housing | (7,800.68) |
| 2528 | Harewood House Tavistock -2232/17/FUL | 09/02/21 | 10 Years | Affordable Housing | (164,285.01) |
| 2547 | Land Rear of Rowan Cottage, Lewdown, Okehampton - 0825/ | 22/11/19 | 10 Years | Affordable Housing | (25,694.44) |
| 2570 | Dell Cote Crapstone (00364/2014 | 27/09/21 | 10 Years | Affordable Housing | (7,542.51) |
| 2584 | Broomhill Barn Sampford Courtenay (00841/2014) | 28/01/22 | NA | Affordable Housing | (16,700.00) |
| 2584 | Land to rear of Rowan Cottages, Lewdown (0825/16/FUL) | 17/10/22 | | Affordable Housing | (29,804.56) |

(722,503.75)

Adapting our Built Environment

| | | | | | |
|------|---|----------|----------|------------------------------------|-------------|
| 2531 | Unit 2-4 Tavistock Retail Park - 00601/2013 | 14/12/15 | NA | Town Centre/heritage improvements. | (11,236.40) |
| 2543 | Land Lower Trendle, Tavistock - 2092/16/Ful | 03/05/19 | 10 Years | Heritage Contribution | (2,000.00) |

(13,236.40)

Growing our Natural Environment'

| | | | | | |
|------|---|----------|------|--------------------|------------|
| 2561 | Land at Abbey Meadows Crapstone (0147/17/OPA) | 20/05/21 | NA | Plymouth Sound SAC | (750.60) |
| 2568 | 2 Drake Rd Tavistock (4309/20/FUL) | 07/07/21 | NA | Plymouth Sound EMS | (330.92) |
| 2572 | Abbeyleaf Milton Combe (1865/20/FUL) | 29/10/21 | NA | Plymouth Sound EMS | (482.99) |
| 2577 | Gulworthy Farm (1551/20/FUL) | | NA | Plymouth Sound EMS | (435.89) |
| 2583 | Breckland Down Rd Tavi (3980/20/VAR) | 12/01/22 | NA | Plymouth Sound EMS | (1,020.41) |
| 2585 | 26 King Street Tavistock (3786/20/FUL) | 10/02/22 | NA | Plymouth Sound EMS | (493.64) |
| 2593 | Challoch Crapstone (0103/21/FUL) | 30/05/22 | None | Plymouth Sound EMS | (1,105.29) |
| 2594 | Trelyn Bere Alston (0454/22/FUL) | 26/05/22 | None | Plymouth Sound EMS | (467.91) |
| 2595 | Barn at Willesley Milton Abbot (4077/21/PDM) | 14/06/22 | None | Plymouth Sound EMS | (443.46) |
| 2590 | Lower Radaford Lamerton (2991/20/FUL) | | None | Plymouth Sound EMS | (253.97) |
| 2599 | Down Park House Yelverton (0083/22/FUL) | 30/08/22 | NA | Plymouth Sound EMS | (530.43) |
| 2608 | Barn at Walreddon, Whitchurch (2760/21/FUL) | | | Plymouth Sound EMS | (597.58) |

(6,913.09)

TOTAL Homes and Built and Natural Environment Delivery Plan

(742,653.24)

Strengthening Community Wellbeing Delivery Plan

Community Facilities

| | | | | | |
|------|--|----------|---------------------|---|-------------|
| 2527 | 11366/2008/TAV - Forma Tavistock Hockey Club | 28/10/13 | 10 Years of receipt | £23,250 - Community Facility & £112,000 off-site Sports Pitch | (23,296.80) |
| | 11462/2008/OKE (see 13 14 schedule 11/11/2008) | 17/04/13 | NA | Community Facilities | (5,096.62) |
| 2571 | Glendale, Crediton Rd Okehampton (02728/2012) | 30/11/21 | 10 years | Community Facility | (15,538.12) |

(43,931.54)

Open Space, Sport and Recreation

| | | | | | |
|------|--|--|---------------------|---|--------------|
| 2504 | Bathway Fields, N Tawton - 01037/2013 | 15/05/2017, 22/08/2017 | 10 Years of receipt | Public Art £23,678.13, Refuse £1,341.20, Play £58,721.78, Playing Field £25,137.16, Community Facilities £31,288.97, Street Cleaning £7,680.16, PCT Contribution £19,010.40 | (1,822.13) |
| 2558 | Land North of Crediton Road, Okehampton - 01089/2013 | 08/06/21 | 10 Years | Play Field Contribution | (50,420.20) |
| 2527 | 11366/2008/TAV - Forma Tavistock Hockey Club | 28/10/13 | 10 Years of receipt | £23,250 - Community Facility & £112,000 off-site Sports Pitch | (29,111.81) |
| 2537 | Land Butcher park Hill - 00610/2015 | 20/09/2018, 28/06/2019, 14/07/2020 | 5 Years | £147,752 - 1st, 2nd, 3rd & 4th instalment of Playing Pitch Contribution (BCIS uplift to follow when triggers.3 & 4 met). £51,791 - Off-Site Play contribution | (180,895.39) |
| 2548 | Land New Launceston Road - 2022/16/OPA | 04/12/19 | 10 years | 50% Off Site Public open Space and play contribution | (227,612.01) |
| 2559 | Land adjacent to Callington Road, Tavistock - 00554/2013 | 14/05/21 | 5 Years | Off-Site Play Contribution 1st Instalment | (35,114.18) |
| 2560 | Land Adjacent to Cross Farm Lewdown (2878/16/Ful) | 11/05/21 | 5 Years | Open Space Contribution towards the Ramps play area in Lewdown | (11,271.40) |
| 2571 | Glendale, Crediton Rd Okehampton (02728/2012) | 30/11/21 | 10 years | Open Space kickabout | (3,097.61) |
| 2586 | North Rd Lifton (2323/16/OPA) | | None | Child Play facilities | (19,801.82) |
| 2586 | North Rd Lifton (2323/16/OPA) | | None | Child Play facilities | (1,243.78) |

| Class Code | Site | Date Received | Restriction/Committed End Date | Conditions | TOTAL S106 DEPOSITS £ |
|------------|--|---------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2588 | Land opp Springfield Park Bridestowe (4136/19/FUL) | 08/04/22 | 7 years | OSSR | (11,020.52) |
| 2589 | Devonia House Yelverton (DNP 0018/20) | 13/05/22 | 10 years | Off Site Public Open Space | (25,520.63) |
| 2596 | Land South of Exeter Rd Okehampton (0032/18/OPA) | | None | Sports Facilities | (71,042.41) |
| 2607 | New Launceston Road, Broadleigh Park (2022/16/OPA) | | | Off-site play contribution | (26,678.75) |

(694,652.64)

Street Cleaning

| | | | | | |
|------|--|---------------------------|---------------------|---|------------|
| 2504 | Batheway Fields, N Tawton - 01037/2013 | 15/05/2017, 22/08/2017 | 10 Years of receipt | Public Art £23,678.13, Refuse £1,341.20, Play £58,721.78, Playing Field £25,137.16, Community Facilities £31,288.97, Street Cleaning £7,680.16, PCT Contribution £19,010.40 | (7,588.11) |
|------|--|---------------------------|---------------------|---|------------|

(7,588.11)

TOTAL Strengthening Community Wellbeing Delivery Plan

(738,584.18)

TOTAL S106 DEPOSITS

(1,488,825.53)

Notes:

1. The deposits as at 30th November 2022 reflect income already received by the Council or where a debtor has recently been raised to a third party.

Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **31 January 2023**

Title: **Draft Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals for 2023/24**

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

Wards Affected: **All**

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

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

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

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Hub Committee resolves to recommend to Council:

- i) To increase Council Tax for 2023/24 by £7.37 (a 2.99% increase) (This would equate to a Band D council tax of £254.00 for 2023/24, which is an increase of 14 pence per week or £7.37 per year);
- ii) The financial pressures shown in Appendix A of £1,928,800;
- iii) The net contributions to/(from) Earmarked Reserves of £(45,567) as shown in Appendix A, including the proposed use of £150,000 from the Business Rates Retention Earmarked Reserve as set out in 3.17 of the report;
- iv) To use £150,000 of New Homes Bonus funding in 2023/24 to fund the Revenue Base Budget as set out in 3.22 of the report, and to allocate £78,500 of New Homes Bonus funding to the Dartmoor National Park Authority as set out in 3.23.
- v) The savings of £1,110,500 as shown in Appendix A;
- vi) The Committee's recommendation on the increase in the garden waste subscription charge from April 2023, as set out in 5.3 and Appendix F.

- vii) The proposed Capital Programme Proposals for 2023/24 of £910,000 and the proposed financing of the Capital Programme as set out in Appendix D (being £700,000 from the Better Care Fund funding from Devon County Council, £160,000 from NHB funding and £50,000 revenue funding from the Vehicles and Plant Earmarked Reserve).
- viii) That Unearmarked Reserves should continue to have a minimum level of £900,000 (as set in the Medium Term Financial Strategy in September 2022), but an operating level of a minimum of £1.25million.
- ix) That, with effect from 31 March 2023, the Servaco dormant company which the Council jointly owns with South Hams District Council, be closed down. The company has never traded – see 3.38.

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is based on a financial forecast over a rolling three year timeframe to 2025/26. The Council adopted a three year timeframe for its MTFS in 2021, as this dovetailed to the timescales of the Corporate Strategy, 'A Plan for West Devon'. This timeframe has been emulated with the 2022 MTFS as it gives a good balance between long term financial planning and having realistic assumptions to be able to work with. This is in light of the current volatility within local government financial planning, due to the lack of certainty from continued one-year financial settlements. The previous one year financial settlements announced by the Government have aimed to address short-term pressures rather than focus on long term sustainability.
- 1.2 The Council, along with other local authorities, has faced unprecedented reductions in Government funding. Between 2009/10 and 2020/21, the Council's Core Government funding has reduced by £3 million. The Council now receives minimal Revenue Support Grant (main Government Grant) of £89,000.
- 1.3 The Council has continued to work in partnership with South Hams District Council which has allowed West Devon to achieve annual savings of £2.2 million and more importantly protect all statutory front line services. Between both Councils the annual shared services savings being achieved are over £6 million per annum. However, the Councils continue to face considerable financial challenges as a result of uncertainty in the wider economy and constraints on public sector spending.
- 1.4 It is important to note that the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out the budget strategy for the Council for the next three years, with

regular reviews (at least annually) and updates when items are further known or are announced by the Government.

- 1.5 This is the starting point for developing a meaningful three year strategy that sets out the strategic intention for all of the different strands of funding available to the Council. The Council will then be able to rely on this to inform future decisions. The management of risk and promoting financial resilience is a key principle of our budget strategy and this has helped facilitate our response. Key to the authority’s financial resilience are our reserves, which are at a prudent level.
- 1.6 The Fair Funding Review, business rates baseline reset, and other funding reforms now look set to be pushed back to 2025/26.
- 1.7 The key assumptions within the Medium Term Financial Strategy are as below. Each of these is described in more detail in Section 3.
- The business rates baseline reset will be deferred until 2025/26 at the earliest (with no negative Revenue Support Grant in 2023/24)
 - There will be a phasing in of negative Revenue Support Grant as part of the business rates baseline reset (predicted to be in 2025/26 at the earliest) with a transition period over three years, to avoid Local Authorities losing/gaining too much in one go. The modelling assumes negative RSG of £227,500 in 2025/26. Some of the negative RSG could be offset by growth.
 - A Council Tax increase of 2.99% has been modelled for 2023/24 in Appendix B.
 - One more year of NHB has been announced for 2023/24
 - A business rates pooling gain of £200,000 has been modelled for 2023/24
 - A council tax surplus of £377,000 for 23/24 has been assumed, with a council tax collection rate of 98.25% for 23/24 (97.8% was achieved in 2021/22)
 - A 3% pay increase has been modelled from 2023/24 onwards (3% equates to £150,000) – see 3.28
- 1.8 The report sets out proposals for the Council to achieve a balanced budget for 2023/24, as shown in Appendix B. The Council is currently forecasting a £234,009 budget gap by the following year, 2024/25. The cumulative aggregated Budget Gap by 2025/26 is £0.7million, if no action has been taken in each individual year to close the budget gap annually.

| Budget Gaps | 2023/24 £ | 2024/25 £ | 2025/26 £ | Total Aggregated Budget Gap £ |
|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--|
| 'New' Budget Gap each year | Nil | 234,009 | 245,582 | 479,591 |
| *Cumulative Budget Gap | Nil | 234,009 | 479,591 | 713,600 |

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

- 1.9 Below shows the summary of proposed changes to the Budget report for 2023/24, following the announcement of the Draft Local Government Finance Settlement. Proposals for a balanced budget are shown below:

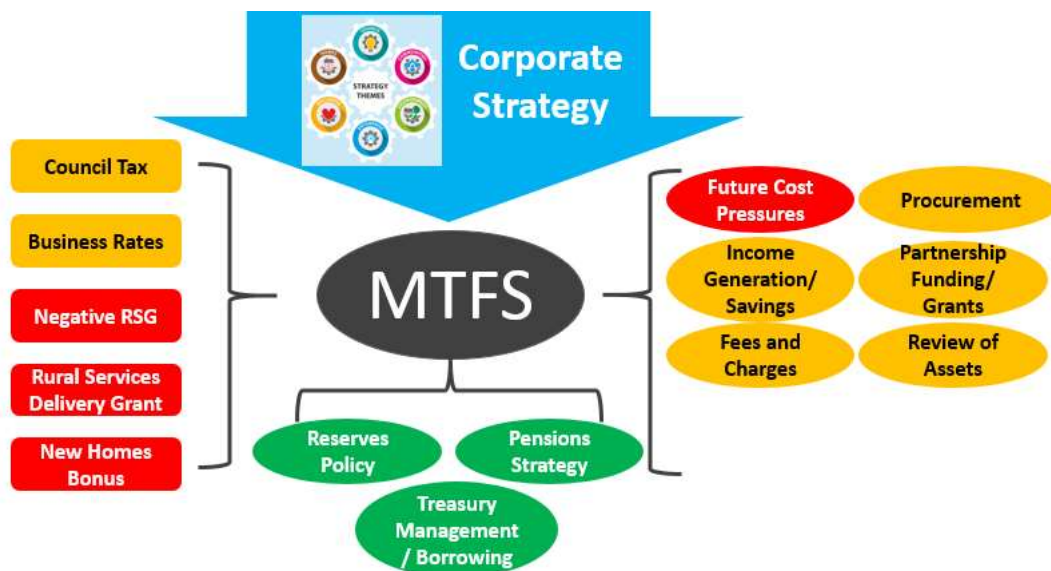
| | £ |
|--|--|
| <i>Budget gap for 23/24 reported in the Hub Committee report of 13th December 2022</i> | 137,296 |
| Additional cost pressures identified | |
| Waste collection, recycling and cleansing contract – additional properties | 50,000 |
| Summary of changes arising out of the announcement of the Local Government Finance Settlement (net of £88,853 which increases the budget gap) | |
| Funding from Funding Guarantee (3% increase in Core Spending Power) – a new Grant for 23/24 | (111,008) |
| Grants rolled into the Funding Guarantee amount | 88,262 |
| Reduction of New Services Grant from £156,000 to £64,015 | 91,985 |
| Withdrawal of Lower Tier Services Grant from £74,000 to Nil | 74,000 |
| Modelling of a council tax increase of 2.99% (an increase of £7.37 on a Band D council tax, compared to an increase of £5) | (49,386) |
| Homelessness Prevention Grant has been increased from £175,000 to £180,000 | (5,000) |
| Reduction in cost pressures | |
| Triennial Pension revaluation – cost pressure has reduced from £75,000 to £50,000 following the results of the revaluation – see 3.24 | (25,000) |
| National Insurance and National Living Wage – cost pressure has reduced from £100,000 to £40,000 | (60,000) |
| Extra income/ financing of the Revenue Budget identified | |
| Increase in the Taxbase for 23/24 from 20,837.75 to 21,225.87 | (98,582) |
| Garden waste income – Members’ views are sought on increasing the annual subscription charge to £49 per annum – see Appendix F | (60,000) |
| Recommend taking £32,567 from the Strategic Change Earmarked Reserve, to produce a balanced budget | (32,567) |
| <i>Revised Budget gap for 2023/24 as set out in this report (as at January 2023)</i> | Nil – (A balanced budget position is presented) |

1.10 **The Draft Revenue Budget Proposals for 2023/24 were considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17th January 2023. The recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the minutes from the meeting, will be presented alongside this Hub Committee report.**

2 COMPONENTS OF THE MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

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

2022/23 Net Budget £7.77 million



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

OVERALL POSITION – BUDGET GAP

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

2.4 **Appendix A** to the Medium Term Financial Strategy sets out the Budget Pressures forecast for the next five years and the additional savings and income forecast. **Appendix B** illustrates the overall financial forecast for the forthcoming five years. The Council’s Net Budget is £7.77 million in 2022/23.

2.5 A Summary forecast is shown below of the potential budget situation if all of the budget pressures and the savings and income generation in Appendix A were approved. It also shows the situation if the Council Tax is increased by 2.99% per annum (shown in Appendix B).

2.6 The report sets out proposals for the Council to achieve a balanced budget for 2023/24, as shown in Appendix B. The Council is currently forecasting a £234,009 budget gap by the following year, 2024/25. The cumulative aggregated Budget Gap by 2025/26 is £0.7million, if no action has been taken in each individual year to close the budget gap annually.

| Budget Gaps | 2023/24 £ | 2024/25 £ | 2025/26 £ | Total Aggregated Budget Gap £ |
|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--|
| 'New' Budget Gap each year | Nil | 234,009 | 245,582 | 479,591 |
| *Cumulative Budget Gap | Nil | 234,009 | 479,591 | 713,600 |

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

2.7 The Council will continue to assess various options for closing the budget gap for 2024/25 onwards, and in the longer term, to achieve long term financial sustainability and further reports will be presented to Members.

3 ASSUMPTIONS FOR FINANCIAL MODELLING PURPOSES

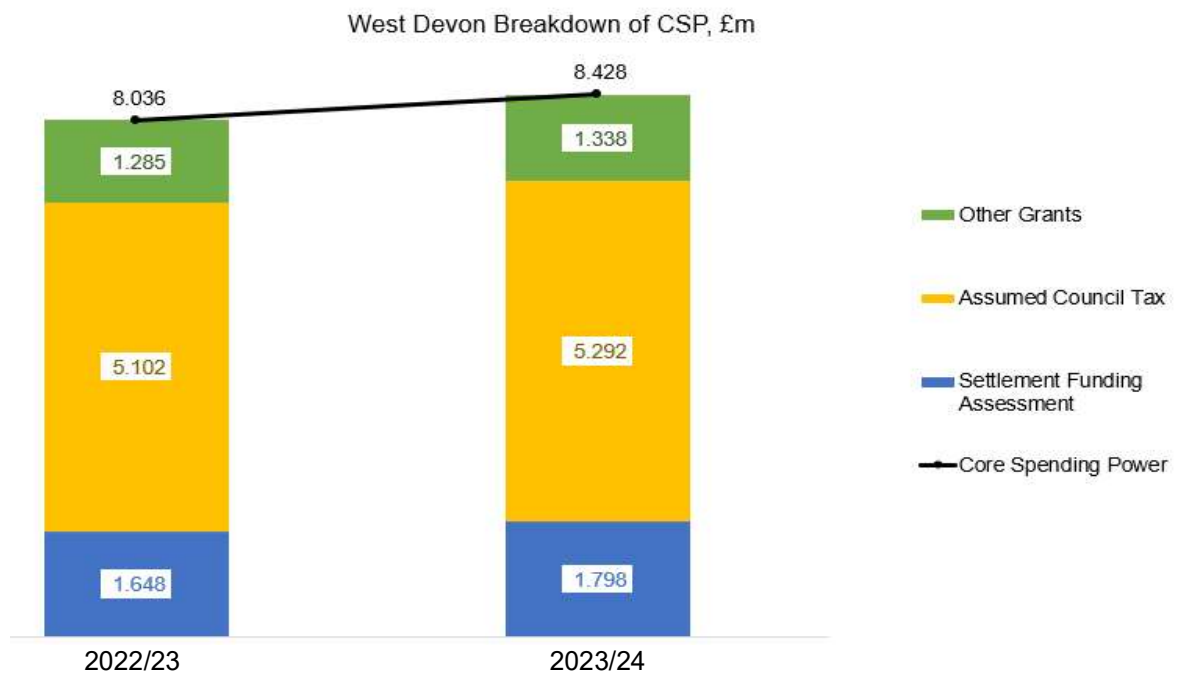
3.1 On 19th December, the Government published for statutory consultation, the provisional local government finance settlement for 2023/24. This followed a policy statement published on 12 December, covering 2023/24 and 2024/25, which are the remaining years of the Spending Review 2021 period. This in turn was just after the Autumn Statement on 17 November, which set the overall level of available resources.

3.2 The provisional settlement is once again a holding position, designed for stability and certainty for planning purposes for 2023/24. The broad approach is based on a uniform roll-over of the core elements of the settlement. Finance reform has been deferred to at least 2025/26 and possibly later.

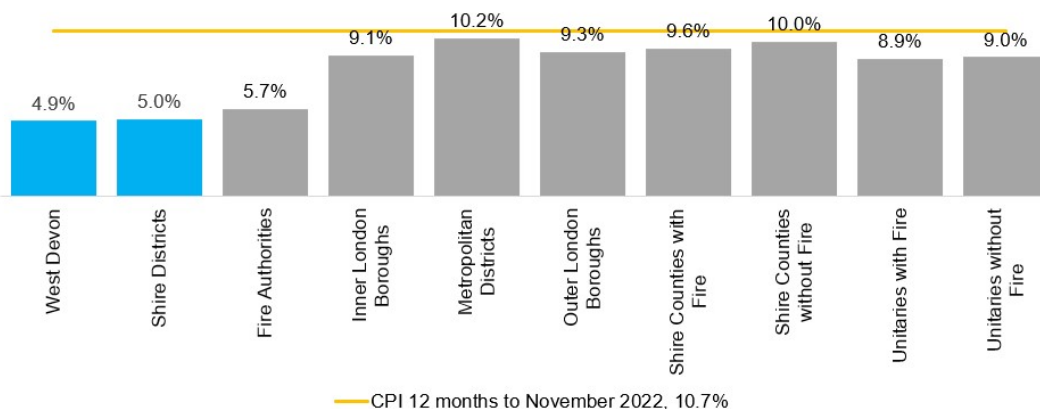
3.3 Detailed numbers are only available for 2023/24 in the Finance Settlement and there remains significant uncertainties for 2024/25, particularly for District Councils. These include the future of the New Homes Bonus Scheme, which is now simply a one-year retrospective payment. There will be a future Government consultation on the New Homes Bonus scheme.

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

3.5 **Core Spending Power for West Devon (which is a measure of how much extra funding a Council has received for next year) increased by 4.9% for 2023/24.** Core Spending Power is the term the Government use to say how much money Councils have to run their services.



The table below shows the change in Core Spending Power by Authority Type. Shire Districts on average received an increase in Core Spending Power of 5%. This compares to 10.2% for Metropolitan Districts.



Council Tax

- 3.6 The Council Tax Referendum limits for District Councils for 2023/24 is the higher of 2.99% or £5. A Band D council tax for the Borough Council of £254.00 for 2023/24 is modelled in Appendix B (an increase of £7.37 per year from the current Band D council tax of £246.63. This is an increase of 14 pence per week, which equates to a 2.99% increase).

The Council's share of the council tax for 2023/24, will be set at the Council meeting on 21st February 2023. (A 1% increase in council tax generates £52,000 of extra council tax income).

Council Tax legislation sets out that Council Tax is partly a form of general taxation on a property and partly a tax on the people living in a property. Council Tax funds essential services in an area and the cost of public services is spread across all tax payers in the same way, regardless of which services they use or receive. Council Tax is a form of general taxation rather than a service charge.

- 3.7 The table below shows how an average Band D council bill is made up for West Devon Borough Council for 2022/23, compared to 2021/22. Of an average Band D Council Tax within the Borough of £2,230.64, an amount of £246.63 is the element of a council tax bill set by West Devon Borough Council. Therefore 11pence of every £1 paid (11%) in council tax is received by West Devon Borough Council to pay for our services. The rest of the council tax bill is set by Devon County Council, the Fire, the Police and Town and Parish Councils to fund the services they provide.

In 2022/23, the council tax for an average Band D property in West Devon increased by £64.06 per annum, an annual increase of 2.96% as shown below.

| Precepting Authority | Band D 2021/22 | Band D 2022/23 | £ Increase | % Increase |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------|------------|
| West Devon Borough Council | £241.63 | £246.63 | £5.00 | 2.07% |

| | | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|---------------|-------|
| Devon County Council Precept | £1,342.44 | £1,372.59 | £30.15 | |
| Adult Social Care Precept * | £168.84 | £183.87 | £15.03 | 2.99% |
| Devon & Cornwall Police & Crime Commissioner | £236.56 | £246.56 | £10.00 | 4.23% |
| Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue | £90.00 | £91.79 | £1.79 | 1.99% |
| Average Parishes/Towns | £87.11 | £89.20 | £2.09 | 2.40% |
| TOTAL | £2,166.58 | £2,230.64 | £64.06 | 2.96% |

- 3.8 The Borough Council is responsible for collecting all the Council Tax debt of approximately £46m as West Devon BC is the Billing Authority. After keeping 11% of the council tax collected to run the Council's services, the rest is paid over to Devon County Council, the Police, the Fire and Town and Parish Councils. The collection rate for Council Tax for West Devon was 97.8% for 2021/22. This was 1.9% higher than the national average of 95.9%.
- 3.9 A council tax collection rate of 97% has been assumed for 2022/23 in the TaxBase calculation.
- 3.10 It has been assumed that the number of properties within the Borough will increase by 300 per annum from 2024/25 onwards.
- 3.11 No council tax referendum principles will apply to Town and Parish Councils for 2023/24 onwards.

Business Rates and Negative Revenue Support Grant (RSG)

- 3.12 It has been assumed that the Business Rates Reset will be delayed to 2025/26 at the earliest.
- 3.13 Pushing these major changes back to 2025/26 means that they can be aligned with the next spending review period (the current spending review runs to 2024/25). 2025/26 now looks like it is shaping up to be a very significant financial year for local government, incorporating a new spending review, the 2021 Census and funding reforms.
- 3.14 This means the Council wouldn't have to forego some of its business rates income (£227,500) by paying some of it back to Government in the form of 'negative government grant' in 2023/24 or 2024/25. Negative RSG is effectively the Council's further predicted funding cuts. The modelling assumes negative RSG of £227,500 in 2025/26. Some of the negative RSG could be offset by growth.

- 3.15 Estimates have been made of the business rates baseline funding levels for 2023/24 onwards and the relative deductions for negative RSG. For example in 2023/24, the £1.761m is the amount the Council is projected to retain from its business rates income collected of around £12.2 million (this equates to around 14p in every £1 collected of business rates).
- 3.16 The 2021/22 collection rate for West Devon for business rates was 93.67%. This was slightly below the national average of 95.5% for 2021/22.
- 3.17 It is modelled to take £150,000 funding from the business rates retention reserve in all three years 23/24 to 25/26. This would reduce the business rates retention reserve by £450,000 over the next 3 years to smooth the impact of the business rates baseline reset and the future loss of pooling gains.

| Business Rates Income | 2023/24 (£m) | 2024/25 (£m) | 2025/26 (£m) |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| | | | Possible Baseline Reset |
| Business Rates Income | 1.761 | 1.857 | 1.960 |
| Less: Negative Revenue Support Grant (RSG) | | | (0.228) |
| Anticipated Pooling Gain | 0.200 | - | - |
| Funding proposed to be taken from the Business Rates Retention Reserve to smooth the volatility in business rates income | 0.150 | 0.150 | 0.150 |
| Total Business Rates Income | 2.111 | 2.007 | 1.882 |

- 3.18 **Business Rates Revaluation** – There will be a business rates revaluation from 1 April 2023, based on the rental market at 1 April 2021. The purpose of a business rates revaluation is to update rateable values and therefore, business rates bills, to reflect changes. Transitional arrangements will be in place to support businesses to adjust to their new bills.

Devon Business Rates Pool

- 3.19 Council in December 2022 approved that West Devon Borough Council will continue to be part of a Devonwide Business Rates Pool for 2023/24. A business rates pooling gain of £200,000 has been modelled for 2023/24.

Rural Services Delivery Grant

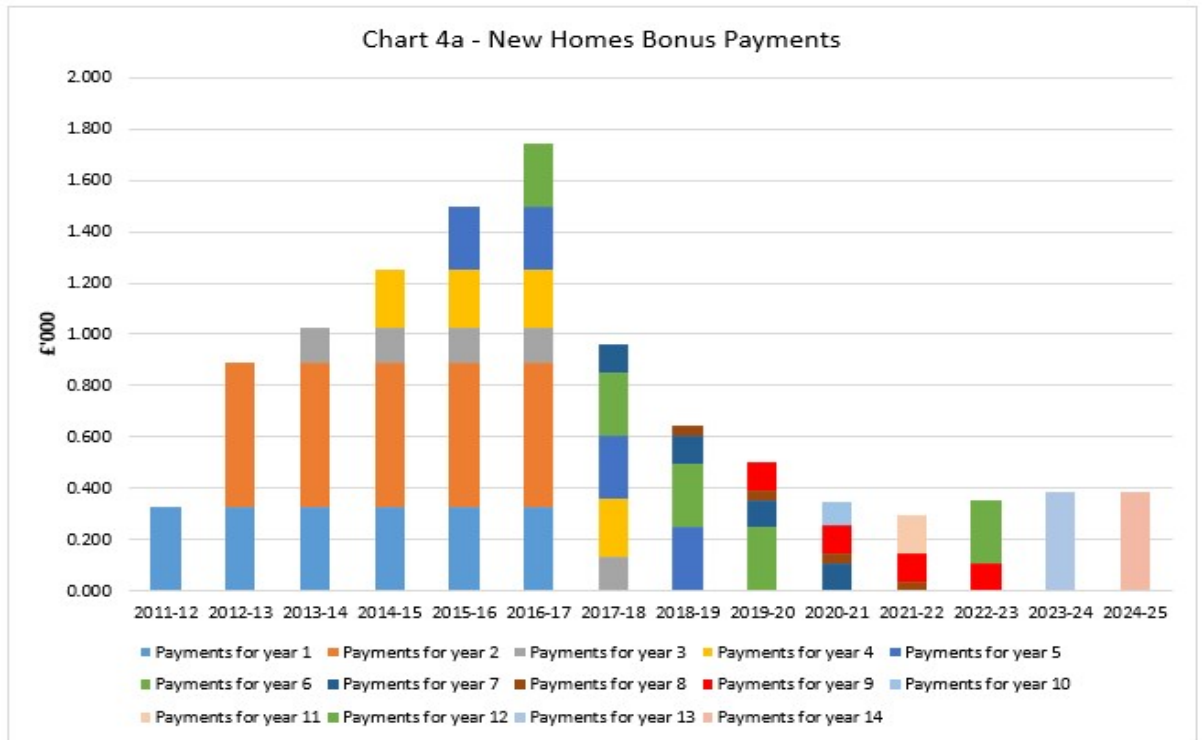
- 3.20 Rural Services Delivery Grant will continue for 2023/24 at previous levels (£85m nationally – WDBC share of £487,296).

New Homes Bonus (NHB)

- 3.21 NHB has been ‘rolled over’ for another year, with no legacy payments being paid. The Council’s provisional allocation is **£384,230 for 2023-24**. There is due to be a consultation on the future of the NHB scheme. A decision on whether NHB will continue into 2024-25 will be made before next year’s finance settlement.

There is a net property increase of 342 properties. When the baseline (0.4%) is deducted of 101 properties (0.4% of 25,329 overall Band D equivalent properties), this means that NHB would be payable at 80% of £1,965 (national average Band D council Tax) x 241 additional Band D properties over the baseline. So for the first 101 extra properties, WDBC receives no NHB. ($241 \times £1965.71 \times 80\% = £378,000$). An extra payment for affordable housing is added on top of the £378,000 to increase the allocation to £384,230.

- 3.22 The budget report assumes that £150,000 of NHB funding is used in 2023/24 to fund the revenue base budget and £160,000 is used to fund the Capital Programme.



3.23 Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) – Members will be aware of the challenges faced by DNPA in setting their budget for 2023-24 and the various steps which the Park Authority has looked at to address their budget proposals for next year. This has included proposals to close the visitor centre at Princetown.

Further to recent meetings in January of Members of DNPA, Members of the Borough Council and officers, DNPA have agreed to keep the Princetown visitor centre open for up to 6 months in order to explore future options. A request will be received from the DNPA for the Borough Council to contribute an element of New Homes Bonus funding to the DNPA, for housing growth within the Park Authority over the last three years. This has been the practice in the past, where WDBC has paid DNPA for the NHB equivalent to the housing growth within the Park Authority boundaries. The amount totals £78,500 for the last three years. It is proposed that the £78,500 is paid to the DNPA from the Council's 2023-24 allocation of NHB funding of £384,230.

3.24 Triennial Pension Revaluation - Every three years, there is a valuation of the Pension Fund (administered by Devon County Council) to assess

the Fund's liability to meet future benefit payments, and whether there are enough assets to meet those liabilities. The valuation as at 31 March 2022 has been undertaken by Barnett Waddingham, a firm of actuaries. They have assessed that as at 31 March 2022, the Devon Pension Fund had discounted liabilities of £5.405 billion, with assets of £5.316 billion to meet the liabilities. This means the Fund has 98% of the assets it needs to meet the accrued pension liabilities. This percentage is known as the funding level, which is now 98%.

The result is an improvement from the last Valuation in 2019 when the Fund had a 91% funding level. The improvement is largely a result of investment returns, deficit contributions paid in by employers and revised demographic assumptions. The increased funding level is good news, demonstrating good progress towards a 100% funding level.

The results for the West Devon proportion of the Devon Pension Fund are shown below. The funding level of the WDBC Pension Fund is now **89.9%**.

Pension Actuarial Valuation result for West Devon BC

The funding level and the movement in the Council's pension position following the Triennial Pension Revaluation are shown below:

| | As at 31st March 2019 (£'000) | As at 31st March 2022 (£'000) |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Assets | 27,258 | 30,241 |
| Liabilities | 32,334 | 33,621 |
| (Deficit) | (5,076) | (3,380) |
| Funding Level | 84.3% | 89.9% |

The table below shows the primary rate (shown in a percentage) and the secondary rate (cash amount).

| Employer Contribution Rate | From 1.04.2023 | From 1.04.2024 | From 1.04.2025 |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Primary Rate (% of Pay) – this is an increase of 3% per annum on the current primary rate of 14.8% | 17.8% | 17.8% | 17.8% |
| Secondary Rate (cash amount per annum) based on 14 year deficit recovery period (Budgeted in 22/23: £344,000) | £244,000 | £254,000 | £264,000 |

3.25 The Pension Deficit has reduced from £5.076m (84.3% funded) at

31.3.2019 to £3.380m (89.9% funded) at 31.3.2022. The secondary rate, the amount paid to meet the pension deficit, will reduce from £344,000 per annum (the amount budgeted in the base budget) to around £244,000 per annum – an annual saving of £100,000 in 23/24. This is on the basis of the pension deficit recovery period of 14 years.

The overall cost pressure is therefore £50,000, being the net of the £150,000 cost pressure in the primary rate and the £100,000 saving in the secondary rate.

Other assumptions within the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

- 3.26 The last pay award offer for 2022/23 has recently been agreed. The pay award is an increase of £1,925 on all NJC pay points 1 and above with effect from 1 April 2022 and an extra day of annual leave entitlement with effect from 1 April 2023. All employees on a NJC pay spine receive a minimum 4.04% pay increase, with a minimum of £10.50 hourly rate of pay. (The estimate of the National Living Wage, set at two-thirds of medium earnings for those aged 21 and over in 2024 is £10.95). For example for Level 8, this would equate to a pay increase of around 9%.
- 3.27 The amount agreed for 2022/23 (as set out above) is higher than the amount that was previously provided for of a 2% provision.
- 3.28 The budget report includes a total provision for the 2022/23 pay award of £360,000 in 23/24. This is an extra £210,000 for the 22/23 pay award (this is the amount on top of the 2% provided for in the 22/23 budget), plus a provision of a 3% (equating to £150,000) pay award for 23/24 and thereafter.
- 3.29 The Medium Term Financial Strategy is not an expression of Council Policy on pay awards, but a means of ensuring an appropriate provision is made as part of the overall financial planning of the Council.
- 3.30 The Consumer Price Index (CPI) has reached 10.7% (November 2022 CPI), which is a 40 year high. A significant part can be attributed directly to gas/electricity price inflation.
- 3.31 An extra £150,000 cost pressure for inflation on goods and services has been included within the cost pressures in Appendix A. This is around a 150% increase in some areas of utilities.
- 3.32 Interest rates are increasing and the Bank Base rate is currently 3.5%. It is predicted that the Council's treasury management income will increase to £400,000 in 2023/24 and an extra £375,000 has been built into the MTFS for 2023/24 (the existing base budget is £25,000).

A Plan for West Devon – The Council's 20 year vision

- 3.33 'A Plan for West Devon' sets out the Council's 20 year vision for West Devon and its communities and how we will work towards it over the next three years. It forms the strategy for both the Council as an organisation and West Devon as a Place. The six areas of focus are supported by detailed annual delivery plans.

<https://westdevon.gov.uk/plan-for-west-devon>

Achieving our Vision

Our longer term vision will be delivered by concentrating on the following areas. These areas of focus will be supported by detailed annual delivery plans.

| | | |
|--|--|--|
|  |  |  |
| Strengthening our communities | Enhancing community wellbeing | Improving homes |
| An area that our communities can be proud of | Every resident is able to live a healthy and active life | Every resident has access to a quality and safe home |
|  |  |  |
| Stimulating a thriving economy | Growing our natural environment | Adapting our built environment |
| A Borough that attracts high quality employment opportunities and space for business to grow | An environment where people and nature thrive together | Planning for the future, celebrating the past |

Climate Change

- 3.34 The Council's annual delivery plan on 'Growing our natural environment' sets out the Council's action plan for addressing climate change and the carbon/biodiversity impact.

OTHER BUDGET ITEMS

- 3.35 The Council will be reviewing core service delivery through on-going service reviews and will bring reports back to Members at the appropriate point, linking back to the corporate strategy.
- 3.36 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill is making its way through Parliament. The Government is aiming for Royal Assent in Spring 2023. There is a proposal within the bill to allow Billing Authorities the discretion to charge second home owners a council tax premium of 100% (so a second home dwelling would pay double the council tax charge). The Bill requires Billing Authorities to have a minimum period of 12 months between making its first determination and the financial year in which it

takes effect. Billing Authorities might be able to charge the premium to second home owners in 2024-25, but the timing will be very tight if Authorities only get the powers in Spring 2023. A Member decision would need to be taken on this as part of the future budget setting process. Modelling shows that extra council tax income of £145,000 could be generated.

Waste and Recycling service

- 3.37 An update on the waste and recycling service was considered by the Hub Committee on 12 July 2022 and Council on 19 July 2022. A further report was considered by the Hub Committee on 1 November 2022 (Minute HC 58/22).

Servaco trading company

- 3.38 It is recommended to Council that, with effect from 31 March 2023, the Servaco trading company which the Council jointly owns with South Hams District Council, be closed down. The company has never traded and dormant accounts are filed annually with Companies House. The original intention of the company was to deliver external training courses. The company was incorporated on 4th September 2014.

4. Treasury Management and Borrowing Strategy

- 4.1 The Council has previously taken external treasury management advice on the Council's overall borrowing levels and debt levels. The Council set an Upper Limit on External Borrowing (for all Council services) as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy of £50 million in 2019 and it is not proposed to change this limit at present.
- 4.2 In 2021/22 the long term borrowing of the Council decreased from £28,342,000 (20/21) to £27,726,000. Short term borrowing increased from £603,000 to £615,000 due to the maturity profile of borrowing.

5 FEES AND CHARGES

- 5.1 A reduction in car parking income of £150,000 has been built into the 2023/24 Budget. The budgeted income is £1,147,000 and the projected loss of car parking income represents 13%. Even though tariffs were increased by 4% in March 2021, Covid continues to have an impact on income. Town centre car parks have not made a full recovery as expected.
- 5.2 At the Hub Committee meeting on 2nd February 2021, Members approved the following: 'delegated authority be given to the relevant Head of Practice, in consultation with the relevant lead Portfolio Holder, to adjust Fees and Charges within their service area by inflation at suitable periodic intervals, with reports being presented to the Hub Committee as appropriate'. This delegation is in place to enable service managers to increase fees and charges by inflation where these are not material changes or increases. The Head of Finance will co-ordinate this process for inflationary increases.

- 5.3 Members' views are sought on increasing the garden waste subscription from April 2023. This is set out in detail in Appendix F of the report. At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 17th January 2023, the report recommended increasing the charge to £49 per annum from April 2023. On considering the report, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended to the Hub Committee to increase the garden waste subscription charge to £52 per annum from April 2023. The minutes from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be presented alongside this Hub Committee report. The final decision on this will be taken by Council on 21st February.

6 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY AND TIMESCALES

- 6.1 The Council will continue to assess various options for closing the budget gap for 2024/25 onwards, and in the longer term, to achieve long term financial sustainability and further options will be presented to Members in further budget reports. This will consider ways to reduce the Council's operating costs and generating further income and savings.
- 6.2 Making the best use of our resources and setting a balanced budget annually is within the 'Delivering Quality Services' Draft Delivery Plan of the Council's long term strategic vision, 'A Plan for West Devon'.

7 Earmarked and Unearmarked Reserves Policy

- 7.1 Unearmarked Reserves have increased by £196,000 in 2021/22 and total £1.490 million at 31 March 2022.
- 7.2 Earmarked Reserves have increased by £248,000 in 2021/22 and total £9.189 million at 31 March 2022. A full list of Reserves is shown in Appendix C. The proposed contributions to/from Earmarked Reserves are shown in Appendix A.
- 7.3 Earmarked Reserves includes £1.631m held in the Business Rates s31 Compensation Grant Reserve. This is due to a technical accounting adjustment where Councils were compensated for the business rates holidays that were announced by the Government for the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors in 2020/21 and 2021/22 (this funding is in the S31 Compensation Grant Reserve). This temporary increase in reserves will reverse back out again in the 2022/23 Accounts, to fund the deficit on the Collection Fund. Therefore this is not money which is available for the Council to spend and it is important that this is not misinterpreted in the Accounts, as this is a national issue.
- 7.4 Reserve levels will be kept under constant review and will be reviewed throughout the budget setting process to consider commitments against Earmarked Reserves, their unallocated balance and the contributions to/from Earmarked Reserves for 2023/24 and future years also. This can then be considered alongside details of the Local Government Finance Settlement.

- 7.5 At Council on 15th February 2022, Members set a minimum balance for Unearmarked Reserves of £900,000, with an operating level of a minimum of £1.25million. This was based on a risk assessment basis and a sensitivity analysis. Therefore the current level of £1.490m is still above these levels previously set.
- 7.6 Legislation does not prescribe how much the minimum level of reserves should be. The Section 151 Officer is tasked with recommending the minimum level of reserves required as part of the budget setting process having regard to elements of risk in the Council's finances (this was recommended at £900,000 being the minimum level in February 2022, with an operating level of £1.25million). Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Section 151 officer to report on the adequacy of the Council's financial resources on an annual basis.
- 7.7 The provision of an appropriate level of balances is a fundamental part of prudent financial management, enabling the Council to build up funds to meet known and potential financial commitments.
- 7.8 As highlighted above there is a high degree of uncertainty about future levels of funding for local government. However, the Section 151 Officer is keeping a close watch on developments and planning for this longer-term uncertainty. For example, the Council has a Financial Stability earmarked reserve to help secure financial stability for the longer term. This will include addressing any future financial pressures from changes in local government funding levels.
- 7.9 The balance on the Financial Stability earmarked reserve at 31 March 2022 is £0.454m. It is also projected to increase to £0.62m in 2022/23.

8 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND PRUDENTIAL BORROWING

- 8.1 The Capital Programme is set by the Council and may be funded by sale proceeds from the disposal of assets (capital receipts), external grants and contributions, directly from revenue or from borrowing.
- 8.2 Capital projects are scored on the following criteria:
- 1 - Health and Safety compliance
 - 2 - Essential to keep operational assets open
 - 3 - Fit with the Council's Delivery Plans for 'A Plan for West Devon'
 - 4 - To rationalise service delivery or service improvement
 - 5 - To generate income, capital value or to reduce revenue costs
- 8.3 It is important that future bids for capital are aligned with the review of the thematic delivery plans and aims within 'A Plan for West Devon'.

- 8.4 The capital bids are set out in Appendix D alongside ways the Capital Programme could be financed. The Capital Bids currently total £910,000.
- 8.5 **Regeneration and Investment Strategy** – The Council has approved a Regeneration and Investment Strategy (Minute Reference CM72, Council 5th April 2022). To date, Investment Properties have a value of £19.12 million in aggregate as at 31.3.2022.
- 8.6 Purchases made within the strategy are capital expenditure. An income projection of £300,000 from the net ancillary income from investments in Investment property has been included within the 2022/23 Base Budget and it is predicted that this will increase by £50,000 for 2023/24 in line with rental reviews.
- 8.7 The Council's Asset Base is £45.7 million at 31 March 2022. The Council will continually review and challenge its asset base in order to deliver the optimum value for money from the Council's Assets.

9 NEXT STEPS AND PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

- 9.1 The MTFs is the starting point for developing a meaningful three year strategy that sets out the strategic intention for different strands of funding available to the Council (Hub Committee 13th September 2022).
- 9.2 The Council's budget is essentially fixed in cash terms and its ability to raise income is limited as there are national controls in place around council tax and business rates.
- 9.3 The Council will continue to assess various options for closing the budget gap for 2024/25 onwards, and in the longer term, to achieve long term financial sustainability and further reports will be presented to Members.
- 9.4 Making the best use of our resources and setting a balanced budget annually is within the 'Delivering Quality Services' Delivery Plan of the Council's long term strategic vision, 'A Plan for West Devon'.
- 9.5 Officers will continue to work with the Hub Committee and the results of this will be incorporated into future Budget reports. This will consider ways to reduce the Council's operating costs and generating further income and savings.
- 9.6 An all Member Budget Workshop took place on Tuesday 8th November 2022.

9.7 The table below shows the budget timetable for the 2023/24 Budget process.

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 17th January 2023 | Overview & Scrutiny Committee - To consider draft proposals for the Revenue and Capital Budget for 2023/24. |
| 31 st January 2023 | Hub Committee – To recommend Final Budget Proposals to Council for 2023/24 |
| 16th February 2023 (9am) | Date which Council Procedure Rule 16 applies |
| 21st February 2023 | Full Council – To approve Final Budget Proposals for 2023/24 and set the WDBC share of the Council Tax |
| 22 February 2023 | Council Tax Resolution Panel – to agree the Council Tax Resolution for 2023/24 (This is WDBC share plus all other precepting authorities share). |

Note 1- Council Procedure Rule 16 states that ‘Where a member intends to move a motion or amendment in relation to the Budget, the text of that motion or amendment must be put in writing and submitted to the Head of Paid Service by 9am on the third working day before the meeting, in order that officers may have sufficient time to consider and advise the Council of the financial implications of any such motion or amendment’. As per the timetable above, this would need to be submitted by 9am on Thursday 16th February 2023.

10. Implications

| Implications | Relevant to proposals Y/N | Details and proposed measures to address |
|------------------|---------------------------|---|
| Legal/Governance | | The Hub Committee is responsible for recommending to Council the budgetary framework. It is the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | | <p>to scrutinise the Budget proposals being proposed by the Council on an annual basis. In accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules, Council must decide the general level of Reserves and the use of Earmarked Reserves.</p> <p>The preparation of the Budget report is evidence of whether the Council has considered and taken into account all relevant information and proper advice when determining its financial arrangements in accordance with statutory requirements, and in particular, that it will set a lawful budget.</p> |
| <p>Financial implications to include reference to value for money</p> | | <p>The report sets out proposals for the Council to achieve a balanced budget for 2023/24, as shown in Appendix B. The Council is currently forecasting a £234,009 budget gap by the following year, 2024/25. The cumulative aggregated Budget Gap by 2025/26 is £0.7million, if no action has been taken in each individual year to close the budget gap annually.</p> <p><i>The Draft Revenue Budget Proposals for 2023/24 were considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17th January 2023. The recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the minutes from the meeting, will be presented alongside this Hub Committee report.</i></p> <p>As part of Grant Thornton’s external audit of the Statement of Accounts for 2021/2022, they will assess the arrangements the Council has in place for:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving economy, efficiency and effectiveness • Financial Sustainability • Governance <p>The outcome of Grant Thornton’s work in this area will be reported to Members at the Audit Committee meeting in March 2023.</p> |
| <p>Risk</p> | | <p>Each of the budget options taken forward by Members will consider the risks of the option.</p> |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Supporting Corporate Strategy | | The majority of activities set out in the Council's delivery plans can be delivered through refocusing and reprioritisation of existing resources however, in order to realise the ambition set out in the strategy, some of the activities will require additional resources. |
| Consultation and Engagement Strategy | | External consultation on the Council's Budget Proposals will be undertaken prior to the Budget being agreed by Council in February 2023. The Budget supports all of the Thematic Delivery Plans within the Council's strategic vision, 'A Plan for West Devon'. There was a public consultation on the Plan. |
| Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact | | A report was presented to Council on 8 th December 2020 'Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan update'. In March 2021, Council approved to set up an Earmarked Reserve for £200,000 for the Recovery Plan and Corporate Strategy. Further detail is set out in the Council's 'A Plan for West Devon' strategic vision. |
| Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications | | |
| Equality and Diversity | | Equality Impact Assessments are completed for the budget proposals. |
| Safeguarding | | None directly arising from this report. |
| Community Safety, Crime and Disorder | | None directly arising from this report. |
| Health, Safety and Wellbeing | | None directly arising from this report. |
| Other implications | | None directly arising from this report. |

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Appendix A – Budget pressures and savings

Appendix B – Modelling of the Budget Position

Appendix C - Schedule of Reserves

Appendix D - Capital bids for 2023/24

Appendix E - Glossary of Terms in Local Government Finance

Appendix F – Garden Waste subscription charge from April 2023

WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

BUDGET PRESSURES

| | BASE 2022/23 £ | Yr 1 2023/24 £ | Yr 2 2024/25 £ | Yr 3 2025/26 £ |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Waste collection, recycling and cleansing contract inflation (estimate) - assume 7.5% 2023/24 onwards (23/24 also includes some extra inflation provision from 22/23) | 80,000 | 345,000 | 225,000 | 225,000 |
| Waste collection, recycling and cleansing contract - Council 19 July 2022 | 0 | 400,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Waste collection, recycling and cleansing - additional properties | | 50,000 | 60,000 | 70,000 |
| Triennial Pension revaluation (increase in Pension Employer primary rate contributions) | 0 | 50,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Inflation on goods and services | 70,000 | 150,000 | 150,000 | 150,000 |
| Increase in salaries - increments and pay and grading | 50,000 | 175,000 | 75,000 | 75,000 |
| Salaries - 22/23 award of £1,925 per Scale point has been modelled (an extra £210,000 on top of the 2% provided for) plus provision for pay award at 3% (£150,000) from 2023/24 onwards, total pay including on-costs of £5m | 90,000 | 360,000 | 150,000 | 150,000 |
| Reduction in car parking income | 0 | 150,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Increase in external audit fees | 0 | 60,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Housing Delivery Team - Hub Committee 7th June 2022 | 0 | 29,800 | 0 | 0 |
| Head of Revenues and Benefits - Hub Committee 12th April 2022 | 0 | 30,000 | 0 | 0 |
| The Planning Improvement Plan, Hub Committee 7 June 2022, noted that the cost of the restructure, £33K per annum, will be funded for the first three years from the additional planning income held in the planning earmarked reserve. | 71,000 | 33,000 | 0 | 0 |
| A Plan for West Devon - Council 28.9.21 - £122,000 cost pressure for 22/23 and £168,000 for 2023/24 | 122,000 | 46,000 | (168,000) | 0 |
| Reduction in Housing Benefit administration subsidy | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 0 |
| National Insurance and National Living Wage (social care levy of 1.25% and NLW increases) | 60,000 | 40,000 | 40,000 | 40,000 |
| IT Support contracts | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Rough sleeper outreach worker (WDBC share of the cost is 40%), to be funded from Government Homelessness grant | 16,000 | | | |
| Reduction in treasury management income | 80,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Community composting groups | 10,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL IDENTIFIED BUDGET PRESSURES | 689,000 | 1,928,800 | 542,000 | 710,000 |

WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

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

| | BASE 2022/23 £ | Yr 1 2023/24 £ | Yr 2 2024/25 £ | Yr 3 2025/26 £ |
|--|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Contribution to IT Development Reserve (£50K per annum) | 50,000 | 50,000 | 50,000 | 50,000 |
| Contribution to Planning Reserve (£25K per annum) | 25,000 | 25,000 | 25,000 | 25,000 |
| Contribution to Elections Reserve (20K per annum) | 20,000 | 20,000 | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| Contribution from the Planning Reserve for the cost of the restructure within the planning service - Hub Committee 7 June 2022 - to be funded for the first three years from the additional planning income held in the planning earmarked reserve | | (33,000) | (33,000) | (33,000) |
| Contribution from Business Rates Retention Reserve to smooth the volatility in business rates income from the baseline reset | (75,000) | (150,000) | (150,000) | (150,000) |
| Contribution from Strategic Change Earmarked Reserve | 0 | (32,567) | 0 | 0 |
| Contribution from the Flexible Homeless Government Grant for three housing posts (wdbc share of costs) and the rough sleeper outreach post | (48,500) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Contribution to Vehicles Replacement Reserve (£50K per annum) - Minute CM42 | 50,000 | 50,000 | 50,000 | 50,000 |
| Contribution to Joint Local Plan Earmarked Reserve | 25,000 | 25,000 | 25,000 | 25,000 |
| Contribution to Financial Stability Earmarked Reserve in 2022-23) (one-off) | 162,850 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Contribution to/ (from) Earmarked Reserves | 209,350 | (45,567) | (13,000) | (13,000) |

SAVINGS AND INCOME GENERATION IDENTIFIED

| | BASE 2022/23 £ | Yr 1 2023/24 £ | Yr 2 2024/25 £ | Yr 3 2025/26 £ |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Income from Investment properties (£300,000 is in the Base Budget for 2022/23) - periodic upwards rental reviews on investment properties | 0 | 50,000 | 25,000 | 0 |
| Management fee income from external contracts such as leisure - Council 15 February 2022 | 0 | 45,500 | 200,000 | 234,500 |
| IT FIT Project - software savings | 70,000 | 10,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Establishment savings (salary savings) gained from IT and digital communications | 20,000 | 50,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Extra recycling income - this income has already been achieved in 2021-22 | 60,000 | 190,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Extra trade waste income | 0 | 30,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Extra treasury management income to reflect increases in the Bank Base rate | 0 | 375,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Extra garden waste income | | 60,000 | | |
| Savings on staff and Member travel and expenses | 0 | 30,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Housing Benefit overpayments | 0 | 40,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Reducing homelessness costs through Springhill provision | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100,000 |
| Extra planning income (to fund four planning specialists and two legal specialists) - Planning Improvement plan - Hub Committee 2 November 2021 | 71,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Income from three weekly trials (Hub Committee 15th September 2020) | (50,000) | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Additional Employments estates income | 50,000 | 50,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Funding from Homelessness prevention government grant (this funds housing posts - funding to be reflected within the base budget) | 0 | 180,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Discretion to charge up to an extra 100% extra council tax on Second Homes (timescale is that legislation maybe introduced for 24-25 but it also could be delayed to 25-26) A Member decision would need to be taken on this as part of the future budget setting process. The figure shown is for modelling purposes only. | | | 145,000 | 0 |
| TOTAL SAVINGS AND INCOME GENERATION | 221,000 | 1,110,500 | 370,000 | 334,500 |

| Modelling assumptions: Assumes Council Tax is increased by 2.99% annually | BASE | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 |
|---|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Modelling for the financial years 2023/24 onwards | 2022/23 £ | 2023/24 £ | 2024/25 £ | 2025/26 £ |
| Base budget brought forward | 7,301,695 | 7,769,695 | 8,587,995 | 8,525,986 |
| Budget pressures (as per Appendix A) | 689,000 | 1,928,800 | 542,000 | 710,000 |
| Savings already identified (as per Appendix A) | (221,000) | (1,110,500) | (370,000) | (334,500) |
| Projected Net Expenditure: | 7,769,695 | 8,587,995 | 8,759,995 | 8,901,486 |
| Funded By:- | | | | |
| Council Tax income - Modelling a 2.99% increase in council tax each year (Taxbase 23/24 = 21,225.87 Band D Equivalent properties) | 5,102,220 | 5,391,371 | 5,630,952 | 5,880,108 |
| Collection Fund Surplus | 152,000 | 377,000 | 200,000 | 200,000 |
| Localised Business Rates (estimate of business rates resources received in the year) | 1,700,000 | 1,761,000 | 1,857,000 | 1,960,000 |
| Business Rates Tariff/Top Up Adjustment amount (Negative Revenue Support Grant change to baseline need assumed to start in 2025/26) | 0 | 0 | 0 | (227,500) |
| Revenue Support Grant | 0 | 89,000 | 93,000 | 93,000 |
| Business Rates Pooling Gain | 200,000 | 200,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Funding from Rural Services Delivery Grant | 487,296 | 487,296 | 487,296 | 487,296 |
| Funding from Funding Guarantee (3% increase in Core Spending Power) - this is a new grant for 23/24 onwards. Assume discontinued when the Fair Funding Review is implemented in 25-26. | 0 | 111,008 | 183,000 | 0 |
| Less grants rolled into the Funding Guarantee amount | 0 | (88,262) | (88,262) | 0 |
| Transitional funding - assume the introduction of the business rates baseline reset and the Fair Funding Review will translate into some transitional funding being available to Councils | | 0 | 0 | 100,000 |
| Funding from New Homes Bonus (or a replacement scheme) | 150,000 | 150,000 | 150,000 | 150,000 |
| Funding from Lower Tier Services Grant | 73,923 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Funding from New Services Grant | 113,606 | 64,015 | 0 | 0 |
| Less: Contribution to Earmarked Reserves | (209,350) | 45,567 | 13,000 | 13,000 |
| Total Projected Funding Sources | 7,769,695 | 8,587,995 | 8,525,986 | 8,655,904 |
| Budget gap per year (Projected Expenditure line 4 - Projected Funding line 19) | 0 | 0 | 234,009 | 245,582 |
| Actual Predicted Cumulative Budget Gap | 0 | 0 | 234,009 | 479,591 |
| Aggregated Budget Gap (if no action is taken in each individual year to close the budget gap annually) | 0 | 0 | 234,009 | 713,600 |

| Modelling Assumptions: (Assumes an increase in Band D Equivalent properties of 300 per annum) | | | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Council Tax (Band D) (an increase of 2.99% per annum has been modelled) | 246.63 | 254.00 | 261.59 | 269.41 |
| Council TaxBase | 20,687.75 | 21,225.87 | 21,525.87 | 21,825.87 |

This page is intentionally left blank

| RESERVES - PROJECTED BALANCES | | | | | APPENDIX C |
|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| | Opening Balance 01.04.2022 £000's | Additions to Reserve 2022/23 £000's | Predicted Spend 2022/23 £000's | Closing Balance 31.03.2023 £000's | Comments |
| EARMARKED RESERVES | | | | | |
| Specific Reserves - General Fund | | | | | |
| Affordable Housing (Revenue) | 0 | 172 | | 172 | This is a new reserve set up as part of the 2022/23 Budget setting process and has been created from a one off contribution from the New Homes Bonus funding in 2022/23 (£172,084). |
| 2016/17 Budget Surplus Contingency | 86 | | (51) | 35 | This is the Budget Surplus from 2016/17 which was put into an Earmarked Reserve. Commitments relate to Capital Programme funding. |
| Broadband Community Support | 50 | | | 50 | As per the report to the Hub Committee on 1st December 2020, Council approved the creation of a Broadband Community Support Earmarked Reserve, to be financed by transferring £50k from the existing Business Rates Retention Earmarked Reserve in 2020/21. |
| Car Parking Maintenance | 534 | | (158) | 376 | The commitments in 2022/23 include Brook Street Car Park. |
| COVID Losses Earmarked Reserve | 254 | | | 254 | This reserve was set up in 2020/21 to protect against future COVID losses. |
| Economic Grant Initiatives | 26 | | (4) | 22 | |
| Elections | 34 | 20 | | 54 | |
| Environmental Health Initiatives | 20 | | | 20 | |
| Financial Stability | 454 | 163 | | 617 | This reserve was created in 2018/19 from the Business Rates Pilot funding. This funding was set aside to assist to smooth out future years' funding variations or reductions, in particular any changes from the Fair Funding Review. A one off contribution of £162,850 was approved as part of the 2022/23 budget (Council Feb 2022). |
| Flood Works | 15 | | | 15 | |
| Grounds Maintenance | 78 | | (10) | 68 | This reserve holds the Grounds Maintenance in year surpluses to be reinvested back into the service. |
| Homelessness Prevention | 244 | | (139) | 105 | This reserve has been created following underspends on Homelessness Prevention Costs. The main commitment in 2022/23 relates to the Housing restructure costs (£101k) - Hub 7/6/22 and £50k for Springhill which is projected to be spent in 2023/24. |
| ICT Development | 25 | 50 | (49) | 26 | Predicted spend in 2022/23 includes the Future IT project |
| Innovation Fund (Invest to Earn) | 378 | | (255) | 123 | This reserve originated from New Homes Bonus funding. Commitments in 2022/23 mainly relate to Capital Programme funding including the upgrading of Havedown Depot. |
| Joint Local Plan | 0 | 25 | (25) | 0 | Contribution to Joint Local Plan |
| Leisure Services | 48 | | (36) | 12 | Commitments relate to Capital Programme funding. |
| Maintenance Fund (Estates) | 361 | | (3) | 358 | |
| Management, Maintenance & Risk Management | 418 | 117 | | 535 | This is a relatively new reserve set up to manage the ongoing maintenance costs of the Council's Investment Property Portfolio. The contributions to the reserve equate to 10% of the rental income on an annual basis. |
| Neighbourhood Planning Grants | 47 | | | 47 | |
| New Homes Bonus (NHB) | 506 | 352 | (390) | 468 | The NHB allocation for 22/23 is £352,084. Projected spend in 2022/23 relates to £150k contribution to the base revenue budget, £30k contribution to the Capital Programme and £172,084 contribution to the Affordable Housing Earmarked Reserve. In 2023/24 there is a commitment of £193k for Springhill. |
| Outdoor Sports & Recreation Grants | 16 | | | 16 | |
| Planning Policy and Major Developments | 146 | 25 | (33) | 138 | This reserve is for all planning matters and is also required to meet appeal costs. The predicted spend for 2022/23 relates to the Planning restructure. The cost of the first three years of this restructure is to be met from additional planning income in the Planning earmarked reserve (Hub 7/6/22). |
| Recovery Plan and Corporate Strategy | 182 | | (172) | 10 | In March 2021 the Hub Committee recommended to Council to transfer £200k of the 2020/21 projected surplus into a new Recovery Plan and Corporate Strategy Earmarked Reserve. Projected spend in 2022/23 relates to 'A Plan for West Devon' commitments. |
| Revenue Grants | 1,417 | 10 | (191) | 1,236 | This reserve comprises of government grants received for specific initiatives or new burdens and are held in the reserve for accounting purposes. A commitment of £49k in 2022/23 relates to the funding of three housing posts which were made permanent in the 2020/21 budget process and are funded from the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant. £80,000 of this reserve has been earmarked to fund the Council's share (40%) of a 2 year fixed term senior role to drive customer service and operational efficiency (Hub 13/9/22 - Medium Term Financial Strategy). |
| Support Services Trading Opportunities | 20 | | | 20 | This reserve was created from external work carried out in other Councils e.g. HR work with Councils also embarking on a Transformation Programme. |
| Strategic Change (T18) | 67 | | (10) | 57 | |
| Tree Maintenance | 17 | | | 17 | A new reserve set up in 2021/22 to hold in year surpluses generated to reinvest back into the Tree maintenance service in future years |
| Vehicle Replacement | 328 | 50 | 0 | 378 | This is a new reserve set up to fund the Council's vehicle replacement programme (Council 4 Dec 2018). £50K a year is contributed to this reserve. |
| Waste & Cleansing Options Review | 658 | | (450) | 208 | Detail is set out in the Hub Committee report of 12 July 2022. The commitments mainly relate to the capital work at Hayedown depot and an additional vehicle. |
| Other Reserves below £15,000 (combined) | 42 | | (10) | 32 | |
| Sub Total excluding the Business Rates Reserves | 6,471 | 984 | (1,986) | 5,469 | |
| Business Rates Retention | 1,087 | | (256) | 831 | This relates to a timing issue on the accounting adjustments required for the localisation of business rates. This reserve also deals with any volatility in Business Rate income. In 2022/23 £75,000 has been earmarked to smooth the volatility in business rates. In addition there are capital programme funding commitments. |
| S.31 Compensation Grant (Business Rates) | 1,631 | 253 | (1,477) | 407 | This is a new reserve set up to hold the business rates S31 grants received in 2020/21 and 2021/22 to offset the business rate reliefs given to businesses during lockdown. Under current Collection Fund accounting rules, the S31 grants received will not be discharged against the Collection Fund deficit until the following year, 2022/23. This reserve is not money which is available for the Council to spend and it is important that this is not misinterpreted in the Accounts, as this is a national issue. |
| TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES | 9,189 | 1,237 | (3,719) | 6,707 | |
| TOTAL UNEARMARKED RESERVES | 1,490 | | (85) | 1,405 | Note: This Unearmarked Reserve has a minimum balance of £900,000 and an operating level of a minimum of £1.25million (set by Members as part of the Budget Process). The projected deficit for 2022/23 of £85k (as set out in the report) would be funded from this Unearmarked Reserve, in accordance with normal accounting practice. |
| TOTAL REVENUE RESERVES (EARMARKED AND UNEARMARKED RESERVES) | 10,679 | 1,237 | (3,804) | 8,112 | |

This page is intentionally left blank

| Capital Bids for 2023/24 | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Priority Criteria | | | | | |
| Statutory Obligations | 1 Compliance, H&S, DDA | | | | |
| | 2 Essential to keep Operational Assets open | | | | |
| Strategic Plan | 3 Fit with the Council's Delivery Plans for 'A Plan for West Devon' | | | | |
| Good Asset Management | 4 Rationalise service delivery or service improvement | | | | |
| | 5 Generate income, capital value or reduce revenue costs | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| Service | Site | Project | Lead officer | Capital Bids for 2023/24 £'000 | Priority code |
| Placemaking | | Community Project Grants (annual bid) | RS | 30 | 1,3,4 |
| Commercial Services | | Waste Fleet Replacement - annual contribution (already approved as per the Council minute from December 2018) | SM | 50 | 1,2,3,4 |
| Assets | | Communal areas and meeting areas at Kilworthy Park (£50,000) and EV installations (charging point at KP, £15,000). To ensure Kilworthy Park is fit for purpose, meeting the needs of the organisation and in order to continue to provide good quality rental accommodation to our tenants. | LW | 65 | 1,2,3,4,5 |
| Assets | | Undertaking decarbonisation studies of our principle assets and operational buildings so as to understand measures that can be implemented to reduce carbon emissions (Scope 2) from our buildings. The surveys will set out the measures needed, the costs of implementation and the ongoing operating and maintenance costs. This would enable us to apply for future Government capital grants to enable the works. | LW | 30 | 1,2,3,4,5 |
| Assets | | Yelverton to Clearbrook cycle trail | GB | 10 | 3,4 |
| IT | | IT automation software - to be utilised by multiple service areas to automate tasks. | JD | 25 | 3,4,5 |
| Private Sector Renewals (inc Disabled Facility Grants) - funded by Government Grant funding from the Better Care Fund. This funding is passported from Devon County Council to West Devon BC to administer the scheme. | | 22/23 allocation was £697,230 – assume 23/24 allocation will be of a similar value. | IL | 700 | 1, 3 |
| Totals | | | | 910 | |

| TO BE FINANCED BY:- | | |
|---|------------|--|
| New Homes Bonus funding (£156,000 from the 2023/24 allocation and £4,000 from the NHB Earmarked Reserve) | 160 | |
| Revenue contribution from the Vehicles and Plant Earmarked Reserve (see Appendix A) | 50 | |
| Better Care funding (Government grant scheme) for private sector renewals and disabled facility grants. This funding is passported from Devon County Council to West Devon BC to administer the scheme. | 700 | |
| Total financing for the Capital Programme | 910 | |

This page is intentionally left blank

Glossary of terms – Local Government Budgeting

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Business Rates Reset – this is the mechanism used by Government to redistribute the 'Business Rates' growth retained by some councils back into the Business Rates system. This could have a significant impact on the business rates retained by the District Council. The Business Rates Reset has been delayed for successive years and the current budget modelling has assumed that it will be delayed until at least 2025/26.

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

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

Business Rates Multiplier - the annual amount established by central government used in the calculation of the 'Business Rates' bill. This amount is multiplied by the businesses rateable value to derive the size of the 'Business Rates' bill for the year.

Business Rates Pool - an agreement between neighbouring councils to add together to combine their 'Business Rates' activities in a pool. This is designed to maximise the ability for councils to retain 'Business Rates' locally. West Devon Borough Council is part of the Devon Business Rates Pool. WDBC continues to be part of the Devonwide Business Rates Pool for 2023/24. A 'Business Rates' pooling gain of £200,000 has been modelled for 2023/24.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

General Fund Balance – also known as '**Unearmarked Reserves**' - the surplus or deficit on the 'General Fund' at a particular date arising from all transactions up to that date, showing the ability of the Council to fund future revenue expenditure (surplus) or the requirement to make savings or raise additional income (deficit). At Council in February 2022, Members have set a minimum balance for Unearmarked Reserves of £900,000, based on a risk assessment basis and a sensitivity analysis.

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

Local Government Finance Settlement - the annual announcement by Government of the amount of grant funding to be provided for the forthcoming year. The provisional settlement is usually announced in mid-December, with a final settlement confirmed in mid to late January.

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

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

Negative RSG – Negative Revenue Support Grant – This is effectively negative government grant, the Council's further predicted funding cuts. The Council would have to make a payment to Government of some of its business rates income, hence the term 'negative'. The latest budget modelling assumes negative RSG of £227,500 in 2025/26. Some of the negative RSG could be offset by growth.

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

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

New Homes Bonus - The New Homes Bonus (NHB) scheme was introduced in 2011 to provide an incentive for local authorities to encourage housing growth in their areas. The aim of the NHB was to provide a financial incentive to reward and encourage local authorities to help facilitate housing growth. The Council receives 80% of the average national council tax (£1,965) for each property growth over the baseline, this equates to £1,572 per property. The Council's provisional allocation for 2023-24 is £384,230. There was a net property increase of 342 properties in the last financial year.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Revenue Support Grant (RSG) - the main grant paid to councils by the Government. Between 2009/10 and 2020/21, the Council's Core Government funding has reduced by £3 million. The Council now receives minimal Revenue Support Grant (main Government Grant) of £89,000.

Rural Services Delivery Grant - This is Government grant introduced to recognise the additional cost of delivering services in rural areas. Rural Services Delivery Grant will continue for 2023/24 onwards at previous levels (£85m nationally – West Devon Borough Council share of £487,296)

Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) - this is essentially the 'Business Rates Baseline' and is the amount of money the Council retains from its share of the 'Business Rates' income.

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

Unearmarked Reserves – see **General Fund Balance**

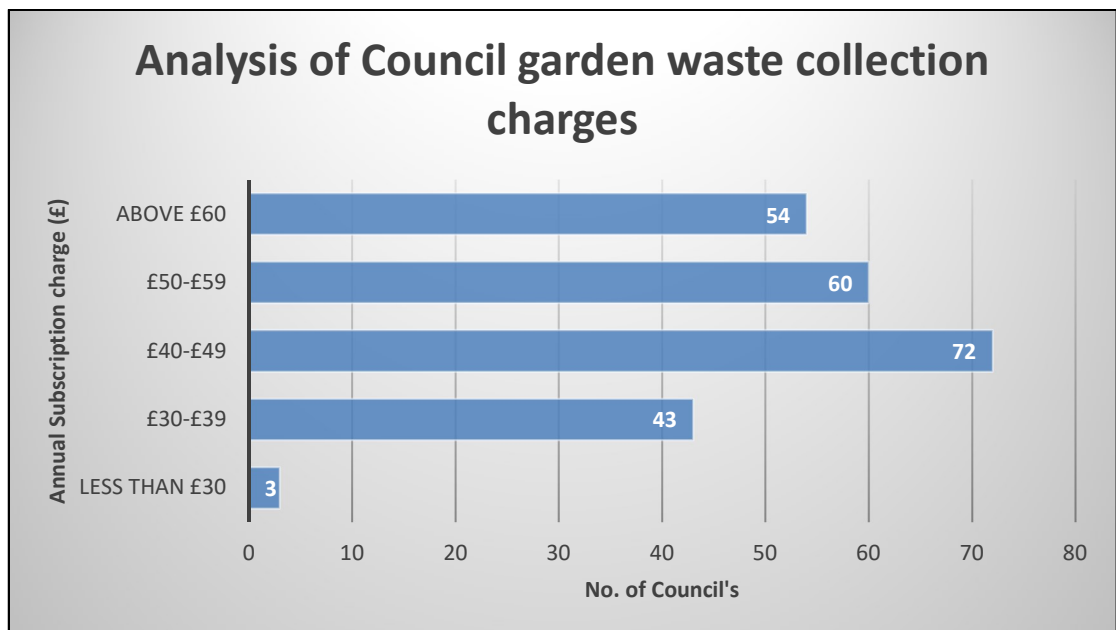
Upper Tier Authorities – in two-tier areas, this is the County Council (This is Devon County Council in the WDBC area).

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX F

Garden Waste subscription annual charge from 1.4.2023

- 1.1 A chargeable garden waste service was first introduced in 2017 at an annual cost of £40 per annum. The fee has not been increased for over 5 years and has remained at £40 per annum since 2017.
- 1.2 Over the past 5 to 6 years there have been significant increasing inflationary costs such as fuel and wages costs.
- 1.3 Benchmarking has been carried out of the current garden waste subscription charges for the current year, 2022/23.
- 1.4 The table below shows the analysis of the annual charges Councils apply across the country for a garden waste collection service (annual subscription cost). For example, 60 Councils currently charge between £50 and £59 for the collection of garden waste, as shown below.



Source www.local.gov.uk (where Councils have provided this information). It should be noted that these are the current year (2022-2023) charges and do not reflect the increasing inflationary costs such as fuel and wages.

1.5 The table below shows the current year (2022/2023) subscription costs and the take up of services in Devon.

| Council | Service offered | Cost | % take up |
|-------------|---|-----------------|-----------|
| East Devon | 11 month Fortnightly (Not over Christmas) | £48 per bin | 25-30% |
| Exeter | 11 month Fortnightly (Not over Christmas) | Up to £51.50 | 61% |
| Mid Devon | 12 month Fortnightly | Up to £50 | 32% |
| North Devon | Fortnightly (Feb to Nov) Monthly (Dec & Jan) | £45 per bin | 55% |
| Teignbridge | 11 month Fortnightly (Not over Christmas) | £50 per bin | 37% |
| Torridge | 11 month Fortnightly (Not over Christmas) | £45 per bin | 34% |
| West Devon | 11 month Fortnightly (Not over Christmas) | £40 for 4 sacks | 24% |

1.6 Garden waste is a non-statutory discretionary service and a chargeable garden waste collection service enables residents to choose how they dispose of their garden waste:

| Option | Environmental impact | Cost to Resident |
|--|----------------------|--|
| Home composting | None | None |
| Disposal at a recycling centre | Some | Travel costs to recycling centre |
| Collection by West Devon Borough Council | High | Approximately £2 per collection (based on a biweekly collection) |
| Collection by independent contractor | High | £10 - £20 per collection |

- 1.7 **Members' views are sought on increasing the garden waste subscription from April 2023.** At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 17th January 2023, the report recommended increasing the charge to £49 per annum from April 2023. On considering the report, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommended to the Hub Committee to increase the garden waste subscription charge to £52 per annum from April 2023. The minutes from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be presented alongside this Hub Committee report. The final decision on this will be taken by Council on 21st February.
- 1.8 This would reflect the fact that the charge has not been increased for over five years and would take account of the increasing inflationary costs of fuel and wages since that time.
- 1.9 It is estimated that the costs of the garden waste service would be in the region of £325,000 for the 2023-24 year. An annual subscription charge of £49 would mean the service would be projected to break even and the projected income would cover the costs of delivering the service. The current income in 2022-23 is around £266,000 based on a £40 charge.
- 1.10 The increased annual charge would be a cost of approximately £2 per collection, based on a biweekly collection over 11 months. This is significantly less than the cost of collection by an independent contractor and also less than the cost of taking garden waste to the local collection centre for many residents, when mileage and travel costs are taken into consideration.
- 1.11 A number of other Councils (already charging more than West Devon) are considering increasing their charges as part of their budget proposals for 2023/24 and West Devon would still be below these.
- 1.12 The benefits of a chargeable garden waste collection service include:
- Reduces the overall environmental impact
 - Reduced cost to the Council of providing a non-statutory discretionary service
 - Residents have a choice - only those that want the service pay for it. i.e. reduced cross subsidisation by council tax payers
 - With limited availability of HGV drivers, it enables the Council to prioritise statutory services (residual, recycling, street cleaning services)
 - Manage resources effectively – we only collect only where needed

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to: **Hub Committee**
Date: **31 January 2023**
Title: **Write Off Report 2021/22**
Portfolio Area: **Performance & Resources – Cllr Edmonds**
Wards Affected: **All**
Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken:

Author: **Lisa Buckle** Role: **Section 151 Officer**
Contact: **Ext. 1413 lisa.buckle@swdevon.gov.uk**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Hub Committee:

- 1. notes that, in accordance with Financial Regulations, the Section 151 Officer has authorised the write-off of individual West Devon Borough Council debts totalling £88,750.87 as detailed in Tables 1 and 2;**
- 2. approves the write off of individual debts in excess of £5,000 totalling £75,438.97 as detailed in Table 3; and**
- 3. agrees, in principle, to approve a supplementary Write Off Policy, which will be brought to the next meeting of this committee for consideration and to be implemented from 1 April 2023.**

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 The Council is responsible for the collection of: Sundry Debts including Housing Benefit Overpayments, Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates.
- 1.2 The report informs members of the debt written off for these revenue streams. Debts up to the value of £5,000 can be written off by the s151 Officer, under delegated authority. Permission needs to be sought from the Committee to write off individual debts with a value of more than £5,000.

- 1.3 This report covers the period 1st October 2021 to 31st March 2022, with debts totalling £164,189.84 due to be written off. The primary reason for this increase is due to individuals and businesses using insolvency measures such as bankruptcy, liquidation, debt relief orders and individual voluntary arrangements as a way of discharging their indebtedness.
- 1.4 The Council previously approved a corporate debt recovery policy with Write Off procedures also being set out in within Financial Procedure Rules. To supplement these arrangements, it is recommended that a separate Write Off policy is agreed to ensure a consistency of approach across all Council services.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council's sound financial management arrangements underpin delivery of all the Council's priorities, including the commitment to providing value for money services.
- 2.2 This report forms part of the formal debt write off procedures included in these financial arrangements.
- 2.3 The Council's collection rate for 2021/22 for Council Tax was 97.8% which is 2% higher than the national average of 95.8%.
- 2.4 The Council's collection rate for Business Rates was 93.7% which is below the national average of 95.5%. Debts outstanding for 2021/22 will continue to be pursued. This is an improvement on the collection rates for 2020/21 which were 97.3% for Council Tax 91.5% for Business Rates.
- 2.5 Debts are recovered in accordance with the Council's Recovery Policy which is published on our website.
- 2.6 Alongside the Recovery Policy, it is recommended that Members, at a future meeting, consider a supplementary policy framework for the writing off of debt. Efficient and transparent write off policies and procedures contribute to the effective management of debt.

3. Outcomes/outputs

- 3.1 In accordance with good financial management principles, the Council makes appropriate bad debt provision for the revenue streams detailed in this report. This provision recognises that a proportion of the Authority's debts will prove irrecoverable and ensures that the value of debtors within the Authority's accounts is a fair reflection of the amount that will eventually be recovered.
- 3.2 All debts, taxes and rates are actively pursued, and in most instances are collected with little difficulty. In cases where payment is not

received on time, a reminder will be issued promptly to the debtor. If this fails to secure payment, a final reminder and/or a summons will also be issued and if necessary the debt passed to an appropriate collection agent such as the Civil Enforcement Agents or the Council's Legal Department in order to secure payment.

- 3.3 Sometimes, however, if the debtor is having difficulty making the payment, special arrangements are used to effect recovery, and this may mean extending the period of time to collect the debt.
- 3.4 In some cases pursuit of an outstanding debt is not possible for a variety of reasons, such as bankruptcy or liquidation and such cases with arrears under £5,000 can be written off by the Section 151 Officer under delegated authority. Cases where the debt exceeds £5,000 must, however, be approved by the Committee prior to the debt being written off.
- 3.5 A record is kept of debts written off, together with the reason for doing so, so that if there is a realistic chance of recovery in the future a debt may be resurrected and pursued again.
- 3.6 The Council has access to Experian's Citizenview database which is currently the most reliable means of tracing absconded debtors. Each case is checked against this system before a decision is taken to write off the debt. A periodic review of write offs against this system may also be carried out to resurrect debts where appropriate.

4. Options available and consideration of risk

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

5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 The Committee approves the write off of individual debts in excess of £5,000 as detailed in Table 3.
- 5.2 The Committee notes it will be asked to consider a supplementary write off policy setting out write off processes and procedures, thus ensuring consistency in the write off of all debt owed to the Council.

6. Implications

| Implications | Relevant to proposals Y/N | Details and proposed measures to address |
|--------------|---------------------------|--|
| | | |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Legal/Governance | | <p>The relevant powers for this report are contained within the following legislation;</p> <p>Section 151 Local Government Act 1972 Section 44 Local Government Finance Act 1988 (Non Domestic Rate) Section 14 Local Government Finance Act 1992 (Council Tax)</p> |
| Financial implications to include reference to value for money | | <p>The Committee notes that, in accordance with Financial Regulations, the Section 151 Officer has authorised the write-off of individual Council debts totalling £88,750.87 as detailed in Tables 1 and 2.</p> <p>It is recommended that the Committee approves the write off of the debt in excess of £5,000 for £75,438.97, as detailed in Table 3.</p> <p>The total debts to be written off are £164,189.84.</p> |
| Risk | | <p>Any risk to reputation is managed carefully by prompt recovery of amounts due wherever possible.</p> <p>This risk is also mitigated by taking a balanced view and ensuring that resources are not expended on debts which are not cost effective to pursue</p> <p>The obvious risk of debtors subsequently being able to pay a debt which has been written off is mitigated by the activity outlined in Part 3.</p> |
| Supporting Corporate Strategy | | Delivering efficient and effective services |
| Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact | | No direct carbon/biodiversity impact arising from the recommendations |
| Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications | | |
| Equality and Diversity | | All enforcement action that is taken prior to this point is undertaken in accordance with legislation and accepted procedures to ensure no discrimination takes place. |
| Safeguarding | | None |
| Community Safety, Crime and Disorder | | None |
| Health, Safety and Wellbeing | | None |
| Other implications | | A bad debt provision is built into the financial management of the Authority |

Supporting Information

Appendices:

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

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

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

Table 4 – National & Local Collection Statistics re 2021/22 Collection Rates

Table 5 – Quarterly income in 2021/22 relating to all years

Table 6 – Previous Year Write Off Totals

Background Papers:

None

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

| TYPE OF DEBT | NUMBER OF CASES | REASON FOR WRITE OFF | Financial Year 2021/22 | | | Totals for Comparison purposes | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------|--|
| | | | Quarters 3 & 4 | | Cumulative Total | | Equivalent Quarters 2020/21 | | Grand Total 2020/21 | |
| | | | Amount (£) | Cases | Amount | Cases | Amount | Cases | Amount | |
| HOUSING BENEFIT | 1 | Overpaid Entitlement | 2,957.29 | 8 | 4,239.44 | 7 | 947.54 | 11 | 4,770.62 | |
| | - | Insolvency / Bankruptcy | - | 3 | 5,586.14 | 1 | 839.33 | 2 | 1,339.33 | |
| | 1 | Deceased | 594.51 | 4 | 2,505.49 | 1 | 39.54 | 1 | 39.54 | |
| | - | Other | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | Absconded | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| | 4 | Not Cost Effective to Pursue | 32.45 | 7 | 54.20 | 8 | 101.30 | 12 | 127.79 | |
| | 15 | Uncollectable Old Debt | 2,926.88 | 17 | 2,964.93 | 6 | 2,632.28 | 13 | 6,713.22 | |
| Total | 21 | | 6,511.13 | 39 | 15,350.20 | 23 | 4,559.99 | 39 | 12,990.50 | |
| COUNCIL TAX | 4 | Absconded | 4,803.01 | 4 | 4,803.01 | 23 | 6,046.93 | 26 | 6,801.20 | |
| | 34 | Insolvency / Bankruptcy | 34,691.55 | 53 | 63,622.75 | 13 | 17,758.85 | 31 | 43,477.09 | |
| | 5 | Deceased | 2,764.17 | 8 | 3,918.87 | 2 | 979.97 | 11 | 5,298.04 | |
| | 5 | Other (inc. CTR overpayment) | 2,060.65 | 5 | 2,060.65 | 2 | 620.06 | 10 | 2,722.22 | |
| | 112 | Small Balance | 15,813.94 | 116 | 15,827.66 | 70 | 56.74 | 71 | 56.91 | |
| | 147 | Uncollectable Old Debt | 6,463.41 | 150 | 11,433.36 | 1 | 885.34 | 1 | 885.34 | |
| Total | 307 | | 66,596.73 | 336 | 101,666.30 | 111 | 26,347.89 | 150 | 59,240.80 | |
| SUNDRY DEBTS | - | Small Balance | - | - | - | - | - | 35 | 2,342.49 | |
| | 3 | Insolvency / Bankruptcy | 2,999.97 | 6 | 3,528.37 | 1 | 500.00 | 3 | 4,678.56 | |
| | - | Unable to pursue | - | 3 | 120.00 | - | - | 4 | 807.13 | |
| | - | Uncollectable Old Debt | - | 11 | 795.07 | - | - | 4 | 874.80 | |
| | - | Absconded | - | 8 | 4,908.43 | 1 | 685.00 | 41 | 16,496.96 | |
| - | Other | - | - | - | 12 | 2,611.94 | 13 | 3,084.44 | | |
| Total | 3 | | 2,999.97 | 28 | 9,351.87 | 14 | 3,796.94 | 100 | 28,284.38 | |
| Grand Total | 331 | | 76,107.83 | 403 | 126,368.37 | 148 | 34,704.82 | 289 | 100,515.68 | |

Page 78

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

| Year | 2021/22 | 2020/21 | 2019/20 | 2018/19 | 2017/18 | 2016/17 | 2015/16 | 2014/15 | 2013/14 | 2012/13 | Pre 2012/13 | Total |
|---------------|---------|----------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------|----------|
| Value | 291.08 | 2,814.44 | 1,110.96 | - | 36.00 | - | - | - | 550.53 | - | - | 4,803.01 |
| Number | 2 | 2 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | |

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

| TYPE OF DEBT | NUMBER OF CASES | REASON FOR WRITE OFF | Financial Year 2021/22 | | | Totals for Comparison purposes | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------------|--|
| | | | Quarters 3 & 4 | | Cumulative Total | | Equivalent Quarters 2020/21 | | Grand Total 2020/21 | |
| | | | Amount (£) | Cases | Amount | Cases | Amount | Cases | Amount | |
| NON-DOMESTIC RATES | 7 | Insolvency / Bankruptcy | 11,988.32 | 7 | 11,988.32 | 5 | 7,377.34 | 6 | 11,060.38 | |
| | 1 | Absconded | 654.71 | 1 | 654.71 | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | Deceased | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | Other | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| | 1 | Small Balance | 0.01 | 2 | 2.20 | 2 | 0.02 | 3 | 0.03 | |
| | - | Uncollectable Old Debt | - | - | - | 1 | 2,650.28 | 1 | 2,650.28 | |
| Total | 9 | | 12,643.04 | 10 | 12,645.23 | 8 | 10,027.64 | 10 | 13,710.69 | |

TABLE 3 SUMMARY OF ITEMS OVER £5000 WHERE PERMISSION TO WRITE OFF IS REQUESTED

| TYPE OF DEBT | NUMBER OF CASES | REASON FOR WRITE OFF | Financial Year 2021/22 | | | Totals for Comparison purposes | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|------------------------|----------|------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------|---------------------|--|
| | | | Quarters 3 & 4 | | Cumulative Total | | Equivalent Quarters 2020/21 | | Grand Total 2020/21 | |
| | | | Amount (£) | Cases | Amount | Cases | Amount | Cases | Amount | |
| NON-DOMESTIC RATES | 4 | Insolvency / Bankruptcy | 52,775.79 | 6 | 65,133.50 | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | Absconded | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | Deceased | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| | 1 | Other | 6,968.40 | 1 | 6,968.40 | - | - | - | - | |
| Total | 5 | | 59,744.19 | 6 | 72,101.90 | - | - | - | - | |
| HOUSING BENEFIT | - | Insolvency / Bankruptcy | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | Absconded | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | Other | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | Deceased | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| | 2 | Overpaid entitlement | 15,694.78 | 2 | 15,694.78 | - | - | - | - | |
| Total | 2 | | 15,694.78 | 2 | 15,694.78 | - | - | - | - | |
| COUNCIL TAX | - | Insolvency / Bankruptcy | - | - | - | 1 | 5,364.12 | 2 | 11,540.15 | |
| | - | Absconded | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | Other (inc. CTR overpayment) | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Total | - | | - | - | - | 1 | 5,364.12 | 2 | 11,540.15 | |
| SUNDRY DEBTORS | - | Insolvency / Bankruptcy | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 11,643.35 | |
| | - | Absconded | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| | - | Other | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | |
| Total | - | | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | 11,643.35 | |
| Grand Total | 7 | | 75,438.97 | 8 | 75,438.97 | 1 | 5,364.12 | 3 | 23,183.50 | |

TABLE 4 NATIONAL & LOCAL COLLECTION STATISTICS RE 2021-22 COLLECTION RATES

Total amount collected in 2021-22 relating to 2021-22 financial year only (net of refunds relating to 2021-22)

| | Council Tax | | | Non Domestic Rates | | |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Collectable Debit i.r.o. 21/22 - £000s | Net Cash Collected* i.r.o. 21/22 - £000s | Amount Collected i.r.o. 21/22 - %age | Collectable Debit i.r.o. 21/22 - £000s | Net Cash Collected* i.r.o. 21/22 - £000s | Amount Collected i.r.o. 21/22 - %age |
| All England | 35,341,791 | 33,874,616 | 95.8 | 21,752,246 | 20,776,105 | 95.5 |
| Shire Districts | 14,763,647 | 14,352,313 | 97.2 | 6,346,429 | 6,156,631 | 97.0 |
| East Devon | 126,747 | 125,322 | 98.9 | 27,482 | 26,760 | 97.4 |
| Exeter | 76,883 | 74,209 | 96.5 | 58,968 | 57,946 | 98.3 |
| Mid Devon | 63,679 | 61,560 | 96.7 | 12,500 | 12,322 | 98.6 |
| North Devon | 74,340 | 72,028 | 96.9 | 24,152 | 23,538 | 97.5 |
| Plymouth | 145,806 | 141,062 | 96.8 | 68,823 | 67,719 | 98.4 |
| South Hams | 83,346 | 81,964 | 98.3 | 23,611 | 23,170 | 98.1 |
| Teignbridge | 105,041 | 102,860 | 97.9 | 23,804 | 23,563 | 99.0 |
| Torbay | 94,060 | 89,590 | 95.3 | 23,111 | 20,908 | 90.5 |
| Torridge | 51,510 | 50,250 | 97.6 | 8,900 | 8,761 | 98.4 |
| West Devon | 45,967 | 44,955 | 97.8 | 8,246 | 7,724 | 93.7 |

* Net Cash Collected is total 2021-22 receipts net of refunds paid, in respect of 2021-22 only

TABLE 5 QUARTERLY INCOME IN 2021-22 RELATING TO ALL YEARS

Total amount collected in 2021-22 relating to any financial year (net of all refunds made in 2021-22)

| | Council Tax Net Cash Collected* £000s | Non Domestic Rates Net Cash Collected* £000s |
|--|---|--|
| Quarter 1 - Receipts collected between 1 st April – 30 th June | 13,336 | 2,352 |
| Quarter 2 - Receipts collected between 1 st July – 30 th September | 12,349 | 1,688 |
| Quarter 3 - Receipts collected between 1 st October – 31 st December | 13,193 | 2,372 |
| Quarter 4 - Receipts collected between 1 st January – 31 st March | 6,832 | 1,437 |

* Net Cash Collected is total receipts in 2021-2022 net of refunds paid, irrespective of the financial year (previous, current or future years) to which they relate

TABLE 6 PREVIOUS YEAR WRITE OFF TOTALS

| | | 2020 - 21 | 2019 - 20 | 2018 - 19 | 2017 - 18 | 2016 - 17 | 2015 - 16 |
|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| HOUSING BENEFIT | Under £5,000 cases | 12,990.50 | 104,270.24 | 75,961.02 | 117,461.11 | 28,341.72 | 37,800.00 |
| HOUSING BENEFIT | £5,000 or over cases | - | 44,375.04 | 12,721.09 | 17,126.57 | 15,685.10 | 15,685.10 |
| Total | | 12,990.50 | 148,645.28 | 88,682.11 | 134,587.68 | 44,026.82 | 53,485.10 |
| COUNCIL TAX | Under £5,000 cases | 59,240.80 | 83,123.43 | 52,827.04 | 85,818.34 | 85,498.82 | 60,159.32 |
| COUNCIL TAX | £5,000 or over cases | 11,540.15 | 5,242.92 | - | 27,458.04 | - | 0.00 |
| Total | | 70,780.95 | 88,366.35 | 52,827.04 | 113,276.38 | 85,498.82 | 60,159.32 |
| SUNDRY DEBTS | Under £5,000 cases | 28,284.38 | 4,006.46 | 16,145.70 | 85,064.24 | 15,895.01 | 3,020.15 |
| SUNDRY DEBTS | £5,000 or over cases | 11,643.35 | 6,759.59 | - | - | - | - |
| Total | | 39,927.73 | 10,766.05 | 16,145.70 | 85,064.24 | 15,895.01 | 3,020.15 |
| NON DOMESTIC RATES | Under £5,000 cases | 13,710.69 | 16,130.13 | 9,704.04 | 8,876.14 | 10,517.74 | 6,650.00 |
| NON DOMESTIC RATES | £5,000 or over cases | - | 123,504.56 | 38,251.60 | 7,561.62 | 29,217.16 | 29,217.16 |
| Total | | 13,710.69 | 139,634.69 | 47,955.64 | 16,437.76 | 39,734.90 | 35,867.16 |
| GRAND TOTAL | | 137,409.87 | 387,412.37 | 205,610.49 | 349,366.06 | 185,155.55 | 152,531.73 |

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to: **Hub Committee**
Date: **31 January 2023**
Title: **Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023/24 and other Council Tax Discounts and Premiums**
Portfolio Area: **Benefits - Cllr Tony Leech**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Date next steps can be taken:

Author: **Geni Hotchkiss** Role: **Head of Revenues and Benefits**

Contact: **geni.hotchkiss@swdevon.gov.uk**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is RECOMMENDED that the Hub Committee:

- 1. Notes the contents of the report.**
- 2. Recommends to Council a local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2023/24 as follows:**
 - Make no changes to Band 1 of the current banded scheme.**
 - Uplift Bands 2, 3 and 4 by 20% (above current inflation) to take into account the Cost of Living crisis.**
 - Replace the current range of earnings disregards with a single £25.00 disregard.**
 - Make changes to the Minimum Income Floor by adjusting the income calculation for self-employed claimants who receive carer's allowance, personal independence payments or disability living allowance.**
- 3. RECOMMENDS to Council that delegated authority is given to the Director of Strategic Finance and the Head of Revenues and Benefits, in consultation with the Lead Member for Benefits, to agree the uprating of working age regulations**

incorporated into the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme in line with those announced by the Department for Work and Pensions.

4. **RECOMMENDS** to Council that officers are instructed to take immediate steps to apply the £25 Council Tax Support Fund payment to the 2023/24 council tax bills of eligible council taxpayers, as announced by the Government on 19 December 2022, and bring forward proposals for a discretionary scheme in late spring 2023.
5. **The adoption of the Council Tax discounts as follows effective from 1 April 2023:**
 - (a) **The discount for unoccupied and substantially unfurnished properties is 100% for a maximum period of 1 month.**
 - (b) **The discount for unoccupied and substantially unfurnished properties for 1 month to 2 years is zero.**
 - (c) **The discount for properties which are vacant and require major repair work to render them habitable is 50% for a maximum period of 12 months.**
 - (d) **The discount for unoccupied furnished properties (second homes) is zero.**
 - (e) **An empty homes premium of an additional 100% is levied on properties that have remained unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least two years, but less than five years.**
 - (f) **An empty homes premium of an additional 200% is levied on properties that have remained unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least five years, but less than ten years.**
 - (g) **An empty homes premium of an additional 300% is levied on properties that have remained unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for at least ten years or more.**
6. **That, in principle, the following additional council tax premiums be applied from 1 April 2024, or earlier if allowed, subject to the required legislation being in place:**
 - **100% premium for properties which have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a period of between 1 and 2 years.**
 - **100% premium for second homes.**

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 There is a requirement to have a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme to support working age residents who qualify for assistance in paying Council Tax. The Local Government Finance Act 1992 requires each billing authority in England to make a

scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to amounts of council tax payable by persons, or classes of persons, whom the authority considers are in financial need ("a council tax reduction scheme").

- 1.2 The LCTRS must be approved and in place by 11 March each year and prior to that the authority must consult with major preceptors and any other person who may have an interest in any proposed changes to the scheme.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 1 November 2022, Hub Committee gave its approval to consult on changes to the LCTRS for 2023-24, to ensure the Council provides as much support as possible to residents during the Cost of Living crisis.
- 1.4 This report provides Members with a summary of the consultation. Members are asked to consider the content of this report and to recommend to Council a local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for the financial year 2023-24.
- 1.5 The report also provides details of the Council Tax Support Fund announced by the Government on 19 December 2022 and the steps officers propose to take to implement it.
- 1.6 With changes to council tax premiums proposed in the Levelling Up and Generation Bill, the report also sets out the current council tax discounts and any proposed changes if legislation is laid in time, i.e., before the council tax for 2023-24 is set by the Council.

2. Background

- 2.1 Since April 2013, the Council has been required to establish a local Council Tax Reduction Scheme to help working age residents on a low income to pay their council tax. This scheme replaced the national scheme for Council Tax Benefit which was fully funded by central government.
- 2.2 The Council is also required to administer the prescribed government Council Tax Reduction Scheme for pension age claimants and is not able to make any changes to this scheme.
- 2.3 It is an annual requirement for Councils to review their working age Council Tax Reduction Scheme and decide whether to continue with the same scheme or revise it.
- 2.4 In 2019, the Council introduced a banded scheme which assessed the maximum level of Council Tax Reduction based on the net income of the claimant and, if applicable, their partner.
- 2.5 With the increased pressure on household budgets because of the cost of living crisis, the Council has recognised that it needs to provide as much support as possible to those who need it most.

- 2.6 One of the ways to do this is to review how support is given through the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and approval was given by the Hub Committee at its meeting of 1 November 2022 for officers to consult on changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2023-24.
- 2.7 In light of the proposals in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill to allow Councils to reduce the length of time a property has to be unoccupied before a premium can be applied and also the proposal to allow a premium on second homes, the report also sets out the council tax discounts proposed for the 2023-24 financial year.

3. Proposed Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2023-24

- 3.1 The public consultation 'Have Your Say on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023-24' ran from Monday 7 November 2022 to Sunday 18 December 2022.
- 3.2 The proposals consulted on were as follows:
- Make no changes to Band 1 of the current scheme.
 - Uplift Bands 2, 3 and 4 by 20% (above current inflation) to take into account the Cost-of-Living crisis.
 - Replace the current range of earnings disregards with a single £25.00 disregard.
 - Make changes to the Minimum Income Floor by adjusting the income calculation for self-employed claimants who received carer's allowance, personal independence payments or disability living allowance.
- 3.3 The response rate to the consultation was low with 23 responses, however it is almost double the number of responses received when the Council first consulted on a possible banded scheme in 2018.
- 3.4 The Council wrote to all the major preceptors seeking their views on the proposed changes to the scheme. Devon County Council confirmed that they have no objections to the proposals, based on the cost estimates provided in the consultation letter. Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue have also confirmed that they are content with the proposals.

Summary of consultation responses

- 3.5 The public consultation received 23 responses, with 95.65% of respondents saying they live in the West Devon Borough Council area. Most respondents (93.33%) are not currently receiving council tax reduction.
- 3.6 There were 23 responses to the proposal to change income bands, broken down as follows:

| Response | Response number | Percentage |
|------------|-----------------|------------|
| Yes | 10 | 43.48% |
| No | 5 | 21.74% |
| Don't know | 8 | 34.78% |

- 3.7 The proposal to remove the current earnings disregards and replace them with a standard earnings disregard for all working age applicants received 19 responses which were broken down as follows:

| Response | Response number | Percentage |
|------------|-----------------|------------|
| Yes | 7 | 36.84% |
| No | 7 | 36.84% |
| Don't know | 5 | 26.32% |

- 3.8 The proposal to make changes to the Minimum Income Floor for those claimants who are self-employed and receiving carer's allowance, personal independence payments or disability living allowance, received 17 responses.

| Response | Response number | Percentage |
|------------|-----------------|------------|
| Yes | 12 | 70.59% |
| No | 2 | 11.76% |
| Don't know | 3 | 17.65% |

- 3.9 The number of responses was low, however we received almost twice as many compared to when the Council first went out to consultation on a banded scheme in 2018.
- 3.10 There was overall support for the proposal to uplift income bands by 20%, however just over a third of respondents were unsure about this proposal.
- 3.11 There was an even split for and against the proposal to remove the current wide range of earnings disregards and replace them with a single one of £25.00.
- 3.12 The third proposal, which seeks to provide more support to self-employed claimants with caring responsibilities and/or disabilities received a significant amount of support with 70.59% of respondents in favour of this proposal.
- 3.13 Having taken into consideration the responses to the public consultation, the Council recognises that one of the best ways it can support residents during the current cost of living crisis is to introduce a revised council tax reduction scheme for working age claimants for 2023-24, allowing for an above inflation uplift on income bands.

- 3.14 In transitioning to the revised banded scheme there could be some initial confusion from claimants. By simplifying the current scheme and ensuring we publicise it effectively, it will be easier for residents to make a claim and administrative costs will also be reduced.
- 3.15 The proposed weekly income bands, effective from 1 April 2023, are detailed in the table below:

| | | Single | Couple | Family 1 | Family 1+ |
|------|-----------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Band | Reduction | | | | |
| 1 | 85% | £0.00 to £95.00 | £0.00 to £138.00 | £0.00 to £220.00 | £0.00 to £355.00 |
| 2 | 80% | £95.01 to £132.00 | £138.01 to £180.00 | £220.01 to £282.00 | £355.01 to £385.00 |
| 3 | 50% | £132.01 to £192.00 | £180.01 to £240.00 | £282.01 to £342.00 | £385.01 to £435.00 |
| 4 | 25% | £192.01 to £246.00 | £240.01 to £294.00 | £342.01 to £396.00 | £435.01 to £480.00 |

4. Council Tax Support fund

- 4.1 Alongside the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement on 19 December 2022, the Government announced £100m of additional funding for local authorities to support the most vulnerable households in England with their council tax bills.
- 4.2 The funding allows councils to deliver additional support to households already receiving council tax support (reduction) as well as offering resources and flexibility to determine local approaches to support other vulnerable households in the area.
- 4.3 Guidance and provisional allocations have been published, with the final allocation to be confirmed at the Final Local Government Finance Settlement. The Council's provisional allocation is £85,969.
- 4.4 The guidance outlines the underpinning principles for use of the fund and expected eligibility criteria. Funding will be allocated to councils based on their share of local council tax support claimants according to the latest data. The Government expects local authorities to use most of their funding to reduce council tax bills for current working age and pension age Local Council Tax Support (LCTS) claimants by up to £25. Councils can use their remaining allocation as they see fit to support vulnerable households with council tax bills.

- 4.5 The discount should apply to current LCTS claimants that will have an outstanding council tax liability for the 2023-24 financial year. Where the council tax liability for 2023-24 is, following the application of council tax reduction (support), less than £25 their bill will be reduced to nil. Where the liability for 2023-24 is already zero no reduction to the council tax bill will be available.
- 4.6 We will need changes to our council tax software to implement the reduction, however as the scheme is similar to the COVID-19 Council Tax Hardship Fund 2020-21, our software supplier is currently working on extending this functionality. They are, however, awaiting confirmation of the final requirements from DLUHC (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) to enable them to make the required changes in time to apply the reduction to the council tax annual bills for 2023-24.
- 4.7 At the time of writing, we have 2,414 residents who likely to be eligible for the £25 payment. The council tax reduction caseload can change daily and, as the qualifying date for the reduction will be 1 April 2023, it is recommended that officers make the mandatory awards and then bring forward proposals to Members in late spring 2023 on how to best distribute the balance of the funding.

5. Council Tax Discounts and Premiums

- 5.1 The Local Government Finance Act 2012 abolished certain council tax discounts with effect from 1 April 2013 and replaced them with discounts which can be determined locally.
- 5.2 Prior to 1 April 2013, billing authorities could charge up to a maximum 100% council tax on dwellings that had been empty for more than two years. From April 2013, billing authorities were given new powers to charge a premium of up to 50% of the council tax payable. Further legislation was then introduced allowing a 100% empty homes premium to be levied from 1 April 2019.
- 5.3 From 1 April 2020 an additional power was given to increase the premium to 200% for dwellings that have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for a period of over 5 years.
- 5.4 From April 2021, a further power was granted to increase the council tax empty homes premium to 300% for properties that have been unoccupied and substantially unfurnished for more than 10 years.
- 5.5 The original legislation and subsequent amendments were introduced with the express intention of bringing empty properties back into use. To supplement these existing powers, the legislation to allow a premium on second homes and reducing the length of time a dwelling has to be unoccupied before a premium can be

applied, is contained within the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill which is currently making its way through Parliament.

- 5.6 The Bill has completed its passage through the House of Commons and had its second reading in the House of Lords on 17 January 2023.
- 5.7 Unless there are changes to the bill as it progresses through Parliament, the premium for second homes can only be implemented with at least one year’s notice, so from 1 April 2024. At the time of writing there are 631 second homes in the borough.
- 5.8 Any decision to apply the reduction in the qualifying period for the empty homes premium will need a decision before the financial year to which it relates.

6. Proposed way forward

- 6.1 The Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2023-24 is agreed as set out in the consultation. The revised income bands will ensure that the Council continues to provide as much support as possible to low-income households, particularly during the cost of living crisis.
- 6.2 Steps are taken as soon as possible to support vulnerable households with their 2023-24 council tax bills through the Government’s recently announced Council Tax Support Fund.
- 6.3 The Council considers the introduction of a council tax premium for second homes and agrees a reduction in the time a property needs to be unoccupied for before an empty homes premium can be applied, as soon as the legislation allows.

7. Implications

| Implications | Relevant to proposals Y/N | Details and proposed measures to address |
|------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Legal/Governance | Y | The Welfare Reform Act 2012 abolished Council Tax Benefit and instead required each billing authority to design a scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to amounts of Council Tax. The prescribed regulations set out the matters that must be included in such a scheme. All authorities in England are required to have a scheme identifying the reductions payable by their constituents who are in |

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| | | <p>financial need under Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (updated in 2012). Schedule 1A paragraph 5 of the Act states that for each financial year, Councils must consider whether to revise their scheme or replace it with another scheme and that such decisions need to be made by 11 March in the financial year preceding that for which the revision or replacement scheme is to take effect. If the Council does not make/revise its scheme by 11 March 2023, a default scheme will be imposed on the Council which will be effective from April 2023. The Local Government Finance Act 2012 amended the Local Government Finance Act 1992. Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) requires each billing authority to make a scheme specifying the reductions which are to apply to the amount of Council Tax payable.</p> <p>Government expects councils to deliver the Council Tax Support Fund using their discretionary powers under Section 13A (1) (c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.</p> <p>Section 11B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended) allows the Council to charge a council tax premium. Section 67(2) of that Act provides that the power to decide to charge a premium can only be exercised by full Council. Further, The Rating (Property in Common Occupation) and Council Tax Empty Dwellings Act 2018 allows billing authorities, from 1 April 2020, to apply a premium of an additional 200% of the council tax due where a dwelling has been empty for five years and over. A premium of an additional 300% can be applied where the dwelling has been empty for ten years and over from April 2021.</p> |
| Financial implications to include reference to value for money | Y | <p>The cost of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme is met by West Devon Borough Council, and the major precepting authorities, in proportion to their share of the council tax. The CTR Scheme is reflected within the Tax Base calculation as a discount. Previous CTR schemes have always been modelled on a cost neutral basis, in that the cost of the scheme was the equivalent of the level of Government funding. Increasing the Band Thresholds would increase the cost of the scheme by around £19,000. The scheme is projected to cost £3.813million as opposed to the current £3.832 million. WDBC's share of the increase in cost is around 11% of this i.e., £2,090. It is envisaged that increasing the Band Thresholds would increase the council tax collection rate for residents in receipt of</p> |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| | | CTR. The Council Tax Collection Fund is in surplus by £2.446m as at 31.3.2022. A distribution of the surplus will be made to all major presenting authorities as part of the 2023-24 Budget setting process. This can be a way of financing the additional cost of the 2023-24 CTR scheme of £19,000, as although the scheme will cost more, preceptors will be receiving a larger distribution of a collection fund surplus than usual due to the level of the surplus on the fund. |
| Risk | Y | To reduce the cost to the Council, changes would have to be made to the level of support made to working age claimants. Most local authorities have already incorporated a reduced level of support into their local schemes and they should be reviewed on an annual basis. There is a risk that the cost of maintaining the current local scheme will increase if the number of claimants rises due to the state of the local and national economy. |
| Supporting Corporate Strategy | Y | Supporting the Council's response to the cost-of-living crisis. Supporting the Council's Quality Council Services. |
| Consultation & Engagement Strategy | Y | Public consultation has been carried out to inform the content of this report. |
| Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact | N | There are no known impacts because of this report. |
| Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications | | |
| Equality and Diversity | Y | The local Council Tax Reduction Scheme only applies to a specific group of people, namely working age residents on low incomes. The proposals set out in this report improve accessibility to the scheme through a simplified process and improve the support available to those on the lowest incomes. |
| Safeguarding | N | None as a direct result of this report, however the local Council Tax Reduction Scheme may help keep vulnerable children and adults safe. |
| Community Safety, Crime and Disorder | N | None as a direct result of this report, however some of the recommendations may help to reduce crimes such as domestic violence. |
| Health, Safety and Wellbeing | Y | Financial wellbeing is crucial to the wellbeing of our residents and the recommendations in this report are designed to support this. |
| Other implications | N | None. |

Report to: **Hub Committee**
Date: **31st January 2023**
Title: **Housing Crisis Update – Summary Report of Actions**

Portfolio Area: **Homes – Cllr Barry Ratcliffe**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Author: **Isabel Blake** Role: **Head of Housing**

Contact: **01822 813551/email: Isabel.blake@swdevon.gov.uk**

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Hub Committee note:

- 1. the progress against the Housing Declaration of February 2022; and**
- 2. the additional information on the Housing Need Survey undertaken for Brentor, and agree to cease work on a directly delivered affordable led housing scheme at Brentor (decision deferred from 1st November 2022).**

1. Executive summary

Housing Crisis

- 1.1 West Devon Borough Council declared a housing crisis in February 2022. Accompanying this declaration were 15 specific points where the Council wished to take direct action. This report seeks to inform Members of the progress to date.
- 1.2 Since the declaration of the Crisis the Head of Housing has prepared a report for every Hub meeting on various housing topics and action taken to address the parts of the housing crisis that the Council can influence. This has ranged from development, direct delivery, the housing and homeless strategies, and energy efficiency. There has been new polices to consider the best use of existing stock and updates on progress on sites in the Council's ownership at Springhill, Tavistock and Wonnacotts Road, Okehampton.

- 1.3 The declaration of the Housing Crisis has now been embedded into the Housing Strategy Better Homes, Better Lives which will shortly be refreshed for its Year 3 action plan.
- 1.4 Whilst seeking to address the issue locally, the size and significance of the housing crisis has appeared to grow, and new challenges arise. The war in Ukraine and Homes for Ukraine Scheme, the Cost-of-Living crisis and the global increase in materials and labour have all impacted on our ability to tackle the crisis and this will continue.

Brentor Directly Delivered Affordable Led Housing Scheme

- 1.5 The Government launched a Community Housing Fund in 2016 and West Devon was a recipient of £247,620 of grant funding. This money was to support local authorities, working with communities to bring forward affordable led housing schemes.
- 1.6 The funding provided was intended to take potential schemes through the feasibility and design stage of development. In the event schemes progressed successfully through the planning stage capital funds would have been secured through for example PWLB (Public works loan board) borrowing and further Homes England grant funding.
- 1.7 This approach was adopted with a view to establish a longer-term pipeline of projects to come forward, whilst recognising that success was not guaranteed.
- 1.8 At the Hub meeting of 1st of November, a recommendation was presented to cease work on a directly delivered affordable housing scheme at Brentor. This was due to the survey indicating a need for only 6 affordable homes, (5 1xbedroom and 1x2 bedroom) and therefore not supporting the proposed development of 9 affordable homes (4 shared ownership and 5 affordable rent all 2 & 3 bedrooms).
- 1.9 During the debate it was recommended to defer the decision, following concerns around the methodology of the Housing Needs Survey.
- 1.10 Officers have reviewed the survey again with Devon Communities together and have concluded that while there is no change in the identified housing need for Brentor of 5 one-bedroom properties and 1 2-bedroom property, a number of people under 55 had completed the survey which was contrary to that stated in the Hub report of the 1st November 2022.
- 1.11 It therefore remains the Officer recommendation to cease work on the directly delivered scheme at Brentor due to a lack of need to support the scheme through the planning process with Dartmoor National Park.

2. Housing Crisis Declaration

- 2.1 The Council declared a Housing Crisis on the 15th of February. The motion carried included 15 points, set out in full below alongside action to date.
- 2.2 The actions are wide ranging, encompassing the need to lobby for legislative change to address structural problems as well as direct actions that the council can take to address acute problems on the ground.
- 2.3 *That West Devon Borough Council should recognise current difficulties in the housing market and the effect of good quality housing within the Borough and:*

Recommendation 1

- 2.4 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

Actions

2.4.1 Through the Housing Crisis series of reports, Members have been kept updated regarding the homeless accommodation project at Springhill. The project remains a corporate priority but there are challenges facing the construction industry, brought about by the effects of rising inflation, the war in Ukraine, Brexit, Covid 19, rising energy prices and the UK ban on the use of rebated diesel. The combination of all these issues is having a real and current impact on the Construction Industry and has already forced several Contractors into administration.

2.4.2 The Council are currently working with a contractor to review the design and develop a final construction cost. Should the cost be deemed acceptable and approved at full Council it is the intention to immediately enter the final construction contract. Officers are likely to have the results and the construction cost in early March 2023.

Recommendation 2

- 2.5 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

Actions

2.5.1 The Council is progressing work at Wonnacotts Road, a site in its ownership in Okehampton. An architect has been engaged to inform on the site constraints and produce a massing plan that will allow a high-level cost estimate. This will establish baseline viability and inform the pre-planning application process. This work is due to complete in Quarter 1 of 23/24 with a decision taken by Members on whether to proceed to the next stage of feasibility where options to deliver any scheme ourselves or to work with a Registered Provider will be considered. It is anticipated that a business case will be presented to members in Quarter 3 or 4 of 23/24.

Recommendation 3

- 2.6 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.

Actions

2.6.1 West Devon has been instrumental in exposing the loopholes in the provision of supported accommodation in England, and the opportunity to profit vast sums of money from the housing benefit system. At every opportunity the Council has made the case for urgently needed reform. The Leader Cllr Jory gave evidence at a Parliamentary select committee, which made far reaching recommendations to Government.

- Introduce compulsory national minimum standards for exempt accommodation, including on referrals, care & support, and quality of housing
- Give local councils the powers and resources to enforce these standards
- Require all exempt accommodation providers to be registered
- Create a National Oversight Committee to join-up existing regulators and mend the current 'patchwork regulation' which has too many holes
- Ensure the providers of exempt accommodation for survivors of domestic abuse have recognised expertise to provide specialist support and a safe environment
 - Review the system of exempt housing benefit claims and clamp down on the exploitation of the lease-based exempt accommodation model for profit

2.6.2 The Council has been successful in securing over £300k in government funding through the Supported Housing Improvement Programme, which not only will allow thorough

scrutiny of housing benefit claims, but will also design a new voluntary inspection regime for providers (exempt accommodation currently provided by an RP is not required to be a licensed HMO, nor is there any oversight from either the Social Housing Regulator or the Care Quality Commission) and co-location of a housing commissioner to ensure that poor providers are discouraged from entering the local market

2.6.3 The Registered Provider who was first highlighted by West Devon as a potential concern has been deregulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. The Council continues to improve practice and quality of provision in the Borough.

Recommendation 4

- 2.7 Recognise the need for extra care accommodation in the Borough and ensure such schemes are supported to come forward

Actions

2.7.1 West Devon has a higher than national average ageing population and appropriate housing will be required by residents who need supported accommodation.

2.7.2 In December 2021, West Devon planning committee granted planning permission, subject to signing the section 106 agreement, for a 60 bed Extra Care scheme on Plymouth Road, Tavistock. The scheme has interest from a Registered Provider of affordable housing with a successful history of delivering schemes of this type.

Recommendation 5

- 2.8 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 devolution ask

Actions

2.8.1 The Task Force has been established and together with Exeter University is in the process of appointing a Programme Director to lead the work of the Housing Commission.

2.8.2 The lobbying activity taken to date collectively includes a response to the consultation on short term lets, request to replenish the Community housing fund and evidence at the Select Committee on short term lets. There is also work ongoing funded from a collective LGA bid to support CLT's (Community Land Trusts) and the challenges of private rented accommodation across the County

Recommendation 6

- 2.9 Lobby Government through our MP's 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 DLUHC for a separate planning class for short term lets and a proper licensing system to cater for them

Actions

2.9.1 A letter was written to Michael Gove MP in June 2022 in his role as the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. The Council both individually and as part of the Devon Housing Task Force responded to a consultation from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on the introduction of a licensing scheme for short term lets

2.9.2 Cllr Judy Pearce Leader of South Hams District Council and Chair of the Devon Housing Task Force attended a parliamentary select committee on short term lets and was able to explain the impact the market has had on longer term lettings in Devon. On hearing the evidence, the Chair of the Built Environment Committee Lord Moylan wrote to Michael Gove MP to support allowing Local Authorities to decide whether to introduce both a registration scheme and planning permission for new short term lets in the area.

The Levelling Up and Regeneration bill currently at 2nd reading stage in The House of Lords, will create a power to establish a registration scheme for short-term lettings. If the bill becomes an Act of Parliament a further update will be prepared for a future report.

Collective political lobbying and ongoing discussions between officers at the Council and DLHUC have given opportunity to bring about meaningful change in this largely unregulated housing market.

Recommendation 7

- 2.10 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.

Actions

2.10.1 The JLP is currently scheduled to be reviewed by 2024 and any review process will require new affordable housing evidence to support our strategy for delivering affordable housing. This may include setting different affordable housing thresholds for developments of certain sizes and types.

Recommendation 8

- 2.11 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.

Actions

2.11.1 This remains a key long term strategic aim of the Council and the recent recruitment of a Housing Development Officer will assist the Council in working towards the creation of a strategic partnership.

Recommendation 9

- 2.12 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

Actions

2.12.1 West Devon has one of the most generous tenant downsizing incentive schemes in the Country following adoption of a policy to increase payments to a maximum of £5,000. So far 3 tenants have taken advantage of this scheme. We have written to 496 tenants to spread the word of the scheme.

2.12.2 A further scheme to promote shared ownership to existing tenants has not yet been brought forward. Our shared service Council has adopted a scheme but there has not yet been any uptake. Officers continue to review the need for a similar scheme in West Devon.

Recommendation 10

- 2.13 Use any Section 106 affordable housing contribution as soon as possible to help fund developments anywhere in the Borough where the terms of the Section 106 agreement permit this

Actions

2.13.1 Section 106 contributions are regularly monitored to ensure that there is a commitment to spend the funding. The consequence of failing to do so is that the Developer can ask for the contribution to be returned if it is not spent within the time specified in the Section 106 agreement

2.13.2 To date S106 contributions totalling £109,941.95 was spent towards the acquisition of a property adjoining Springhill

Hostel in Tavistock. No Section 106 contributions have been returned to a developer by this Council.

Recommendation 11

- 2.14 Campaign for changes to the Broad Market Area to better reflect the costs of rents in West Devon

Actions

2.14.1 Despite our request for consideration of a review of the local housing allowance and broad market area there has been no change from the Government on this issue. It is imperative that the Council continue in their lobbying efforts to bring about change in this area. In December 2022 there were no 3 bed properties to rent advertised on right move within the Local Housing Allowance anywhere in West Devon

Recommendation 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 accommodation

Actions

2.15.1 This recommendation is linked to the development of our sites and therefore is a medium-term recommendation. Since the Housing crisis declaration, the importance of adopting "fabric first" principles to minimise energy costs to the occupants has become forefront in our collective minds.

Recommendation 13

- 2.15 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.

Actions

2.16.1 The Council has delivered £519,027 worth of Green Home Grants to its residents, enabling residents to retrofit energy efficiency measures into their properties. The Council will shortly be bidding for Home Upgrade Grant Funding (HUG2) from Central Government to enable it to continue to provide grant assistance over the next two years. We have already published the local eligibility criteria for Energy Company Obligation (ECO) phase 4. Residents who meet the criteria can contact accredited installers to have energy efficiency measures installed at their property.

We are working with local community energy group to provide energy advice to help residents be more efficient and reduce emissions.

Recommendation 14

- 2.16 That this authority lobbies our MP's and central Government to provide an incentive to landowners for the provision of land specifically for local needs affordable housing

Actions

2.17.1 Whilst there may be opportunities to go further, this aspiration is met in part through The Joint Local Plan (TTV27). It provides an incentive for a landowner to bring forward land for affordable housing purposes. This allows an element of open market housing to make the affordable housing viable. These developments must be affordable led not market led.

Recommendation 15

- 2.17 Having declared a housing crisis the ideas set out in points 1-14 of the substantive motion be given further consideration at a meeting of the homes, hub advisory committee, an informal council session and that future meetings of the Hub be supplemented by published agenda reports and an evolving draft action plan.

Actions

2.18.1 The Hub Advisory group met after the declaration of the Housing Crisis and were instrumental in ensuring that the crisis became embedded into the Housing Strategy.

2.18.2 The Hub has received a report on matters pertaining to the Housing Crisis at every committee meeting and the Lead Member meets with the Head of Housing each month.

3. Brentor directly delivered affordable housing scheme

- 3.1 On the 1st of November a report was presented to the Hub committee on the Housing Crisis. One of the recommendations was to cease work on a directly delivered affordable led housing scheme at Brentor.
- 3.2 At the meeting the decision was taken to defer the vote on this recommendation, following an address by the local member who raised concerns around the methodology of the Housing Needs survey. It was also requested that the Council consult with Brentor

Parish Council to fully explore the Housing Need within the parish, gathering definitive information on current requirements and this information be brought to the next meeting of the hub committee for further consideration. There was also a commitment to contact the landowner.

3.3 The Head of Assets has contacted the Landowner, it is the intention to continue this dialogue once the issue around the housing needs survey has been addressed.

3.4 Officers have not yet contacted the Parish Council. It is important to separate the concerns raised regarding the Housing Needs Survey before work recommences with the Parish Council and the wider community. The Council set out ways in which it would be willing to help in the 1st of November report

3.5 We raised the Members concerns with Devon Communities Together, who reviewed the survey data. Having done so they confirmed that;

- The identified need for 5 one-bedroom properties and 1 two-bedroom property in Brentor remains the established need.

However

- A number of people under 55 did complete the survey, contrary to that stated in the Hub report. Under 55's equated to 16% of the respondents (14 of the 88). Devon Communities Together has accepted that this part of the report should have been clearer.

3.6 Data protection declarations on the original survey prevents the individual surveys being shared with the Council. A copy of the Housing Needs Survey report and application form are appended to this report.

3.7 In light of the evidence, it is still the recommendation to the Hub Committee that the Council ceases work on a directly delivered affordable led housing scheme at Brentor.

3. Proposed Way Forward

5.1 Declaration of a Housing Crisis

The Council has projects at Springhill and Wonnacotts Road that will bring forward much needed accommodation in the Borough. Significant staff resource has been assigned to these projects and it is essential that there is good governance, and clear understanding of appropriate time scales and likely cost to the Council.

- 5.2 It is imperative that the Council continues to lobby Government to bring about the legislative changes and continue to champion our causes on Exempt accommodation, holiday accommodation and second homes and the Broad Market Area boundaries – on this issue alone there has been no significant change to the local housing allowance in these areas since 2011.
- 5.3 Collating evidence on affordable housing as part of the JLP review in 2024 will remain a focus as will delivery on the Housing Strategy. A year 3 action plan will be presented to members in Spring 2023.
- 5.4 As well as opportunities on our own land we need to continue to make best use of stock and continue to promote energy efficiency grants and downsizing payments not just to deliver on the Council’s climate crisis but also to support residents with the cost of living and particularly the high price of energy.

5. Implications

| Implications | Relevant to proposals Y/N | Details and proposed measures to address |
|--|---------------------------|--|
| Legal/Governance | Y | There are no legal implications as a direct result of this report. |
| Financial implications to include reference to value for money | N | There is no financial request as a direct implication of this report. However, many measures are subject to significant expenditure, and these will be brought to Members at the appropriate time with the relevant business case. |
| Risk | | There is no risk as a direct implication of this report |
| Supporting Corporate Strategy | | Homes |
| Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact | | There are no direct implications because of this report |
| Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications | | |
| Equality and Diversity | | None as a direct implication of this report |
| Safeguarding | | None as a direct implication of this report |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Community Safety, Crime and Disorder | | None as a direct implication of this report |
| Health, Safety and Wellbeing | | None as a direct implication of this report |
| Other implications | | |

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Housing Needs Survey Brentor

Appendix 2 – Copy of the Housing Need Survey Application form

Background Papers:

None

Parish of Brentor Housing Needs Report



Produced by: Devon Communities Together

On behalf of: West Devon Borough Council

Date April 2022



**Devon Community
Housing Hub**



LOVE DEVON Helping Communities Help
Themselves for 60 Years

Contents

- 1. Executive Summary**
- 2. Aims of the Survey**
- 3. Survey History, Methodology and Response**
- 4. Introduction and Information about Brentor**
- 5. General Survey Findings**
- 6. Housing Aspirations of Older People**
- 7. Assessment of those wishing to move home within next 5 years**
- 8. Assessment of those in need of affordable housing**
- 9. Conclusions - Future Housing Need for Brentor**

Please note all documents produced by Devon Communities Together under this Contract are the intellectual property of Devon Communities Together and ownership of such documents will rest with Devon Communities Together. If this document is used by any organisation other than the client to support a development, then a fee will be charged. Details of this fee can be obtained from the Community Housing Coordinator at Devon Communities Together.

Devon Communities Together
Units 73 & 74 Basepoint Business Centre,
Yeoford Rd, Exeter EX2 8LB
Tel 01392 248919

www.devoncommunities.org.uk

1 Executive Summary

Principal Conclusions

The survey identified a need for up to 6 affordable homes within the next 5 years.

Key findings

Affordability

- The survey found 6 households in housing need who could not afford to buy or rent in the open market.

Tenure

- 4 of the households in need would only be able to afford social rented housing
- 2 has sufficient income for affordable rent or low cost home ownership (LCHO), but did not have sufficient savings for LCHO.

Size of Property Required

- Five 1 bedroom properties
- One 2 bedroom property

Other Findings

- 200 surveys were delivered and 88 survey forms were returned. The response rate was 44%
- 73% (60 responses) of those who answered the question said they would be in favour of a small development of affordable housing for local people and 27% (22 respondents) were against. 6 households did not answer this question.

2. Aims of the Survey

- To investigate the housing need, tenure and size of homes required for local people living or working in the parish and those wishing to return.
- To establish the general level of support for new homes in the parish with an emphasis on homes for local people with housing needs.
- To establish the views of the whole community on future housing in the parish.
- To assist the Parish Council and Borough Council with future planning for the parish.

3. Survey history, methodology and response

3.1 History

West Devon Borough Council commissioned this survey to assess future local housing need in the Parish. After discussions with the Council survey forms were finalised and 200 forms were posted to every household in the parish. Parishioners were able to return the survey in a reply paid envelope. The survey was also available for completion online. The deadline for the return of the survey was 3rd April 2022.

3.2 Methodology

The survey was carried out using a standard methodology approved by local planners.

The survey form was in 3 parts. The first section asked a limited number of questions about the type of household and their support for affordable housing. All residents were invited to respond to this part of the survey. The second section was aimed at parishioners aged over 55 to gauge the specific needs of older residents. The third part of the survey was designed to be completed by households who intend to move home within the next 5 years and wish to remain living in the parish. Both those who have an affordable housing need and those who wish to buy on the open market were invited to complete this section of the form.

3.3 Response

- 88 surveys were returned, which is a response rate of 44% of all dwellings surveyed.
- The survey achieved its aim of identifying actual households in need. Out of the returned surveys, 13 were returned with Part 3 completed.
- All but 2 of the respondents that answered this question live in Brentor.

It should be noted that whilst apparent inconsistencies in responses are followed up, the information given is taken at face value.

4. Introduction and Information about Brentor.

4.1 Overview of Brentor.

Brentor is a rural parish located in West Devon and lies just inside Dartmoor National Park. The parish consists mainly of open countryside and moorland with the main settlement, North Brentor, being located centrally within the parish boundary. The parish also includes the hamlets of South Brentor, Liddaton and Lydford Station. All of these settlements except Liddaton lie within the boundary of Dartmoor National Park.

The beauty spot and tourist attraction, Lydford Gorge, lies within the parish, as does Brent Tor. The nearest large town is Tavistock which is located approximately 5 miles south of Brentor. Transport connections are fairly good, Brentor village lies just over 2 miles off of the A386 which accesses North Devon and Plymouth. There are regular daily bus services which pass through North Brentor and Lydford Station and link to Tavistock and Okehampton.

Parish amenities include a parish church, village hall and playing field. The village hall is home to a number of activities including drama, garden club, art and exercise classes and holds regular social events.

4.2 Population Figures

In the 2011 census the population of the Parish was 404 living in 208 dwellings. There were 170 dwellings with at least one usual resident and 38 dwellings which were either empty, second homes or holiday lets (18%). The estimated population in 2019 was 388 (Office of National Statistics Mid 2020 population estimates).

4.3 Type of Accommodation

In the 2011 Census the types of accommodation in the parish were broken down as in Table 1 below. The largest category is detached houses or bungalows. There are few terraced houses and very few flats.

Table 1

| Detached house/bungalow | Semi-detached house/bungalow | Terraced house/bungalow | Flat | Caravan / mobile home | Total |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|--------|-----------------------|-------|
| 122 (59%) | 52 (25%) | 29(14%) | 4 (2%) | 1 (0.5%) | 208 |

4.4 Bedroom numbers

In the 2011 Census the number of bedrooms per dwelling were broken down as in Table 2 below.¹ The vast majority of homes (73%) have between 3 and 4 bedrooms with very few smaller 1 bedroom properties (3%).

Table 2

| 1 bedroom | 2 bedrooms | 3 bedrooms | 4 or more | Total |
|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|-------|
| 5 (3%) | 42 (25%) | 57 (34%) | 66 (39%) | 170 |

When viewed together these tables show that there is a lack of smaller, cheaper accommodation in the parish with detached dwellings and properties of 3 bedrooms plus being the most prolific. Therefore there are very few properties suitable for those on low incomes to buy or rent. It is also of note that 26% of households in the Parish are single person households, however this is not reflected in the profile of the housing stock.

¹ These tables only give details for 170 dwellings, this is because there is no data for empty homes in this dataset.

4.5 Property Prices and Rent

There are currently 42 property listings within 3 miles of Brentor on the Rightmove website, of which 32 are sold subject to contract (STC). Of those that are listed the cheapest property is a three bedroom terraced house with an asking price of £185,000. There are 10 x 2 bedroomed properties for sale, 3 of which are priced below £250,000 (9 are sold STC), and 10 x 3 bedroom houses, with 4 priced at £275,000 or below (7 of which are STC). There were no one bedroom properties for sale within 3 miles of Brentor. Information from a wider area has been used to establish an entry level value for this size property, however it should be noted that there are very few suitable properties available.

It is a feature of the housing market during 2021 that properties are showing as sold STC for many months before the transaction completes. This is due to the restrictions in place for viewing properties due to the Covid pandemic, which means that a potential home mover must secure an offer on their property before they can start to view homes which causes delays. This has also resulted in much fewer properties being marketed at the current time, and a significant backlog demand from prospective purchasers. This is not a situation unique to Devon.

To assess whether a household can afford to buy or rent in the open market it is necessary to look at the cost of an entry level property in the local market. This is done by comparing information on recent house sales and homes currently on the open market. Average rents are identified by comparing local private rents gained from the housing need survey with rents of properties currently on the market. From this information, we can establish typical rents to assess affordability. There were 8 properties advertised for rent within 3 miles of Brentor, and information on rent levels was provided by 5 respondents. This information has been used to establish entry level rent costs.

The figures used to assess affordability are set out in Table 3 below.

Table 3

| Size | Property price | Weekly rent |
|-----------|----------------|-------------|
| 1 bedroom | £180,000 | £127.00 |
| 2 bedroom | £250,000 | £153.00 |
| 3 bedroom | £275,000 | £196.00 |

There are currently 4 council/housing association owned properties in Brentor. There have been no lettings last 2 years and it is not anticipated that lettings of current affordable housing stock will have any impact on future need figures.

5. General Survey Findings

5.1 In favour of a small local development

Respondents were asked if they would be in favour of a small number of homes for local people being built if the need for affordable housing were proven. 60 (73%) of those answering the question said they would be in favour. 22 (27%) said they were against any development. It should be noted that 6 households did not respond to this question.

5.2 Site suggestions and general comments

42 individuals made suggestions for possible housing sites within the parish and / or made more general comments about housing in the parish. These suggestions and comments will be made available to the District Council on a separate document.

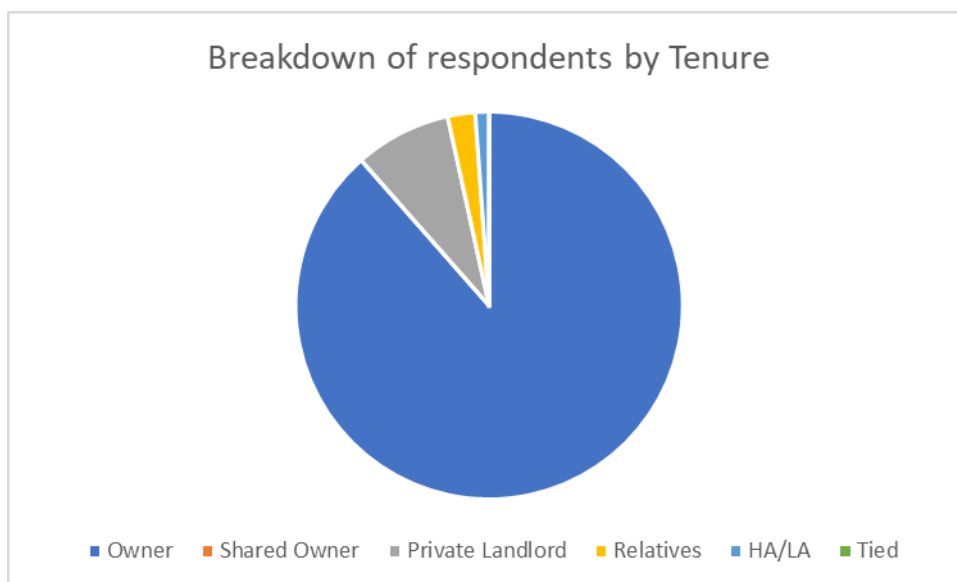
5.3 Knowledge of those who have left parish in last 5 years

Respondents were asked if they knew of anybody who had had to leave the parish in the last 5 years due to lack of suitable housing.

- 20 households replied that they did know of someone

5.4 Current tenure

Of the 87 respondents who provided details, 77 own their own home and 7 rent from a private landlord. Of the remaining households 2 are living with relatives and 1 rents from a housing association or local authority. Figure 1 below shows the breakdown of tenure.



5.5 Main or second home

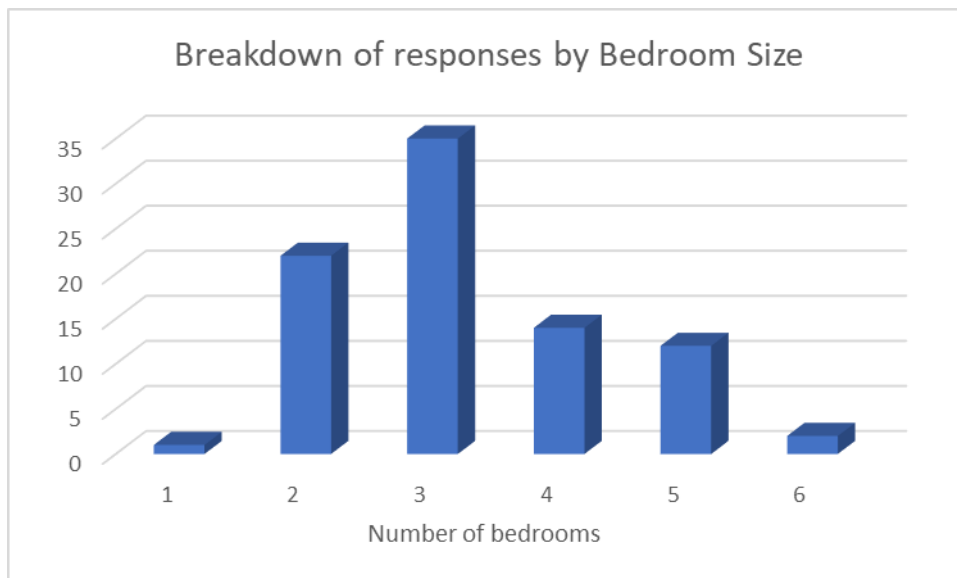
86 respondents lived in their property as their main home and two owned the property as their second home.

5.6 Parish of Residence

Respondents were asked which parish they lived in. 85 (98%) respondents stated that they live in Brentor, with 1 living in Tavistock, and another living in the North. 1 respondent did not answer the question.

5.7 Number of bedrooms in current home

Respondents were asked how many bedrooms their current home has. The responses are shown in Figure 2 below.



5.8 Future plans

Respondents were asked whether they intended to move home within the Parish within the next 5 years. If they answered yes to this question they were asked to complete Part 3 of the form.

- 15 households stated they did intend to move within the Parish within the next 5 years

5.9 Community Land Trusts (CLTs)

Respondents were asked whether they would consider becoming a member of a CLT.

- 5 households showed an interest and their details will be passed on to the local authority.

6. Housing needs and aspirations of older residents

Part 2 of the questionnaire was directed at residents over the age of 55. The number of people over the age of 55 is set to rise significantly across the UK over the next 20 years. In 2014 the Office for National Statistics published population projections for the next 20 years. These figures show that by 2034 the percentage of people over the age of 55 will have increased by 23% across Devon.

74(84%) respondents had a least one member of the household that was aged 55 or over and completed Part 2 of the survey.

6.1 Age of Respondents to Part 2 survey

Respondents were asked to give their age in 10 year bands. As can be seen in Table 4 overleaf, the majority of those who replied (88%) were aged between 55 and 75.

Table 4

| Age Group of individuals within household | 55-65 | 66-75 | 76-85 | Over 86 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|---------|
| Number | 42 | 61 | 13 | 1 |

6.2 Future Housing Plans

Households with someone over 55 were asked about their future housing plans.

- 11 households plan to move within the next five years. 8 these all would like to remain in Brentor, 2 wish to move elsewhere and 1 did not indicate where they would seek to move.
- Of the 8 households wanting to remain in Brentor 3 expect to be able to meet their housing need by purchasing on the open market and 1 did not answer the question. The remaining 4 older households 1 did not provide information to enable an assessment for affordability to be made, and 3 will need 1 bedroom affordable housing.
- 6 further households expects to move after five years.
- 55 (have no plans to move at the moment.
- 2 respondents did not answer the question.

6.3 Adaptability of current home

Respondents were asked if their current home was adaptable to meet changing needs.

- 42 households said their home was adaptable
- 23 households said their home was not adaptable
- 9 households did not answer the question.

6.4 Type of Accommodation preferred by older persons

Older households were asked what type of accommodation they may need in the future. The majority 47 (64%) did not answer this question. Of those that did 24 (32% of responses) preferred a home better suited to their needs but not designed for older people and 3 preferred a specifically designed home. Preferences are shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5

| Type of Accommodation Preferred by Older Persons | Number |
|--|--------|
| Home better suited to needs but not specifically designed for older people | 24 |
| Home specially designed for older people | 3 |
| Residential / nursing home | 0 |

6.5 Considerations when choosing next home

Households were asked to list the most important considerations when choosing a new home. They could give more than one reason. The numbers in brackets are the responses from those who indicated that they were likely to move within 5 years. The reasons are listed in Table 6.

Table 6

| Most important consideration | Number |
|--|--------|
| Need to downsize to a smaller more manageable home | 14 (5) |
| Cheaper running costs | 16 (7) |
| Proximity to shops/amenities | 8 (3) |
| Proximity to public transport | 9 (2) |
| Need to be near family / carers | 9 (4) |
| Need one level for medical reasons | 9 (3) |

The most important consideration was that older persons wished to move to a property which is cheaper to run and more manageable.

6.6 Conclusion - Older Persons Needs

The older persons' survey shows that the majority of older households 55 (74 %) have no plans to move home. However, the parish does have a number of older households who wish to downsize to smaller accommodation that is easier to maintain, has lower running costs and is close to amenities and support.

The survey indicates that 3 of the 6 households that expect to move home within the next 5 years and remain in Brentor will need affordable housing. The remaining 3 households have stated that they will be looking to the open market for alternative housing within 5 years. It would be important to give consideration to how any open market properties can be identified for local people.

7. Assessment of those wishing to move to a new home in Brentor within the next 5 years

Part 3 of the survey was aimed at those who expect to need to move home within the next 5 years and remain in Brentor. It includes all households including older households. It asked questions regarding size and make-up of the new household, local connection and financial circumstances. This information helps to identify the number of households that are eligible for both open market and affordable housing in the parish and the size, tenure and type of homes required.

15 households indicated a need to move within the next 5 years and remain in Brentor. However 16 completed Part 3 of the survey. The needs of these 16 households have been included in this section of the survey.

7.1 Minimum bedroom requirement

Respondents were asked the minimum number of bedrooms they would require in their new home. Table 7 below shows the breakdown. It should be noted that there are criteria relating to affordable housing that set the number of bedrooms that a household are eligible for based on the number of adults and children in that household. Four households did not answer the question.

Table 7

| 1 bedroom | 2 bedroom | 3 bedroom | 4+ bedroom |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 3 | 6 | 2 | 1 |

7.2 Timescales for moving

Households completing this part of the form were asked to identify when they would need to move.

- 1 of the households indicated a current need to move.
- 3 households indicated a need to move within the next 1-3 years.
- 6 households indicated a need to move within the next 3-5 years.
- 6 households did not answer the question

7.3 Housing tenure

Respondents were asked what type of accommodation they would consider moving to. This gives an indication of respondents' aspirations rather than confirming which type of housing they are eligible for. The results are shown in table 8 below. Respondents could choose more than one option.

Table 8

| Shared ownership/ equity | Affordable housing for rent | Self-build | Discount market | Rent to buy | Open market |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|-------------|
| 3 | 6 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 7 |

7.4 Reasons for moving

Respondents were asked why they wished to move home. They could tick more than one box.

Table 9

| Reason for wishing to move | No of respondents |
|--|-------------------|
| Need to move to a home with more bedrooms | 0 |
| Need to downsize to a home with fewer bedrooms | 4 |
| Need to move for health/mobility reasons | 3 |
| Will be leaving home and do not expect to be able to rent or buy privately | 3 |
| You are struggling to afford your current home | 3 |
| Wish to move back to the parish and have a strong local connection | 1 |
| Home is in poor condition | 1 |
| Your private tenancy is ending | 1 |
| Sharing kitchen and / or bathroom | 0 |
| Other - to give / receive support | 2 |

7.5 Budget for new home

Respondents who wished to purchase a home were asked about their budget. Table 10 below shows the breakdown of replies. 8 respondents did not answer the question.

Table 10

| Less than £150,000 | £150,000 - £200,000 | £200,000 - £250,000 | £250,000 - £300,000 | £300,000 - £350,000 | £350,000 + |
|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------|
| 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

8. Assessment of those in affordable housing need

This section of the survey looks at the number of households who would qualify for an affordable home in the parish, based on their household income and savings.

8.1 Exclusions

10 of the households who expressed a need to move within the next 5 years and remain in Brentor have been assessed and have been excluded for the following reasons:-

- They stated they were only interested in open market housing (2);
- They gave insufficient details to assess their eligibility (5);
- They already own their own home so do not qualify for affordable housing (3).

This leaves 6 households who would for affordable housing. Of these 2 households are living with relatives and 4 are in private rented housing.

8.2 Local Connection

To qualify for affordable housing, respondents must have a local connection to the Parish of Brentor. This connection is determined West Devon District Council and is set out below:-

- The person has lived in the parish/town for 3 out of the 5 years preceding the allocation.
- The person has immediately prior to the allocation lived in the parish/town for 6 out of 12 months preceding the allocation.
- Immediate family have lived in the parish/town themselves for 5 years preceding the allocation. For avoidance of doubt The Local Government Association guidelines define immediate family as parents, siblings and non-dependent children.
- The person has permanent employment in the parish/town with a minimum contract of 16 hours per week which has continued for the 6 months preceding the allocation without a break in employment of more than 3 months such employment to include self-employment. This should not include employment of a casual nature.

5 of the households identified have a local connection, and one will have a local connection by residency within the next 5 years.

8.3 Housing Options

The housing options available to the households identified as being in need of affordable housing have been reviewed.

Respondents provided information on income and savings along with household size which allows an assessment of what type of affordable housing is best suited to the household's financial circumstances. Two households had sufficient income for low cost home ownership, but insufficient savings. The breakdown of housing needs of the 6 households that were identified as having a need for affordable housing are shown in the table below.

Table 11

| | 1 bedroom | 2 bedroom | 3 bedroom |
|---------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Social rent | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Market Rent / Rent to buy | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Low cost home ownership | 0 | 0 | 0 |

8.4 Other evidence of housing need

As well as this survey other evidence of housing need should be considered. The housing waiting list or register for Devon is called Devon Home Choice. Applicants are given a banding from A to E depending on their level of need. There are 5 households resident or working in the Parish registered on Devon Home Choice. It is important to note that there is insufficient information recorded to establish whether these households meet the local connection criteria detailed in paragraph 8.2. Details are set out below:-

Table 12

| Devon Home Choice band | 1 bed | 2 bed | 3 bed | 4 bed | Total |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Band A (Emergency need) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Band B (High) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Band C (Medium) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Band D (Low) | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Band E (No Housing Need) | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |

One of the households who are registered on Devon Home Choice completed the survey by the closing date.

8.5 Housing Mix

The suggested mix of housing is shown in Table 13 below. This takes account of the family makeup as declared on the survey form and the type of housing required. Two of the households had sufficient income for low cost home ownership, but insufficient savings. Consideration could be given to a rent to purchase product in these circumstances. The remaining 4 households would only be able to access

Table 13

| Type of Property | Social Rented Housing | Affordable Housing for Rent | Low cost home ownership | Totals |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|----------|
| 1 or 2 bedroom property for single people | 4 | 1 | 0 | 5 |
| 1 or 2 bedroom property for couples | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 bedroom property for families | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 3 bedroom property for families | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | 4 | 2 | 0 | 6 |

9. Conclusion - Future Housing Need for Brentor

Overall, it must be remembered that this Housing Needs Survey represents a snapshot in time. Personal circumstances are constantly evolving. Any provision of affordable housing, would, by necessity, need to take account of this. The survey has identified a need in the near future for up to 6 units of affordable housing.

As the needs of households are constantly changing the level and mix of need in this report should be taken as a guide. In particular it may be appropriate to vary the mix of sizes provided. This report remains appropriate evidence of need for up to five years. However, if there is a significant development of affordable housing in the parish which is subject to a local connection requirement and substantially meets the need identified in the report it will normally be necessary to re-survey the parish before any further development to address local needs is considered.

Brentor Housing Survey

This survey form has been sent to every known household in the Parish. The survey can be completed on Survey Monkey by following the QR code, or online at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BrentorHNS>



Alternatively, paper copies can be returned in the provided envelope.

Completed forms must be received by 3rd April 2022

If you require extra forms or have any questions, please e-mail info@devoncommunities.org.uk

Confidentiality and Data Protection: The information you provide will be used by DCT to provide information for the Housing Survey Report and summary information on rural housing need. No data will be published which can identify an individual. Forms will be retained for 5 years then destroyed. Please see full data protection statement at end of form.

Part 1

Please complete Part 1 of the form, even if you do not have a housing need.

1) Please tick one of the following. Do you:

Own your own home

Live in a shared ownership property

Live with relatives

Rent from a private landlord

Rent from a housing association/local authority

Live in housing tied to a job

Other: please specify

2) Is this your: Main Home

Second Home

3) In which Parish do you live?

4) How many bedrooms does your current home have?

5) If you rent privately, how much rent do you pay per month?

Under £400

£400-£499

£500-£599

£600-£699

£700-£799

£800-£899

£900-£999

£1000 +

Community Land Trusts

Community Land Trusts (CLTs) are non-profit, community-based organisations run by volunteers that develop housing and other assets that are owned and controlled by the community and are made available at permanently affordable levels. CLT membership is open to all who live or work in the defined community. The members elect a volunteer board comprised of people living within the community to run the trust on their behalf on a day to day basis.

6) Would you be interested in becoming a member of a local CLT?

YES/NO

If YES, please leave your contact details below

Name Email/Telephone

What do we mean by affordable housing?

SHARED OWNERSHIP- this is where you buy a share of your home (25% to 80% of the home's value) and pay rent on the remaining share. You'll need to take out a mortgage to pay for your share of the home's purchase price. You can now have a household income of up to £80,000 and still be eligible for a shared ownership property.

SHARED EQUITY - this is similar to shared ownership. However, while the developer and/or Government own the remaining share you do not pay rent on it.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR RENT - this is where you pay a percentage of market rent to a housing association or similar organisation. There are currently a number of different rent regimes where the amount paid for a similar sized home may vary.

DISCOUNT MARKET HOMES - this is where you buy a home at a discount below the open market cost.

SELF-BUILD / CUSTOM BUILD- this is where you are involved in the construction of your home, this can be individually or as a group. The extent of your involvement will be decided by the type of scheme. Self-build normally involves some form of ownership but can also be used to provide rented housing. You must have an affordable housing need to be eligible for an affordable self-build home.

RENT TO BUY - This scheme allows working households to rent a home at an Affordable Rent before having the option to buy after a set period of time. There are several different Rent to Buy models and the period of time after which tenants can buy varies between these models. To be eligible for Rent to Buy, tenants must be first time buyers or those returning to the market following a relationship breakdown. As with shared ownership, tenants can have a household income of up to £80,000 to be eligible.

7) Do you know of anybody who has had to leave the Parish in the last 5 years due to the lack of affordable housing? If yes, please contact info@devoncommunities.org.uk to arrange for a survey form to be sent. YES/NO

8) If a need for affordable housing is identified, would you support a housing development for local people to meet that need? YES/NO

Any development would be wholly or predominantly affordable homes (rented or shared ownership). Open market homes would be the minimum required to make the scheme economically viable.

9) Do you have any suggestions for a suitable site for affordable housing in the Parish or any other comments regarding housing in the Parish?

.....
.....

10) Do you intend to move to a new home within the Parish in the next 5 years? YES/NO

If you answered YES to question 10, please complete Part 3 of this form regardless of the type of housing you will require.

Part 2 - Housing Needs of Older People in Brentor

Residents aged over 55

Population projections for Devon show an increase of 23% in people over 55 by 2034. This part of the survey looks at the impact of this increase on Brentor and should only be completed by those households with at least one member over 55.

If there is anyone aged over 55 in your household, please complete Part 2 of the form, regardless of your circumstances.

11) How many people of each age group are there in your household?

Age 55-65

Age 66-75

Age 76-85

Age 86 or over

12) Which of these statements best describes your future housing plans? Please tick one box

I have no plans at the moment to move home

I expect to move home within 5 years

I have thought about moving home but do not expect to do so in the next 5 years

13) Is your current home adaptable to meet changing needs?

YES/NO

If you would like to discuss adaptations to your home, please contact Care Direct on 0345 1551 007 or csc.caredirect@devon.gov.uk.

14) If you expect to move, what type of accommodation do you think you will need?

A home which better meets your needs but is not specially designed for older people

A home which has been specially designed for older people

A residential or nursing home

15) Where do you want to move to when you next move home?

Remain in Brentor Elsewhere in district

Elsewhere in Devon Away from Devon

16) If you intend to move within the next 5 years, which reasons listed below will be the most important when you choose your next home?

Close to family/carers/ support Smaller, more manageable home

Proximity to shops/amenities Proximity to public transport

Cheaper running costs i.e. fuel bills, council tax

Home on one level or adaptable for medical reasons

Part 3

If you think you may need to move to a new home in Brentor within the next 5 years, please complete Part 3 of the form.

Please answer all questions relevant to your household as fully as possible in order to ensure that your housing need can be accurately assessed.

A separate form for each household that wants to move must be completed. For example, each grown up child (over 18) in a family, who wants to set up their own home, should complete a separate form, giving their own financial details and personal circumstances, not that of the main household. If you require extra forms or have any queries, please e-mail info@devoncommunities.org.uk

In order to assess accurately housing need, we have to ask for some sensitive information.

Confidentiality and Data Protection: This information is collected by Devon Communities Together (DCT) as data controller in accordance with the general data protection regulations in the *Data Protection Act 1998* to provide information for the Housing Needs Survey Report and summary information on rural housing need. No data will be published which can identify an individual and no sensitive information will be passed to any other organisation or agency without your permission, including the Parish Council. Personal data will be retained for 5 years and then destroyed. Please see end of form for full Data Protection statement.

17) Please complete the table below listing all persons who would need to live in the new household including the person completing the form. (Please continue on a separate sheet if needed)

| Name and relationship to person completing the form | Age | Gender | Wheelchair accommodation needed | Level access needed |
|---|-----|-----------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| | | M/F/Other | Y/N | Y/N |
| | | M/F/Other | Y/N | Y/N |
| | | M/F/Other | Y/N | Y/N |
| | | M/F/Other | Y/N | Y/N |
| | | M/F/Other | Y/N | Y/N |
| | | M/F/Other | Y/N | Y/N |

If you have a specific need which is not covered above, please provide details on a separate sheet.

18) What is the minimum number of bedrooms you would require in your new home?

19) When do you think you will need to move to a new home? Please tick one box

Now or within the next 12 months Within 1 - 3 years Within 3 - 5 years

20) Please indicate your reasons for wishing to move home below. You may tick more than one box.

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| You need or will need to downsize to a home with fewer bedrooms | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| You need or will need to move to a home with more bedrooms | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| You are sharing kitchen/bathroom facilities with someone who is not going to be moving with you | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| You need to move for health/mobility reasons | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Your home is in poor condition | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| You are struggling to afford your current home | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| You will be leaving home and do not expect to be able to rent or buy privately | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| You have a private tenancy ending | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| You wish to move back to the parish and have a strong local connection | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| You need to move for work | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other -please detail | <input type="text"/> |

21) What type of housing are you interested in?

In Part 1 of this form we explain the different types of housing. Please indicate which types of housing you would be interested in by ticking the boxes below. You may tick more than one box.

Shared Ownership/Equity Affordable/Social Rent Self/Custom Build*
Discounted Market Home Rent to buy Open Market Housing

*If you are interested in building your own home please register your interest on the West Devon Borough Council website at westdevon.gov.uk

22) If purchasing a new home, what would your budget be?

Less than £150,000 £150,000 - £199,999 £200,000 - £249,999
£250,000 - £299,999 £300,000 - £349,999 £350,000+

23) Do you believe that you have enough income and savings (including equity in your existing home) to be able to buy a suitable property on the open market in the parish? **YES/NO**

If you have answered NO to question 23, please complete questions 24 & 25 which will help us to assess what form of affordable housing will meet your need.

IMPORTANT

Please note we can only assess your eligibility for affordable housing if we have **full income and financial details**. Without these, we will not be able to process this form or include your household in the need figures. If you are not comfortable to disclose this information, please tick 'prefer not to say'.

As per our confidentiality and data protection statement, this financial information will remain confidential and will not be seen or passed on to any other organisation.

Single people wishing to set up a new home alone should give their income and financial details only, not that of their parents or other household members who will not be re-housed with them.

24) **Income**

What is your household's **gross annual income**? (before deductions) including benefits and pensions. This should be the combined income for couples.

Less than £20,000 £20,001 - £25,000 £25,001 - £30,000 £30,001 - £35,000
£35,001 - £40,000 £40,001 - £45,000 £45,001 - £50,000 £50,001 - £55,000
£55,001 - £60,000 £60,001 - £70,000 £70,000 - £80,000 Over £80,000
Prefer not to say

25) **Savings, investments and assets**

Please give the amount of any savings and investments you have to the nearest £1,000

Do you potentially have access to a deposit **in addition** to any savings? If so, how much?

If you own a home we need the following information to make a proper assessment of whether you could potentially qualify for an affordable home

What is your estimate of the current value of your home?

What is your estimate of how much you still owe on your mortgage?

Prefer not to say

26) Will you be reliant on housing benefit to pay all or part of your rent?

All Part N/A

27) Please answer the following questions, if they do not apply please put "n/a"

Is a member of the household currently resident in the parish, if so for how many years?

Is a member of the household currently employed in the parish, if so for how many years?

Do you have other strong local connection with the parish for example by upbringing? Please detail.

28) Have you registered your housing need with Devon Home Choice? YES/NO

29) If you have not registered with Devon Home Choice, please give reasons why

If you consider that your household is in affordable housing need, it is important that you register with Devon Home Choice at www.devonhomechoice.com

Have tried to register but was refused

Waiting list is too long

Form was too long and complicated

Hadn't heard of it

Lack of affordable housing in the village

Other: please detail

DATA PROTECTION DECLARATION

The information you provide on this survey will be used by DCT to provide information for the Housing Survey Report and summary information on rural housing need. No data will be published which can identify an individual. Wherever your personal information may be held by us, we will take reasonable and appropriate steps to ensure that it is protected from unauthorised access or disclosure. We may pass your details to partner organisations for affordable housing purposes only. These third parties are obliged to keep your details securely. All data from the housing need survey will be kept securely for a period of 5 years after which it will be destroyed. The data is retained for 5 years as this is the length of time that the housing need survey is valid for. If you want your details removed at any point, you can contact us at Devon Communities Together to request its removal.

If you believe you may need affordable housing in Brentor please sign below to confirm that you have read and understood the above declaration and that you agree to DCT retaining and sharing your contact information as detailed above. If you do not require affordable housing there is no need to provide your contact details or sign the declaration.

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Name: | |
| Address: | |
| Telephone Number: | Email: |
| I agree to DCT retaining my contact information and sharing it with the local authority and any other relevant organisations where this is to assist them in providing appropriate housing. | |
| Signed..... | Date..... |

Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **31 January 2023**

Title: **UK Shared Prosperity Fund & Rural England Prosperity Fund**

Portfolio Area: **Leader - Cllr Neil Jory**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Date next steps can be taken:

Author: **Chris Shears** Role: **Head of Economy and Place**

Contact: Chris.shears@swdevon.gov.uk

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is RECOMMENDED that the Hub Committee:

- 1. Approves the delivery of the package of support within our UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) investment plan which has been agreed with the Levelling-Up Department.**
- 2. Agrees to waive the requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules to seek tenders, if they would otherwise be required, and an exemption from the Rules is made to enable a direct award of contracts to the businesses identified in Section 5 to meet the timetable of the programme as set out by Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.**
- 3. Approves the Rural England Prosperity Fund proposal submitted to Government, which if successful will begin delivery from April 2023.**

1. Executive summary

- 1.1 In March 2022 the Government announced funding for a business and community support programme, UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), which form part of the Levelling Up agenda. The funding allocation for West Devon is £1,000,000.
- 1.2 In order to access the allocated funding, the Council devised and submitted an investment plan to the Levelling-Up department by

the 1st of August 2022. These plans set out; local economic and community challenges, opportunities, examples of the types of projects to be delivered and indicative outputs and outcomes.

- 1.3 Recognising this fantastic opportunity our approach has been to analyse the UKSPF scope and target where it intersects with our adopted corporate strategy – A Plan for West Devon. In doing so we will leverage the funding to deliver the priorities of the Council and maximise the impact for our residents, communities and businesses.
- 1.4 Members have played a crucial part in shaping the proposals prior to submission through the members workshops.
- 1.5 Following approval of our business plan, the UKSPF work programme can now commence delivery and it will target:
 - i. Regenerative Farming and the agricultural sector
 - ii. Inclusive and active travel
 - iii. Business and community support
- 1.6 All four strands have a golden thread of clean growth and decarbonisation running through them, that will shape the support and outcomes, as required by UKSPF.
- 1.7 This is a three-year programme running until 2024/2025. Details of the work programme are set out in this report.

2. Development of the local investment plan

1. Details of the application process were released to local authorities in May 2022. The team identified areas of alignment between our Corporate Strategy, Levelling-Up objectives, and wider Government policy areas (including climate and transport policy). A presentation was then delivered to members in June 2022, suggesting an approach which looked to deliver against these aligned objectives. Members provided positive feedback and made suggestions to strengthen the proposals which were taken on board.
2. Throughout June and July 2022, the Placemaking Team met with a number of partner organisations who specialise in the delivery of support against these themes and a range of stakeholders who could potentially benefit from support to identify the kind of measures that could have a positive impact on their businesses. These stakeholders and partner organisations include:
 - Devon County Council
 - Neighbouring local authorities
 - Dartmoor National Park Authority
 - AONB Teams
 - National Highways
 - National Trust

- SusTrans
 - WSP (a consultancy firm working with Devon County Council on transport strategy)
 - The Apricot Centre
 - Riverford Farm
 - The Good Food Loop
 - University of Plymouth
 - University of Exeter
 - North Devon Biosphere
 - National Farmers Union
 - Business Information Point
 - The Carbon Trust
 - Retrofit Academy
 - British Intellectual Property Centre
 - Community Energy Groups
 - Businesses (Marine, Agricultural, Transport, Construction and other)
3. From these discussions, a range of projects under each theme were developed, which would deliver against UKSPF outputs and outcomes which were submitted to Government on the 31st of July 2022. Following the submission of the plan, work has been ongoing to further develop project proposals and to more accurately estimate the outputs and outcomes for each of our proposed projects.
4. Members were also updated on the proposed projects and how their suggestions had been incorporated into the investment plan. For example, additional resource was switched from the marine economy to the agri-tech and regenerative farming programme, and a number of partner organisations which members suggested we liaise with have now been engaged and had the opportunity to input to the programme, such as the community energy groups.

3. Funding

- 3.1 The Government took quite a rigid approach to the proportion of funding that must be spent during each year of the programme:

| Allocation 2022/2023 (£) | | | Indicative allocation 2023/2024 (£) | Indicative allocation 2024/2025 (£) |
|--------------------------|---------|----------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Capital | Revenue | Capacity | 176,568 | 735,148 |
| 28,000 | 60,284 | 20,000 | | |

4. UKSPF Programme of Activities

4.1. A programme of activities has been developed against each of the themes:

4.2. **Active and Inclusive Travel:**

- Commission a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) across South Hams and West Devon to identify the important cycle and walking routes and barriers along these. The LCWIP will be a key piece of evidence to support active travel within the revisions to the Joint Local Plan. A behaviour change study will also run alongside the LCWIP to identify ways to increase uptake in active travel.
- A suite of active and inclusive travel projects will be supported as identified within the LCWIP. These projects may include: e-bike trials or hubs, officer and member training, behaviour change campaign and a fund to support small scale physical infrastructure improvements and/or feasibility studies.
- Match funding to support the Levelling Up bid for the West Devon Transport Hub to ensure it prioritises active and inclusive travel.

4.3. **Agriculture and Regenerative Farming:**

- The programme recognises that there is an existing wealth of farming expertise within West Devon, and therefore focuses on areas of support aligned to clean growth and decarbonisation – which do require continuous engagement as it is constantly evolving and improving.
- R&D focused project which will see agricultural businesses given the opportunity to work with knowledge organisations (such as the University of Plymouth), and businesses developing new technologies. The aim being to make our agricultural sector a test bed for new and emerging technologies and processes, helping the local industry to lead the rest of the UK in future advances, in productivity, automation, resilience and yields.
- It creates the conditions needed for tech developers to test their products in the real world, monitor performance and receive direct feedback from end users before launching their products to the wider market. For this project, we are working with the Devon Agri-Tech Alliance, which is led by Devon County Council. There are parts of this project still being negotiated, but we are looking at a total project cost of around £160,000 through West Devon UKSPF over the next two years, with the project starting from April 2023.
- Working with local expertise the work programme will deliver a regenerative farming project to support agricultural businesses to transition towards a more

sustainable (but commercially viable) approach. Changes would include a move away from fertilizers to regenerative farming processes, which focus on soil quality to improve yields and climate resilience. The programme involves formal training and work placements to ensure support is available for our farmers of tomorrow.

- Trainees will be placed within farming businesses, and will work with the business to develop a transitioning plan and to begin implementing the necessary changes. Though the process of transitioning to regenerative farming takes approximately 7 years to complete, UKSPF will help a significant number of farming businesses to begin this process.
- There is also a land consultancy element to the project, which will identify opportunities for agricultural businesses to bring unused land into beneficial uses, for example, the planting of wildflowers to improve biodiversity, or the planting of fast growing trees which can be used for fuel or for natural flood risk mitigation.
- The project will be delivered by the Apricot Centre, based in Dartington, who specialise in regenerative farming training, providing direct support to farms to help them transition to regenerative farming processes, and land consultancy. The cost of this project is £80,000 through the West Devon UKSPF allocation for the 2 years. However, this project will start from January, as their programme of activities runs on a calendar year rather than a financial year.
- Finally there is a food distribution project to help increase the opportunities for locally produced food and drink to reach local marketplaces (whether these are food and drink businesses, local distribution networks, or actual marketplaces). This project also aims to reduce the food-miles related to local crops and produce. Farmers will also be encouraged to make their land accessible at suitable times of year, for site visits to be coordinated so that people are able to visit and learn about how their food is produced. For this project we are working with the Good Food Loop and it will £45,000 of the UKSPF over the 2 year period starting from April 2023.

4.4. Wider Business Support & Consultancy:

- Specialist advisors programme - working with our business communities to develop bespoke decarbonisation plans. These plans will explore all elements of the business including, the buildings they operate from, their processes and production lines, their logistics chains, and their end products and services. The plans will set out a pathway that businesses can follow to decarbonise their activities.

- A study of our construction sector and its supply chain to identify gaps in local capabilities to deliver low carbon or decarbonised construction projects. Support will then be delivered to improve these capabilities, putting our local construction businesses in a resilient position where they will be ahead of the curve with regards to their ability to meet future planning and building regulations.
- A project will be delivered to support our community energy groups. Since the removal of the RCEF (Rural Community Energy Fund), it has proved challenging for Community Energy Groups to move forward with projects that would provide clean energy and energy efficiency measure to local communities. Through this project, they will be provided with a shared resource to help them draw down other Government funding to move their projects forwards.

5. Procurement

- 5.1. DLUHC have recommended that Councils consider using procurement exemptions to expedite delivery of the programme and achieve their aspiration to spend our Yr 1 allocation by the end of March.
- 5.2. Having reviewed the delivery programme, it is recommended that the appointment of the Devon Agri-Tech Alliance and Apricot Centre is made using a procurement exemption. The grounds for this exemption, as follows:
- 5.3. The Devon Agri-Tech Alliance has been created as a pan Devon body to specifically deliver against the UKSPF funding available from multiple local authorities. It is entirely unique and so is a "limited market" in procurement terms. The partnership includes a wide range of support organisations, ranging from the Universities of Plymouth and Exeter, to Business Information Point and the other business support organisations.
- 5.4. The Apricot Centre is the only establishment locally (and therefore in such a way as will be successful and target our farmers and residents) that is able to deliver the programme that has been devised to meet our specific UKSPF and Corporate Strategy priorities. Their programme brings significant match funding, and they have a track record of successful delivery of regenerative farming programmes. It is also deemed to be unique and can justifiably rely on an exemption.
- 5.5. The delivery of the numerous other strands of the programme, including the LCWIP are not expected to require an exemption as they have already been pre-procured by the team at risk, or fall below the procurement financial thresholds.

6. Governance

- 6.1. For each of the themes, a steering group is being set up which will consist of key delivery partners, members and businesses and community representatives. The programme will

report internally through the Strategic Delivery Board, and externally through the Executive.

- 6.2. Delivery partners will be required to report to the local authority on a quarterly basis so that funding can be released retrospectively, relating to the outputs and outcomes they have achieved. At present, delivery partners are returning delivery profiles to the local authority which will be agreed prior to the commencement of their projects. This will form the basis of their reporting, which will be provided to each of the theme steering groups, while an overview of outputs and outcomes by theme will be provided to the Strategic Delivery Board.

7. Rural England Prosperity Fund

- 7.1. Following our submission for UKSPF, the Government announced a further package of support available to rural areas (by Government definition, our entire local authority area is deemed to be rural), the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). This funding has been allocated to the local authority, and is accessed through a similar process to UKSPF. The funding is 100% capital, and has a narrower set of outputs and outcomes which it must be used to deliver. The funding also needs to deliver towards decarbonisation and must show clear links with our UKSPF proposals. The deadline for submission was November 30th 2022.
- 7.2. The allocated funding for West Devon is £838,000. If proposals are accepted by the Government, this funding will begin from April 2023 and will run for 2 years until the end of March 2025.

8. Interventions

- 8.1. The Placemaking Team worked with UKSPF partner organisations to develop proposals which would add value to the UKSPF programme while meeting the REPF criteria. The interventions which best align with the local authority's UKSPF proposals are:
 - 8.2. Supporting Businesses:
 - Capital grant funding for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas
 - Capital grant funding for growing the local social economy and supporting innovation
 - Capital grant funding for developing and promoting the visitor economy
 - 8.3. Supporting Communities:
 - Capital grant funding for active travel enhancements in the local area
 - Capital grant funding for impactful volunteering and social action projects to develop social and human capital in local places

- 8.4. A number of projects have emerged which will strongly connect REPF with the local authority's UKSPF programme:
- Support for interventions identified in a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP):
The LCWIP will identify opportunities to deliver infrastructure improvements to make active travel options more accessible. REPF will provide a pot of capital funding to deliver some of the smaller scale interventions.
 - Support for Community Infrastructure (village halls):
As a part of the UKSPF work with community energy groups, there will be an audit undertaken of our rural community infrastructure, with a particular focus on strengthening the role that village halls play in providing a range of services to those who are rurally isolated. REPF will be able to support the delivery of any identified opportunities to strengthen the role village halls can play (eg energy efficiency improvements or the adoption of renewable technology that would enable them to play the role of a "warm bank").
 - Support for the adoption of innovative technologies:
Businesses receiving support through the UKSPF programme relating to R&D and the trialling of new and innovative technologies, will be able to apply for a grant to purchase the equipment being tested on their sites.
 - Support for decarbonisation:
Businesses which go through the UKSPF programme to develop a decarbonisation plan for their business will be able to apply for a grant through REPF to implement some of the stages of the decarbonisation plan.
- 8.5. There will not be a requirement for businesses to go through a UKSPF programme in order to be able to apply for grant support, but those which have engaged with the UKSPF programme will have their application weighted favourably.

9. Funding Profile

- 9.1. REPF also has a rigid spending structure that local authorities must abide by. Based on REPF requirements, the following spending profile has been proposed (Y1 = 2023/24, Y2 = 2024/25):

Rural Businesses

- Y1 - £150k
- Y2 - £288k

Capital grant funding for small scale investment in micro and small enterprises in rural areas

- Y1 - £60k

- Y2 – £110k

Capital grant funding for growing the local social economy and supporting innovation

- Y1 - £60k
- Y2 - £110k

Capital grant funding for developing and promoting the visitor economy

- Y1 - £30k
- Y2 - £68k

Rural Communities

- Y1 - £150k
- Y2 - £250k

Capital grant funding for active travel enhancements in the local area

- Y1 - £100k
- Y2 – 200k

Capital grant funding for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups

- Y1 - £50k
- Y2 - £50k

10. Governance

- 10.1. Governance for the REPF programme will be undertaken through the same thematic groups being created for the UKSPF programme, and the Strategic Delivery Board.

11. Conclusion

- 11.1. The Placemaking Team has developed a programme of activity that the Government's Levelling-Up Department deems to be a good approach to delivering the UKSPF in West Devon. The planned activities align closely with local objectives and will see the local authority working with a range of partners with an excellent track record for delivering high quality projects.
- 11.2. By taking a similar approach with the REPF, and interweaving it with our UKSPF activities, we are confident that the Government will support our approach with this new funding, and that we will be able to have an even greater impact on our businesses and our communities. Our projects will focus on improving productivity, creating sector resilience, and decarbonising our key industries, while ensuring that some of our most rurally isolated communities will have localised support infrastructure to help meet their existing and future needs.

12. Implications

| Implications | Relevant to proposals Y/N | |
|--|---------------------------|---|
| Legal/Governance | | |
| Financial implications to include reference to value for money | | The financial implications are set out within the report. |
| Risk | | |
| Supporting Corporate Strategy | | |
| Consultation & Engagement Strategy | | |
| Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact | | |
| Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications | | |
| Equality and Diversity | | |
| Safeguarding | | |
| Community Safety, Crime and Disorder | | |
| Health, Safety and Wellbeing | | |
| Other implications | | |

Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **31 January 2023**

Title: **A Plan for West Devon – Quarter 3
Integrated Performance Management
Report**

Portfolio Area: **Councillor Neil Jory
Leader of the Council**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Date next steps can be taken:

Author: **Neil Hawke** Role: **Assistant Director Strategy
and Organisational
Development**

Contact: Neil.Hawke@swdevon.gov.uk

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Hub Committee:

- 1) Note the progress in delivery of the Plan for West Devon thematic delivery plan and the overall strategic performance of the Council; and**
- 2) Commence work with lead officers to make minor amendments to the Year 3 delivery plans for consideration at the next Hub Committee meeting on 7 March 2023.**

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council adopted its Plan for West Devon strategy in September 2021.
- 1.2 We are now coming towards the end of year two of the thematic delivery plan and this report provides an update on progress.
- 1.3 This report forms a quarterly update which also highlights the strategic risk profile of the Council, performance against key indicators and an overview of the capital programme.

- 1.4 Since adoption of the strategy, the operating landscape for the Council has changed and as such some minor amendments are required to the delivery plan for year 3. See Section 2.2 for more information.

2. Proposed way forward.

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Hub Committee consider progress as set out in Appendix A to this report.
- 2.2. Since adopting the Plan for West Devon Strategy in 2021, the operating landscape for the Council has changed and decisions have been taken by Council that need to be reflected in the Year 3 delivery plan. This includes removal of any completed schemes, addition of Cost of Living response action plan and responding to the Homes for Ukraine initiative. Furthermore, we now have certainty around a number of bids submitted to Government fund which should be reflected in the update.
- 2.3. Advisory Groups have all held at least 3 meetings over the past 18 months and as such have helped shape minor refinements to the plan which can be reflected.
- 2.4. It is therefore recommended that Hub Lead Members work with the officer lead for each theme to make minor amendments to the Year 3 delivery plans. These changes would not be significant and not require additional funding but would ensure that the Year 3 delivery plans can continue to be monitored with smart objectives for each action.

3. Implications

| Implications | Relevant to proposals Y/N | Details and proposed measures to address |
|--|---------------------------|--|
| Legal/Governance | Y | This report includes an overview of performance during the period and therefore contributes to transparency in Council operations and delivery |
| Financial implications to include reference to value for money | Y | The report includes a high-level overview of spend against our agreed strategy |
| Risk | | |
| Supporting Corporate Strategy | Y | This report provides an update on progress against each Corporate Strategy theme. |
| Climate Change - Carbon / | Y | None as a direct implication of this report |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Biodiversity Impact | | |
| Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications | | |
| Equality and Diversity | | None as a direct implication of this report |
| Safeguarding | | None as a direct implication of this report |
| Community Safety, Crime and Disorder | | None as a direct implication of this report |
| Health, Safety and Wellbeing | | None as a direct implication of this report |
| Other implications | | |

Supporting Information

Appendices:

Appendix A – Quarter 3 Integrated Performance Management Report

Background Papers:

Quarter 2 Integrated Performance Management Report

This page is intentionally left blank



West Devon
Borough Council

A Plan for West Devon – Progress Update

Page 139

Quarter 3 2022/23 (October – December 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 140



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 18 – Capital Programme Overview

Page 19 – Strategic Risk Assessment



West Devon
Borough Council



A plan for West Devon

Introduction



It's hard to believe that we are fast approaching the end of our Year 2 delivery plan, and I am pleased with the continued progress we are making.

Of course the Cost of Living impacts continue to affect us all and there has been a real focus during this quarter to ensure that we develop a clear plan of action to do what we can to support residents.

Operationally, our waste contractor and council localities team worked closely to make sure the streets were spotless for residents and businesses following another successful Tavistock Goose Fair in October!

In November we took steps to provide certainty to some of our key partners, extending funding to them for a further two years. This has included support for Citizens Advice, CVS and community transport organisations – all of whom are really on the frontline of supporting our residents

In December we were notified that our bid for funding through the Government Shared Prosperity Fund was successful – with just over £1m being awarded to us to deliver a range of projects with a focus on working towards our net-zero climate ambitions

Cllr Neil Jory

Leader West Devon Borough Council

During this reporting period we've :-



Held an event for Ukrainian residents from across the Borough to socialise and also get important information and support from us, Citizens Advice and CVS

Launched a £50,000 Cost of Living Community Action grant scheme



Commenced a project to plant over 70 trees at 3 green spaces in Tavistock – actual planting Starting in January .

Received a clean bill of health on the Audit of our Financial Accounts by our external auditor



West Devon
Borough Council



A plan for West Devon

Section 1 – Performance on a page

Corporate Strategy Actions



Good progress has been made with the majority on track to deliver as planned.

Page 142

Spend against approved strategy programme 2022.23

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Agreed Strategy Budget 2022/23 | £404,500 |
| Spend to Date | £95,732 |
| Forecast to year end | £375,500 |
| Forecast Variance | £29,000 under |

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 |
|---|---|
| 16.5 | 15.3 |

The average risk score for our strategic risk register has decreased due to certainty of the Homes for Ukraine schemes future funding and adoption of a Cost of Living response plan.



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.

Progress remains consistently positive remaining with 89% of actions on track.

More detail on each of the delivery plans is set out in the coming pages.

| Overall Performance Against Actions | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Status | | Total Actions Within Category | % of overall actions |
|  | 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 | 56 | 89% |
|  | There are some issues or risks which are requiring management but a plan is in place to bring back on track | 7 | 11% |
|  | 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 | |
|  | This activity is not yet due to start in the current year | 0 | |
| | Totals | 63 | 100% |

Page 143





At the time of preparing this report we have continued to make good progress across the actions within our delivering plan including:-

- Extended funding for our Key Partners (Citizens Advice, CVS, Community Transport schemes) for two years – provide them with financial certainty and enabling us to continue to work together to support residents
- Attended the Devon Association of Local Councils Annual Conference, having a stand and talking to Town and Parishes about our priorities
- Our localities team worked with our contractor FCC to support a safe, clean and tidy Tavistock Goose Fair
- Continued promotion of the Seamoor Lotto
- Held Northern Links meeting to connect Town and Parishes with the Borough Council – with a particular focus on Cost of Living and how we can work together
- Commenced work to develop a 'Team West Devon' Annual conference in 2023



Cllr Paul Vachon
Lead Member for strengthening communities



| Focus Area | Total Actions 2022/23 | 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 | 4 | 3 | 1 (SC1.4) | | |
| Supporting the voluntary sector in responding to community needs | 1 | 1 | | | |

Key Risks / Issues

- SC1.4 Launching a new community events fund has been carried forward from last year. Advisory Group considered this action at their recent meeting and we will launch the fund as a 'Coronation Events' fund in the next quarter

Focus for next Quarter

- Arrange a Superlinks meeting for Town and Parishes to engage with Leader of Devon County Council
- Develop and launch the events grant scheme for Coronation events





As we enter the winter months, residents health and wellbeing becomes even more of a focus for the Council – particularly in light of the ongoing Cost of Living challenges. During this period we have taken steps to quickly develop a Cost of Living response plan setting out exactly what we will do to support our residents. Key actions delivered during this period include:-

- Launching a Winter Wellbeing community fund of £50,000
- Commissioning Mental Health and Wellbeing workshops for primary schools within the area
- Launched Household Support fund with households in receipt of Council Tax discount that haven't been eligible for other government support receiving £650 and households in receipt of council tax disabled band discount receiving £300 – supporting over 200 households in total



Cllr Tony Leech
Lead Member for enhancing community wellbeing



Page 145

| Focus Area | Total Actions 2022/23 | 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 | 2 | 1 | 1 (CW1.1) | | |
| Leisure provision that meets residents needs | 2 | 2 | | | |
| Mental Health and Wellbeing | 3 | 3 | | | |

Key Risks / Issues

- CW1.1 – Rural Poverty pilot is slightly behind the agreed timetable but our specific actions around Cost of Living all contribute to tackling rural poverty

Focus for next Quarter

- Progress with delivery of Cost of Living action plan, including awarding funding to successful applicants
- Promote (via a leaflet and online Support Hub) the support available to residents as the Cost of Living continues to impact
- Continue delivery of Health and Wellbeing pilot in a geographically defined location



West Devon
Borough Council



A plan for West Devon



Positive progress continues in responding to the housing crisis within the Borough and during this quarter we have:-


- Engaged with contractor to update business case for temporary accommodation units in Tavistock
- Carried out a rough sleeper count – recording zero rough sleeping in the area
- Instructed architects to look at site constraints and development options for Wonnacotts Road
- Continued development of parish profiles
- Appointed a Principle Housing Delivery officer to support strategic housing projects on council land
- Secured £300k funding to deliver a project supporting housing improvement programme – linked to our campaign for action in respect of supported housing



Cllr Barry Ratcliffe
Lead Member
for improving
homes



Page 146

| Focus Area | Total Actions 2022/23 |  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 | 3 | 2 | 1 (IH1.6) | | |

Key Risks / Issues

IH1.6 – The current challenges within the construction industry continue to make it difficult to identify a successful procurement route. See Section 5 of this report for more information

Focus for next Quarter

- Further work on progressing the Councils aspirations for a housing development at Wonnacotts Roads)
- Implement project for housing improvement programme
- Update Housing Strategy and Homelessness Strategy for 2023/24



West Devon
Borough Council



A plan for West Devon



Work has continued in progressing our plans to support the thriving economy in West Devon. During this quarter we have been notified that our bid to the Government UK Shared Prosperity Fund has been approved. This bid secures £1.1m of funding to support schemes within West Devon including agriculture and regenerative farming, active and inclusive travel and other wider business decarbonisation support and consultancy.

In other actions, during this period we have:-

- Supported Okehampton Town Council in progressing their plans for a BID, with an Extraordinary Town Council meeting giving unanimous support for further explore the potential
- Carried out a #MyPlace Christmas campaign promoting local businesses and events



Cllr Peter Crozier
Lead Member for stimulating a thriving economy

Page 147

| Focus Area | Total Actions 2022/23 | On Track | Slightly off track but plan in place | Risk that unable to deliver on time | Not yet due to commence | Key Risks / Issues |
|---|-----------------------|----------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Promote Destination West Devon | 5 | 5 | | | | |
| Helping West Devon Towns and Businesses thrive | 5 | 5 | | | | |
| Respond to opportunities to enhance the economy | 2 | 2 | | | | |

Focus for next Quarter

- Commence in-depth research in to how a BID might be developed in Okehampton.
- Begin to deliver projects funding by UK Shared Prosperity funding





Good progress is being made on delivery of the specific actions within the year two 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:-

- Worked with other Councils and organisations to prepare the Devon Carbon Plan (a roadmap for how Devon will reach net-zero emissions by 2050 at the latest) – considering how this aligns with our existing strategy
- The Natural Environment Advisory Group informed a draft EV Strategy for the Borough
- Submitted a £75,000 bid under the Innovate UK Net zero pioneer places programme for an engagement and capability study which if successful could lead to an £8m fund
- Secured funding through the Forestry Commission for planting of over 70 new large trees at three green spaces in Tavistock – Bishopmead, Monksmead and the Meadows
- Our Leisure provider (Fusion) have continued to progress plans to secure a solar panel contractor



Cllr Lucy Wood
Lead Member
for growing
our natural
environment



Page 148

| Focus Area | Total Actions 2022/23 | 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 – The lack of existing EV charging infrastructure, limited range of some EV's and the large area covered by some roles / vehicles represents a challenge in terms of ensuring that service remains efficient with an EV fleet

Focus for next Quarter

- Commence planting of trees in Tavistock
- Forecast vehicle replacement schedule and understand the budget pressure associated with fleet charging infrastructure in more detail
- Fusion Leisure to award contract for solar panel installs – with the hope that installation can commence in April 2023



West Devon
Borough Council



A plan for West Devon



This quarter we've continued positive progress against delivering our plans for the built environment including:-

- Extended funding for two years for the UNESCO World Heritage Site partnership
- Supported important cultural events within the Borough that celebrate our history – including Tavistock Goose Fair
- Concluded the My Place My Views consultation – a project delivered under the Joint Local Plan to get views from residents about what is important about their local area which will help inform future planning
- Securing funding through the UK Shared Prosperity fund which will enable us to support the West Devon Transport Hub – enhancing active and inclusive travel and linking the new hub to the wider community and surrounding areas

I am also pleased that we have been able to welcome our new Assistant Director for Planning during this period. He will lead the delivery of our planning improvement programme – a key aspect of the Councils role in ensuring we adapt our built environment



Cllr Caroline Mott

Lead Member for adapting our built environment



Page 149

| Focus Area | Total Actions 2022/23 | 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 | 4 | | | |
| Planning infrastructure for the future | 4 | 4 | | | |

| Key Risks / Issues |
|--------------------|
| |

Focus for next Quarter

- Assess the responses to the My Place My Views consultation and consider if there is benefit in continuing with a similar engagement platform following the completion of the trial.
- Respond to the Government consultation on reforms to National Planning Policy, National Planning Policy Framework and introduction of National Development Management policies





During this quarter we have continued to progress with our plans for ensuring that our services are inclusive and accessible to our residents. As the cost of living increases, we have taken steps to consider how we reach out to our residents with weekly articles in local newspapers, online and through posters and leaflets to ensure that residents know what support is available regardless of whether they are online or not. During this period we have also:-

- Begun the development and implementation of booking home visits where customers are not able to go online or require support that requires a face to face engagement
- Implemented an enhanced system for managing of online messages through social media – meaning that we no longer have to take contact centre staff off the phones to manage these – improving the phone service
- Implemented automated customer satisfaction system to monitor the satisfaction of residents using the phones – we already offer surveys for online interactions



Page 150

| Focus Area | Total Actions 2022/23 | 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 | 5 | 4 | 1 (IA1.4) | | |

Key Risks / Issues

Action IA1.1 – Customer Charter work has been delayed but a plan is in place to implement this in the Autumn
 Action IA1.4 – We have not commenced delivery of the Residents Satisfaction survey as initially planned however, with the JLP team, we have commenced a wider satisfaction and view gathering exercise through the #My Place survey.
 Action IA1.5 – Slight delays in gathering Member views in respect of the Induction Programme however this is now included in the O&S work programme

Focus for next Quarter

- Develop a timeline and plan for a Resident Satisfaction survey to be carried out later in the year
- Develop a Member induction plan and timetable to ensure that Members are provided with the knowledge and skills required to support residents following the 2023 elections
- Progress plans for further online improvements and processes



West Devon
Borough Council



A plan for West Devon



It has been another busy quarter for delivery under our Council Services theme During this quarter we have:-

- Held full staff briefings to inform staff of the results of the staff survey and update them on key corporate messages
- Received confirmation of our financial settlement for 2023/24 from the Government which was broadly in line with our financial modelling and estimates.
- Had a 'Clean bill of health' and a positive audit report from our External Auditors (Grant Thornton) in respect of our 2021/22 accounts – with no significant issues raised
- Commenced development of an Organisational Development Plan setting out a clear commitment for staff in respect of learning and development, management support and leadership development
- Commenced consultation on Council Tax reduction scheme – to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of residents



Cllr Chris Edmonds
Lead Member for maximising our resources



Page 151

| Focus Area | Total Actions 2022/23 | 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 | 3 | 2 | 1 (R1.1) | | |
| Finance fit for the future | 7 | 6 | 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 continue to work with the supplier to resolve the issues with the technology
- 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

- Continue with progress on the Future IT programme
- Agree the Councils budget for 2023/24 at Full Council – Feb
- The Council will submit a consultation response to the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2023/24



West Devon
Borough Council



A plan for West Devon

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 2022/23 | Spend to Date | Forecast spend to year end | Notes |
|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------|----------------------------|--|
| Communities | £15,000 | £0.00 | £12,000 | Community Grant Scheme to be launched January |
| Community Wellbeing | £37,500 | £0.00 | £27,500 | Slight delays in the rural poverty pilot means that this funding may be underspent at year end. We have commissioned an organisation to deliver some Mental Health and Wellbeing training sessions to schools in the area which, if positive feedback received, we may extend. |
| Homes | £30,000 | £5,000 | £30,000 | |
| Economy | £197,000 | £55,732 | £197,000 | Actual includes cost of Visit West Devon website |
| Natural Environment | £39,000 | £605 | £39,000 | |
| Built Environment | £46,000 | £5,000 | £30,000 | Conservation Area Appraisal Officer now in post |
| Inclusive Services | £5,000 | £0.00 | £5,000 | Delays to carrying out resident satisfaction survey but this funding will be utilised within Communications to ensure we can continue engagement |
| Resources | £35,000 | £0.00 | £30,000 | Recruitment for Website Support Officer now underway |

Page 152



Section 4 – Key Service Performance

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

This section of the report will set 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.

Page 153
These KPI's are deemed to be at the 'Strategic Level' of our performance management framework.

The next two pages set out the high level overview of performance against the KPIs



KPI Performance

| KPI Description | Good Looks Like | 2022/23 | | How its calculated | Narrative |
|---|--------------------|-----------------|-------------|---|---|
| | | Target | This Period | | |
| Percentage of customers completing a process and reporting a positive satisfaction with the process | Higher than target | >80% | 82% | Every web form submitted asks users to complete feedback forms. This is the % of customers scoring positively | A total of 389 unique feedback forms were completed for online processes during this period. Of those, 319 were rated at 4 or 5 stars (out of 5). The team continue to monitor ratings on a regular basis and make improvements to processes. |
| Processing of Major Planning Applications - % determined in time | Higher than target | 70% | 100% | Total number of applications determined in the period on time | |
| Processing of Minor Planning Applications - % determined on time (with extensions) | Higher than target | 80% | 93% | Total number of applications determined in the period on time | |
| Planning Enforcement Cases Outstanding | Downward trend | Last period 158 | 131 | Cases open at start of period, plus new cases, less closed cases. | 52 new cases were received during the period and 79 cases were closed which demonstrates an overall positive direction of travel. |

Page 15 of 14



KPI Performance

| KPI Description | Good Looks Like | 2022/23 | | How its measured | Narrative |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|-------------|--|--|
| | | Target | This Period | | |
| Processing speed housing Benefits (Average number of days to process new claims) | Lower than target | <17 days | 9.4 days | Calculation of number of days from receipt of claim to finalising processing | Oct – 11.8 days Nov – 9.1 days Dec- 7.5 days |
| Average number of missed collections per 100,000 collections of household waste | Lower is better | <80 per 100,000 | 252 | Number of missed collections per 100,000 due collections | We are now calculating WD misses differently from the 1 st December. Whereas previously we would have only included public reports in this figure, we are now including incomplete rounds, so any collection not made on the given day. If we were calculating WD in the old way, the figure for December would have been 113.* |
| % of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting | Upward trend | | TBC | | This information is not available at the point of publishing the report due to the timescales to receive the data from DCC |
| % of complaints responded to within timescales | Higher than target | 90% | 61% | Total number of official complaints responded to within timescales (both stage 1 and stage 2) divided by total number received | A total of 26 complaints were received during the period (20 Stage 1, 6 stage 2). Of those, 16 were completed on time. Work continues with services to ensure that complaints are prioritised and where possible, resolved with a phone call. |

Page 155



Section 5 – Capital Delivery

The Delivery Projects

This new section provides an update on the capital projects which are important in supporting our delivery of key activities within A Plan for West Devon.



Page 156

| Action | Measures of Success Achieved | Key Project Risk(s) |
|--------|---|--|
| H1.6 | Deliver on our plans for 11 self contained apartments in Tavistock to support people who are homeless | Planning Approval Issued Tender documents |
| NE1.2 | EV infrastructure has been installed within Hatherleigh, Chagford and Bedford. | EV infrastructure installed in Hatherleigh, Chagford and Bedford car parks. Wayleave Resolution (Bedford) |

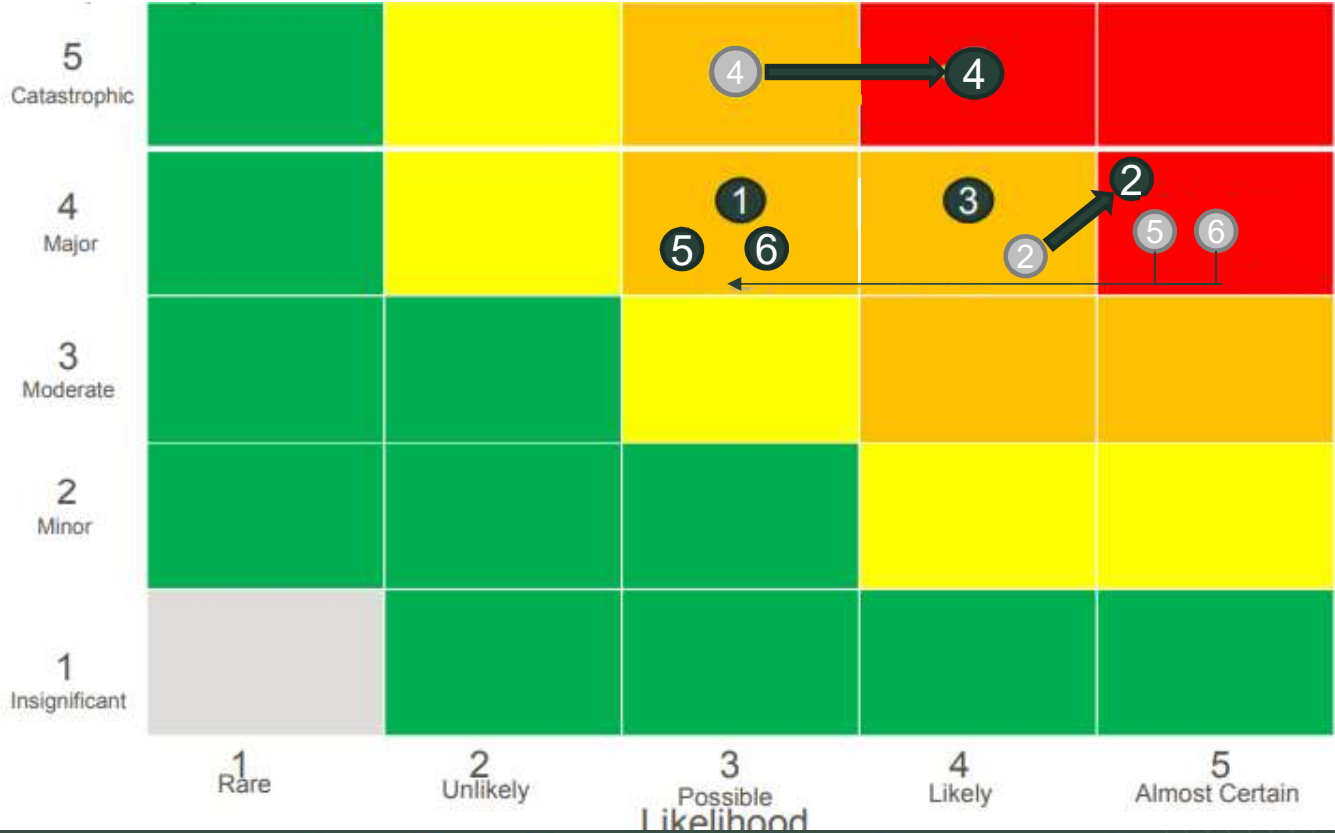
The aim is to develop this section within future reports to detail pipeline projects.



Section 5 - Strategic Risks December 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. Home for Ukraine Placement breakdown risk has reduced due to Government providing certainty over the continuation of the guest/host scheme. The Cost of Living risk has reduced due to the agreement and implementation of a response plan clearly setting out the actions we will take.

Page 157



- Risk Title**
1. Adherence to Medium Term Financial Strategy
 2. Inadequate Staffing Resource
 3. Health and Wellbeing Service Provision
 4. Business Continuity
 5. Failure to respond to Cost of Living
 6. Homes for Ukraine Placement Breakdowns



Risk Title: Insufficient Staff Resource

What is the risk? The risk is that the Council fails to have the right culture, organisational conditions or resources to deliver our priorities for our communities. Insufficient staffing arrangement resulting in a loss of staff morale and inadequate resources for training and re-skilling in an ongoing period of change. Failure to engage staff resulting in uncertainty regarding changes in working practices and job security. Particular risk in relation to future terms and conditions. Cost and time of retraining / upskilling staff. Unrealistic expectations in relation to staffing capacity

What could cause the risk to occur? The last few years have seen Local Government stepping up to provide significant and varied support to our residents, communities and businesses in addition to maintaining our core service delivery, This has been a sustained period of the council delivering additional support and services and is only likely to continue in to the short-medium term.

| | | | | |
|--------------|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--|
| Risk Scoring | Likelihood of risk occurring | | 5 (Almost Certain) | <p>What are we doing to reduce the risk?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing to review services and update service plans to ensure they can meet future demands Reviewing our recruitment campaigns – ensuring that they are effective and targeted Filling key roles with temporary resources to ensure that services can continue to meet statutory requirements while we continue to recruit permanent employees Developing a programme of developing our own talent within the organisation through apprenticeships Identifying local recruitment events with a view to attending and highlighting roles available within the Council Assessing the 'offer' with other similar organisations to identify benefits that may enable us to attract staff |
| | Impact | Financial | 4 (Major) | |
| | | Service Quality | 4 (Major) | |
| | | Reputation | 4 (Major) | |
| | | Legal / Regulatory | 4 (Major) | |
| | | Health and Safety | 4 (Major) | |
| | | Morale / Staffing | 4 (Major) | |

Current Update (Dec 2022) The position remains broadly as in November 2022 update. There are still challenges in recruiting to key roles within the Council - currently Legal recruitment remains challenging. ONS data sets out that private sector salaries increase on average 6.9% in 2022 compared to an average of 2.7% in the public sector. While the recently agreed Local Government pay award of £1,925 per employee has increased the salaries we are offering, we know from recent recruitment attempts that the salary on offer is the biggest challenge.

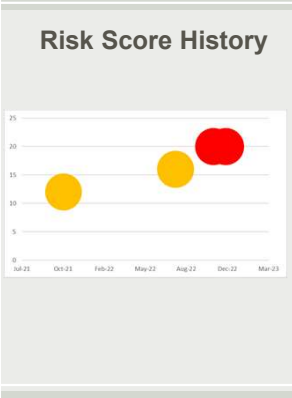
We are continuing to explore different ways of ensuring our workforce meets our future needs including the development of new recruitment campaigns and branding, clearly setting out the additional 'non-pay' benefits of working for the Council and looking at the longer term, developing our own talent through apprenticeships and looking at the T-Levels scheme.

Overall Scoring

Risk Score (Current)

20

Likelihood 5 x Impact 4



Risk Direction

| Risk Title: | 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 could cause the risk to occur? | 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. International events could lead to an increase in cyber attacks on UK government domains over the coming months. We could also see an increase in Covid-19 cases impacting on availability of staff. |
|-------------------------------------|--|

| | | | | |
|----------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------------|------------|
| Page 159 | Risk Scoring | | Likelihood of risk occurring | 4 (Likely) |
| | Impact | Financial | 5 (Catastrophic) | |
| | | Service Quality | 5 (Catastrophic) | |
| | | Reputation | 4 (Major) | |
| | | Legal / Regulatory | 2 (Minor) | |
| | | Health and Safety | 3 (Moderate) | |
| | | Morale / Staffing | 3 (Moderate) | |

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.
- We continue to encourage safe systems of working in respect of Covid-19
- 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

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| Current update (Dec 2022) | The position remains broadly as per the last update in November 2022. The Council continues to keep its business continuity plans updates although as is typical, the risk of a business continuity event being triggered remains high at this point in the year due to the increased likelihood of extreme weather events impacting on service delivery. Additionally, information from the police (as reported to the media in January) highlights that there is a significant risk as a result of recent thefts of electrical cable from the national grid within our neighbouring South Hams area (where our primary ICT systems operate). The risk around this is that it could result in a power outage to our HQ which would require us to trigger our ICT business continuity plan. We are taking steps to ensure that this is further updated in light of this additional information. An Officer planning day is scheduled for Mid January to fully consider our Business Continuity Plans to ensure they remain fit for purpose. |
|---------------------------|---|

Overall Scoring

Risk Score (Current)



Likelihood 4 x Impact 5



Risk Direction



This page is intentionally left blank