

Agenda for Cabinet Wednesday, 12th May, 2021, 6.00 pm

Members of Cabinet

Councillors M Armstrong, P Arnott (Chair), P Hayward (Vice-Chair), G Jung, D Ledger, M Rixson, J Rowland, J Loudoun, S Jackson and N Hookway

Venue: Online via the Zoom app. and Blackdown House

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(or group number 01395 517546)
Tuesday, 4 May 2021



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Public speakers are now required to register to speak – for more information please use the following link: <https://eastdevon.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/have-your-say-at-meetings/all-other-virtual-public-meetings/#article-content>

1 Public speaking

Information on [public speaking is available online](#)

2 Apologies

3 Declarations of interest

Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)

4 Matters of urgency

Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online

5 Confidential/exempt item(s)

To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the Press) have been excluded. There are two items which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.

Matters for Decision - Key Decisions

6 **Public toilet review - Right Toilet in the Right Place** (Pages 4 - 21)

This report looks at East Devon's provision of public toilets, trying to set out some guiding principles to ensure we have the right toilet in the right place, whilst also acknowledging the need to review our level of operation to make it more sustainable in terms of budget, especially given the increased costs of enhanced cleaning and necessary building enhancements for protection from Covid-19 and other future epidemics as well as changed hygiene standards.

Matters for Decision

7 **Poverty Strategy** (Pages 22 - 76)

This report presents a Poverty Strategy for adoption following the investigation and research undertaken by the Poverty Working Panel.

8 **European Regional Development Fund Welcome Back Fund** (Pages 77 - 84)

The Welcome Back Fund (WBF) is an extension of RHSSF and East Devon District Council's funding agreement will be varied to accommodate the additional allocation of £230,991. There is a WBF Form for the Council to complete, that builds upon the RHSSF action plan that needs to be submitted by 30 May 2021. Once agreed, the Council can then start to claim for additional allocation and activity.

9 **Developing East Devon's creative arts sector & cultural tourism offer** (Pages 85 - 98)

This report considers the importance of tourism to the economy of the District and what role the Council can play to help the sector to thrive in a post-pandemic environment.

10 **Seaton Jurassic** (Pages 99 - 102)

This report sets out the current position in relation to Seaton Jurassic Visitor Centre and Devon Wildlife Trust's (DWT) proposed exit of the building on 17 September 2021 and the recommended steps EDDC will need to take over the next few months.

11 **Consideration of public consultation for variance of the Exmouth Anti-Social Behaviour Public Spaces Protection Order 2020 - 2023** (Pages 103 - 107)

To seek approval to vary the existing Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) for the control of ASB & consumption of Intoxicating substances in Exmouth, as required by the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014.

12 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

The Vice Chair to move the following:

“that under Section 100(A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, of the description set out on the agenda, is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing this item in private session (Part B)”.

Part B Matters for Decision

13 Towards Zero Carbon Development in the West End (Pages 108 - 133)

This report provides an update on progress towards the delivery of zero carbon development in the West End of the District. The Council have received confirmation of an offer from the Heat Network Investment Programme, following the submission of a funding bid in January 2021. The report details the decision making that is required now, as well as the next steps.

14 THG staffing and cultural development (Pages 134 - 137)

The report outlines the current position of the Arts Development Manager and THG Curator which is a fixed term appointment and the increasing of capacity within the team itself, to be able to meet the new challenges and demands of the cultural development report.

[Decision making and equalities](#)

For a copy of this agenda in large print, please contact the Democratic Services Team on 01395 517546

Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting 12 May 2021

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Public toilet review - Right Toilet in the Right Place

Report summary:

Following a report to Cabinet in June 2020, relating to the additional cleaning required to ensure the public toilets were Covid secure compliant, along with the restriction on number of toilet blocks which could open because of resource limitations or physical building design; it was agreed that a longer term review of public toilet provision was needed that took account of the additional costs of cleaning for protection from viruses and building design alteration and investment to provide the right toilet in the right place, with good standards and a Covid secure hygienic design.

The recommendation from the June 2020 report built on work from previous service plans, where a review of our public toilet stock has been planned and is required to look both at costs related to closing our budget deficit (MTFP saving of £200k against toilet provision and overall budget deficit of around £3mil), and the quality of our facilities. Many require refurbishment. Capital investment has not taken place since 2014 whilst this review has been pending.

This report looks at East Devon's provision of public toilets, trying to set out some guiding principles to ensure we have the right toilet in the right place, whilst also acknowledging the need to review our level of operation to make it more sustainable in terms of budget, especially given the increased costs of enhanced cleaning and necessary building enhancements for protection from Covid and other future epidemics as well as changed hygiene standards. Consideration is given to our operating model and paid access facilities as well as levels of provision and quality.

Proposals have been made regarding the categorisation of toilets based on suggested Principles of Provision and levels of use, whilst acknowledging that we can't afford to operate all of our public toilets as we did before if providing enhanced facilities and meeting the savings suggestions needed for sustainable budget management.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☐ No ☒

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That Cabinet;

1. Agree the 'Principles of Provision' as the basis for the toilet review to ensure we have 'the right toilet in the right place'.
2. Agree the importance of public conveniences to tourism and the local economy and endorse that the Council;
 - a. focusses on the provision and support for Category A public conveniences at our key locations on the basis of the Principles of Provision, and
 - b. seeks to provide opportunities for others to take on Category B sites, and
 - c. offers Category C sites to Town & Parish councils if they feel continued provision here is necessary.
3. On the basis of Recommendations 1 & 2 agree to a consultation process as detailed in the report (Section 5) to inform decisions on the final category list and the Principles of Provision and ask the Overview Committee to review the consultation responses and equalities assessment and provide its views prior to a final decision being taken.
4. Delegate authority to the Portfolio Holder for Coast, County & Environment in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Economy & Asset Management and Leisure Sport & Tourism and the Strategic Leads for Finance and Housing, Health & Environment to decide the final category lists and conclude negotiations with interested parties around Category B & C toilets;
5. Determine whether to install contactless paid access on the retained toilets to enable a future income (£200k p.a.) to help meet deficits and improve toilet standards.
6. Note that in-house operation is more cost effective than private sector operators and so resolve to continue operation on this basis.
7. Agree that for the toilets the Council maintains for others (Table 4 of Category A, B & C list);
 - a. that the service contract costs be increased to cover expenditure to achieve breakeven, achieving a predicted income of around £16,500.
 - b. should be standardised and full freehold transfer to the town or parish council offered and completed where appropriate.

That Cabinet recommends to Council;

8. Agree that a capital budget of £3.15 million be set as part of the 2022/23 budget for the re-build or refurbishment of all Category A public toilets (subject to the results of the consultation).
9. (If agreed) to set an additional £250k capital budget for the installation of contactless paid access equipment from 2022.
10. Authorise the use of the Transformation reserve to support enabling costs for any transfers - contribution towards legal / surveyor fees and the cost of splitting utilities to enable transfers.

Reason for recommendation:

To review the way we provide public toilets; ensuring we continue to maintain important sites whilst reviewing the provision at other sites and capitalising on opportunities for alternative uses; this will help deliver the savings detailed in our Transformation Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan whilst protecting and improving a core stock of important public toilet sites.

The review also proposes to invest in toilets that are retained to ensure the right toilet in the right place, this is important since no capital investment has been made for a number of years. Many of the sites need updating to meet modern standards and expectations as well as incorporating Covid secure/improved hygiene design features.

Officers: Andrew Hancock, Service Lead – StreetScene ahancock@eastdevon.gov.uk Tim Child, Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation, tchild@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergencies
- ☒ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☐ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☐ Culture, Tourism, Leisure and Sport
- ☐ Democracy and Transparency
- ☒ Economy and Assets
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Medium Impact

The review may lead to some locations having less public toilet provision than now. Whilst we have been careful to ensure the suggested Category A sites would provide facilities in most cases within an 8 minute walk at the most; this could have an effect on some groups with disabilities, particularly those who need access to a toilet facility.

An equalities impact assessment should be undertaken following consultation and in taking account of its results.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; Reputational risk of reducing the provision of a valued public service. Many of our sites have not been invested in for 5 years plus, and so we have a lot of refurbishment to undertake. The financial impact may be too great if we were to refurbish all sites. Risk of not achieving the required saving from the medium term financial plan to help meet the budget deficit, requiring other services to be reduced. Risk of not concluding transfer negotiations on any blocks that might be suitable for such a transfer, thus incurring additional unbudgeted expense. If our facilities continue with underinvestment, it will reflect poorly on our good reputation as an efficient District Council striving for excellent services.

Links to background information:

[Cabinet report – Reinstating Streetscene seasonal resource and budget](#) June 2020

[Cabinet report – enhanced toilet cleaning budget March 2021](#)

[Category A, B & C site suggestions](#)

[Public toilet cost information](#)

[Public toilet water usage](#)

[Proposed PC layout types](#)

[Covid compliant unisex toilet cubicle](#)

[Danfo proposal](#)

[Danfo design option](#)

[Healthmatic contactless review](#)

[Healthmatic paid access door information](#)

[Cat A PCs Re-build Refurb costs](#)

[Cat B & C Re-build Refurb costs](#)

[British Toilet Association best practice guide](#)

[Axminster Public Conveniences map](#)

[Beer Public Conveniences map](#)

[Budleigh Salterton Public Conveniences map](#)

[Exmouth Public Conveniences map](#)

[Honiton Public Conveniences map](#)

[Seaton Public Conveniences map](#)

[Sidmouth Public Conveniences map](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ Outstanding Place and Environment
- ☐ Outstanding Homes and Communities
- ☐ Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- ☒ Outstanding Council and Council Services

Report in full

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The pandemic has brought into sharp focus the need to tackle our long pending public toilet review, which has been on service plans for 6 years but postponed due to other priorities and because of its contentious nature. We already knew through our Medium Term Financial Plan that we needed to look at the overall costs of public toilet provision with a target of a £200k saving from this area to help address our overall budget deficit of around £3 million.
- 1.2 In 2019 a draft report regarding the public toilet review was discussed with the Administration at the time. It was agreed that the Careful Choices consultation of future potential service cuts would be conducted, the results of which would be used to guide how the public toilet review was taken forward. Due to changing political priorities and budget management enabling a balanced budget to be set for 2020/21, the toilet review was postponed.

- 1.3 In June 2020 we reported to Cabinet on the enhanced cleaning required to ensure our public toilets were meeting Government Covid secure guidelines (report – Reinstating StreetScene seasonal resource and budget under background links), which required an additional £76k in staffing to address. Along with this we highlighted the limitations of the out dated and often poor building design with regard to providing a hygienic and Covid secure environment now, and into the future. As well as the need to address our lack of capital investment into our public toilet stock as a result of the pending toilet review. Section 6 talks about the costs of re-building and refurbishing our public toilet stock. One of the recommendations of the report was that a longer term review of public toilet provision should be conducted, taking account of Covid cleaning costs and stock re-build or refurbishment costs for Covid secure and hygienic design. This report attempts to set out a framework for the review and takes account of the stock investment required as well as building design and confirming our intent to invest in the facilities we operate to provide the ‘right toilet in the right place’.
- 1.4 In the June report we estimated the cost of refurbishing all of our stock could be around £4mil. In section 6 we discuss the costs in more detail, which show the cost of refurbishing and investing in all of our sites could be as high as £4.94mil. This coupled with the revenue cost implications is felt to be financially unsustainable and hence why we should consider the review of what we are providing and where.
- 1.5 Prior to the pandemic we noted a national decline of public toilet provision, as many councils have faced the need to reduce service budgets and make difficult decisions for several years. Some UK high streets no longer have any council-run public toilets. Ten areas, including Newcastle, Merthyr Tydfil in south Wales and Wandsworth in south London, now have no council-run public toilets at all. This is due in part to continued cuts to local authority budgets; and whilst public toilets are a very important local service, they are not a statutory service. Councils are doing everything they can to keep public toilets open, including running community toilet schemes to enable pubs, restaurants and shops to make their toilets available to the public. East Devon District Council has tried such a scheme, but found uptake was poor and the establishments involved have all now pulled out due to inconsiderate use of their facilities. East Devon is very well served with 26 council owned public toilets and 4 further toilets the council cleans for others. Some of our towns have many public toilets and the toilet maps (background links) show how well served our towns are.
- 1.6 We currently have 20 public toilets open, 1 of which is not an EDDC block but are cleaned by us and 2 other sites which are being subsidised by town councils whilst we are operating enhanced cleaning - [Public toilets and Coronavirus information - East Devon](#) .
- 1.7 In March we reported to Cabinet requesting they approve a request for additional enhanced cleaning linked to the continuation of government Covid secure guidance until potentially March 22. In this report we comment on the reduction in complaints about our facilities whilst we have carried out additional cleaning, and whether the public will be content with reducing cleaning standards again. This is another budgetary factor to weigh up, we could not afford to operate this way at the currently closed sites if added back to our ‘live’ stock.
- 1.8 Whilst there have been a handful of local complaints about the inconvenience of some of our public toilets being closed during the pandemic, on the whole the open blocks have coped with the community need and we’ve had less complaints about the facilities as they are maintained to a higher standard. Even in the height of summer 2020 when we saw record levels of use at our Parks and Beaches, the toilets we had open were sufficient for most. So one has to ask if we know we need to invest significantly in re-building or refurbishing our outdated toilets for modern requirements, and we know we have a high number of toilet blocks compared to

neighbouring areas (in normal times), and the restricted sites we had open serviced the demand in one of our busiest ever summers; why when we must reduce service costs would we re-open all of them? Moving forward it would seem sensible to provide a smaller number of better provisioned and better maintained toilets, with other sites re-purposed (For example the Seaton Chine Hideaway café case study) and still providing some form of toilet access.

- 1.9 Particularly as the positioning or use of some public toilets are questionable. Our suggested categorisation (Categories list A, B & C sites under background links) discusses some of this, and water usage shows some blocks have a very low use compared to the sites in prime locations, or the ones currently open.
- 1.10 East Devon recognises that public toilets matter to everyone and that there are key areas where we should provide them, however as this is not a statutory service we must ensure we are doing all we can to reduce the costs of providing the service; reviewing the ways in which we provide it and the number of overall toilets we provide, particularly in locations where demand is less or alternative facilities exist; and ensuring we are able to continue investing in the infrastructure so they are modern, clean and fit for purpose.
- 1.11 Public toilet provision currently costs the council £895,230 a year (2019/20 budget used as subsequent budget effected by Covid costs). We receive £62k of income which reduces the net budget to £833,190. The total can be broken down as £473k of direct and staff costs, £263k of recharges and £158k of depreciation of the capital assets. There is also the capital cost of future investment requirements on these buildings to ensure they remain fit-for-purpose and generally of sound construction, this is further discussed in section 6. This provides 30 public toilet sites (26 directly owned and operated by the council and 4 maintained for others).
- 1.12 A saving of £40k has already been realised against this budget for 2021/22 due to the Government's change in business rate liability for public toilets. This savings has already been accounted for against balancing budgets and is separate from the need to save an additional £200k against public toilets.
- 1.13 Our current budget deficit for the 2022/23 budget year is just over £3 million, including the anticipated impact of Business Rates rebasing and NHB. The Medium Term Financial Plan as reported to Cabinet in January 2021 shows a planned future years saving of £200k from the toilet budget to help towards this deficit. Savings here will help protect other important council services. We have sought to suggest ways this saving could be made, as well as protecting a level of service provision, enabling future investment in the quality of toilets we continue to manage and also providing opportunities for betterment through category B (3.6) re-use options such as food and drink or amenity offers with some form of retained publically accessible toilet where possible.
- 1.14 It is very important that we continue to provide high quality public toilets for our residents and that we recognise they have an important role to play in our visitor economy; but that future provision is financially sustainable and that we are making the best uses of our sites. Continued provision at our current level is no longer sustainable. This review seeks to balance the savings requirement with protecting a level of toilet provision, enhancing and investing in retained stock.

2 Principles of Provision

- 2.1 In establishing where we should provide public toilets and why, it is first good to think about some principles to guide this provision. We have considered a number of factors in determining

how we should go about continuing to provide this important non-statutory service and produced the suggested Principles of Provision as below.

2.2 The overall objective of the council should be to provide high quality, modern facilities that are mainly located in town centers, tourist areas and parks which help support these areas. The council should look at other means of operating toilets and be concerned with overall levels of provision, but not necessarily direct provision in all cases. These principles have been used to steer this review and produce the suggested categorisation lists.

- a. **Charter standard** – public toilets to be maintained to a high standard meeting *British Toilet Association* review standards and capable of achieving National Toilet of the Year Awards. Toilets to be unisex open access cubicles where appropriate, but incorporate a male urinal and designated female cubicle where space allows. Incorporate Accessible/open access design standards, baby change facilities, water and energy saving, auto-locks and a long term investment plan (as adopted successfully since the 2004 toilet review). Investigation of changing places in large towns. Develop and publish a 'Charter standard' from service best practice and previous review work.
- b. **Access** – We will ensure all toilet blocks have modern clean facilities with disabled/open access for all (not limited by RADAR key) and baby change facilities. Investigate provision of adult changing facilities at a few key sites.
- c. **At least 1 per town** - East Devon will continue to maintain at least 1 public toilet for each town with a population over 5000, but won't be responsible for toilet provision in villages or some smaller towns as we can't afford to provide facilities everywhere. To assist Town & Parishes with their provision 'peppercorn' freehold disposal of some sites should be considered.

Provision in new towns – To be discussed on a case by case basis and if public toilets can be incorporated into other public buildings or attractions this to be pursued. **Cranbrook provision** is being discussed through the Cranbrook Strategic Delivery Board and is likely to be provided within a community building in the town centre.

- d. **More than 1 in some coastal or visitor attraction areas** - It may be appropriate to provide more than 1 toilet in some locations because of our visitor economy, for example where we have a prime park site or large beach.
- e. **Proximity** – A toilet within reasonable easy walking distance is an important consideration for most users. We will ensure at a minimum that there is a toilet block within an 8 minute walk at the most in town centre areas (600m radius of a town centre and/or seafront). This will be based on demand and facilities in other ownership. Where possible this radius should be 300m / 4 minutes reasonable walk. Walking times are calculated based on a 3 miles per hour walking pace. This is the UK average walking pace and the recommended walking speed used in many British standard design guides.

- f. **Community need** - Public toilets are important to support health, recreation and leisure activities in our towns and at nominated parks or beaches. We will try to match community need either through direct provision, business concessions or developments that incorporate public toilets or community toilets where toilets are provided by others but available to the public. If we transfer provision to others, or offer concessions (such as Seaton Hideaway Café) where toilet provision is incorporated into the business offer, we will ensure that publicly accessible toilets are maintained as part of the business concession. Standards of provision for these sites will be laid out in our Charter Standard.
- g. **Covid secure/hygienic design** – Following the pandemic and our risk assessment of toilet access and hygiene against the government Covid secure guidance it became obvious that we needed to alter the design and hygiene standards of our toilets. This design change will incorporate minimised touch points, sensor flushes and taps and easy clean surfaces to protect and minimise viral transmission now and in the future.

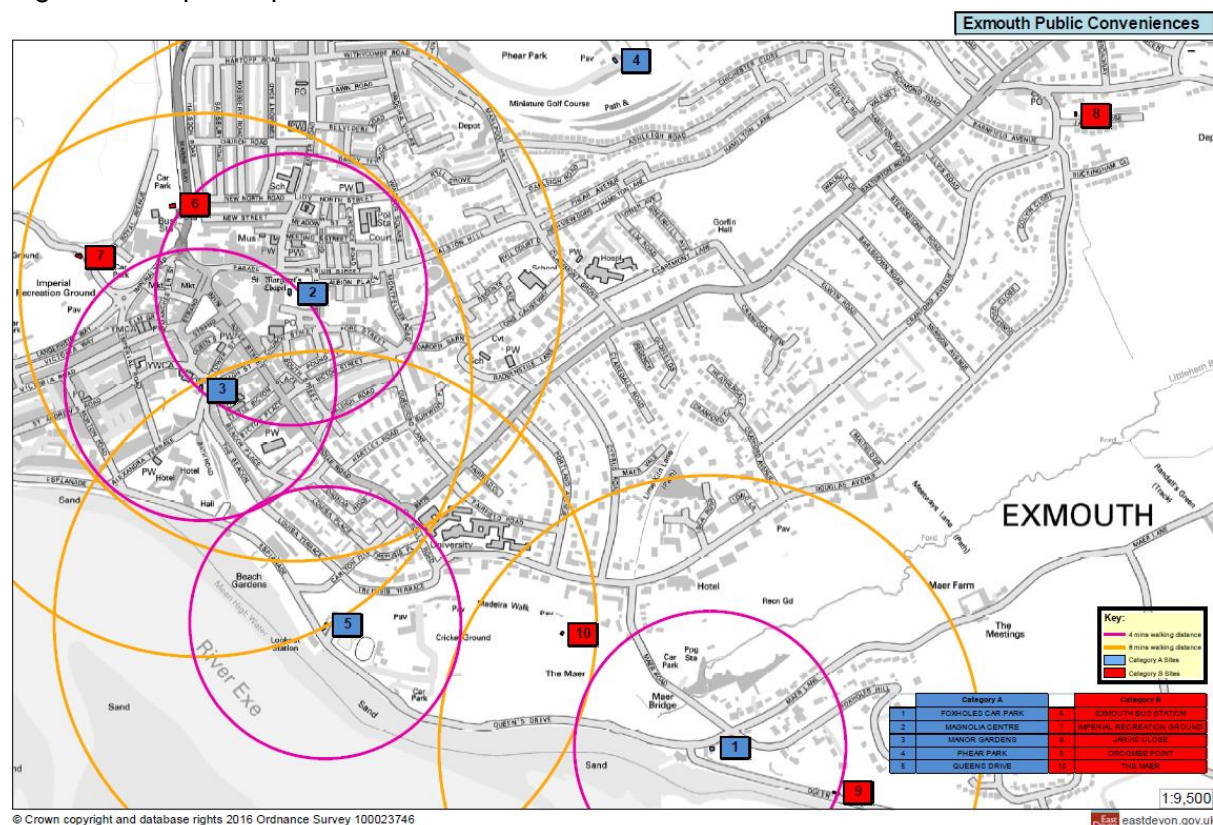
2.3 East Devon has informally used the charter standard and access principles as described above successfully since the 2004 toilet review, but will now produce and publish a charter so our standards are clear to everyone, this could be incorporated in a Public Toilet Policy.

2.4 We have considered these proposed standards in determining the proposed category A, B & C toilet sites, whether toilet blocks meet them already or how easily they could be upgraded. We've looked closely at the proximity and number of toilets in a given area before proposing potential toilet blocks which could be used differently.

2.5 We've also considered alternative methods of operation such as paid access. This could be added for a capital cost of around £2-3k per door for a simple system, and would break even in year 2. The contactless payment access would then allow us to cover some of the running costs of the toilets. This option would ideally be added to a streamlined stock in the future and is discussed further in section 7 as well as in detail in the background paper – [Healthmatic contactless review](#).

2.6 The Background papers section has a link to maps of our main towns with public toilet locations and walking distances marked on them. This is useful in showing how well served our towns are by current public toilet provision, and also that there is scope for operating some of these public toilets differently. We have used concentric rings to show walking distances of 4 minutes and 8 minutes respectively, as set out under the principles of provision. Please note the maps only show two categories, A & B. Some of the B locations have now been split into a further category C since the creation of the maps.

Fig 1 – Example map of Exmouth town centre & sea front:



3 Categorisation of toilet sites

- 3.1 We recognise the importance of the public toilet service, but also see opportunities in reviewing where we are involved in direct provision, freeing up some sites for alternative uses which could still include publicly accessible toilets. The opportunity for review applies particularly where there are many toilets or the toilets are less well used.
- 3.2 It is of vital importance to most people to be able to access a public toilet when out, within a reasonable walking distance of key areas such as a town centre, beach or large park, particularly for those who suffer from involuntary urination or have certain disabilities. It is of equal importance that these facilities are of a high standard, well maintained and easily accessible to all.
- 3.3 In some cases we should ask why East Devon is providing the public toilet, when other commercial operators could, especially if the toilet benefits their business. These are sensitive considerations, but as our budgets continue to reduce we need to think differently about provision.
- 3.4 In this review we've proposed to categorise our public toilets into Category A, Category B and Category C sites, the Categories list and which public toilets have provisionally been suggested in which category can be found under **background links – Category A, B & C list**.
- 3.5 **Category A toilets**– Important public toilet sites which underpin the community, visitor economy or town, in which we will continue to invest and maintain. These toilets will meet our Principles of Provision and be open in design, unisex where appropriate, easy to maintain, will have open access disabled facilities (not RADAR key restricted) and incorporate energy saving features. Where category A toilets do not currently meet these standards we will invest in them so they do. Category A sites will have a long term investment plan to ensure the facilities East Devon manages continue to be of a high standard.

3.6 Category B toilets – Still important locally, but less well used or where there are multiple toilets in close proximity (according to proximity maps and 4/8 minute walking zones). If a toilet has been listed as suggested category B it means we would look at other options for the use of the site. At sites identified as category B, we could consider marketing a lease opportunity for a different offer such as a café, to include a publicly accessible toilet, or market the asset for sale, depending on the options for each particular site. Town or parish councils wouldn't be precluded from bidding for these sites, but we believe category B sites offer good potential for an alternative use and therefore would attract a commercial value. These uses may in some instances still include a publicly accessible toilet operated by a third party.

3.7 Category C toilets – As above, but less well used or the area is well served by toilets. In these examples we don't believe there is a commercial alternative that could provide an income and publicly accessible toilet, or there is a desirability to sell the freehold. In these examples the toilet should be offered as a freehold transfer to the town or parish council to operate for a peppercorn and with overage provisions should the use subsequently change. It is acknowledged and accepted that a parish or town council might wish to remodel a building and East Devon would have no objection to them doing so, provided an appropriate toilet facility remained. No dowry should be payable due to our budget deficit. Under these proposals these toilets are over the level of provision as outlined in the 'principles of provision' and it can be considered that we can no longer afford to provide them. If the town or parish council did not wish to take them on, they would be closed, and in most cases demolished to provide additional car parking spaces.

3.8 If we progress the commercial opportunities for Category B sites (background links Category A,B & C), we can consider alongside straight disposal, the scenario of adding an amenity such as a bar or café, leased or disposed by the council, or indeed retaining as an investment whilst retaining a form of toilet provision operated by a 3rd party. The sites which can be used differently could generate a small income in addition to the £230k saving if all proposals are taken forward. A typical average rent for a small café lease would be around £5-10,000 p.a. although clearly the rent would depend on the premises.

4 Reviewing the public toilets to produce the suggested category lists

4.1 StreetScene, Property, Place & Asset and Finance teams worked together to gather the information needed for this review, forming a picture from several sources of information, and proposing the categories based on a composite of different factors.

4.2 Financial information for each of the toilets was collated to show the annual running costs and budget over a number of years, to include materials, consumables, maintenance, services and staffing. This piece of work was done when we had additional resource to look at asset costs. Figures were produced up to 2015/16. The costs shown against each toilet in the Category A, B & C list under background links for this report have then been adjusted for RPI to show current running costs. The financial information generally indicates how well used a toilet is, as it comes partly from the direct operating costs, which increase as use increases. The costs can also be used to indicate where a toilet is aging, when excessive repairs are required.

4.3 The **water consumption** information for each toilet has been used as an indicator of overall use of the toilets, combined with service knowledge from cleaners and supervisors. The water usage figures were then considered against the total costs and a check against the 'principles of provision' to determine the suggestions for the different categories. There is water consumption information against each toilet in the Category A, B & C List as well as a table of public toilet water use in descending order, both can be found under background links. **It is felt that the level of water use of each site generally supports the suggestions made by**

Officers of toilet categorisation (with some exceptions where other factors have also been considered).

4.4 Site inspections and surveys were conducted for each toilet to look at general use, situation and opportunities for alternative uses, as well as proximity to other public toilets and walking times between facilities. The intelligence gained from the site inspections was then cross referenced with the financial information, water usage and a check against principles of provision to produce the suggested lists for category A, B & C.

4.5 Proximity maps – following a site inspection the maps of the toilets were produced with concentric rings added to show walking distances to the toilets, this is discussed as a principle at 2.2.

4.6 Suggested categories - Where multiple toilets fall within a 4 or 8 minute walking ring, officers used professional judgement and the Principles of Provision to guide thinking along with quantitative factors (4.2 & 4.3) and possible alternative uses to produce the suggested category lists. The final suggested sites in each category can be found under background links – Category A, B & C sites.

Case study – Seaton Hideaway Café. This is a good example of what operation by others can look like, and how it can actually add something rather than the perception of toilet closure taking something away. **A triple benefit of improving the local visitor economy, bringing an income through a lease and reducing East Devon's operating costs.**

EDDC operated large but underused toilets at the Chine, Seaton, along with there being an old fashioned and small café. Nearby are West Walk Toilets, recently refurbished and adhering to our Principles of Provision. When the existing café lease holder retired, we took the opportunity to offer the whole building footprint to prospective bidders, including the toilets. What we have now is a much larger and more vibrant café with a smaller number of publicly accessible toilets operated by the café. Overall the café has been improved by increasing the internal footprint, and is now operating as a very successful and vibrant local business. Toilet provision in a reduced form has been retained.

The Chine toilets used to cost £15,000 - £18,000 per year to operate. The improved café with retained public toilet provision no longer costs East Devon to operate and now brings in an income, whilst benefitting the local economy and visitor economy (pre-pandemic).



4.7 We have tried very hard to apply some logic to a subject that understandably different groups of people will have different views on. We have tried to show that we understand that this service is important to people, and that we recommend a level of continued service is protected

and applied consistently, at the same time recognising the need to review service levels in order to reduce our budget deficit.

4.8 To acknowledge the importance of public conveniences to tourism and the local economy it is recommended that East Devon District Council focusses on the provision and support for public conveniences at key locations based on the assessment as outlined above for Category A toilets. Then seeks to provide opportunities for others through Category B sites and offering Category C sites to town & parish councils if they feel continued provision here is necessary.

4.9 We have looked at the use of our public toilet stock and categorised the toilets as shown in the background link document; Category A.B & C site suggestions. The category A toilets are well used and adhere to the location/proximity principles of provision. The refurbishment of these sites to meet access and hygiene principles is further considered in section 6. 14 sites from a total of 26 council owned sites. We suggest that we should continue to invest in and protect the provision of these category A toilets so that the public can still access this important service, drawing up a schedule of investment and refurbishment, discussed further in the finances - section 6. The toilets in suggested categories B & C are presented as sites either having alternative uses, commercial opportunities, asset sale or transfer to town and parish council. These should be discussed further by Cabinet and consulted upon.

5 Category B & C sites – opportunities for commercial concessions, asset sale or transfer to town & parish council – a consultation.

5.1 Where the site survey or usage indicators showed a public toilet didn't meet our suggested principles of provision, or where there was a proliferation of public toilets in an area; we have identified the site as a category B when we think there are opportunities possibly for alternative uses with publicly accessible toilets (café, bar, shop) or for asset sale. As stated at 3.7 we should discuss whether we can any longer afford to provide these toilets and whether other alternative uses could bring a benefit as well as retaining some toilet access, as with the Hideaway café case study, or whether Towns & Parishes could take over the running.

5.2 In these examples we recommend marketing the sites for alternative uses as shown in the Category A, B & C site suggestions list. Marketing specifics would be drawn up with the Property, Place and Assets team and relevant Portfolio Holders subject to the results of consultation. Public toilet provision by East Devon would cease at these sites from a future date to be determined through the budget setting process. Negotiations for uses such as cafes, bars or shops would continue past this point. The Chine café in Seaton was vacant without toilets for 1 year whilst negotiations were concluded.

5.3 Category C sites will be confirmed based on the suggested sites following consultation and we would need to cease provision at these sites from 1st April 2022. Negotiations with town and parish councils should be concluded to allow them to take over provision if they wish ahead of this date. Consideration could be given to extending the handover period, however it must be noted that this will directly affect our ability to meet the savings targets for the 2022/23 budget deficit.

5.4 Whilst ideally we would have concluded the consultation and fixed the lists before offering up some of these sites for lease/alternative uses or to towns and parishes, the timescales to make the required savings for the 2022/23 budget gap make this difficult. As such, alongside the consultation we will provide a document setting out our approach to these transfers – why we are proposing the changes, the basis of transfers, that there would be no ongoing monetary support, what information we'll provide re costs/ utilities etc. and what will happen if a transfer doesn't happen.

- 5.5 We'll also need to circulate a standard set of heads of terms and have considered for each site the extent of demise being offered. We'll have to consider user covenants and overage. Reports on Title will also be required to ensure we can transfer title and bring to the attention of other parties any restrictions in Title.
- 5.6 We also need to consider whether we'll contribute towards legal / surveyor fees and the cost of splitting utilities. It would seem reasonable to do this to enable transfers and it is suggested this cost be covered by the transformation reserve. However it is recommended that we would not make payments to reflect future investment requirements.
- 5.7 If we are to conclude the consultation and consider the results to enable decisions to be in place for the 2022/23 budget year, it makes the timescale very tight. To complete by 31st March 2022, we will need towns and parishes to have made their decisions by 1st November 2021 and Members and Officers to have considered the consultation results to conclude the final category lists to enable 5 months for the legal work to be done (1st December 2021 at very latest). We will therefore need to issue draft heads of terms by 1st August 2021 to town and parish councils with the proposed category list consultation papers so they can consider if they would be interested should the toilets in the current proposals remain in said categories.
- 5.8 The consultation has been drafted and subject to Cabinet approval of the recommendations will be finalised and agreed with the Portfolio Holder for Coast, Country & Environment. It will then be sent out to all Ward Members ahead of being issued to town and parish councils along with the heads of terms and information packs, and will also be publicly available on our website. It will include the principles of provision, the toilets in the A, B and C category lists and ask for feedback on the ideas and suggestions. The consultation would be open for 2 months, with the results used to reflect on the final category lists and Principles of Provision.
- 5.9 Due to the tight timeline it would be good if Cabinet could delegate the review of the consultation process and content, along with a review of the equalities impact assessment to the Overview Committee to assist in getting wide Member input into these.
- 5.10 Following the consultation an equalities impact assessment will be finalised and the feedback from the consultation considered. It is recommended that given the tight timescales, delegated authority be given to the Portfolio Holders; Coast, Country & Environment and Economy & Asset in conjunction with the Strategic Lead Finance and the Strategic Lead – Housing, Health & Environment to consider the consultation feedback and agree the final category lists before concluding any negotiations and transfers with town and parish councils and other interested parties; finalising the toilet review in a way that delivers the required savings and protects a sustainable level of future provision.

6 Finances & investment in toilet design/refurbishment

- 6.1 If the categorisation of public toilet stock is accepted and the facilities EDDC operate reduced to 14 sites, the saving against our revenue budget would be in the order of £230k. This does not take account of other costs associated with legal conveyancing, utilities disconnection or additional costs associated with enhanced cleaning.
- 6.2 In reviewing our public toilet stock, to provide the right toilet in the right place, with modern standards, clean and attractive facilities we have produced the indicative design shown under the background information section – [Proposed PC layout types](#). The schematics follow the design criteria listed in the Principles of Provision. **Front opening unisex facilities with designated male urinal and female only cubicles where space allows**, providing the safest and easiest to clean facility and follows British Toilet Association best practice, with spacious cubicles. This is also the type of facility favoured by private sector suppliers such as Danfo and Healthmatic, and reduces the space and 'cover' for anti-social behaviour.

- 6.3 The design incorporates the Covid secure/hygiene standard from our Principles of Provision, these can be seen in the background information link – [Covid compliant unisex toilet cubicle](#). The measures include; Sensor activated flushes, automatic hand washing and drying appliances, front opening cubicle, timed auto door lock, wall mounted hand sanitiser, social distancing/warning signage and information signs and posters as standard. Enhanced cleaning through the pandemic has led to far fewer complaints from the public, and we believe this improved hygienic design will have a similar effect.
- 6.4 Our Property & Facilities Team who produced all the design schematics in consultation with StreetScene who manage the facilities have surveyed all the sites and produced the following cost estimates based on rebuild or refurbishment costs for the Category A sites as appropriate – [Cat A PCs Re-build Refurb costs](#). As none of the sites have been invested in since 2015, an investment schedule is now felt to be overdue. The total capital cost of the works required is estimated to be around **£3.15 million for the 14 Category A sites, plus 2 additional sites**. The additional sites – Bus Station Exmouth (Cat C but linked to motorhome project) and Harbour Rd Seaton (Cat B) are currently being funded by the Town Councils and have been included in the rebuild cost for information only.
- 6.5 It is recommended that an appropriate capital budget be agreed and a request made to Council to set this budget, building it into the 2022/23 financial year for the investment into our Category A sites (once the consultation has been completed). Furthermore adult changing places should be investigated with installation if possible in the largest town(s). The Service Lead – StreetScene and Service Lead – Place, Assets & Commercialisation in consultation with their Portfolio Holders will then plan and carry out the resulting works from the 2022/23 financial year, focussing on the sites with the most pressing need and aiming to complete all upgrades within a 2 year period.
- 6.6 It is not felt that it is prudent or financially affordable to upgrade all of the existing public toilet stock, especially the bottom quartile of the usage/water consumption list (unless another Principle of Provision factor takes priority). The total **capital cost would rise by £1.79 million to a total of £4.946 million** if all public toilet stock was retained and invested in. For debate the **average cost per toilet block for re-build/refurb is £190,238**. We have suggested the category lists based on qualitative and quantitative factors, and changes to these should be founded similarly, as any additions will increase the potential capital budget burden and reduce the possible revenue savings at a time when the Council is facing a large budget deficit.
- 6.7 There is £110k of basic work required to the currently closed Category B & C sites to make them Covid secure/hygiene compliant if there was a pressing desire to re-open these sites without initial wholesale refurbishment. Re-opening these sites would also cancel out any potential revenue saving, and with our current enhanced cleaning regime, would significantly increase costs. At Cabinet in June 2020 in relation to the [report on re-opening public toilets](#), it was decided it was financially un-viable to do this for the time being.

7 Paid access and other operating models

- 7.1 Officers have contacted both Danfo and Healthmatic, industry leading providers of serviced public toilet provision and low maintenance public toilet replacement/refurbishment to gauge private sector operation as a cost comparison with our own and also to understand if investment through this contracted route could provide better value to the authority.

7.2 Comparison table of Danfo and Healthmatic indicative prices against EDDC operation for 14 sites.

Cost area	EDDC	Danfo	Healthmatic
Cleaning & maintenance of 14 sites	£115,793*	£242,000	£288,235**
Paid access solutions	N/A	£250-275k	£200k+

*EDDC cost adjusted for building overheads as per 7.4 below.

** Healthmatic costs include capital investment and reduce each year as outlined at 7.5.

7.3 Danfo provided an indicative cost of **£242k** for the cleaning and maintenance (excluding vandalism, facility costs and utilities) of the 14 Category A sites. The 14 sites were used to aid comparison. No figures were discussed for capital investment and refurbishment, and further clarity needs to be sought on this depending on the direction we take.

7.4 With regard to pay-to-enter mechanisms, Danfo offered 2 options. A) EDDC provide the capital funding for this and all revenue generated is returned to the council to help of set the running costs of the toilets. B) Danfo provides the capital investment, for upgrading facilities and paid access, which would increase the service cost (no figure yet provided) to repay the investment. We would then enter into a contract for the service (including refurbishment), typical length 10+ years to allow Danfo to recoup investment. More information on their proposal can be found at background information – [Danfo proposal](#) and [Danfo design option](#).

7.5 Healthmatic's cost is initially **£288k** pro-rata for the 14 sites (price provided for 17). This price for the operation of the sites includes a £1.5mil capital investment as well as retaining any income from paid access, estimated at £200k. The suggested contract length here is 15 years, if the contractor is going to do the refurbishment at their expense, then the contract needs time to payback down the capital and this is the duration Healthmatic are advising. This does tie us to this provision and also limits future investment in the facilities. Alternatively we could provide the capital, which could reduce the contract length to around 5-7 years.

7.6 Healthmatic say in their paper – background information – [Contactless review](#), that In East Devon, they anticipate it will be mainly visitors who pay (they estimate 65% across the area of the 1m or so users), and this **will earn the Council somewhere between £120,000 and £250,000 per year depending on the charge**. It will reduce vandalism, reduce the numbers of users and improve the accessibility. It also will bring income which can be invested in services.

7.7 Healthmatic make the following key points about paid access:

- No. Users of the 17 toilets in a typical year – estimated 1m
- Reduction in paid usage if charging introduced – 50% (this helps reduce running costs)
- Optimum contactless charge per use – 40p
- Target revenue - £200,000 at 40p
- Contactless costs to install (if Disabled toilets included) - £200,000
- Cost per annum paid to contactless provider (Nayax) – approximately £13,000
- Capital costs of installation (if provided by EDDC) should pay back after 13 months
- Can we (the council) or should we charge for access unless sites are updated and renovated.

7.8 EDDC In-house provision costs £350,890, this excludes depreciation for a better comparison with private sector providers. However our own costs do include utilities, overheads and building costs/direct costs (insurance, infrastructure etc.), which the private sector prices do not. This accounts for an average of 67% of our total cost. Our price is shown reduced by this percentage for comparison purposes at £115,793. The background for our costs can be seen in background links – [public toilets cost information](#). This was put together in 2017 when we had a specific resource to do this work, it has since been uplifted for RPI. Our actual costs that

make up our annual budgets are current costs and tracked within our financial systems, we currently lack the resource to pull out the information and interrogate it in a format to present updates, and hence we are using the 2017 data with RPI uplifts.

- 7.9 As our in-house service cost is cheaper than the indicative prices supplied it is not recommended to pursue a private sector operator model. Additionally as the council can borrow capital funds at a better rate than the private sector it is also envisaged that the council should invest in refurbishment of our public toilet stock, rather than doing so through the private sector. If Cabinet should wish us to investigate operation by others in more detail, we could undertake a contract procurement or market test to better understand the costs and terms.
- 7.10 Seeking leading industry views on methods of operation and facilities along with some indicative pricing has been invaluable in sense checking our own officer's views and ensuring we are achieving best value for our residents and visitors. The Healthmatic contactless review particularly gives another opinion on some of our sites, but generally concords with our own thoughts. Both Danfo and Healthmatic's public toilet designs and access information are very useful for our refurbishment programme moving forward and consideration of paid access.
- 7.11 The potential income from paid access would help us off-set running costs and protect service provision. Along with this we are advised it will reduce vandalism and running costs. During the pandemic our enhanced cleaning has led to far fewer complaints, and even compliments of public satisfaction. The elevated staffing needed to achieve this is not sustainable financially, but paid access could have the same effect on cleanliness and satisfaction. For these reasons it is recommended that Cabinet consider the inclusion of **contactless paid access** into our refurbishment programme, setting the fee between 30p-40p. **An additional capital budget of £250k should be allocated for this and recommended to Council.** The annual income of around £200k (at 40p) will further assist the sustainability of public toilet provision and help us tackle our budget deficit.
- 7.12 Paid access **installation on the entire toilet stock** (open and currently closed) is **not a prudent step** and counter to the advice of both Danfo and Healthmatic as well as our own officers. However for the purpose of debate, the **average cost for paid access at a block** taken from Healthmatic's report (actual cost depends on style and number of doors) is almost **£12k**. The ROI would be much reduced at the lower use sites, and if one is to apply a charge, the facility must be in good order. So as 6.6 refurbishment of the blocks would be needed.

8 Table 4 – Toilets leased and cleaned for others

- 8.1 The toilets shown in appendix table 4 of the Category A, B & C site list are toilets which have either been leased to others following the 2004 toilet review; or are toilets cleaned for others. The table shows the detail.
- 8.2 In the case where we are maintaining or cleaning the toilets for another party, it is recommended that the service/contract costs for this be increased so that we are covering costs, and the council is no longer incurring costs for toilets which were agreed to be disposed of under the 2004 review.
- 8.3 Where these toilets have been leasehold transferred it is recommended that they be standardised and wherever possible be freehold transferred to the current lease holder for a peppercorn. The rationale for this is that the council has already decided these toilets should no longer be maintained/paid for by East Devon District Council.

9 Conclusion

- 9.1 We recognise that public toilet provision is an emotive subject and an important service. It is however non-statutory and costs almost £900k per year including recharges. With budget pressure from reducing government grants we must look at transforming how we operate services, and our medium term financial plan sets out targets for savings from different ways of operating.
- 9.2 This review is looking to ensure East Devon continues to provide high quality public toilets in a sustainable way, but also recognising in some situations other methods of provision might be appropriate, indeed beneficial to the public, particularly where there are multiple toilet blocks or toilets are less well used and some sites could add a café, bar or other commercial offer.
- 9.3 We recognise it is of vital importance to people to be able to access a public toilet when out, within a reasonable walking distance of key areas such as a town centre, beach or large park.
- 9.4 It is not our intention that all proposed category B sites will result in the loss of toilet provision, rather we want to find concessions or operators who will continue to provide public toilets; but as with the Seaton Hideaway café example, the toilet provision will be smaller and the café improved.
- 9.5 The potential saving of up to £230k will only be delivered if East Devon stops maintaining the toilets at all category B & C sites. This saving does not take into account the costs of negotiations, legal fees, TUPE considerations, other transfer costs (empty rate liabilities) if not disposed/occupied quickly or redundancy costs which may result if toilet numbers are reduced. Recharges will need to be reduced accordingly, with corresponding back office saving. In conjunction with this saving, an income of around £200k per year could be realised if contactless paid access is installed.
- 9.6 The re-build and refurbishment costs shown in section 6 should be committed in principle and then built into budgets through the 2022/23 budget setting process to ensure the public toilets we continue to maintain are fit for purpose, Covid secure/hygiene standard compliant and 'the right toilet in the right place'.

Financial implications:

The report details the financial position of the Council and the need to reduce net costs. The Medium Term Financial Plan shows a budget gap of £3.010m in 2022/23 and a further £1.243m in 2023/24. Of this total £4.253m funding gap, £3.1m relates to business rate and New Home Bonus funding changes by Government.

The public toilets annual budget is significant as detailed in the report and if not managed differently will increase further along with the identified need of significant capital investment to provide toilets suitable for the future. This is an area of spend where the Council has considered costs can be reduced and an alternative, if not better service provided. A £200k saving was targeted a few years ago but the Council's MTFP gap has increased since then, this is a large area of spend and the report gives options for members to make a significant step in helping to balance the Council's budget. Officers will struggle to bring other such significant saving proposals forward whilst still being able to maintain a service. From a financial perspective it is important the Council start making these important decision and steps.

Legal implications:

As the report identifies the provision of toilets is a discretionary service and therefore the Council is able to decide whether it wishes to continue with the provision of public toilets and if so how. In coming to a decision it will be necessary to comply with the public sector equality duty and ensure that appropriate related impact assessments are carried out informed by appropriate consultation. Otherwise the approach advocated / options presented are within the Council's duties and powers and represent a reasonable approach to working through the issue bearing in mind the relevant timescales.

Report to: **Cabinet**

Date of Meeting 12 May 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Poverty Strategy

Report summary:

This report presents a Poverty Strategy for adoption following the investigation and research undertaken by the Poverty Working Panel. The series of thematic Panel meetings have allowed a strategy and action plan to be drafted having regard to national good practice, local experiences and the contributions of partners.

The Poverty Strategy is ambitious and is directed at alleviating poverty in the district by aligning existing efforts, working in partnership and identifying a range of new interventions aimed at improving the quality of life for our residents affected by poverty.

This is our first Poverty Strategy reflecting the priority that Council is giving for poverty prevention, financial resilience, a strong local economy, targeted action and improved health and wellbeing. There are choices to be made about how much resource is to be focused on alleviating poverty in the district.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☐ No ☒

Policy Framework Yes ☐ No ☒

Recommendation:

That Cabinet:

1. Adopt the Poverty Strategy and Action Plan, and
2. Ask the Head of Paid Service to assign a Strategic or Service Lead to coordinate the activities of Services through an officer project board or steering group to deliver the Poverty Strategy, and
3. Extend the work of the Poverty Working Panel to oversee the monitoring and delivery of the Poverty Strategy and tracking good practice.

That Cabinet recommend to Council:

4. To agree a budget of £30,000 to 'pump prime' the delivery of initiatives and projects contained in the Poverty Strategy and Action Plan.

Reason for recommendation:

To agree a strategic approach towards alleviating poverty in the district and improving the quality of life of those households affected by poverty.

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergencies
- ☐ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☐ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☐ Culture, Tourism, Leisure and Sport
- ☐ Democracy and Transparency
- ☒ Economy and Assets
- ☒ Finance
- ☐ Strategic Planning
- ☒ Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact High Impact

The Poverty Strategy has equality issues central to its purpose and direction of travel, and seeks to level up differences in those that have and those that do not have adequate resources to lead a good quality of life.

Climate change Medium Impact

Risk: Low Risk; The Poverty Reduction Strategy is designed to reduce inequality and improve the quality of life for those who are struggling to access life essentials

Links to background information [Agenda and Minutes of the Poverty Working Panel](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☐ Outstanding Place and Environment
 - ☒ Outstanding Homes and Communities
 - ☒ Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
 - ☒ Outstanding Council and Council Services
-
-

1. Background

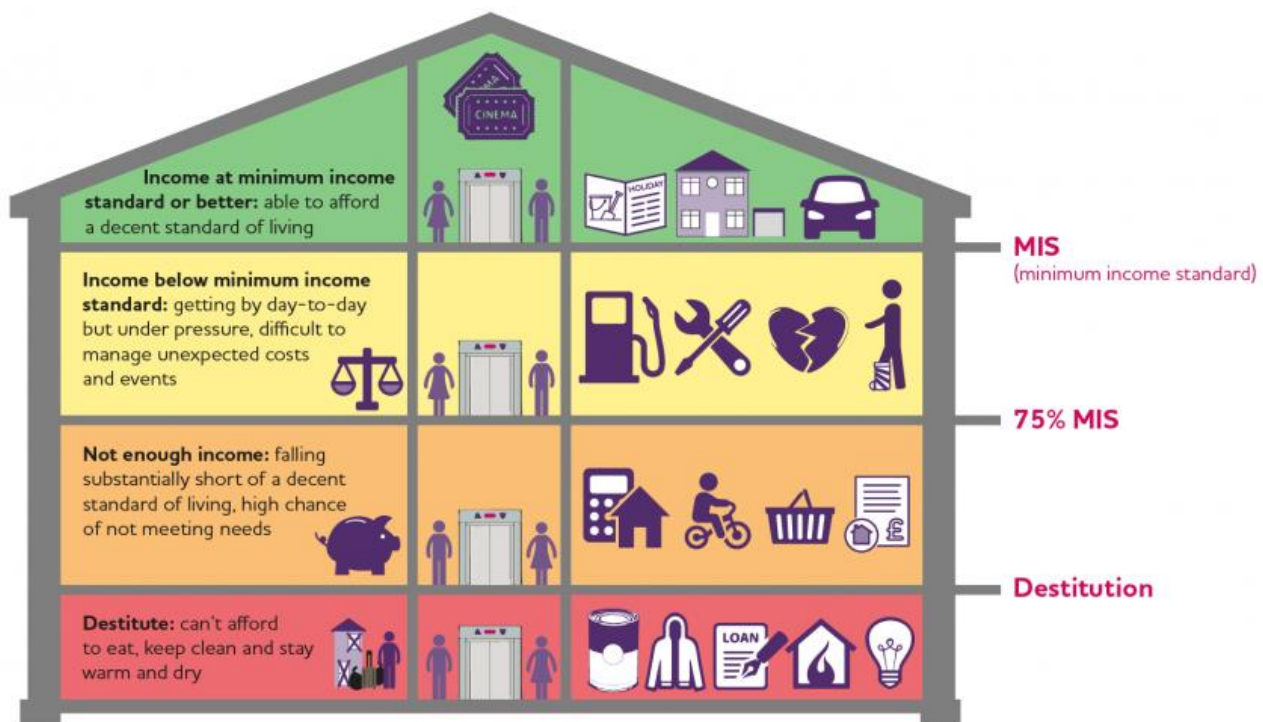
- 1.1 Poverty is an unnecessary evil in the twenty first century. It ruins life chances and spoils the quality of life of those impacted. In terms of national social policy we have made little impact on persistent poverty in recent years, and it impacts on a high proportion of people, even in so called affluent communities. Many of our Council services are steeped in the prevention and alleviation of poverty, from the administration of welfare benefits, through to public health interventions, tackling rough sleeping and economic and community development activities.
- 1.2 There is more than one definition of poverty and it can mean different things to different people, but it is generally considered that someone is in poverty when they are not able to heat their home, pay their rent, pay for food or buy the essentials for their children. There are 4 levels of poverty according to the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2019:
 - **Income at minimum income standard or better** – able to afford a decent standard of living
 - **Income below minimum income standard** – getting by day-to-day but under pressure, difficult to manage unexpected costs and events

- **Not enough income** – falling substantially short of a decent standard of living, high chance of not meeting needs
- **Destitute** – can't afford to eat, keep clean and stay warm and dry

1.3 Poverty is most commonly measured using either:

- People in relative low income – living in households with income below 60% of the median in that year;
- People in absolute low income – living in households with income below 60% of (inflation adjusted) median income in some base year, usually 2010/11.

Levels of poverty



There are 3 levels of poverty

- 1.4 Poverty prevention and alleviation is a priority for this Council. This ambition is prominent in the recently published **Statement of Intent**.
- 1.5 We are witnessing a stubborn level of poverty nationally and locally with signs of this worsening with the economic damage done by the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.6 For many years a number of our Services have been supporting low income groups maintain a quality of life through providing subsidised housing; assisting access to affordable housing; administering benefits and hardship payments; enabling full employment and quality jobs; business support and economic development; supporting community development; promoting public health initiatives and enabling health & wellbeing activities; funding financial and debt advice; supporting community and voluntary groups; etc.
- 1.7 During the pandemic we have been administering hardship funds; test & trace payments; Local Restrictions Support Grant; Additional Restrictions Grants; Business Rate Relief; Community Support Hub; Corona virus Community Food Fund; Covid-19 Prompt Action Fund; as the main sources of financial support that relate specifically to the pandemic.

2. The Poverty Working Panel

- 2.1 The Poverty Working Panel was established by Cabinet in February 2020 (delayed start due to Covid -19). In so doing Cabinet agreed the following as the purpose of the Panel:

To assist Cabinet in the development of an East Devon Poverty Strategy, to monitor progress against the Strategy once adopted and to review the Strategy on an ongoing basis and to make recommendations to amend it as appropriate. Also to consider the progress of the actions in relation to poverty agreed to by Cabinet at its meeting of 8th January 2020.

2.2 At the 8th January 2020 Cabinet meeting, it was resolved that the following recommendations from the Overview Committee be agreed:

1. *Consider funding the creation of an East Devon Poverty Strategy to further develop and target the areas identified within this report that we are able to influence and to support a corporate approach to ensure consistency across Council Services.*
2. *Carry out a review of the funding and delivery arrangements for Money Advice to ensure that we're focussing on the key issues identified in the report.*
3. *Recommend that Council protect the existing funding levels contributed for Money Advice to Homemaker South West and Citizens of circa £120,000 for 2020/21 to enable the review (Recommendation 2) to be undertaken.*
4. *Update Corporate Debt Policy to include; Breathing Space in-line with proposed Government changes & to consider any other supportive measures that may be beneficial.*
5. *Agree to the Council's frontline services, in collaboration, setting up a series of local events across the District with key stakeholders that focus on Universal Credit, Money/Debt advice (including how to avoid Loan sharks), budgeting, fuel poverty etc. with the over-arching aim of supporting people to become more financially resilient.*
6. *Consider lobbying central Government directly and/or through our MPs in the following areas;*
 - *Right to Buy*
 - *Removing the freeze on Local Housing Allowance Rates in order to be reassessed to reflect market rents.*
 - *Universal Credit – More financial support to be given to customers to help with the transition. More funding to be given to local Councils to reflect the support that customers need with moving onto this Benefit.*
7. *Continue to explore opportunities to increase our supply of social housing through either redevelopment of existing stock and/or building new Council Housing, in conjunction with a review of the current Housing Revenue Account business plan.*
8. *Agree to the Council working alongside East Devon foodbanks to better understand demand and eradicate dependency that could lead to a reduction and possible extinction of the need for foodbanks in the district.*
9. *Undertake a detailed analysis of fuel poverty in the district with a view to developing a separate action plan.*

2.3 The Poverty Panel's primary outcome for the work it is undertaking should be aiding in the production of the East Devon Poverty Strategy with a view to tackling poverty in the district.

2.4 The key question, therefore, is:
How can the Council's tackling/anti-poverty approach be coordinated, improved and captured in a corporate strategy document that improves the situation for households in poverty in East Devon?

2.5 The Poverty Working Panel included in its scope poverty relating to income & employment; debt & financial vulnerability; food & nutrition; affordable warmth & water; affordable housing & homelessness; and health equality.

2.6 The Poverty Working Panel adopted a series of Lines of Inquiry these included:

Anti-Poverty Strategy: How can the Council tackle poverty in the district? How should it be framed and targeted? How do we measure the impact? How do we ensure this is a genuine cross cutting theme mainstreamed across council services?

Target Areas: This policy is central to the Council Plan priorities and achieving sustainable communities. Are the target areas of policy intervention being consistently delivered and understood?

Partnership Working: The Council cannot tackle poverty in isolation. What are the limitations on the Council's influence and ability to tackle poverty? What should the role of East Devon Public Health Strategy be in future? How do we best coordinate partnerships to deliver shared anti-poverty ambitions? How do we work effectively with community and voluntary groups?

2.7 Aligned with this thinking the Poverty Working Panel attempted to ensure the following:

Outcomes: While the strategy is intended as a long term commitment it is important to know what outcomes are expected, and what will be achieved in the short term. Can these outcomes be identified, and are the long term ambitions realistic, achievable, measurable and appropriate?

Resources: The strategy might signal a fundamental shift in the way that the Council operates. To what extent will the strategy influence the council budget and attract sufficient resources?

Councillors: Councillors play an important and active role in their communities and will be critical in delivering the strategy. How can this be achieved? How can we best lobby for change in social policy that addresses poverty?

Cross Cutting: To be effective the strategy needs to influence how every Service operates. Has this happened to date? How could the strategy be cross cutting and meaningful?

Awareness: To have impact the strategy needs to be widely understood. How do we ensure that stakeholders, partners and residents understand the strategy and what it means for them?

What Works and what doesn't Work: What has the Council's approach on poverty achieved to date? How can the Council do more of what works?

3. Towards a Poverty Strategy

3.1 The Poverty Strategy will tie together the existing activities we undertake across our Services, with some new projects and stretch targets to reflect the current picture of poverty across the district and the anticipated worsening due to the impact of the pandemic and Brexit projections (reasonable worst case scenario).

3.2 The Council's approach set out in this emerging Poverty Strategy reflects evidence on the nature of poverty in East Devon and changes in the national social policy over the past decade. Poverty is a cross cutting theme with a number of Council Services involved in our interventions.

3.3 It also builds on the learning from the Council's existing approach to supporting individuals and communities. This learning includes:

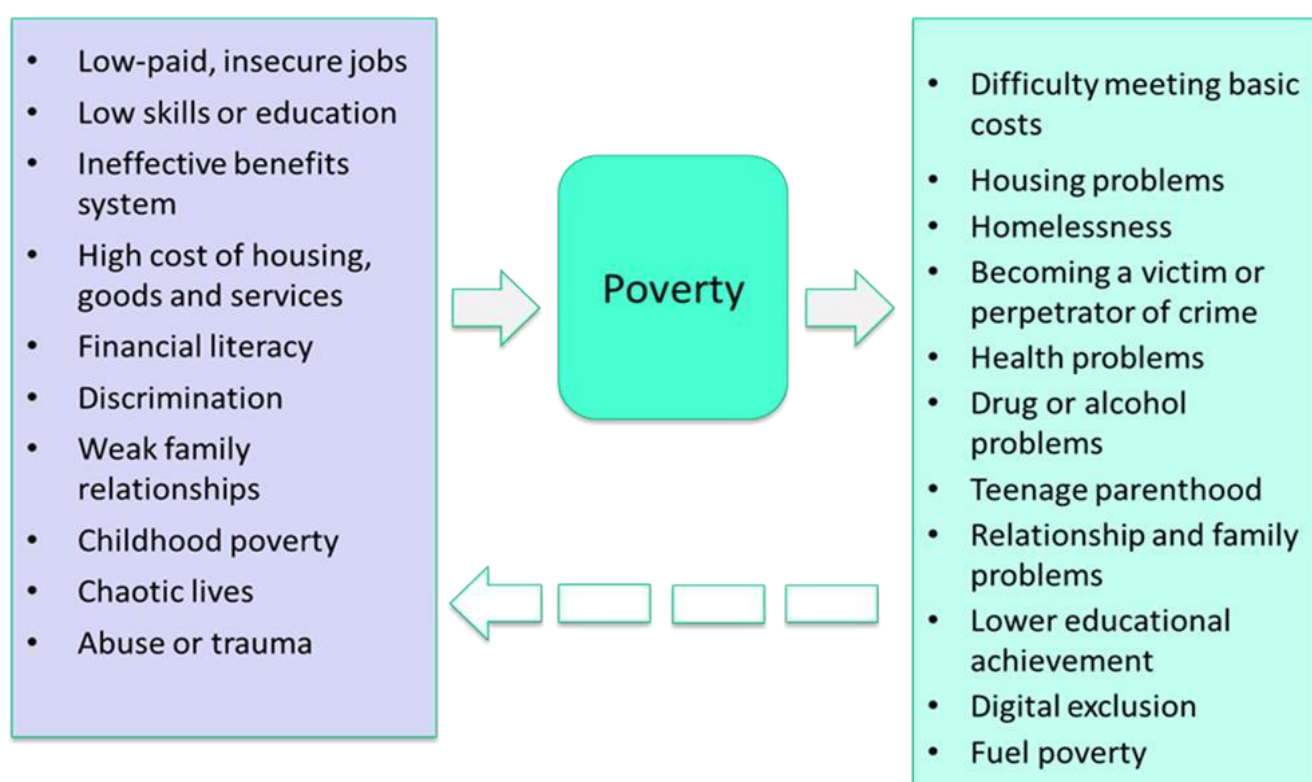
- The importance of balancing efforts to address the immediate effects of poverty, with preventative work to address the root causes of poverty.

- Being clear on which issues can be addressed by direct delivery by Council services, which issues can be achieved through partnership working (where more can be achieved through collaboration), and which issues require influencing and lobbying activity (where powers lie with Government or other agencies).
- A need to build the capacity and resilience of residents and communities.

3.4 Poverty is defined in different ways including not having enough possessions or income for a person's needs; the condition of being extremely poor; a person or community that lacks the financial resources and essentials for a minimum standard of living; household income below 60% of the average.

3.5 Six types of poverty have been recognised – situational; generational; absolute; relative; urban; and rural.

The causes and effects of poverty are summarised below:



3.6 The Poverty Panel have considered and approved a Plan on a Page overview (**annex 1**) and five high level objectives that broadly sit with our Services:

- 1 Helping people on low incomes to maximise their household income and minimise their costs, building financial resilience and reducing indebtedness. Lead Service – Finance.
- 2 Strengthening families and communities, including supporting groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty, and community and voluntary groups working to combat poverty. Lead Service – Housing.

- 3 Promoting an inclusive economy, by raising skills and improving access to a range of employment opportunities for people on low incomes. Lead Service – Growth, Development & Prosperity.
- 4 Addressing the high cost of housing, improving housing conditions, creating affordable warmth and reducing homelessness. Lead Service – Housing.
- 5 Improving health outcomes for people on low incomes, including access to good diet, health care and ill health prevention. Lead Service – Environmental Health.

3.7 The Panel meetings were carefully organised to cover a range of themes impacting on poverty whilst observing the scope of work set for the Panel and the sphere of influence. Outside speakers and Services contributed to the meetings

Poverty Working Panel meeting	Theme(s)
October	Set up meeting - Terms of reference, sphere of influence, shaping the lines of enquiry, review of previous poverty work, Marmot report, and impact of Covid-19 on poverty.
November	Joseph Rowntree annual report and poverty strategy, Poverty Plan on a page and high level objectives, free school meals.
December	Poverty and the economy, draft Poverty Action Plan.
January	Department of Work and Pensions, paper from Cllr Allen, EDDC administered benefits and support, poverty dashboard and key performance indicators, draft Poverty Action Plan.
February	Citizens Advice, financial support, Environmental Health & Car Parks making a difference, draft Poverty Action Plan.
March	Housing, homelessness, community development, Service Plans.
April	EDDC Poverty Strategy and Action Plan, community & Voluntary sector contributions, breathing space concept.

3.8 Through the seven meetings of the Panel the evidence has been collated and organised into a Strategy with an Action Plan this has been reproduced in **annex 2 & 3**. I am suggesting that a Strategic or Service Lead is assigned as Lead Officer for poverty alleviation and someone who can coordinate the efforts of a number of services and external partners towards the adopted objectives, and assume responsibility for delivering the Poverty Strategy, monitoring and reporting on progress and refreshing the approach as circumstances change. This might be best achieved through a project board or steering

group building on the resources and capacity of the two Financial Resilience Officers we have employed.

- 3.9 The Poverty Strategy and Action Plan needs to be dynamic such that we can adapt to changing circumstances, particularly as we anticipate that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is likely to worsen the position for many households. We have tried to keep the new financial demands to a minimum, working within existing budgets and using existing capacity to deliver the actions set out in the Strategy/Plan. We will need to ensure that poverty remains a corporate priority and that we effectively coordinate activity across Services.
- 3.10 It will be necessary to secure some **revenue funding** to deliver some of the projects in the Action Plan. An earlier recommendation sought £100,000 be identified in the budget as a contingency for the Hardship Fund. In addition, a project fund of £30,000 would be necessary in progressing initiatives and specific projects to ensure that they achieve the desired outcomes and are sustainable. This does represent a cautious and measured development of this work stream, building on our existing framework of interventions and growing the programme of support and interventions.
- 3.11 There are **risks** associated with this approach in so much as we could be accused of under resourcing the activity and our ambitions. What I have proposed is a minimum position that has regard to our budget position, forecast future budget constraints, and our existing capacity with some realignment of resources. The level of resourcing will not affect what we do, but the pace at which we can deliver the actions and objectives. We can obviously do more and have a greater impact with resources dedicated to the delivery of the Strategy. I can propose more expansive arrangements to deliver the Strategy, if Members desire, and bring back a wider range of options for delivering the Strategy.
- 3.12 The Council will be developing the Statement of Intent into a new **Council Plan** over the next few months and this presents an ideal opportunity for the Council to determine the degree of priority and prominence it wants to take in respect of poverty balanced against the other priorities of the Council.
- 3.13 We have undertaken an analysis of the poverty commitments in the new Service Plans for 2021/22 (reported to the March meeting of the Poverty Working Panel) and it can be seen that there are a range of ambitious commitments reflecting the intention to alleviate poverty in our communities.
- 3.14 We want to put in place a dashboard of poverty indicators, a process for monitoring and review. The Poverty Working Panel may well consider how it might transform into a monitoring group, meeting less frequently to oversee delivery of the strategy and action plan.
- 3.15 Poverty ruins lives, highlights inequalities and constrains potential. It is shameful the level of poverty in modern society. The Council has a role to play, but cannot alone eliminate poverty in the district. The Strategy and Action Plan proposed for adoption will make a positive difference for many of our residents and signal the Council's intentions to support its more vulnerable residents.

Financial implications:

There is a budget request of £30k which can be met from the unallocated budget sum in 2021/22 set aside to meet such requirements.

Legal implications:

As the Poverty Strategy does not form part of the Policy Framework it is a Cabinet decision whether to adopt it or not. Advice on individual actions will be provided as and when required. Otherwise there are no legal implications requiring specific comment.



Poverty – Plan on a Page

Our **purpose** is to – **reduce poverty across East Devon**

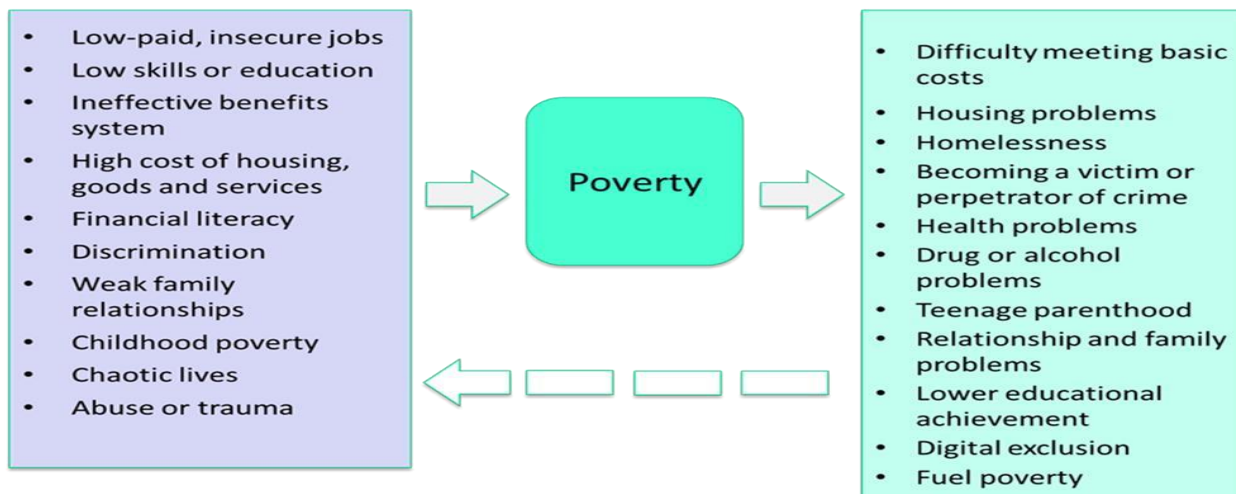
The Council's approach set out in this strategy reflects updated evidence on the nature of poverty in East Devon and changes in the national context over the past decade.

It also builds on the learning from the Council's existing approach to supporting individuals and communities. This learning includes:

1. The importance of balancing efforts to address the immediate effects of poverty, with preventative work to address the root causes of poverty.
2. Being clear on which issues can be addressed by direct delivery by Council services, which issues can be achieved through partnership working (where more can be achieved through collaboration), and which issues require influencing and lobbying activity (where powers lie with Government or other agencies).
3. A need to build the capacity and resilience of residents and communities.

Causes

Effects



Strategic Actions:

- 1 Helping people on low incomes to maximise their household income and minimise their costs, building financial resilience and reducing indebtedness.
- 2 Strengthening families and communities, including supporting groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty, and community and voluntary groups working to combat poverty.
- 3 Promoting an inclusive economy, by raising skills and improving access to a range of employment opportunities for people on low incomes.
- 4 Addressing the high cost of housing, improving housing conditions, creating affordable warmth and reducing homelessness.
- 5 Improving health outcomes for people on low incomes, including access to good diet, health care and ill health prevention.



EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN

The purpose of this Strategy is to prevent and erase poverty in East Devon



East Devon District Council Poverty Reduction Strategy

Introduction and Context

East Devon is a prosperous area for many. It has a strong economy, driven by a combination of small businesses, agriculture, tourism, the service sector, and a significant cluster of hi-tech and bio-technology businesses.

However, despite the continuing growth of the East Devon economy, we have identified pockets of **poverty**, using measures which takes into account data on wages, pensions, benefits and other income. While some jobs in the district command very high salaries, there are a significant proportion of households in the area living on low incomes, or in poverty.

The incidence of poverty is unbelievably high for the 2020's and a sad reflection of the failure of social policy and societies priorities. The Covid-19 pandemic is making matters worse for many. Poverty is a serious **equalities** issue for modern society. This is evident internationally, nationally and locally. We live in an inequitably society with vast differences between those that are 'well off' and those who have insufficient to meet their basic needs.

We are seeing increased levels of **debt** with many households taking on debt to make ends meet, leading to problems in prioritising debts and incurring high interest on debts. This has been combined with an increase in food bank usage. There are important **safeguarding** links with poverty and the impact on vulnerable households needs careful consideration and intervention.

Poverty is defined in different ways including not having enough possessions or income for a person's needs; the condition of being extremely poor; a person or community that lacks the financial resources and essentials for a minimum standard of living; household income below 60% of the average.

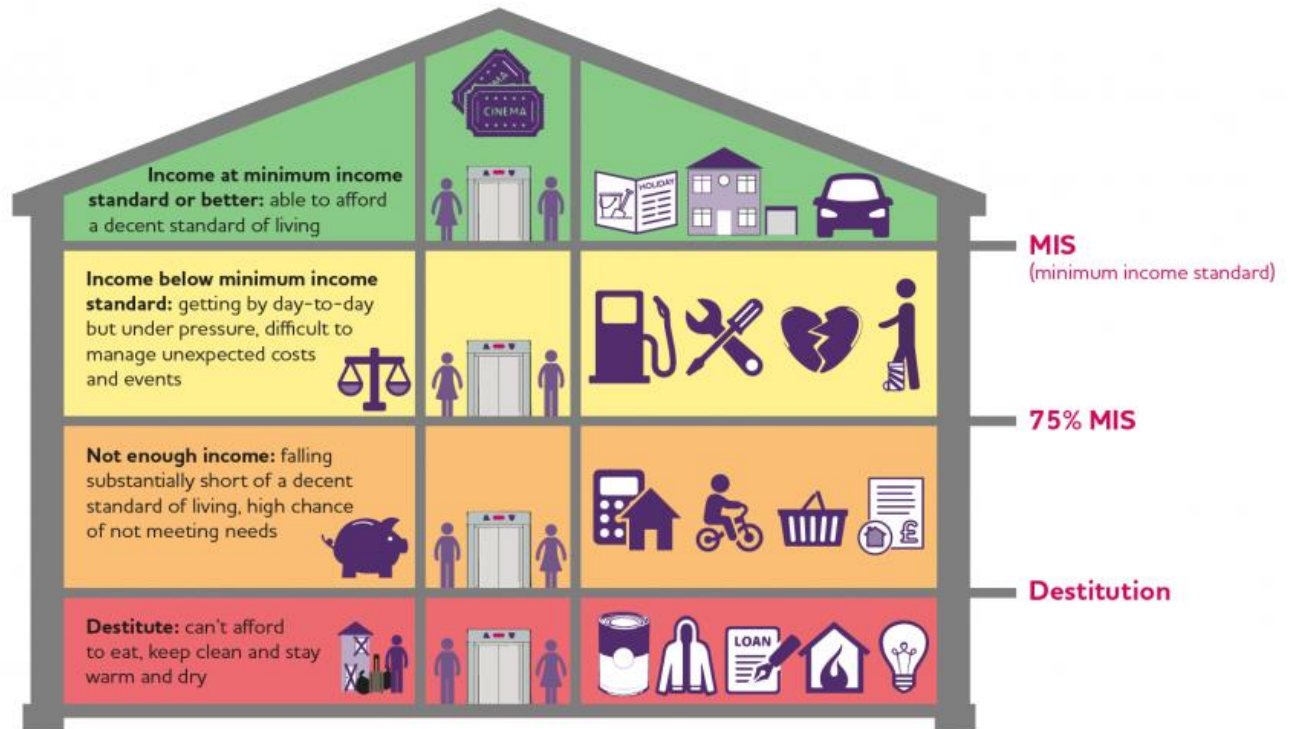
Through national studies six types of poverty have been recognised – situational; generational; absolute; relative; urban; and rural.

Poverty has been defined simply as **not having enough possessions or income for a person's needs**; the condition of being extremely poor; a person or community that lacks the financial resources and essentials for a minimum standard of living; and where a household income is below 60% of the average.

The Joseph Rowntree Trust have usefully illustrated different types of poverty in the diagram below:

East Devon District Council Poverty Reduction Strategy

Levels of poverty



There are 3 levels of poverty

Poverty in East Devon

Accepting that there are several different definitions of poverty. The most common is relative income poverty, where households have less than 60% of contemporary median income (after benefits and taxes). We know that 60% of median household income (including earnings, pensions, investment income, benefits and taxes) in the UK was £17,759 in 2018/19. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's report found that once housing costs are included in this definition, fourteen million people (22%) are in poverty in the UK.

Office of National Statistics data shows that in financial year ending (FYE) 2020, the period leading up to the implementation of measures against the coronavirus (COVID-19), average household disposable income (after taxes and benefits) was £30,800 – up 2.3% (£700) compared with FYE 2019, after accounting for inflation.

Over FYE 2020, real earnings increased by an average of 1.5%, however more recently total annual pay growth for March to May 2020 fell by 1.3%, after accounting for inflation, which will likely impact adversely on income growth rates in FYE 2021. The increase in median income in FYE 2020 continues an upward trend seen since FYE 2013, where average household income increased by an average of 2.1% per year.

East Devon District Council Poverty Reduction Strategy

Median gross weekly earnings £ East Devon - source DCC website

Indicator	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Male Full Time workers	570	559	564	623	575
Female Full Time Workers	420	452	450	465	529
Female Part Time Workers	206	195	200	213	
Male	529	514	476	563	499
Female	344	321	326	353	381
Total	414	395	393	426	423
Full Time Workers	519	513	496	550	554
Part Time Workers	207	193	191	213	196

Median household incomes (including earnings, pensions, investment income, benefits and taxation)

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
UK median income	£28,783	£29,819	£30,674	£31,465	£30,918
60% of UK median income	£17,270	£17,891	£18,404	£18,879	£18,551

Source: ONS, 2020, Time series of mean and median equalised household disposable income

It is difficult to accurately measure the level of poverty in East Devon, as comparable data on household income is not available at a local, district level. The Council has access to income data from CACI, but this is only available in income bands of £5,000, and unlike the national data above, it does not factor in taxation. However, this does suggest that the proportion of households in East Devon with gross incomes below £20,000 per annum and £15,000 per annum has declined steadily between 2014/15 and 2019/20.

Our Poverty – A Local Picture report produced in November 2019 was an extensive piece of research on poverty that included a local flavour and found:

- **In East Devon 15.5% of households live below the 60% of median income.**
- **For East Devon it is estimated that 10,899 households are below the poverty line.**

East Devon District Council Poverty Reduction Strategy

- **This translates into 23,978 people in poverty assuming average households comprise 2.2 people (Knowing East Devon).**
- **East Devon's child poverty rate is 22.3% below the national average (34%) but concerning.**

While a number of the indicators have improved, poverty remains a significant issue in East Devon. The income related indicators show that:

- Average weekly earnings for the lowest 10% of earners were £117.80 per week in 2019, which is 3.4 times less than the average for all East Devon employees (£396.80 per week).
- In 2019, 11% of East Devon households were claiming Universal Credit and/or Housing Benefit and in 2020 this has risen to 16%.

During this strategy period we will be developing a poverty indicator **dashboard** to provide visibility of poverty in the district. This will recognise the multi-dimensional nature of poverty and there being no single indicator.

The impact of coronavirus on poverty

The national policy response to the coronavirus, including the short-term and longer-term impacts of lockdown on the local, national and global economy, is likely to lead to many more people in East Devon experiencing economic hardship. Many people in the district have already experienced a loss of income due to furloughing, redundancy or difficulty finding self-employed work.

It is likely that the lockdown will push some people into economic hardship who have previously been relatively well off. It will also exacerbate existing poverty for people on low incomes, with those who have no credit history or savings to fall back likely to be hit particularly hard. A combination of economic hardship and the social restrictions of lockdown have also led to an increase in mental health issues, loneliness and isolation.

During 2020 and subsequent years, it is likely that the economic and social effects of Covid-19 will continue to be felt in the district. If the recession continues, it is likely that unemployment will increase, incomes will drop for many residents, and the number of people claiming Universal Credit and other benefits will increase. People who were already on low incomes before lockdown are more likely to be impacted by the longer-term economic consequences of the pandemic.

As part of its Anti-Poverty Strategy, the Council will work with partner organisations and local communities to respond to both the initial and longer-term impacts of coronavirus on residents and local communities.

East Devon District Council Poverty Reduction Strategy

East Devon District Council's response to poverty to date

The Council is committed to tackling poverty in the district. For some years the Council has produced policies, which aim to:

- improve the standard of living and daily lives of residents in East Devon who are experiencing poverty; and
- help alleviate issues that can lead households on low incomes to experience financial pressures.

The Council has stated that it wants to ensure that:

- Nobody should get into poverty without immediate help from EDDC
- Nobody should be in involuntary poverty longer than 2 years in East Devon

This will be achieved through collaborative working and effective relationships with partners.

Evolving our approach - our strategy for tackling poverty

The Council's approach set out in this strategy reflects updated evidence on the nature of poverty in East Devon and changes in the national context over the past ten years.

This **learning** includes:

1. The importance of balancing efforts to address the immediate effects of poverty, with preventative work to address the root causes of poverty.
2. Being clear on which issues can be addressed by direct delivery by Council services, which issues can be achieved through partnership working (where more can be achieved through collaboration) and which issues require influencing and lobbying activity (where powers lie with Government or other agencies).
3. A need to build the capacity and resilience of residents and communities.

These three lessons inform the three underpinning themes in this strategy which are outlined below.

This Strategy has been shaped and encouraged through the work of the Council's **Poverty Working Panel** established to gather evidence on poverty and develop a plan to alleviate poverty in the district.

East Devon District Council Poverty Reduction Strategy

Three underpinning themes

1. Addressing the causes and effects of poverty

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation identifies a number of different causes of poverty. Some of these causes can also be consequences, creating a cycle that can trap people in poverty. The causes are summarised in the table below.

Cause	Explanation
Unemployment and low-paid jobs lacking prospects and security	Low pay leads to low income and inadequate savings or pensions. Indebtedness adds to the adverse financial situation for many households. Redundancy amongst older people can also be a factor in poverty.
Low levels of skills or education	Low levels of skills or education make it difficult to secure a job, with security, prospects and decent pay.
An ineffective benefit system	A range of issues with the current benefits system, including insufficient levels of benefits to meet high costs; difficulties in moving into work or increasing hours; difficulties in engaging with the benefits system and delays; and low up-take of some benefits.
High costs of housing and goods and services	High living costs can help create poverty, including high costs for housing, goods and services, and higher costs due to increased need (e.g. personal care for disabled people). There can also be a 'poverty premium', where people in poverty pay more for the same goods and services.
Discrimination	Discrimination can limit people's access to good qualifications or jobs and can restrict access to services
Weak family relationships	Family breakdown can lead to poverty and lack of supportive parenting can impact on a child's education and development. Domestic abuse can also have poverty implications.
Chaotic lives and traumatic life events	Chaotic lifestyles Including problematic use of drugs and alcohol. Poverty can also occur with sudden onset of illness, disability or other life changing events.
Abuse or trauma	Neglect or abuse as a child, or trauma in adult life, can have negative impacts on a person's mental health, which can contribute to poverty.

The JRF also identifies a number of key effects of poverty, some of which are similar to some of the causes of poverty listed above:

East Devon District Council Poverty Reduction Strategy

- housing problems
- homelessness
- being a victim or perpetrator of crime
- health problems - including mental and physical health
- drug or alcohol problems
- teenage parenthood
- relationship and family problems
- lower educational achievement
- poverty itself – poverty in childhood increases the risk of poverty in adulthood

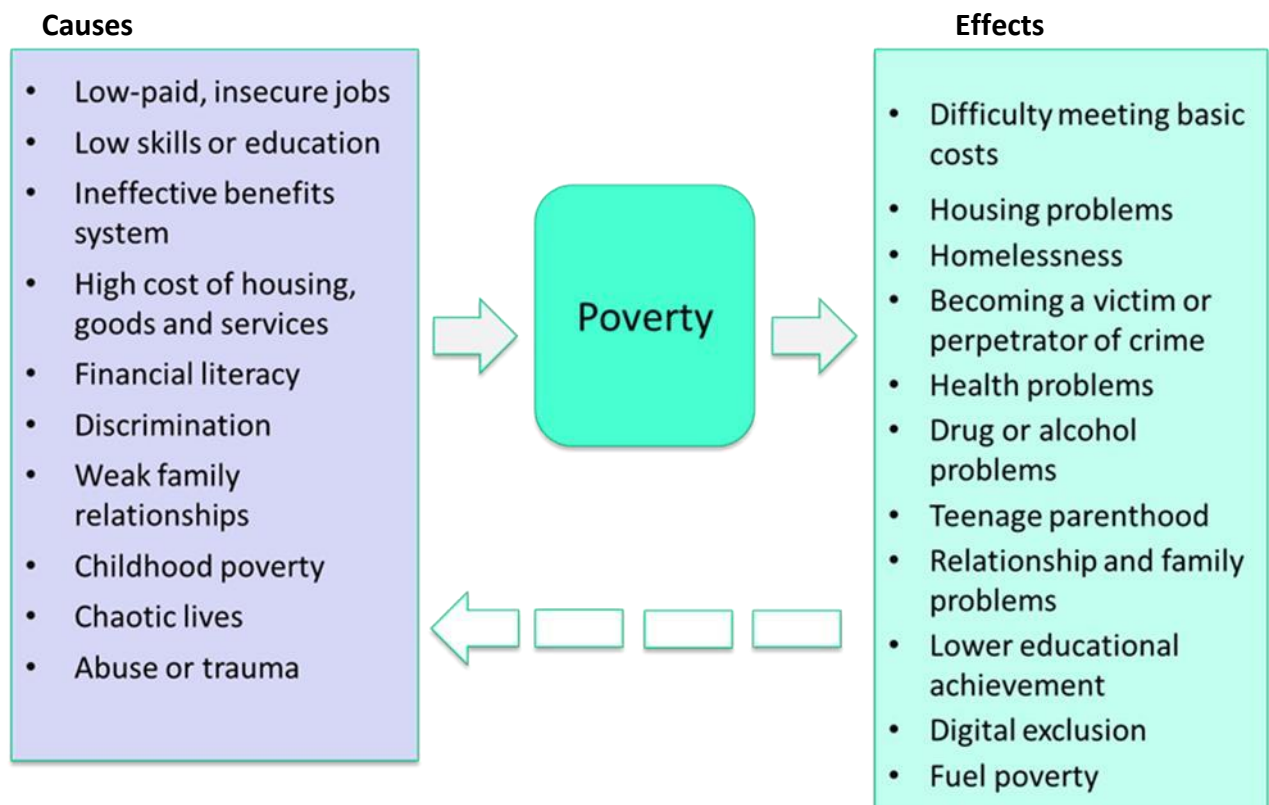
The Poverty Working Panel considered that discussions with key stakeholders and residents combined with local knowledge confirmed that many of the issues identified by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation impact on residents in poverty in East Devon. In addition to these issues, residents and consultees identified the issues summarised in the table below:

Issue	Explanation
Difficulty meeting basic needs	People in poverty can struggle to meet basic needs including food, fuel costs, furniture and appliances, and shelter.
Digital exclusion	People on low incomes are less likely to be able to afford internet access, which can make it difficult to apply for Universal credit and other benefits, access cheaper utility deals, apply for jobs and access public services. Rural isolation can also be a factor in poverty.
Financial literacy	Including understanding of how to manage finances and debt.
Fuel poverty	People in poverty can experience fuel poverty, resulting from rising energy costs and poor home energy efficiency.
Impacts of welfare reforms	Including the progressive roll-out of Universal Credit, the Benefits Cap, and the Spare Room Subsidy or 'Bedroom Tax'

The causes and effects of poverty identified by the JRF and local stakeholders and consultees are summarised in the diagram below.

East Devon District Council Poverty Reduction Strategy

Figure 2 – The causes and effects of poverty



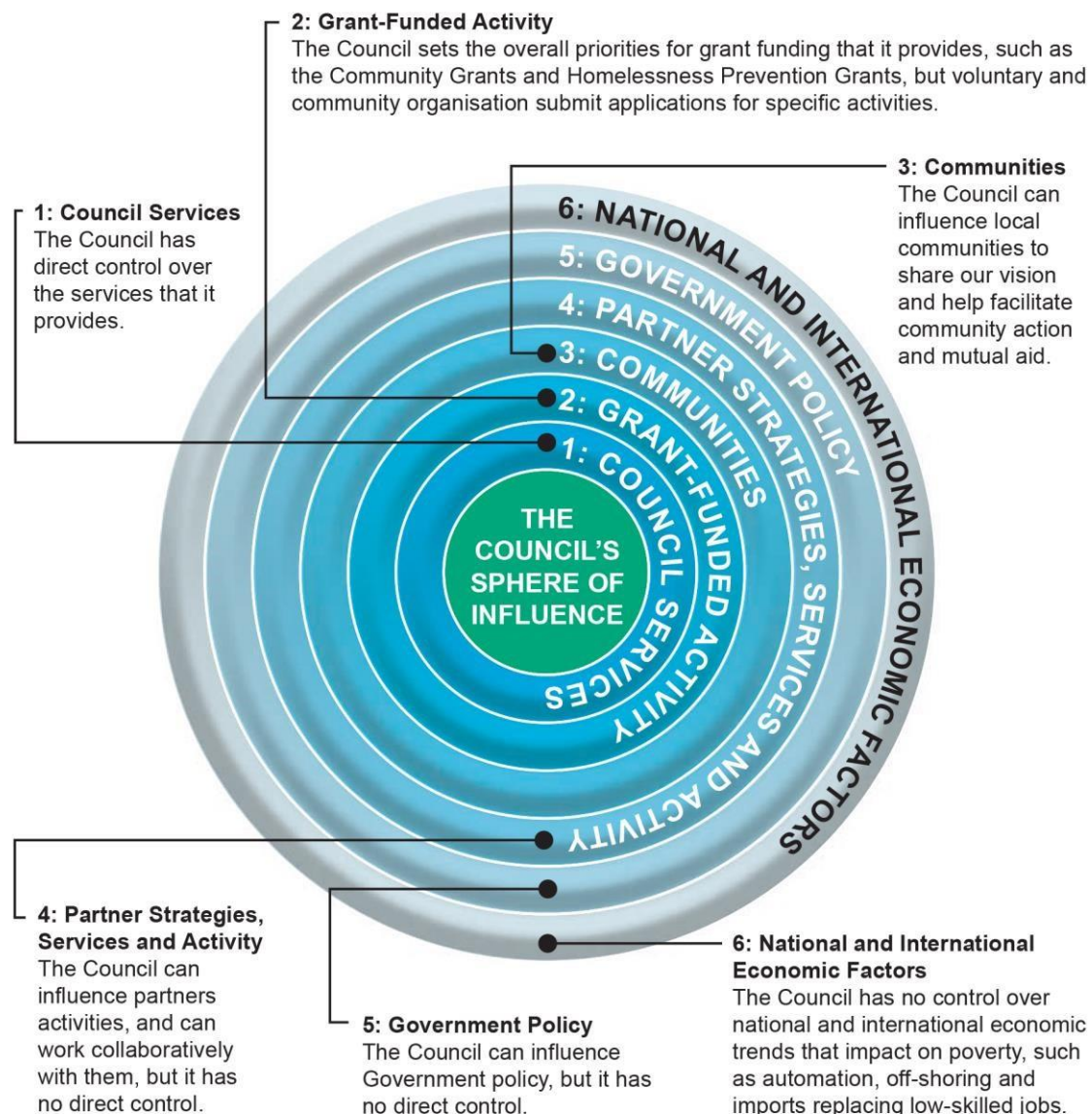
This strategy seeks to balance our ongoing efforts to address the effects of poverty, with a further focus on preventative work (often in partnership with other agencies and organisations) to address some of the root causes of poverty outlined above.

2. Balancing direct delivery, partnership-working and influencing activity

A range of different organisations and factors have an impact on poverty in East Devon. As shown in the diagram below, the Council has varying levels of control and influence on these different organisations and factors, from Council service delivery, where the Council has direct control, through to national and international economic factors, where the Council has no control or influence.

East Devon District Council Poverty Reduction Strategy

Figure 3 – The Council's Sphere of Influence in relation to poverty



The Council's Anti-Poverty Strategy focuses primarily on actions that the Council can deliver directly, together with some actions that are delivered in partnership with public, voluntary and community partners. Our approach will seek to be clear on:

- which issues can be addressed by direct delivery by Council services;
- which issues can be achieved through partnership working (where more can be achieved through collaboration); and
- which issues require influencing and lobbying activity (where powers lie with Government or other agencies) to bring about change and secure funding.

East Devon District Council Poverty Reduction Strategy

The Action Plan that accompanies this strategy clearly highlights which actions will be achieved through direct service delivery, partnership working or influencing and lobbying.

Through its mainstream services the Council is well placed to take action to address some of the causes and effects of poverty identified above. For example, through provision of Council housing, housing advice services, and funding for homelessness support services, the Council can help to address housing affordability issues, housing problems and homelessness. The Council also provides and commissions a range of services that help promote public health and active lifestyles, and provides access to green spaces across East Devon.

However, as shown in the table below, there are many other issues where, while the Council provides some relevant service or grant funding, other local partners in the public, private or voluntary sector have greater responsibilities and capabilities to make a difference. Through this strategy, the Council will continue to seek opportunities to work effectively in partnership with these organisations.

Issue	Lead agency or agencies
Benefits system	Department for Work & Pensions (for Universal Credit, Job Seekers, etc.) Local Authority (Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction)
Crime	Police, Probation Service
Mental and physical health problems	NHS, Devon County Council, Devon Partnership Trust
Discrimination	Voluntary and community groups focused on equalities issues
Family relationships, abuse and trauma	Devon County Council Social Services, voluntary and community groups

There are aspects of poverty where the Government or other organisations have greatest influence and the Council currently has little or no service delivery responsibilities or regulatory powers. On these issues, the Council will seek to show 'leadership' and lobby for changes in Government policy and funding to address immediate financial needs and bring about long-term, lasting changes to the underlying causes of poverty. Some of these issues are shown in the table below.

Issue	Lead agency or agencies
National policy on the benefits system	Government policy on welfare benefits

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Unemployment, pay and job security	Government fiscal and labour market policy, local employers, JobCentre Plus
Skills and education	Government education and skills policy, schools, further education colleges, Universities

3. Building the capacity of residents and communities, and facilitating community action and mutual support

The Council's approach to tackling poverty will also focus on building the capacity of local residents and communities. The Council intends to work collaboratively with local residents, community groups and voluntary groups to build their capacity and help them to become more self-sustaining.

We will listen to residents' views on local issues and work with communities to identify the solutions. As a Council, we will seek to coordinate and facilitate community action and mutual aid to help address poverty, focusing on the strengths and assets that communities bring to the table.

The outstanding community response to the Coronavirus emergency shows the desire East Devon residents and communities have to support each other, and particularly the most vulnerable. The emergence of a network of mutual aid groups potentially provides one route for developing this aspect of East Devon life, and the Council will continue to facilitate and build such community-led approaches in the period where the district begins to recover from the pandemic.

Our five strategic objectives

The three themes set out above are woven through five strategic objectives with lead Services identified:

- 1 Helping people on low incomes to maximise their household income and minimise their costs, building financial resilience and reducing indebtedness. Lead Service – Finance.
- 2 Strengthening families and communities, including supporting groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty, and community and voluntary groups working to combat poverty. Lead Service – Housing.
- 3 Promoting an inclusive economy, by raising skills and improving access to a range of employment opportunities for people on low incomes. Lead Service – Growth, Development & Prosperity.
- 4 Addressing the high cost of housing, improving housing conditions, creating affordable warmth and reducing homelessness. Lead Service – Housing.

East Devon District Council Poverty Reduction Strategy

- 5 Improving health outcomes for people on low incomes, including access to good diet, health care and ill health prevention. Lead Service – Environmental Health.

The rationale for each objective, and the key activities we will undertake to help achieve each, is set out below and in the Action Plan. For each objective, we set out how the activity fits within our underpinning theme of balancing actions which are within the council's direct delivery; which will be developed and delivered in partnership; and which we will lobby Government and others to deliver.

Objective 1 - Helping people on low incomes to maximise their income and minimise their costs, building financial resilience, and reducing indebtedness.

While East Devon as a whole is very prosperous and average wages are comparatively high, a significant proportion of residents are receiving low levels of pay and/or are claiming benefits:

- One in four people receive weekly pay (£275.60) which is only 65% of the average weekly pay (£426.10) in the district.
- 16% of East Devon households are claiming Housing Benefit and/or Universal Credit.

High costs of living make it difficult for people on low incomes to meet basic costs. The JRF highlights that while globalisation, competition and innovation have pushed down the prices for many consumer goods and services, boosting living standards overall, rises in housing, transport, food and fuel prices have increased the cost of living, particularly for people in poverty. JRF research shows that nationally in 2018 families needed 30% more disposable income to meet basic costs than in 2008.

The cost of living is particularly high in East Devon, making it difficult for people on low incomes in the city to meet basic costs. Evidence shows that:

- Housing costs are high in East Devon. In 2019, the average lower quartile monthly rent was £650, while lower quartile average house prices were ten or more times the average lower quartile earnings.
- Food poverty is an issue in East Devon, with the numbers of people receiving emergency food from Foodbanks steadily increasing reaching a peak during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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- Fuel poverty affects an estimated 10% of people in East Devon, due to a combination of low incomes, high energy costs and poor energy efficiency of some properties.

The high cost of living can be exacerbated by “poverty premiums” where people in poverty pay more for the same goods and services. For example, many people on low incomes use pre-payment meters for gas and electricity, at greater cost. Similarly, people on low incomes are less likely to have internet access, and are therefore less likely to switch their energy supplier to get a better deal or access other cheaper online deals.

Income poverty has a very real impact on people’s lives, putting them under constant pressure. The JRF highlights the following effects of poverty:

“Poverty means not being able to heat your home, pay your rent, or buy the essentials for your children. It means waking up every day facing insecurity, uncertainty, and impossible decisions about money. It means facing marginalisation – and even discrimination – because of your financial circumstances. The constant stress it causes can overwhelm people, affecting them emotionally and depriving them of the chance to play a full part in society.”

Action to date

To help address income poverty in East Devon the Council has taken a range of actions to date as part of its Anti-Poverty Strategy. To increase incomes for people in low-paid employment, we have:

- Increased financial support for working age residents claiming Council Tax Reduction through introducing an income banded scheme that increased maximum support from 80% to 85% from 2020. 86% of claimants received beneficial increases.
- Run a campaign to encourage local employers to become accredited with the Living Wage Foundation and pay all their staff the Real Living Wage.
- Supported residents on low incomes by identifying full entitlements to welfare benefits and ensuring accurate and efficient assessment of Housing Benefit and Council Tax reduction.
- Supporting residents in financial hardship through use of the council’s discretionary funds and referrals to external agencies for additional financial help, such as Watercare, Ecoe, Devon County Free school meals, Healthy Start, etc.
- Run loan shark awareness campaigns.

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We have also taken a delivered a range of actions to help reduce costs for low income residents, including:

- Funding voluntary and community groups to provide a range of activities to help reduce social or economic inequality through the Council's annual Community Grants programme. This has included funding Citizen's Advice to provide free legal, debt and money advice, financial capability support, and specialist welfare rights casework.
- Providing a dedicated Community Support Hub in addition to the Council's Revenue & Benefits Service, where residents can access debt, financial and rent advice from Council officers and voluntary and community groups.
- Training Rental Officers and funding HomeMaker to support Council tenants and other low income residents in financial crisis to access financial support, benefits and budgeting and debt advice.
- To help financially vulnerable residents we now have a dedicated Financial Resilience Officer working collaboratively with partner agencies to identify and address underlying issues that can be causing or exacerbating poverty.
- Nominating an Environmental Health Officer to advise on Fuel and to assist low income residents to reduce their fuel and water costs by installing energy or water saving measures in their homes.
- Supporting volunteer digital champions to deliver a programme of digital inclusion sessions for older people in sheltered housing.

We have also carried out a significant amount of work in partnership with other local organisations to address food poverty in East Devon. This has included:

- Providing funding for local Food Banks in our towns.
- Funding HALFF to provide a programme of cookery sessions in areas of deprivation over 3 years, helping participants to prepare healthy, low cost meals.
- Assisted with food deliveries.
- Promoted access to food banks on our website.

Actions for 2021- onwards

To help address income poverty in East Devon, the Council will progress a range of actions from 2021 onwards to help people on low incomes to maximise their income

East Devon District Council Poverty Reduction Strategy

and minimise their costs. These actions are set out in detail in the action plan that accompanies this strategy. The key actions include:

District Council actions

- Continuing to build upon the financial resilience work through close partnership working with external agencies including the voluntary sector to maximise income, reduce indebtedness and increase financial literacy.
- Develop a poverty dashboard to help us identify key issues that can be used to shape and inform policy, strategy and future interventions.
- Improving digital solutions for low income households through the development of online app and promoting greater awareness via social media platforms.
- Supporting digital inclusion sessions for Council tenants and leaseholders, and older residents in sheltered housing schemes and more widely.
- Promoting the Real Living Wage, and ensuring that our contractors and partner do the same.

Partnership actions

- Working with partner organisations and local communities to develop measures to support residents experiencing economic hardship and poverty as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.
- Working in partnership with Jobcentre Plus, local housing providers and the voluntary sector to support vulnerable benefit claimants in the transition to Universal Credit following the full roll-out to all claimants in East Devon.
- Provide funding to voluntary and community groups through the Council's Community Grants for activity focussed on reducing social or economic inequality, including funding for debt advice services and other activities that will help reduce poverty.
- Work in partnership with local voluntary and community groups to address food poverty, including working with Food Banks to develop a food re-distribution hub.
- Work with partner agencies and community groups to develop sustainable networks to support residents in fuel or water poverty to reduce their energy and water costs.
- Support partner organisations and community groups to develop sustainable activities to support low income residents to access the internet and develop digital skills.
- Promote credit unions and the dangers of using loan sharks.

Influencing and lobbying actions

East Devon District Council Poverty Reduction Strategy

- Promote Living Wage accreditation to employers in East Devon, including businesses, public bodies and voluntary and community sector organisations.
- Work with local businesses to identify ways in which they might use their skills, capacity and resources to support achievement of shared objectives around tackling poverty and disadvantage.
- Lobbying and influencing Government on welfare benefits policy issues.

Objective 2 - Strengthening families and communities, including supporting groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty

While many areas of East Devon are comparatively affluent, there continues to be concentrations of poverty and deprivation in particular communities in the district.

According to the Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), a small number of East Devon's Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) were in the most deprived 20% of LSOAs in the country in 2019. Each LSOA represents an area with a population of around 1500 people. The two most deprived LSOAs are in Littleham, Exmouth and St. Pauls, Honiton ward.

The concentrations of poverty and deprivation in particular localities suggests that there is a need for collaborative area-based work in the most deprived neighbourhoods and communities in the district to identify and address the underlying issues that lead to persistent deprivation. Through this Anti-Poverty Strategy, the Council will work with partner organisations to develop area based approaches, building on the County Council's approach, and other multi-agency initiatives.

As well as supporting geographical communities where there are higher levels of poverty and discrimination, key local stakeholders have suggested that there is a need to support particular communities or groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty. Available national and local data shows that older people, children, disabled people, BAME people, LGBT people and women are more likely to experience poverty.

Actions for 2021- onwards

The key actions the Council will take from 2021 onwards to strengthen families and communities are set out in detail in the action plan that accompanies this strategy. They include:

District Council actions

- Reviewing the needs of the community and voluntary sector in building stronger communities, and identify where the Council can best provide support.
- Supporting and promoting volunteering, including holding events to increase the number of people volunteering for local community and voluntary groups.
- Funding and supporting events which increase community pride and cohesion.
- Providing a programme of 'community days' in low income areas.

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- Using planning policy to ensure that new developments promote permeability, connectivity and accessibility.
- Ensure that the Council's community development and environmental programme includes schemes in more deprived wards in the district.
- Highlight the issue of rural isolation and poverty.

Partnership actions

- Develop a collaborative, area-based approach to support communities with high levels of deprivation in partnership with a range of organisations.
- Support an annual programme of events which celebrate diversity and promote community cohesion, in partnership with local equality and diversity organisations.

Influencing and lobbying actions

- Greater recognition of the need for building resilience and to support households get back on their feet.
- Funding local authorities to undertake this work and greater recognition of the benefits by central government.

Objective 3 - Promoting an inclusive economy, by raising skills and improving access to a range of employment opportunities for people on low incomes

As outlined above, while East Devon is very prosperous overall, there are significant levels of inequality in the city and a proportion of residents are on low incomes or in poverty. As part of the Anti-Poverty Strategy, the Council will seek to promote a more inclusive economy, where all residents can benefit from East Devon's prosperity. The OECD defines inclusive growth as: "economic growth that creates opportunity for all segments of the population and distributes the dividends of increased prosperity, both in monetary and non-monetary terms, fairly across society."

One of the key causes of poverty and inequality is differences in education, skills and employment levels. Evidence suggests that in East Devon there is:

- an **educational attainment gap** in East Devon, which impacts on longer term life chances for young people from low income households.
- a **skills gap** in East Devon. 32.9% of the working age population in East Devon had higher level qualifications (NVQ Level 4 and above) in 2019. ONS data for 2020 shows that for everyone one person who has no qualifications, there are around five individuals who hold a qualification at NVQ4 and above.

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- a low level of **social mobility**, possibly as a result of these education, skills and employment issues.

Actions for 2021- onwards

The key actions the Council will take from 2021 onwards to promote an inclusive economy are set out in detail in the action plan that accompanies this strategy. They include:

District Council actions

The Council will seek to use its planning powers to help create a more inclusive economy. One of the themes identified in the East Devon Local Plan is: Wellbeing and social inclusion – how the plan can help spread the benefits of growth, helping to create healthy and inclusive communities. As the plan is developed consideration is being given to how this theme can be integrated throughout, drawing on relevant evidence.

There are also opportunities to promote inclusive growth through major new developments, such as Cranbrook. Specific policies will be firmed up as the development progresses, but should include a requirement for developers to submit an employment and skills plan with planning proposals, setting out how they will seek to employ a skilled local workforce and provide training and apprenticeships throughout the delivery of the development.

Partnership actions

We will work with local businesses to identify ways in which they might use their skills, capacity and resources to help tackle poverty and disadvantage. This could include businesses making financial contributions, engaging with local schools or providing skilled volunteers to support local voluntary and community groups taking action to reduce poverty.

We will also work in partnership with those organisations which have greater responsibility for education, skills and employment issues, including Devon County Council, JobCentre Plus, schools, further education colleges, the University of Exeter.

Influencing and lobbying actions

As identified above, there are a number national and international economic factors that affect the shape of the local economy, which it is difficult for a local authority to influence. We will take opportunities to lobby Government on relevant economic policy issues, and seek to influence the strategic approach of the Local Enterprise Partnership.

Objective 4 - Addressing the high cost of housing, improving housing conditions, and reducing homelessness

As highlighted above, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) identifies high housing costs as a key cause of poverty and housing problems and homelessness as potential effects of poverty. We recognise this locally as a factor influencing poverty levels.

This Strategy does not seek to replace the East Devon Housing Strategy and related plans, which sets out the Council's approach to broader housing issues. Instead this section, highlights some of the housing issues facing people in poverty in East Devon, and some of the actions that are being taken to address these issues.

Addressing the high cost of housing

The JRF states that: "The high cost of housing and childcare in many parts of the UK creates the biggest squeeze on people in poverty.... Increasing the supply of genuinely affordable housing to bring down costs across tenures has become central to solving poverty in much of the UK."

While strong economic growth in East Devon has brought investment into the area and created employment, it has also led to an in-migration of highly skilled workers and high demand for houses, leading to high housing costs.

Housing is particularly unaffordable for people on lower incomes in East Devon. For many people on low incomes in the city, owning their own home is unachievable. Renting accommodation in the private sector has also become less affordable for lower income households, with lower quartile monthly private rents in the district increasing significantly typically £175 per week in 2019.

Renting privately is particularly difficult for people who are claiming benefits. There has been a significant gap between Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates (which determine the level of Housing Benefit entitlements for private rented housing and the housing element of Universal Credit) in East Devon and private rents in the district. This is because the Local Housing Allowance rate is based on a Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA) which includes places where rents are much lower than in East Devon.

This gap has reduced as a result of special measures introduced during the coronavirus pandemic, but we will continue to lobby government to seek alignment of the BRMA with actual rents in the city on a permanent basis.

Actions for 2021-onwards

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Part of the solution to high housing costs is to increase the supply of housing, particularly affordable housing, to meet the high levels of demand in East Devon. The majority of new affordable homes will come from private developments. The Council has set requirements in the current Local Plan for the proportion of affordable homes that must be delivered as part of new developments, including a requirement for 40% of homes on sites of 10 or more dwellings to be affordable (of which 75% should be social housing). In 2019/20 a total of 356 new affordable homes were delivered, and it is anticipated that more will be delivered through future developments.

The Council owns and manages over 4,200 homes in East Devon and we are committed to building new council homes which are affordable to those on low incomes. The Council has an ambitious programme to deliver at least 100 new council homes over 5 years subject to funding being available.

Improving housing conditions

While delivering new affordable housing is a priority in East Devon, the majority of residents will continue to live in currently existing homes, some of which are in poor condition. Due to a combination of low incomes, high energy costs and poor energy efficiency of homes, many low income residents struggle to pay their utility bills. A significant number of households in East Devon are in fuel poverty.

Actions for 2021-onwards

The Council has made significant investments in maintaining our homes to a good standard and making them more energy efficient. The Council will invest a further £5 million from 2020-2023 in improving the energy efficiency of Council-owned homes with the lowest energy efficiency ratings. We will also identify opportunities to reduce energy consumption as part of the development of new Council affordable housing schemes.

The Council will also support residents on low incomes by:

- Supporting private tenants in their homes, taking enforcement action against landlords / property managers whose properties do not meet the required energy efficiency standards.
- Ensuring Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are licensed where required and proactively take enforcement against landlords or property managers that are not complying.
- Working with partner agencies and community groups to develop sustainable networks to support residents in fuel or water poverty to reduce their energy and water costs.

Reducing Homelessness

The number of homeless people, and those threatened with homelessness, approaching the Council for assistance has significantly increased over the last five years. The Council's Homelessness Review identifies a number of key causes of homelessness:

- Homelessness due to a lack of appropriate accommodation.
- Breakdown of personal and family relationships. Our data shows that three of the four most common reasons for homelessness are: being asked to leave by family or friends; family breakdown; and domestic abuse.
- Financial difficulties. Loss of a private sector tenancy is the second highest reason for homelessness, with some people losing privately-rented tenancies because they are unable to meet rental costs due to debt, cuts in welfare funding and low Local Housing Allowance rates.

Particular groups of people are more at risk of becoming homeless, including single person households, people with mental health problems, and ex-offenders being discharged from prison.

As part of its mainstream work to address homelessness the Council:

- Provides a housing advice service, which provided advice to 600+ households in 2019/20 on a range of housing concerns including homelessness.
- Carries out work to prevent homelessness, or relieve homelessness where it cannot be prevented or has already occurred. Over 250 households were successfully prevented from homelessness or relieved from homelessness in 2019/20.
- Funds a network of prevention, relief and support activity delivered by partner organisations through a combination of contracts and annual grant funding.
- Secures private rented housing for single homeless people, the Council's Rent Deposit Scheme.

Preventing and tackling homelessness requires a co-ordinated and strategic response, and the Council works in partnership with a wide range of statutory and voluntary agencies. The Council has a Homelessness & Rough Sleeping Strategy, which sets out in detail our plans to prevent and manage homelessness in the district.

Rough-sleepers

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The numbers of rough sleepers in East Devon has fluctuated in recent years. The number of rough sleepers counted in the district during the course of a year increased from 3 in 2015/16 to 12 in 2019/20.

Rough-sleeping is a complex issue, and people find themselves sleeping rough as a result of a variety of personal factors. However, evidence from local counts of rough sleepers shows that people are much more likely to end up on the street if they have mental health problems or alcohol or substance misuse issues. Street homelessness also disproportionately affects men, people who have suffered trauma, people who have been in some kind of institutional care or organisation and people who have little by way of financial or social capital.

Actions for 2021- onwards

- **Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy** – A key focus of the proposed new strategy will be measures to increase access to private sector tenancies for homeless people. This will enable people to progress more quickly along the pathway from sleeping rough, to overnight shelters, to short-term hostel accommodation and into rented accommodation.
- **Promoting Housing Benefit Plus** – The gap between private rents and the Local Housing Allowance makes it difficult for homeless people to meet private rental costs. The Housing Benefit Plus scheme provides a supplement to Housing Benefit (1 year for single people up to £133pcm, 2 years for families up to £200pcm) to bridge the gap. This is accompanied by employment and income maximisation advice, which helps people to increase their incomes to the point where they are able to meet private rents on an ongoing basis.
- **Housing First** – the Council is piloting the Housing First approach to help people to come off the streets. Experience shows that hostel accommodation is not suitable for some rough sleepers with complex needs, who often end up sleeping rough again. Housing First involves providing a secure self-contained home, together with personalised support, for rough sleepers with multiple and complex needs. Providing a home first can provide a stable platform from which other issues can be addressed and can lead to better outcomes as a result.

Objective 5 - Improving health outcomes for people on low incomes

The Council's Public Health Strategy observes that while health outcomes overall in East Devon are broadly very good, there are significant health inequalities in the district.

Overall East Devon has a low proportion of people with unhealthy weight, but as our strategy shows, a greater proportion of children have excess weight in the most

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deprived wards in the district. Obesity can increase the risk of health conditions such as diabetes, joint problems and heart disease.

The Public Health Strategy notes that there is a strong link between health outcomes and the following factors:

- Income levels.
- Levels of education, due to better employment prospects and incomes for people with higher qualifications, but also better 'health literacy' and adoption of healthier lifestyles.
- Lifestyle and health behaviours, including dietary factors, smoking, and lack of physical activity and are also important risk factors.
- Substance misuse (including alcohol and drug use).

The Doughnut Economic model has regard to equality and the basic needs of individuals and households. We are starting to use this to guide decision making and influencing the development of local strategies and policies.

Actions for 2021- onwards

District Council actions

The Council has a role to play in providing a range of preventative public health services that can have a positive impact on health outcomes for low income residents and communities. These range from supporting physical exercise through provision of leisure centres, promoting active lifestyles, and providing access to green spaces, to working with local voluntary groups and businesses to promote healthy eating and access to sustainable food.

The key actions the Council will take from 2021 onwards to help improve health outcomes for people are set out in more detail in the action plan that accompanies this strategy. They include:

- Providing a discount in entry prices at LED run sports and swimming facilities for people receiving benefits.
- Providing free swimming sessions for low income families with children, and free and discounted swimming sessions for young people.
- Using planning policy to help ensure new developments help create a good living environment which supports good mental and physical health outcomes, through provision of open space and the design of the built environment.
- Reduce obesity, promote healthy eating and healthy weight programmes.

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- Delivering against the Armed Forces Covenant commitment that is based on improving health and wellbeing, prosperity, integration and reaching potential for ex-service personnel.

Partnership actions

The Council will also support delivery of a number of activities to improve health outcomes with local partners, including:

- Supporting free exercise referrals by GPs for low income residents in East Devon.
- Supporting cookery skills and healthy eating programmes for low income residents delivered by local voluntary and community organisations.
- Providing a programme of free lunches with churches and other partners for low income families during school holidays in areas of highest need in the district.
- Supporting outreach advice service for residents experiencing mental health issues due to low income, debt or addiction.

Influencing and lobbying actions

While the Council provides a number of services which impact on public health, it is not the lead agency on public health, social care and clinical issues, so it will seek to collaborate with and influence a range of NHS bodies, Devon County Council and voluntary and community organisations to help improve health outcomes for people on low incomes. This can be achieved through several key partnership structures, including:

- Devon Health and Wellbeing Board, which includes representatives of NHS England, Clinical Commissioning Group, NHS providers, Healthwatch and local authorities.
- Primary Care Networks, which bring together GP practices in East Devon and are focusing on developing Integrated Neighbourhood models to address key health and social care issues in local communities.

Conclusions

Poverty prevention and alleviation is a priority for the Council. We will use our powers and influence to improve the quality of life for our residents by implementing an ambitious strategy and action plan of measures to improve lives.

We will align our services towards poverty alleviation and ensure that our activities are coordinated, effective and have a positive impact.

We will measure and monitor our actions, refining our commitments as we learn and listen to the needs of our communities.

East Devon District Council Poverty Reduction Strategy

We have set ourselves a challenging ambitious agenda, but with determination and a consistent focus we are confident that we will succeed.

Anti-Poverty Strategy 2021 – onwards. An Action Plan

No.	Action	Service	Completion date	Narrative, performance measures and outcomes
Objective 1 - Helping people on low incomes to maximise their household income and minimise their costs, building financial resilience and reducing indebtedness.				
1.1	Exploring the opportunity for developing a poverty dashboard that draws on data from a range of different sources to allow us to gather, understand and use the data to help shape policy and inform on future interventions	Finance	Subject to resources following Covid-19 response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understanding of the different types of poverty and issues being experienced in different demographic areas of district. ➤ Breakdown by Ward if possible to illustrate difference and rural poverty. ➤ Dashboard that breaks poverty down into types; relative, absolute and in-work so that future interventions are based on needs of individuals living within certain areas. ➤ Demographic areas of highest need shown on a map that can be used to help inform and target future interventions including hidden poverty. ➤ Dashboard to be used as a measure on the trajectory of poverty within the District. ➤ Relevant data provided in an easy to understand format to help inform poverty panel and internal departments on future interventions for supporting financially vulnerable households.
1.2	Working with partner organisations, such as Citizens Advice, schools, etc. to promote and reach out to those who aren't currently engaging but are financially struggling (hidden poverty)	Finance & Housing plus partner organisations	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Capturing data on where referrals have come from, e.g. schools, local charities & support agencies, foodbanks, etc. ➤ Breaking the cycle of repeated emergency support measures. ➤ Feedback from partner organisations.
1.3	Creation of Financial Resilience Team within Revenues and Benefit responsible for administering discretionary funds. Team to work in	Finance	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Future financial resilience is achieved for residents living on low incomes e.g. repeat arrears in future financial years. ➤ Numbers of residents requiring repeat support. ➤ Average length of time taken to support residents out of poverty.

	close partnership with other internal departments (Housing and Council Tax) to ensure that joint approach is taken to supporting residents experiencing poverty. Team to also work in partnership with other external agencies and organisations to ensure that residents are receiving necessary support not provided by East Devon through referrals and signposting			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Type and amount of discretionary support used. ➤ Number of referrals made to outside agencies. ➤ Number of cases working in partnership with outside agencies/ organisations. ➤ Recognition of rural isolation and digital poverty. ➤ Recognition of poverty amongst older people. ➤ Recognition of poverty caused by major life events/crisis i.e. disability, unemployment etc.
1.4	Support Council tenants and other low income residents' households to access financial support, and provide advice on benefits, budgeting and money issues	Finance & Housing	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Income maximisation, minimisation of expenditure and budgeting support to help customers live within their means. ➤ Number of residents supported to access financial support. ➤ Number of residents provided with advice on benefits, budgeting and debt. ➤ Number and type of interventions undertaken. ➤ Advice on avoiding loan sharks and offering credit unions as an affordable lending source. ➤ Environmental Protection team will continue to provide National Assistance Burials, making arrangements and covering costs for individuals who die without anyone to arrange the burial or cremation. ➤ The Environmental Protection team's Pest Control service operates at significantly subsidised costs compared to private sector costs for the control of rats, mice and wasps.
1.5	Support low income households to access entitlements to welfare benefits and continue to work in partnership with Job Centre Plus and DWP to support vulnerable households with the continued migration of claims from Housing Benefit to Universal Credit. Analyse and assess trends and patterns on claimant profile to determine future actions, interventions	Finance	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensures that income is maximised for those who are experiencing poverty. ➤ Number of households who have been supported to apply for and subsequently receive Welfare Benefits. ➤ Using data to identify patterns and trends in future needs.

1.6	Operate a Council Tax Reduction scheme (working age) which strikes the right balance between providing the right level of support for those that are financially vulnerable whilst also recognising the importance of protecting council tax income for providing essential services	Finance	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Monitor and evaluate household data to identify patterns and trends in caseload. ➤ Use the data to identify actions, appropriate interventions to help shape and inform policy and strategy. ➤ The effectiveness of the scheme in relation to collection and arrears levels. ➤ Ensuring scheme protects the most financially vulnerable and meets our equality duties.
1.7	Promote the Real Living Wage and encourage our contractors and partners to pay their staff the Real Living Wage	Human Resources/ Services	September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Measure progress towards the Real Living Wage year on year. ➤ Benchmark against the Minimum Wage and the National Living Wage. ➤ Document conversations with contractors and partners.
1.8	Promote Living Wage accreditation to employers in East Devon, including businesses, public bodies and voluntary and community sector organisations	Growth, Development & Prosperity	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase the number of East Devon employers that have achieved Living Wage accreditation to 100, of which at least 55 will have received direct support from the Council. ➤ Number of employees working for employers that have achieved Living Wage accreditation. ➤ We could support this via communications and through our business ambassador programme. Many of them will be our larger employers. ➤ Discourage zero based contracts or where employees have low contracted hours as these have a big impact on how much people get paid/job security as we know these are factors that low income households are caught up in as its low skilled/low paid work.
1.9	Review the funding arrangements for Money Advice and how these are delivered to ensure they are meeting the Council's priorities in helping to alleviate poverty. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reducing indebtedness • Improving money management skills • Maximising household income • Addressing hidden poverty 	Finance	March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ How the service is being delivered to reflect the make-up of the district – digital tools (apps, social media, and web), face to face, phone, etc. ➤ The effectiveness of the service being provided. ➤ Numbers of residents provided with debt, benefits and financial advice broken down by different demographic groups. ➤ Number of debt referrals made. ➤ Number of Debt Relief Orders applied for. ➤ Number of Bankruptcy Cases made. ➤ Number of residents attending budgeting courses. ➤ Number of recurring cases of arrears after debt actions taken. ➤ Number and type of money advice campaigns.

1.10	Implement new Breathing Space legislation that comes into force May 2021 that will need to be reflected in the way that we manage debts within the Council. This will include updating our corporate debt policy, implementing changes to our working practices and ensure contracts/agreements with external agents involved with the collection of debts are updated	Finance in conjunction with Housing & Environmental Health	May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Capturing data on the number of residents that seek professional debt help under the 'Breathing Space' scheme and the types of council debts this includes- council tax, business rates, rents, sundry debts, car park debts, etc. ➤ An initial review (3-6 months) from when the scheme goes live to understand how this scheme is working within the district and whether it is delivering against the aims so that we can assess and provide useful feedback to the poverty panel. This review will also help to identify further actions that we will need to take.
1.11	Implement a common financial statement for capturing income and expenditure so that we have a consistent approach across all Council services for assessing income and expenditure, and exploring how we can work with partner organisations and agencies (Citizens Advice) for sharing this information more widely (subject to GDPR)	Finance in conjunction with Housing	Subject to resources following Covid-19 response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Remove barriers for residents in accessing support. ➤ Providing consistency of approach across all Council services for determining financial support. ➤ Will reduce timelines for determining financial support to residents as will only have to complete this information once.
1.12	Review the rent deposit/loan scheme that the Council operates to better understand the effectiveness and whether the scheme could be better linked in with other discretionary funds to ensure that these debts do not lead to wider financial problems	Housing and Finance	Subject to resources due to ongoing response to Covid-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of rent deposits/loans that are repaid. ➤ Number of loans requested that are supported via other discretionary funds. ➤ Number and reasons for subsequent defaults.
1.13	Review the use of Discretionary funds, (Discretionary Housing Payments, Exceptional Hardship Fund, DEFRA funding etc.), to ensure that funding in is working to the same goals in providing long term financial resilience and helping to alleviate poverty as other internal departments	Housing and Finance	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensures that residents are supported to stay in affordable/suitable accommodation, whilst meeting statutory requirements. ➤ Number of customers presenting with arrears or for debt advice after discretionary funds have been awarded to secure tenancies.
1.14	Support digital inclusion sessions for Council tenants and leaseholders, and	Housing/Finance	September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Numbers of digital inclusion sessions held in community centres.

	older residents in sheltered housing schemes and more widely in the community, and by into training sessions already funded by Job Centre plus			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Numbers of digital inclusion sessions held for older residents in sheltered housing schemes and more widely. ➤ Outcomes for those attending sessions.
1.15	Providing greater accessibility for our low income households through the development of our digital solutions including the online app	Finance	Subject to resources (including Strata) following Covid-19 response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Easy to access and complete using various electronic devices when applying for financial support. ➤ How applications and numbers are being received across different digital channels.
1.16	Work with partner organisations and local communities to develop measures to support residents experiencing economic hardship and poverty as a result of the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic	All services	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Expand the relationship with Citizens Advice and community & voluntary groups to support residents. ➤ Recognise the value of a strong community and voluntary group network.
1.17	Provide funding to voluntary and community groups for activity focused on reducing social or economic inequality, including funding for debt advice services and other activities that will help reduce poverty	Finance	March each year June each year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Main Community Grants budget is fully allocated each year to voluntary sector activities that meet Council's grants priorities. ➤ Grant awards are monitored to ensure they deliver the outcomes set out in funding agreements - Summary report produced each year.
1.18	Work in partnership with local voluntary and community groups to understand and address causes of food poverty, including developing a food re-distribution hub	Finance/ Growth, Development & Prosperity	April 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Budget agreed. ➤ Premises secured. ➤ Business Plan agreed. ➤ Underlying reasons for referral. ➤ The different types of wider support required and provided. ➤ Number and reasons for referrals made to foodbanks. ➤ Explore with our network of local food and drink producers through Gate to Plate to ensure any surplus/potential waste is appropriately channelled.

1.19	Work with partner agencies and community groups to develop sustainable networks to support residents in fuel or water poverty to reduce their energy and water costs	Environmental Health	March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Networks in place and operational by March 2021. ➤ Additional performance measures and targets to be set once scale of network has been established and is in place.
1.20	Support partner organisations and community groups to develop sustainable activities to support low income residents to access the internet and develop digital skills	Growth, Development & Prosperity	March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Numbers of digital champions providing support to residents. ➤ Numbers of residents receiving support from digital champions.
1.21	Work with local businesses to identify ways in which they might use their skills, capacity and resources to support the achievement of shared objectives around tackling poverty and disadvantage	Growth, Development & Prosperity/ Environmental Health	October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of businesses and employers engaged. ➤ Number and type of new corporate social responsibility activity undertaken by businesses and employers following engagement with the Council. ➤ Support engagement and promotion of best practice. ➤ Environmental Health Commercial team help to boost residents on low incomes who want to start small food-based businesses. The team ensure these start-up businesses comply with legislation in ways that do not require large investments, until they have proved that they will be able to generate income to fund the improvements they need.
1.22	Lobbying and influencing Government on welfare benefits policy issues	Portfolio Holder & Poverty Panel	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use lobbying to encourage changes at a national social policy level. ➤ Engage M.P.s in debate on poverty prevention issues.
Objective 2 - Strengthening families and communities, including supporting groups of people that are more likely to experience poverty, and community and voluntary groups working to combat poverty.				
2.1	Review the needs of the community and voluntary sector in building stronger communities, and identify where the Council can best provide support	Housing	September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conclude discussions with groups on the role of a CVS for East Devon. ➤ Produce a CVS Service Level Agreement for discussion and agreement. ➤ Map community and voluntary groups to develop a comprehensive database and the core services being provided.

2.2	Review, develop and implement the Volunteer programme of activities, including holding an event to increase the number of people volunteering for local community and voluntary groups in East Devon	Housing	October 2021	➤ Build on the existing volunteer programmes and link with our health & wellbeing objectives.
2.3	Provide a programme of 'community days' in low income areas of the district to: save residents money from disposing of bulky waste; encourage residents to have a sense of pride in their neighbourhood; and encourage community engagement to help create sustainable communities	Housing	September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of community days held in low incomes areas of the district (target 6 in 2021/22). ➤ Number of skip days held in low income areas of the district. ➤ Tonnage of bulky waste collected at community days.
2.4	Ensure that Cranbrook residents and neighbouring disadvantaged communities benefit from enhanced service delivery and improved physical, social and psychological linkages between the existing and new developments.	Planning + Growth Development & Prosperity	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Reduction in number of residents receiving unemployment benefits. ➤ Prioritise investment in Cranbrook Town Centre – ensuring delivery of local facilities – including supermarket, GP surgery, dental surgery, early years child care, library, etc. ➤ Provide employment skills support to enable disadvantaged residents are able to apply for jobs within local facilities (in partnership with JSP). ➤ Work with RSLs to support disadvantaged households (e.g. Live West). ➤ Use the poverty dashboard to identify the socio-economic make-up of Cranbrook to help understand the need.
2.5	Use planning policy to ensure that new developments promote permeability, connectivity and accessibility	Planning	Ongoing	➤ Planning policies promote safe, legible, permeable, and accessible public realm.
2.6	Ensure that the Council's Environmental Improvement programme includes schemes in more deprived wards, including Littleham, Exmouth and St. Pauls, Honiton.	Environmental Health	Ongoing to March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Raise awareness of the EIP scheme amongst residents. ➤ Seek and consider EIP scheme proposals from local communities ➤ The Environmental Protection team have proposed new links with Housing officers to work more closely with our own tenants in conflicts with neighbours. ➤ Our Community Safety Partnership Coordinator will continue to work with a wide network of contacts across the district, sharing information - most aimed at supporting families, young people and preventing harm or exploitation.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Our Community Safety Partnership Coordinator will continue to use social media to share key messages and opportunities around community safety themes. ➤ Our Community Safety Partnership Coordinator anticipates a further grant from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for community-strengthening activities throughout 2021/22.
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No.	Action	Service	Completion date	Narrative, performance measures and outcomes
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop and delivery priority schemes identified by local communities.
2.7	Develop a collaborative, area-based approach to support communities with high levels of deprivation in partnership with a range of organisations	Housing	Ongoing to March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Performance measures to be developed as area-based approach and initiatives are explored.
2.8	Support an annual programme of events which celebrate diversity and promote community cohesion, in partnership with local equality and diversity organisations	Housing	Annually from March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Successful programme of events delivered linked to each national or international event, including free events and events with free spaces for people on low incomes. ➤ Encourage attendance at events from all sectors of the community. ➤ Pilot the use of podcasts to convey poverty messages in audio form.

Objective 3 - Promoting an inclusive economy, by raising skills and improving access to a range of employment opportunities for people on low incomes.

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3.1	Explore opportunities to spread the benefits of economic growth across the District, ensuring that all communities have access to high quality skills and education provision in order to access employment opportunities and that the development of the new Local Plan is supported by a robust evidence base	Planning/ Growth Development & Prosperity	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a Local Plan evidence base that identifies the needs for employment land across the district and make site allocations through the new Local Plan to meet those needs. This process should include discussions of where the LA should invest to improve access to employment. ➤ Opportunities explored for anti-poverty considerations to be include in viability assessments for new developments. We would need a robust methodology showing the activities and measures to be funded are effective at reducing local poverty. The overall impact on development viability would need to be considered. ➤ Opportunities explored to support “meanwhile uses” for land that is earmarked for development not necessarily an anti-poverty action. Can the council use revenue generated from meanwhile uses to support anti-poverty action?
3.2	Ensure that the proposed developments in the West End of the District benefit both new residents and existing neighbouring disadvantaged communities by maximising local employment, skills and training opportunities	Planning/ Growth Development & Prosperity		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ See comments at 2.4

No.	Action	Service	Completion date	Narrative, performance measures and outcomes
3.3	Seek funds to continue the Activate project, working with local arts and cultural organisations to deliver a programme of cultural activities for a cohort of young people on free school meals, who will benefit from a programme of different activities to develop self-awareness, resilience and leadership skills	All Services	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of young people taking part in the programme who are eligible for free school meals and have been identified by the college as being at significant risk of not reaching their potential. ➤ Educational attainment of participants, as measured by the school, compared to expected educational attainment without the programme. ➤ Aspiration levels of participants, including number of participants aspiring and planning for further or higher education.
3.4	Ensure all large scale/major developments develop and deliver an Employment and Skills Plan as part of their S106 agreement. Delivery against agreed targets will be monitored to ensure provision of tangible benefits to local employment and skills development	Planning/Growth, Development & Prosperity	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Encourage developers to provide a satisfactory ESP as a standard requirement of each legal agreement for all large scale major developments. ➤ Consider new planning policies through the new Local Plan to make ESP's a requirement for large scale major developments and potentially some smaller scale developments. ➤ The provision of a satisfactory ESP will be a requirement of both the appointed contractor at construction stage and the operating tenant at occupation stage where development is for commercial use. ➤ Delivery of ESP targets in line with CITB Key Performance Indicators. Monitored by Building Greater Exeter.

3.5	Include employment, training and skills development opportunities in regular communications to East Devon businesses and residents	Growth, Development & Prosperity	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provision of relevant information in regular business updates and resident newsletters. ➤ Analysis of unique click through and forwarding data to assess impact. ➤ Promote digital inclusion to cover skills/training as well as infrastructure provision.
3.6	Hold quarterly DWP updates to ensure our local JCP branch managers are aware of all approved developments in district so they can prepare work coaches to discuss associated local employment opportunities with benefit claimants	Growth, Development & Prosperity	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Quarterly virtual meetings with DWP Partnership Manager. ➤ Monitor engagement with relevant construction contractors and site occupiers where commercial.
3.7	Ensure suitable provision of a Gateway service to maximise the benefit and value of the DWP Kickstart Scheme to both local employers offering jobs and the 16-14 yr. old UC claimants who take on these local placements	Growth, Development & Prosperity	Ongoing (18 month scheme beginning Sept, 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify the optimal Gateway provider to work with local business and training providers. ➤ Regular liaison with employer and Kickstarter to ensure the right wrap around support and employability training is being provided. ➤ Formally partner with this gateway provider, support with regular communications to encourage compliant placements and refer all enquiries received.

		All Service Teams	June 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If we're serious about tackling poverty and improving access to employment, this strategy could include a simple requirement for all service teams to take on and train a number of kickstart placements (16-24 yr. old claiming Universal Credit) to bolster our staff resource and tangibly improve the future employability of the benefit claimant, many of whom will be from less wealthy households. This would improve both access to employment, training and education and help address some of the limiting self-belief and confidence issues mentioned earlier. ➤ We could also establish a 50+ work placement scheme to address the needs of that age group.
3.8	Lobby Government on relevant economic and skills policy issues	Growth, Development & Prosperity with Portfolio Holder	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Have a dialogue with M.Ps on poverty and social policy issues.
3.9	Seek to influence the strategic approach to the local economy taken by the Local Enterprise Partnership	Growth, Development & Prosperity	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hard to identify performance indicators for this. If we are to facilitate a shift in focus from productivity to inclusive prosperity.
Objective 4 - Addressing the high cost of housing, improving housing conditions, creating affordable warmth and reducing homelessness.				
4.1	Develop new Council homes for rent, and ensure that rent levels are as affordable as possible	Housing	Annually March 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of new homes for rent provided annually on Council owned sites. ➤ Number of new Council homes started in East Devon. ➤ Benchmark rents with other social housing providers.
4.2	Develop a new business plan/strategy for a further Council affordable housing programme	Housing	October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Business Plan approved by the Council's Housing Review Board. ➤ Undertake viability assessments on all development proposals to ensure that there is a good long term business case.

4.3	Identify opportunities to reduce energy consumption as part of the development of new Council affordable housing schemes and consider the cost impact of alternative energy sources on Council tenants	Housing	September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bid for government funding to support decarbonisation. ➤ Undertake further carbon footprint measurements to chart progress. ➤ Explore technologies to reduce carbon emissions and provide affordable warmth for tenants.
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No.	Action	Service	Completion date	Narrative, performance measures and outcomes
4.4	Ensure that existing council homes are well maintained and implement a programme of energy efficiency improvements to lower-rated council homes	Housing	Ongoing March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Percentage of reactive repairs completed within target timescales. ➤ £2.5 million programme of energy efficiency improvements delivered in Council properties, predominantly in properties with Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings of D, E, F or G
4.5	Support private tenants in their homes, taking enforcement action against landlords / property managers whose properties do not meet the required energy efficiency standards	Environmental Health	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Measurable once Government enforcement toolkit has been trailed and released. Expected from April 2021 onwards. ➤ Numbers of cases/investigations that have resulted in enforcements action taken. ➤ The Private Sector Housing team will continue to work on improving conditions of housing in private ownership for rented and owner occupiers. ➤ The Private Sector Housing team will continue to combat fuel poverty by helping to reduce energy bills, improve energy efficiency and maximise household income. ➤ The Private Sector Housing team will continue to work on eliminating EFG EPC rated homes occupied by fuel poor households.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Private Sector Housing team are planning a park homes insulation project. ➤ The Private Sector Housing team plan to review their communications processes and update their website. ➤ The Private Sector Housing team manager plans to develop a strategy and action plan for their activities.
4.6	Ensure Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are licensed where required and proactively take enforcement against landlords or property managers that are not complying	Environmental Health	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of HMO licences issued. ➤ Number of cases / investigations that have resulted in enforcement action for failure to licence. ➤ Breakdown of enforcement action taken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Warning letter ○ Simple Caution ○ Civil Penalty ○ Prosecution
4.7	Implement the Council's Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy and embed within it a range of measures to significantly improve access to the private rented sector and retention of a private sector tenancy for homeless people	Housing	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase the number of households assisted to move into the private rented sector. ➤ Expand the Housing First offer. ➤ Encourage greater housing association contributions.

No.	Action	Service	Completion date	Narrative, performance measures and outcomes
4.8	Review, rebrand and promote the Rent Deposit scheme to enable more people to find a private rented sector solution to their homelessness	Housing	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increase in the number of households taking up the Housing Benefit Plus scheme. ➤ Number of households supported into private rented accommodation (target: 40 households supported into PRS accommodation per annum).

4.9	Extend the Housing First pilot programme to provide self-contained accommodation and support for 20 rough sleepers	Housing	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 10 'Housing First 1' units to be tenanted by June 2020. ➤ 12 'Housing First 2' social housing units (with an onsite caretaker for every 2 tenants) provided. ➤ 4 'Housing First 2' units to be tenanted by March 2021.
4.10	Embed improvements identified as good practice in tackling Domestic Abuse into service delivery	Housing	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Analysis of customer and partner feedback. ➤ Case audits results. ➤ MASH completions/MARAC/Safeguarding referrals by service and individual. ➤ Evidence of target-hardening budget usage.
4.11	Work with developers through the planning process to enable the delivery of new high quality, energy efficient affordable homes	Housing	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of affordable homes delivered on strategic growth sites and on other sites. ➤ Planning policies ensure that affordable housing is well integrated on sites and indistinguishable from market homes. ➤ Number of affordable homes delivered to BREEAM standards or equivalent (PassivHaus etc.). ➤ Number of affordable homes delivered close to transport infrastructure.
4.12	Work with Registered Providers to ensure homes are genuinely affordable to those that need them	Housing	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Encourage social rents in place of affordable rents. ➤ Monitor and benchmark social landlord rents.
4.13	Develop the furniture poverty initiative to ensure that tenants have access to basic household furniture items	Housing	September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Option review report to Housing Review Board January 2021. ➤ Expand the range of assistance provided through our own furniture project. ➤ Work with charities and voluntary groups who support tenants with essential household items.

No.	Action	Service	Completion date	Narrative, performance measures and outcomes
Objective 5 - Improving health outcomes for people on low incomes, including access to good diet, health care and ill health prevention.				
5.1	Provide a reduction in entry prices at LED operated sports and swimming facilities for people receiving Means Tested Benefits	Countryside & Leisure	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of people holding concessionary cards. ➤ Number of entries to Council-owned leisure facilities by people holding concession memberships. <p><i>(N.B. Attendance numbers during 2020/21 will be affected by pool closures as a result of Covid-19).</i></p>
5.2	Provide free swimming sessions for low income families with children, and free and discounted swimming sessions for young people	Countryside & Leisure	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of Surestart sessions for families with young children run and number of attendances. ➤ Number of attendances at free swim sessions for juniors between 4-6pm on weekdays. ➤ Number of attendances at discounted (£1) sessions for young people. <p><i>(N.B. Attendance numbers during 2020/21 will be affected by pool closures as a result of Covid-19).</i></p>
5.3	Provide monthly free health sessions for low income groups	Countryside & Leisure	March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of free health sessions held. ➤ Number of people attending free health sessions.

No.	Action	Service	Completion date	Narrative, performance measures and outcomes
5.4	Use planning policy to help ensure new developments help create a good living environment which supports good mental and physical health outcomes, through provision of open space and the design of the built environment	Planning Service/ Growth Development & Prosperity	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Planning policies that emphasise design quality of new homes and enhance and increase open space provision and public access to it. ➤ Planning policies ensure that developments with mixed tenures provide the same access to shared amenities for all residents of the development. ➤ Provision of green space serving new developments.
5.5	Support free exercise referrals by GPs for low income residents in East Devon	Environmental Health	August 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Total number of free exercise referrals made by GPs for residents on low incomes. ➤ % of participants on low incomes completing an activity programme. ➤ Link to the Sport England pilot here.
5.6	Support healthy eating programmes targeted at low income residents and delivered by local voluntary and community organisations	Environmental Health	October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of cookery skills workshops delivered in low incomes areas of East Devon. ➤ Number of people participating in cookery workshops.
5.7	Provide a programme of cooking skills with local partners for low income families in areas of highest need in East Devon	Environmental Health	September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of venues providing cookery skills around the district and number of people reached.
5.8	Support outreach advice and support for residents experiencing stress and anxiety due to low income and debt	Environmental Health	September 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of clients seen by the outreach advisor in total. ➤ Total value of additional income for clients identified by the outreach advisor. ➤ Deliver against the Armed Forces Covenant commitment that is based on improving health and wellbeing, prosperity, integration and reaching potential for ex-service personnel.
5.9	Influence key health strategies, including the Devon Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the models being developed by Primary Care networks	Environmental Health	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Partner health strategies take account of key issues identified by EDDC. ➤ The Public Health Project Officer will continue to work with services to influence annual implementation plans and collate annual reviews of our public health activities across the council. ➤ The Public Health Project Officer will continue to identify projects that help to implement our public health strategic plan, which aims to tackle health inequalities and deprivation.

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Public Health Project Officer will continue to represent EDDC at County-wide meetings e.g. Devon Smoke free Alliance and contributes to County-wide developments e.g. JSNA working group. ➤ The Public Health Project Officer will continue to represent EDDC with local groups e.g. WEB Community Health & Wellbeing Board as required, to help tackle health inequalities. ➤ The Public Health Project Officer will continue to liaise with local NHS colleagues as required, and continue efforts to influence potential projects e.g. via their Population Health Management programme. ➤ The Public Health Project Officer will continue to liaise with other agencies to support those community-strengthening activities which are likely to improve health/wellbeing outcomes. ➤ The Public Health Project Officer will continue to source, evaluate and share reliable and locally relevant health information; communicating messages with a wide range of contacts as appropriate, and using various formats.
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Report to: **Cabinet**



Date of Meeting 12 May 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

ERDF Welcome Back Fund

Report summary:

East Devon has benefitted from the Reopening High Streets Safely Fund (RHSSF) programme announced by central Government and funded through the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) which commenced on 1 June 2020 with the Council receiving an allocation of £130,992. Following consultation with towns and parishes, a report went to Cabinet on 21 July 2020 and a hybrid delivery approach was approved with subsequent use of delegated authority.

The Welcome Back Fund (WBF) is an extension of RHSSF and East Devon District Council's funding agreement will be varied to accommodate the additional allocation of £230,991. There is a WBF Form for the Council to complete, that builds upon the RHSSF action plan that needs to be submitted by 30 May 2021. Once agreed, the Council can then start to claim for additional allocation and activity.

This report summarises both where we are with the existing RHSSF but also sets out how the Council needs to take forward the WBF and within the recommendations include the delegations needed to deliver on the interventions permitted through the WBF and the recovery of spend incurred.

Due to the WBF being an extension of the RHSSF this report will cover both.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That Cabinet note:

1. The Reopening High Streets Safely Fund deployment to-date and additional Welcome Back Fund allocation.

That Cabinet resolve:

1. To endorse the broad programme / potential spend set out in the table found at para 3.7 of this report, subject to refinement of service delivery requirements, targeted stakeholder feedback and procurement.
2. To delegate to Service Lead – Growth, Development & Prosperity to engage with targeted stakeholder engagement to refine specific projects and proposals.
3. Delegate authority to Service Lead – Growth, Development and Prosperity in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Economy & Assets to deliver the WBF project (including entering into contracts, agreeing specific spends, recruiting temporary posts and adapting the project to reflect changes in funding guidance together with individual Service Leads requirements on delivery of interventions)

That Cabinet recommend to Council;

1. To approve and provide the budget for the appointment of such temporary posts as are required to support the WBF project.

Reason for recommendation:

The recommendations will enable Officers to develop an emerging programme of works, facilitate the processing of financial claims, publicity requirements and record keeping to support towns and parishes where the Council will undertake works. Where Parishes or Towns ask for assistance, we can work with them to deliver interventions.

Local Authorities in receipt of WBF funding allocation (East Devon District Council) must have financial management and control procedures in place for the WBF activity.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergencies
- ☒ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☐ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☒ Culture, Tourism, Leisure and Sport
- ☐ Democracy and Transparency
- ☒ Economy and Assets
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; The activities deemed to be within scope of the programme are blunt – not all activities will qualify for use of this fund. In terms of reputational and communication, there is a fine balance between a message of welcoming visitors and the requirement to keep our communities safe and there is a risk that the Council is perceived as prioritising some areas over others. In terms of financial risk, the money allocated is from ERDF and has to be reclaimed in arrears. The Council does not have an ‘in-house’ external funding team or ERDF claim officers. Expenditure has to be within the scope of the fund, must be deemed to be eligible (have complied with the timescales of the fund and ERDF procurement and publicity requirements where applicable) together with a fully evidenced audit trail. If we are to process claims by another tier authority, which we encourage not to, there must be a Service Level Agreement between East Devon District Council and that Delivery Partner Local Authority. Even if successfully claimed, works and expenditure could be subject to verification and potential clawback.

Links to background information [Welcome Back Fund: allocations per local authority](#)
[Welcome Back Fund Guidance](#)
[Welcome Back Fund Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ Outstanding Place and Environment
 - ☐ Outstanding Homes and Communities
 - ☒ Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
 - ☐ Outstanding Council and Council Services
-

Report in full

1.0 Background – Delivery by East Devon District Council of Reopening High Streets Safely Fund (RHSSF)

- 1.1 The Reopening High Streets Safely Fund programme commenced on 1st June 2020. East Devon District Council was given an allocation of £130,992. Following consultation with towns and parishes, a report went to Cabinet on the 21st July 2020 and a hybrid delivery approach was approved with subsequent use of delegated authority.
- 1.2 Through November and December 2020, local high street businesses were surveyed about what measures would assist them in terms of reopening safely. Businesses identified that the following additional support would help them operate more safely, (in order of priority):
- A visitor/ public-facing campaign to restore confidence in shopping on the High Street
 - Access to online business advice (one Stop Shop type of website with all relevant resources, guidance and checklists)
 - Dedicated Information Officer to advise on latest legislative and temporary measures in place
 - Dedicated helpline/ contact for specific questions
 - Dedicated council patrols to monitor and enforce high street/ retailer compliance with Covid-19 safe trading measures
- 1.3 Through RHSSF the following interventions are currently being delivered:

Management and Administration: In-house programme Management

Strand 1: Support to develop an action plan for how the local authority may begin to safely reopen their local economies: Programme Monitoring (Footfall data)

Strand 2: Communications and public information activity to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely: The Stay Local Shop Safe campaign that has been rolled out across the district through a wide variety of media

Strand 3: Business-facing awareness raising activities to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely: The appointment of 2 Covid Compliance Officers providing information and advice to high street businesses

Strand 4: Temporary public realm changes to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely: This has included the installation of public hand sanitiser stations in high streets and pavement stencilling with social distancing messages. Beer Parish Council, as Delivery Partner, have delivered Neighbourhood Shopping area adaptations (a Legal agreement has been entered into with Beer Parish Council to facilitate this activity).

- 1.4 It should be noted that the process has been extremely challenging for a number of reasons:
- Definitive fund guidance has been slow to emerge and has been iterative
 - The need for ERDF compliance (particularly in relation to procurement and publicity and branding)
 - Resourcing the programme with so many competing priorities in responding to a pandemic
 - The ongoing uncertainty, particularly given that the programmes focus was on reopening which has been ‘bumpy’ at times due to the numerous lockdowns and reopening events. Note that the end date for RHSSF was extended from 31.03.2021 to 30.06.2021 because of the evolving lockdown situation and because so many Local Authorities were struggling with delivery.
 - The quantity of towns and high streets in East Devon
- 1.5 The RHSSF has been aimed at high streets and neighbourhood shopping areas, this has meant that some of our busy local economy areas such as seafronts, were not within the scope of the fund.

2.0 Welcome Back Fund (WBF)

- 2.1 The WBF is an extension of RHSSF and East Devon District Council’s funding agreement will be varied to accommodate the additional allocation– There is a WBF Form for the Council to complete (that builds upon RHSSF action plan) –that needs to be submitted by 30th May. Once agreed, we can then start to claim for additional allocation and activity (we can deliver/ spend before the agreement is in place, but that expenditure would be at EDDC’s risk). A new dedicated resource will be needed to undertake this work in May (at risk) as there is no capacity within the Place, Assets & Commercialisation staff base to undertake the programme management and ERDF action plan, governance and claims process.
- 2.2 Spend must occur by 31 March 2022, is revenue only and must be additional spend – it will not pay for existing costs.
- 2.3 East Devon’s allocation of the WBF is £230,991 and reflects the fact that additional funding is allocated specifically to support coastal resorts across England to safely welcome tourists in the coming months. The RHSSF’s focus was not to support these areas, rather to support high streets and neighbourhood centres. We must reflect this when considering how spend is allocated bearing in mind that East Devon have received greater allocation than non-coastal Districts.
- 2.4 The current projection is that £51,490 of the RHSSF will be unspent. The guidance allows this underspend to be amalgamated with the WBF meaning that £282,481 (assuming this level of underspend) in total is available for delivering the WBF.
- 2.5 The WBF will support continued delivery of the 4 activity strands summarised in 1.3 of this report, together with 2 new strands as summarised below.

2.6 Support to promote a safe public environment for a local area's visitor economy.

The local authority will want to effectively support and promote the safe and successful reopening of the public environment for local trade and tourism.

To boost the look and feel of their high streets, local authorities may invest in activities to make high streets welcoming and promote the visitor economy.

The fund allows a more flexible approach around supporting public space, it does not necessarily need to be adjacent to commercial areas, making it easier to support for example promenades.

Note: It should be noted that of course for some Local Authorities, inland towns and cities, their WBF programme will continue to be focussed upon their town and city centres and main high streets/ shopping areas. The focus for East Devon, however, may perhaps shift to the forthcoming visitor season and the disproportionate impact on our main coastal resort towns.

This includes but is not limited to:

- Placed based marketing, for example, supporting safe celebration events on high streets and in local towns.
- Marshals.
- Public space maintenance.
- Maintenance of public conveniences (toilets) including new temporary facilities (toilets) provision.
- Beautification activities including graffiti removal.
- Non-permanent public realm adaptations.
- Activities that future proof the high street.
- Improvement of green spaces and provision of outdoor seating areas.

There is scope to pay the salaries of staff or consultants to develop this work, but it is important that the local authority can evidence that this is additional activity beyond what was already underway prior to the grant being received.

Events and celebrations should respect the most recent social distancing guidelines as per the Safer Public Places guidance and the Guidance for managing beaches, the countryside and coastal areas.

2.7 Support local authorities to develop plans for responding to the medium-term impact of Covid-19 including trialling new ideas particularly where these relate to the High Street.

This strand is complementary to strand 1 but recognises that the impact of Covid-19 on local economies will be significant. Local authorities can, under this strand, use the fund to develop plans for responding to these impacts. This could include, but is not limited to, undertaking research to inform the development of a local strategic plan.

The strand will support opportunities to further develop pilot projects and strategic responses to address and reverse the long-term impacts of covid-19 on local economies, particularly where they relate to the high street.

Furthermore, the Fund can be used to develop plans for responding to these impacts, including considering how other funding streams could help address those challenges in the future.

The two local MPs for the District are actively encouraging the use of WBF funding to support the development of bids to the Levelling-Up Fund.

In addition, where temporary changes to the public realm are being proposed as a part of a trial the respective local authority should work in partnership with public sector landowners as appropriate.

- 2.8 Expenditure and claim process: The funding is claimed in arrears and therefore there is a level of risk incurred by the Council if a submitted claim is rejected or grant money received is subsequently 'clawed back' following audit.
- 2.9 Delivery partners – it is possible for other bodies (there's a list that includes other tiers of government, Business Improvement Districts, Destination Management Organisations) to undertake delivery. To do this the Council would need to enter into a formal legal agreement with them and we submit their claim for funding. We have done this with Beer Parish Council, but there are significant resource issues in terms of putting the legal agreements in place, ensuring compliance with the programme and the risk of a claim being unsuccessful.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 The delivery of RHSSF to date has been evolving and iterative (by both the RHSSF and EDDC). This has made the management process highly resource intensive, if there are lessons to be learned from the initial programme it is the need for a comprehensive management plan/ strategy and to identify and set the big themes/ priorities for delivery from the start.
- 3.2 East Devon is very soon to embark upon what could potentially be one of the busiest and most challenging visitor seasons the District has experienced for many years and there are a set of broad proposals/ funding allocations that build upon the existing RHSSF programme adding further measures specifically aimed at supporting key visitor destinations.
- 3.3 In addition, the WBF also offers the potential to utilise funding both for the immediate local economic restart as well as the potential to develop plans for responding to these impacts, including considering how other funding streams could help address those challenges in the future - pursuing longer term economic investment by investing in the development of bids to the Levelling Up Fund.
- 3.4 Before the commencement of the RHSSF delivery role out, the Council undertook consultation with towns and parishes, the findings of which shaped the programme; consultation with local businesses further informed and refined activity.
- 3.5 The WBF activity proposals set out below include a broad programme of activities that will be managed and delivered by the Council, building upon that work delivered to date and responding to the most urgent and pressing needs of the district as it opens up as well as putting in place longer term plans for responding to the medium and long term impact of Covid-19.

- 3.6 We will undertake further targeted stakeholder engagement to further shape and refine delivery on the ground but do not intend a similar programme of consultation as we did for RHSSF.
- 3.7 Potential programmes / activities – all indicative with agreement of Service Leads still needed.

WBF Activity Strand	Delivery Lead	Activity Area	Estimate value
N/A		Management & Administration 4% of WBF allocation - £230,991 (£9,239.64)	See below
1		Action Plan Manager – to coordinate and assist with delivery of projects and submission of claims to ERDF.	Estimated £30,000 (to include the Management & Administration amount)
1	Place & Prosperity Team	Footfall data (programme monitoring)	Estimated <£10,000
2	Communications/ Streetscene/ all	Public Facing Communications (visitor facing) – new emphasis on public spaces, visitor areas, public safety and management of visitor numbers	Estimated £30,000
3	Environmental Health	Covid Compliance/ Information Officers – July 21 – December 2021 (Business facing) including 15% Fixed Rate Costs.	Estimated £26,000
5	Environmental Health/ Community Safety Officer	Marshals - Ideally for half term week commencing 31/05/2021 and for the summer Holidays 26/07/21 to 30/08/2021. Covid Marshals would be available to all towns but with priority deployment as follows: Exmouth, Axminster, Honiton, Seaton and Sidmouth	Estimated <£25,000 (subject to quote)
5	Streetscene	Public Space maintenance, toilets reopening, enhancements to public spaces	Estimated £70,000
6	Growth, Development & Prosperity	Research to inform the development of a local strategic plan over a longer term, The development of datasets including footfall, vacancy rates and sentiment data. To develop Levelling Up Fund proposals for : Exmouth & Seaton	Estimated £100,000
		Figure exceeds funding available of £282,481, need to refine service delivery needs and outcome of procurement	£291,000

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Financial implications:

Financial details out laid out in the report. As explained there is a risk that expenditure incurred although in good faith and best intentions of meeting the requirements of ERDF might when reclaimed not be reimbursed. The mitigation will be to have knowledgeable dedicated resource overseeing the process as set out.

Legal implications:

The scheme is detailed in the related Government guidance and care must be taken to ensure that all of the requirements of the scheme are complied with and actioned accordingly to reduce and mitigate risk, given particularly that the funding is paid in arrears. Legal Services can assist with this and advise on any individual action as instructed. Otherwise there are no specific legal implications requiring comment.

Report to: **Cabinet**

Date of Meeting 12 May 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

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Developing East Devon's tourism and creative arts and cultural sector offer

Report summary:

This report considers the importance of tourism to the economy of the District and what role the Council can play to help the sector to thrive in a post pandemic environment.

The report provides a roadmap for the future development and enhancement of the Council's ambitions for cultural development as articulated in the Statement of Intent. The proposals seek to build on the existing work of the Council focussed mainly around the THG, as a cultural hub and the Arts & Culture Forum through a more cohesive and strategic approach to arts and culture and also seeking to add capacity and resource into meeting these ambitions.

The report also recognises how an enhanced cultural programme can help to support and link into the District's distinctive cultural tourism offer through better promotion, marketing and scaling up of the Council's work in this area that are linked directly to the social and economic recovery of the district – connecting to Team Devon's *Build Devon Back Better* - through cultural tourism, green initiatives, educational opportunities and 'Made in Devon' retail.

The opportunity to place culture at the heart of the Council's recovery planning (both economically and socially) is the main driver for this report and its recommendations.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☐ No ☒

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That Cabinet:

- Note the significance of the tourism sector and culture to the District and the importance of supporting recovery from the impact of the pandemic
- Agrees to progressing a new Tourism Strategy and a revised Cultural Strategy to reflect the new ambitions and opportunities to expand the arts and cultural offer of East Devon with a view to recommending to Council that it supersedes the Culture Strategy 2017-21.
- Receives further reports on the Tourism Strategy and replacement Cultural Strategy as work progresses.
- Endorse the repurposed role of the THG in leading the development of the Council's arts and cultural development ambitions and acting as the cultural hub supporting cross service cultural activities.
- Endorse repurposing the Arts & Culture Forum into Arts Culture East Devon (ACED) which will be supported by the work of the THG as the network for the district's creative arts and culture sector to engage in and also support the bid to Arts Council England to provide funding to manage and fundraise for the network.

That Cabinet recommend to Council:

- That a budget of £50k is made available, to be funded from the Business Rates Retention 100% Pilot Reserve, to develop both a Tourism Strategy and a revised Cultural Strategy.

Reason for recommendation:

To be able to deliver the corporate ambitions identified within the Council's Statement of Intent to develop and enhance the arts and cultural offer as an essential part of the recovery planning work post COVID19 that will help both a social and economic "bounce back". The ability of the East Devon's arts and cultural sector to help support the Council's ambitions for a scaling up of its cultural tourism offer, meeting its climate change emergency response targets and providing a district-wide cultural network (ACED) to engage with the district's creative arts sector.

To ensure that the Council's role in supporting the tourism sector, including in relation to recovering from the impacts of the pandemic, is clearly set out.

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergencies
- ☐ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☐ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☒ Culture, Tourism, Leisure and Sport
- ☐ Democracy and Transparency
- ☒ Economy and Assets
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Medium Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; The report scopes out the potential roadmap for scaling up the Council's stated ambitions for its cultural work linking into tourism, communities, the environment and our events programme. The risk issues are centred around the current capacity of the Council's arts development team and budget being unable to deliver on these ambitions without further resourcing to enable delivery on the recommendations within the report.

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ Outstanding Place and Environment
 - ☒ Outstanding Homes and Communities
 - ☒ Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
 - ☒ Outstanding Council and Council Services
-

Report in full

1. Background and context

The Cambridge Dictionary defines tourism simply as the business or providing services such as transport, places to stay or entertainment for people who are on holiday. The reality is that

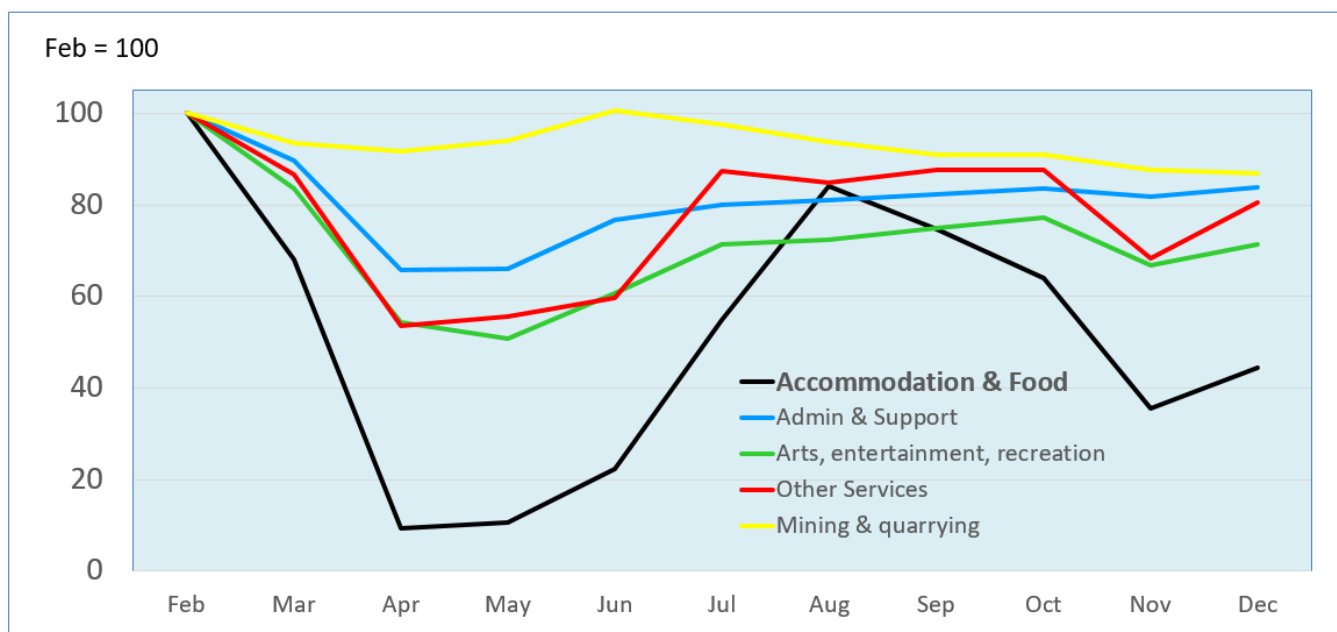
the tourism sector is one of the largest employers globally and that the industry that supports it is diverse, multi-faceted and complex. Different countries, areas and places compete for custom and trade based on the strength of their relative offers.

Devon has one of the largest visitor economies in Britain, drawing in visitor spend of almost £2.5bn per year, primarily driven by the quality of the natural environment. The County attracted 24 million overnight stays from visitors from across the UK and the world in 2016, contributing £2.5bn to its economy and employing 12% of the County's workforce. There are twice as many tourism business in Devon than the national average

In 2015 East Devon attracted over 500,000 domestic and international trips. This resulted in over 2m night stays and spend of £117m. This was combined with nearly 4m day trips with associated spend of over £135m. The sector is one of the District's largest employers with three times the national average of accommodation businesses. The relative productivity of the sector, as measured by the value added by employee, has though remained low (£17,180 as opposed to an East Devon sector average of £20,562 in 2012). Employment is also concentrated in specific areas, notably along the coast. It has been estimated that 28% of employment in Sidmouth, 19% in Exmouth and 14% in Budleigh Salterton is directly related to tourism.

2. Impact of the Pandemic

There is no doubt that the tourism sector has been heavily impacted by the pandemic. This has included business going in to administration, such as Shearings. The following graph shows the five most impacted sectors in the UK in terms of GVA during 2020.



The following tables also illustrate that the accommodation and food sector in conjunction with those in the arts, entertainment and recreation sector have both the highest proportion of employees furloughed and the businesses with less than three months cash flow.

Proportion of Employment Furloughed – UK (source: Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey)

Industry	04/05 - 17/05	27/07-09/08	21/09-04/10	16/11-29/11	14/12-27/12	25/01-07/02
Manufacturing	37.6%	21.3%	23.6%	26.2%	27.6%	27.2%
Water Supply, Waste Mgt	48.4%	31.6%	33.1%	29.0%	32.3%	24.8%
Construction	56.8%	32.3%	32.9%	37.8%	40.1%	38.8%
Wholesale And Retail Trade	41.8%	22.5%	20.2%	24.8%	27.6%	27.8%
Transportation And Storage	49.4%	28.2%	26.6%	26.0%	27.8%	27.6%
Accommodation And Food	66.0%	39.9%	40.1%	48.7%	51.7%	51.3%
Information And Comms	*	19.3%	21.6%	24.8%	24.1%	21.4%
Real Estate Activities	37.8%	21.5%	28.2%	31.1%	26.1%	27.7%
Professional And Technical	46.8%	23.5%	23.1%	24.7%	28.0%	27.8%
Administrative And Support	51.8%	33.6%	34.0%	35.6%	36.7%	35.2%
Education	35.9%	19.2%	24.2%	19.6%	24.2%	23.2%
Human Health And Social Work	35.4%	25.4%	28.7%	27.9%	30.5%	29.1%
Arts, Entertain And Recreation	58.2%	36.6%	25.7%	32.2%	36.0%	37.8%
Other Services			43.0%	53.2%	45.1%	52.8%
All Industries	46.5%	26.8%	27.0%	30.1%	32.1%	31.6%

Businesses with less than 3 months cash flow (source: Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey)

Industry	04/05 - 17/05	27/07-09/08	05/10-18/10	16/11-29/11	30/11-13/12	11/01-24/01
Manufacturing	29.1%	8.9%	3.8%	4.5%	3.8%	5.2%
Water Supply, Waste Mgt	15.3%	4.7%	2.9%	4.8%	4.2%	5.0%
Construction	46.6%	9.2%	2.5%	2.7%	2.8%	3.9%
Wholesale And Retail Trade	23.2%	5.2%	5.6%	17.7%	8.5%	21.9%
Transportation And Storage	38.0%	18.6%	10.9%	12.4%	12.2%	14.2%
Accommodation And Food	82.7%	26.6%	17.5%	42.1%	32.7%	50.8%
Information And Comms	13.1%	7.2%	3.0%	3.8%	3.4%	4.8%
Real Estate Activities	27.1%	12.6%	4.7%	8.9%	6.7%	8.5%
Professional And Technical	15.1%	8.6%	3.9%	3.3%	2.6%	3.8%
Administrative And Support	33.9%	23.8%	11.8%	17.1%	14.3%	17.6%
Education	11.4%	8.7%	3.2%	4.4%	4.6%	7.4%
Human Health And Social Work	7.7%	3.6%	1.8%	3.1%	2.2%	4.2%
Arts, Entertain And Recreation	72.2%	50.7%	27.3%	53.4%	36.8%	58.8%
Other Services	n/a	n/a	15.4%	28.1%	28.0%	26.3%
All Industries	30.9%	13.2%	7.7%	15.5%	10.8%	18.3%

The County Council has recently undertaken a survey of business confidence levels, bookings and prospects for 2021 in the tourism and hospitality sectors. Between February and November 2020 it was estimated that approximately £1.23bn of anticipated tourism business turnover has been lost in Devon due to COVID-19, despite some respite with re-openings. In the November 2020 lockdown alone it was estimated that, as a result of the lost tourism spend, approximately £22 million of supply chain spend is also unlikely to have occurred. 77% of Devon businesses taking part in the survey were closed for the whole of November 2020 as a result of COVID-19, the average turnover change of those still open was -64% of November 2019 turnover.

Despite the tangible impacts from the pandemic on the tourism sector there is now a strong sense of optimism regarding the coming summer period. In the context of ongoing restrictions on international travel, there is significant demand for domestic 'staycations' with evidence of rising prices. In fact attention is now turning to addressing the potential consequences of excess demand and 'over-tourism'. This ranges from potential congestion and dealing with large numbers of motorhomes through to the emptying of bins and the impact on public conveniences. A new 'Reopening Tourism Safely' group has been formed at the Heart of the South West level to coordinate activity strategically in this respect.

3. What role can the Council play in support the tourism sector?

The tourism sector is clearly of significant economic importance to the District. It is relatively diverse and there are a number of leading private businesses providing everything from

accommodation to attractions. The District Council's role in relation to supporting tourism has shifted over time from funding large scale marketing and promotion activity and supporting the operation of Tourist Information Centres to bringing forward physical regeneration projects, such as Seaton Jurassic and Queen's Drive space, designed to improve the offer of specific places. Most recently the Council's role has focused on deploying business grants to compensate for the impact on trade of the national and local restrictions. This is alongside the provision of street scene services, beach safety and maintenance of greenspaces.

As restrictions begin to be lifted there is the opportunity to consider the Council's role going forward and how this can help to support recovery and add value to the sector. It is likely that it will need to focus on improving qualitative outcomes, including raising productivity, for the tourism sector rather than simply the pursuit of more tourists and visitors. Specific dimensions to this could include the following;

- Harnessing the potential to promote culture-led tourism – for example by leveraging the programmes of the Thelma Hulbert Gallery and the Manor Pavilion Theatre within the context of the cultural strategy and the Arts & Culture East Devon partnership
- Spreading the geographic focus across the District – for example by working with the AONB partnership and to bring forward initiatives such as the Clyst Valley Regional Park in conjunction with partners such as the National Trust
- Promoting green and eco-tourism – the ability to also support tourism through the provision of EV charging points in our car parks was highlighted recently. Also around 70% of all visitors to Devon are attracted by the quality of the environment which turn speaks to the stewardship role of the farming and forestry sectors as well as to our own role in providing natural attractions such as Seaton Wetlands
- Addressing skills shortages in the sector by working with relevant organisations and the FE sector to ensure provision of relevant training – shortages are likely to be particularly pronounced in the post Brexit environment
- Supporting private sector-led initiatives such as East Devon Excellence – this brings together a range of leading businesses in the District with the potential to support wider industries such as in relation to food and drink.
- Ensuring a thriving festival and events scene – including linking to our own events strategy
- Place making – including utilising the Council's own assets to further develop the offer of specific places. This could range from public realm improvements through to the development of improved facilities.
- Supporting investment - the government recently confirm details of the Welcome Back Fund which will help support the safe return of shoppers and tourists. The deployment of these funds will need to move forward in conjunction with partners such as town councils. Equally there is an opportunity to help sustain recovery through the proposed Adaptation, Innovation and Resilience Fund and to bid into national programmes such as the Levelling Up Fund.

The Statement of Intent commits to producing a tourism strategy. The following are identified under the 'A Resilient Economy' heading:

- Sustainable & green tourism as part of promoting our rural economy
- the need for a Tourism Strategy that focusses on our natural and cultural environments

...and under 'Better Homes & Communities for All':

- Delivering a wide range of events & activities on our land consistent with our Culture Strategy & developing and Events Strategy
- Developing a new Cultural Quarter in Exmouth as part of the seafront regeneration programme that brings the creative arts into the vision for a new tourism offer for the town

It is clearly important that the production of this strategy now moves forward and helps to enshrine the points outlined above and defines specific objectives, outcomes and actions. This

will need to be produced in partnership with key stakeholders including industry representatives and be considered by Cabinet prior to adoption.

It is a specific recommendation of this report that a budget of £50k is made available to fund both the production of a tourism strategy and a cultural development strategy. The latter is the subject of a separate but related report on developing the District's creative arts sector and cultural tourism offer.

Two further factors have become evident in writing this paper. The first is that our evidence base by which to understand and measure the tourism sector is substantially out of date. East Devon has not been part of the Visit Devon's 'Value of Tourism' survey since 2015. Steps are now being taken to address this. The second is that East Devon lacks profile within an already crowded marketplace in terms of Destination Management Organisations (DMOs). In March 2021, the government announced an independent review to assess how DMOs across England are funded and structured, and how they perform their roles, in order to establish whether there may be a more efficient and effective model for supporting English tourism at the regional level, and if so what that model may be. Recommendations are due to be made to the Secretary of State this summer and this will need to be taken in to account in the future strategy.

4. The value of culture

4.1 In the Arts Council England report - 'The Value of Arts & Culture to People and Society' there are five key ways arts and culture can boost local economies:

- Attracting visitors;
- Creating jobs and developing skills;
- Attracting and retaining businesses;
- Revitalising places;
- Developing talent.

4.2 Those who had attended a cultural place or event in the previous 12 months were almost 60% more likely to report good health compared to those who had not, and theatre goers were almost 25% more likely to report good health. Research has shown that high frequency of engagement with arts and culture is generally associated with a higher level of subjective wellbeing as well as improve the cognitive abilities of children and young people. There is also strong evidence that participation in the arts can contribute to community cohesion, reduce social exclusion and isolation, and make communities feel safer and stronger

4.3 The arts and culture industry has grown by £390 million in a year and now contributes £10.8 billion a year to the UK economy. The sector contributes £2.8 billion a year to the Treasury via taxation, and generates a further £23 billion a year and 363,700 jobs.

4.4 Cultural Tourism also plays a crucial role in today's economy. In 2018 it represented 37% of the total tourism sector, with an annual growth of approximately 15%.

- With the COVID-19 pandemic, it is estimated that international tourism fell by around 80% in 2020.
- There is an opportunity to build a more resilient tourism economy, promoting digital transition and rethinking a more sustainable tourism system.
- East Devon has a high cultural, social and environmental potential.

4.5 The LGA refer to the 'pulling power' of arts and culture: visitors to a theatre, museum, or festival spend money on their ticket or entrance fee, meals in local restaurants, spending in local shops, or perhaps hotel bookings as part of their visit. The value of arts and culture to

society has long been debated. We know that arts and culture play an important role in promoting social and economic goals through local regeneration, attracting tourists, developing talent and innovation, improving health and wellbeing, and contributing to the delivery of public services. These benefits are 'instrumental' because art and culture can be a means to achieve ends beyond the immediate intrinsic experience and value of the art itself.

4.6 In its report - *LGA local.gov.uk: The impact of COVID-19 on culture, leisure tourism and sport* it has clearly evidenced the following relevant issues:

- the explosion of culture, sport and leisure consumption and participation during lockdown has demonstrated that these are among the services that really matter to residents. Their value is far greater than the entertainment they provide: they are essential to people's mental and physical health.
- Secondly, councils will have a crucial role to play in delivering economic recovery. Prior to the pandemic, the creative industries were the fastest growing part of the economy, along with tourism. These businesses are integral to our recovery and part of a complex ecosystem which includes the services funded and delivered by councils.
- Lastly as this research has shown, the impact of COVID-19 on culture, leisure, tourism and sport has been severe and this position is likely to remain challenging in the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, this sector has a vital role to play in the nation's recovery. Expenditure on culture and leisure organisations is not a sunk cost; it is an investment in the health and wellbeing of a place and its residents.

4.7 The Arts Council England (ACE) Strategy 2020-2030 'Let's Create' has set out an ambition to achieve by 2030, that England is a country in which "the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish, and where every one of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences". To be achieved through;

- **Creative People:** Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life.
- **Cultural Communities:** Villages, towns and cities thrive through a collaborative approach to culture.
- **A creative and cultural country:** England's cultural sector is innovative, collaborative and international.

It is through this ACE Strategy ambition and also the LGA's 'Creative Places: Supporting your local creative economy' 2020 document that this report will seek to establish how the Council can put in place various programmes, resources and partnerships to build on its existing commitments within the arts and cultural sectors and also establish a clear "roadmap" to how this can further support the development of East Devon's cultural visitor economy.

5. EDDC's repurposed cultural programme 2020/21

5.1 The majority of the creative arts and cultural work undertaken by the Council is through the Thelma Hulbert Gallery and its Out & About programme which delivers the most high profile projects and PR campaigns that brings a focus to the importance and value of arts and culture within our district. Other important cultural providers are The Manor Pavilion Theatre, Sidmouth which has a popular and successful programme of dance, musicals, drama, comedy and ballet performances throughout the year and is an award winning community theatre.

5.2 The Wild East Devon and AONB teams also deliver programmes which connect culture with our outstanding environment and promote the value of our rich cultural heritage. LED through the Exmouth Pavilion also supports a popular programme of entertainment and finally more

recently the work of the Events Officer has started to explore opportunities for enabling new events activities such as music festivals and outdoor theatre.

5.3 There is no clearly defined cultural or tourism service within the Council and it is through these services along with our Economic Development team which provide the majority of the advice, support and outputs that help to support our visitor economy and provide a diverse and exciting programme of creative arts and cultural activities

5.4 Following recent discussions within the Leadership Group, Portfolio Holders and Culture Champion and the recent Arts and Culture Forum there is a clear ambition to develop on the work of the THG and the Arts & Culture Forum to provide Cultural Leadership and a district wide role for arts development and also supporting our creative arts and cultural sector. This is articulated within the Statement of Intent that will feed into the reworked Council Plan. In the last 18 months the THG has developed a much greater focus on arts and cultural development across the district, delivering the council's priorities through arts and culture, alongside it's already well established and respected exhibition programme. There has been an overwhelmingly positive response from communities and the creative arts sector to this focus but with this it has highlighted that there are capacity issues within the THG team.

5.5 The THG's core work programme currently focusses on:

- Curating a diverse programme between 5 and 7 exhibitions of contemporary art and craft The programme responds to our local community, our local heritage and all our visitors through projects, exhibitions, open selections, touring exhibitions, often including works by artists of national or international significance
- Events - garden parties, feasts, symposiums, artist talks, music events, festivals, film screenings...and much more (revenue raising) craft fair, contemporary craft festival, Gate to Plate, Exmouth festival, Sidmouth sea festival, Honiton festival of imagination, Honiton show.
- Outreach work - a parallel programme working with Young People, Elderly, Schools, and local marginal groups: Families from low socio-economic backgrounds in East Devon e.g. EDDC's housing tenants team & Honiton Children's Centre. Working with rurally isolated older people e.g. Honiton Memory Café and Honiton Dementia Alliance – intergenerational, Devon Insight (people dealing with sight-loss in East Devon. Also working with new audiences with little experience of cultural engagement - non arts partnerships (Forestry England, East Devon AONB, RSPB, Sidmouth Walking Festival, LED Walking for Health, Clinton Devon Estates, EDDC's Countryside team – Wild East Devon. Finally with Community Mental wellness such as NHS – Devon Recovery Learning Network, Arts & Health South West & Honiton Mental Health Friendly Town
- Volunteering and participation - supporting 30+ volunteers in a range of roles: Visitor Experience, Retail, Learning, gardening and events. Following recognised best practice in volunteer management
- Partnership building and advocacy - partners already established in 2021 include: RD&E and North Devon Health Trust (NHS), Routes to Roots, Wild East Devon, AONB Blackdown Hill and East Devon, University of Exeter, the Devon and Exeter Institution, Libraries Unlimited, Devon Artist Network, UNESCO City of Literature, AYCH – Atlantic Youth Creative Hub , Culture Declares Emergency, TATE, Artist Room, Arts Council Collection, Visual Arts South West, SW Museum Partnership, Museum Association, Family Arts Festival, Double Elephant Print Workshop, Natural England, Serpentine Gallery (Melissa Blanchflower)
- Retail and commercial - curation and management of a respected craft and design shop in Honiton with additional online outlet. Manages over 30 ranges of SW based maker/designers. Revenue created is £14K per year and the THG is the only in-house commercial product offer for EDDC

The new post COVID-19 repurposed district wide arts development work the THG has been leading on since 2020 now includes the following programmes:

- **THG 'Out & About'** is our way of bringing the benefits of cultural activities direct to the residents of East Devon and shine a spotlight on the districts outstanding natural environment for all to enjoy. It makes cultural activities accessible and a '*way of life*', where everyone can enjoy culture in the outdoors, benefiting health and wellbeing. THG Out and About works in the outdoors to engage diverse audiences through participatory, interactive and unusual creative processes. It employs a range of creative practitioners from poets to artists, sculptors to designers, sharing ideas on our heritage and natural environment, inspiring and exciting communities locally, nationally and globally
- **The Creative Cabin:** in August 2020 THG, together with Wild East Devon launched a new travelling creative space - the Creative Cabin. This was developed as a fun and creative space to explore art and nature in your neighbourhood safely during the Covid 19 pandemic. The Cabin hosts a broad range of activities, projects, talks, films, performances and workshops which creatively explore our relationship to nature and the climate emergency.



- THG has developed the first strand of the Council's Climate Emergency behaviour change public programme - **Climate Conversations 2021**, a multi-site public programme and touring project developed within the context of East Devon District Council's commitment to Devon's Climate Change Emergency declaration and University of Exeter's declaration of an environment and climate emergency. Together we will creatively explore the climate

emergency through exhibitions, workshops, volunteering opportunities and resources. Working with our partners ANOB, and the University of Exeter we will assist communities to understand complex issues and make real sustainable changes by bringing communities together on a shared challenge.

- **Public Art Commissions and Regeneration projects:** With its specialist knowledge in the curation, delivery and programming of public art projects in both urban and rural areas THG is now starting to deliver these projects. To date the THG has consulted on a Section 106 public art commissions, delivered a public art project for GWR, designed an award winning 'Pocket park' with artist Michael Fairfax and most recently a community mural in Exmouth.

Case Study: THG commission 2020: The Abode of Love in Exmouth.



The Abode of Love is a flood defence in Exmouth. In 2019, East Devon District Council invited Thelma Hulbert Gallery (THG) to develop an ambitious arts commission for the area complementing the new waterfront developments in 2020 and addressing anti-social behaviour. It was part of a wider initiative celebrating Exmouth, placing culture and creativity at its heart. Due to Covid-19, the project could no longer go ahead, however THG and artist Anna Fitzgerald pledged their commitment to develop a creative response to Exmouth. Anna Fitzgerald created 'To be continued...' a site-specific commission at the Abode of Love where the community of Exmouth including artists and designers collectively transformed the walls with vibrant coloured pixels.

Part II of the project will take place in August 2021

6. Arts and Culture East Devon (ACED)

- 6.1 Against the context of Covid19, THG took the initiative to develop a public forum to support the cultural and creative sector in its recovery from the pandemic. All cultural services such as local arts, theatres, museums and galleries, festivals, music events, public art, those working with local social, wellbeing, inclusion and economic development agendas, and creative businesses are all invited to participate in a supportive network developing a creative economy and stabilising the cultural ecology of the district.

Brand in development:



6.2 This scaled up Forum will provide the platform for the district's diverse and influential "family" of cultural and creative arts organisations and groups to have a visibility and profile under the rebranding of the original Arts & Culture Forum into ACED. The benefits of such a platform are clearly evidenced in other local authorities such as Exeter, Torbay, Taunton & West Somerset, Cornwall etc. where the joining up cross all the creative arts sectors has brought exciting new initiatives, funding, long lasting social and economic benefits into communities and towns as well as inspiring the next generation of cultural providers.

6.3 The forum is also the first step in launching East Devon's visible cultural tourism campaign.

ACED aims:

- Embed the role of the arts in the cultural, social, educational, environmental and economic life of the district by providing a **supportive network**
- Support advocacy work for local arts and culture services and identify areas for **collaboration**
- Share news, **best practice**, plans and ambitions- aiding **communication** between arts practitioners, arts organisations, non-arts organisations, local government and regional and national bodies
- Develop and **promote** local authority arts and culture-led economic growth initiatives
- Support an increase in **engagement** in cultural activity in the District, developing a healthy social and cultural ecology which **enriches communities and visitors**

It is the intention of ACED to help deliver the cultural ambitions stated within the Statement of Intent and also meet the Arts Council England vision in their 'Let's Create' 2020-30 strategy which will help East Devon DC to align its cultural ambitions with the Government's cultural priorities and secure support and funding for future programmes

7. Resourcing the cultural ambitions

7.1 It is this expanded cross district portfolio of programmes, activities and events that is now driving the cultural development within the Council. The recent development of a Climate Change focused programme - 'Climate Conversations' has shown how the THG can be important conveners bringing together strategic partnership across the locality.

7.2 It is clear that the importance of the THG team has grown experientially in the last 2 years, supporting the Council in wider strategic corporate priorities and also through adopted plans such as the Public Health Plan, Climate Change Strategy and Events Strategy and also linking

into high profile regeneration schemes such as Queens Drive and the seafront enhancements in Exmouth through the Abode of Love project. This alongside sympathetically and innovatively responding to the challenges posed by Covid19.

- 7.3 The need to bring these “threads of cultural activity” together clearly necessitates the need for an overarching Cultural Strategy for the Council which spearheads all cultural activity across services including Streetscene, Countryside, Economic Development, Housing and Property Services. The THG can be used as a “cultural engine”, coordinating with Council teams who engage with art and culture. This will prove most effective in securing funding and provide a joined up approach for PR, aiding cultural tourism.
- 7.4 To continue operating at this ambition, managing a multitude of sites, projects and initiatives, the team needs to be restructured to reflect the increasing workload, responsibility and contribution to EDDC’s strategic plan, specifically with the new ‘ACED’ work stream. The gallery and all its wider activity is currently managed by only 2.5 members of staff.
- 7.5 The team can provide vital support to all services in the council engaging with arts and culture; from public art commissioning to retail merchandising, to outreach, participation and Creative PR, their value is clear. If teams are given capacity to work together collaboratively and support embedded work streams driven by a cultural strategy, it will save the council money in the longer term.

8. Cultural benefits to the visitor economy

- 8.1 In a similar vein following discussions with Portfolio Holders responsible for the economy, culture and tourism there is a linked ambition to promote the diverse and unique cultural sector in the district as an important part of the economic recovery work being undertaken by the Council.
- 8.2 The main area of focus so far has been on tourism in particular the role of cultural tourism and the promotion of the district’s unique and varied cultural offer that could provide a 5-10% uplift in visitor spend into the local economy of the district. The challenges of enabling that uplift and the role that East Devon DC could bring to this sector/theme that adds value to the existing providers in the sector.
- 8.3 This is potentially a significant area of work that crosses many Service areas who have an active role and vested interest in the absence of a bespoke tourism budget and tourism officers. The Council was engaged in tourism development some 10+ yrs. ago working with our tourism sector, and various Destination Management Organisations, TICs and at the time SW Tourism to help promote, support and join up a coherent brand for our visitor economy.
- 8.4 There have been some initial discussions between Portfolio Holders and Officers to further explore how the Council can meaningfully re-engage a role and purpose for the district’s visitor economy. This is potentially a significant area of work that crosses many Service areas who have an active role and vested interest in the absence of a bespoke tourism budget and tourism officers.
- 8.5 This time around there is a view that any value added by East Devon DC re-engaging should be much more targeted and focussed on where we can support organisations and digital platforms that are already in existence e.g. East Devon Excellence and where we can provide content e.g. our cultural and countryside activities & events. There is also an opportunity to draw upon funding programmes being made available for the rebooting of our economy post COVID such as the SW LEPs ‘Levelling Up’ fund and the District’s own AIR Fund enabling projects such as Exmouth’s Cultural Quarter idea to be led as a cultural regeneration initiative that brings together all the various visitor attractions together in a coherent offer for the visitor.

8.6 There are already District Council led “bounce back” programmes we are continuing to develop and invest in initiatives led such as the work to help revitalise our High Streets, help salvage the future of Exeter airport and provide advice to our local businesses that operate tourism businesses. This work is in addition and compliments this work and tries to bring into a more coherent narrative for how we are supporting our visitor economy.

8.7 So what are the potential proposals and opportunities for developing our cultural tourism offer but ensuring that it dovetails into the wider work outlined in this report for the district’s wider cultural sector?

- To develop a cultural tourism offer working with East Devon Excellence by providing content, activities & events to “scale up” our digital presence platform
- To commission external advice to develop a Tourism Strategy that meets the ambitions set out in the Statement of Intent

9. A way forward for East Devon DC’s cultural ambitions

9.1 It is clear that to bring together the ambitions highlighted within this report alongside the existing high profile programmes being delivered by the THG, Manor Pavilion theatre, Wild East Devon and more recently the Events Officer there is a need to replace the existing Cultural Strategy 2017-2021 which is more narrowly focussed to a broader more encompassing Cultural Strategy that reflects the new areas of work such as the potential of culturally led regeneration schemes in the district, the value of our cultural sector for developing our visitor economy and scaling up of our support and promotion of the district’s diverse and vibrant creative arts community.

9.2 Alongside a newly commissioned Cultural Strategy is a need to develop a Tourism Strategy for the district which will help to provide an important link to these cultural development ambitions as there are potentially significant opportunities to develop the cultural tourism offer in East Devon that has a focus primarily on our rural hinterland area as our coastal areas have a well marketed and thriving visitor offer. This work has been picked up by the Service Lead – Growth, Development & Prosperity.

9.3 The developing role of ACED will also provide an important “voice” for the district’s grassroots cultural and creative arts sector that can help to create new opportunities to market, promote and support the sector as well as link into the cultural tourism offer. This network will require support and over the next 6 months it will be supported through the THG team leading to a longer term solution with a proposed new funding application to the Arts Council England to fully fund this role.

10. Summary

Tourism is a significant sector of the East Devon economy. There is an important opportunity to review how the Council can best support recovery post pandemic and add value to the sector. This will need to be developed in to a tourism strategy that will be considered further by Cabinet.

This report has attempted to reflect the creative arts and cultural ambitions of the Political Administration articulated within its Statement of Intent and the way that all the Council’s arts and culture teams have started to mould that into a coherent and exciting programme of projects, activities and new platforms.

The THG has and is showing that it can also be the Council’s primary vehicle for delivering this Council-wide arts and cultural development programme by taking a lead for these areas and

integrating into other Council priorities such as climate change and cultural tourism and regeneration. The successes of many of the programmes within this report have been achieved through close collaboration with other teams such as Wild East Devon, Events, LED and Streetscene.

The ability to “kick on” from here and showcase the value of culture in helping our communities recover from the pandemic or start the conversation with our local residents about how they can engage meaningfully with climate change issues requires an overarching strategic framework that places culture at the heart of the Council’s corporate documents recognising the intrinsic value of culture to our district’s wellbeing and how we can recover from the impacts of the pandemic economically as well as socially.

Financial implications:

The financial details are contained in the report with a request of a £50k budget to meet one off cost being met from a specific reserve. The financial implications that may arise from these Strategies are unknown and will have to be considered by Council along with other priorities.

Legal implications:

The revised Cultural Strategy will require adoption by Council as it is part of the Policy Framework while the Tourism Strategy is a matter for Cabinet. Should Cabinet endorse the repurposing of the Arts & Culture Forum, this will be included within the changes to be presented to Annual Council. Otherwise there are no legal implications requiring comment.

Report to: **Cabinet**

Date of Meeting 12 May 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release



Seaton Jurassic

Report summary:

This report sets out the current position in relation to Seaton Jurassic Visitor Centre and Devon Wildlife Trust's (DWT) proposed exit of the building on 17th September 2021 and the recommended steps EDDC will need to take over the next few months.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

- (1) That Cabinet note the position with Seaton Jurassic Visitor Centre and agree the next steps outlined in the report.

Reason for recommendation:

The centre will fall back under the direct responsibility of the Council in September 2021 and members will need to be able to consider options on future use.

Officer: Simon Davey – Strategic Lead Finance

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergencies
- ☒ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☐ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☒ Culture, Tourism, Leisure and Sport
- ☐ Democracy and Transparency
- ☒ Economy and Assets
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Strategic Planning
- ☐ Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Medium Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; The responsibility for the building will fall to the Council from the 17th September. This has immediate financial implications with rates, insurance and other liabilities and the reputational implications of such a facility not being in use. There are also obligations the Council must follow in accordance with funding agreements when the centre was built.

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ Outstanding Place and Environment
 - ☐ Outstanding Homes and Communities
 - ☒ Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
 - ☐ Outstanding Council and Council Services
-

Report in full

Background

Seaton Jurassic Centre occupies a prominent position in the heart of Seaton. It opened in March 2016 and cost £4.2m, with £1.7m provided by external funding from Heritage Lottery Fund, Devon County Council, Seaton Town Council, Coastal Community Fund and other smaller donors. The building was leased to Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) for a period of 35 years after a Tender process and they have operated the Centre for the last five years under a shared profit arrangement.

DWT have sublet part of the building to a café operator to generate an income stream and there is also a small tourist information facility within the building which is run by DWT and we understand funded by the Town Council.

DWT have approached EDDC as landlord to terminate their lease early as they claim the current operation is not viable. The trading agreement that sits alongside the lease does allow for their occupation to cease under certain conditions.

It is understood that DWT are likely to have limited opening of the centre during the coming months, exact details are unclear.

Aside from the decision of DWT to vacate, there are significant building defects identified over the past few months by both DWT and EDDC that will need remedying before the building can be used further. The issues known to date relate to the plant within the building as opposed to the construction itself but requires further exploration and addressing to ensure that the building can be operational.

DWT wrote to EDDC on 12th March 2021 to confirm they wished to step away from the Centre as the risk of committing further funds to upgrading the Displays was too great when considering the losses they'd made in recent years. DWT have requested an exit date of 17th September 2021. Legal Services have advised DWT that a compliant break notice must be served following the provisions set out in the Trading Agreement as there is no break clause in the lease itself. A response is awaited but its expected conditions will be met in order to facilitate their requested exit date. Once the correct notice has been served the Council will need to enter into discussion with DWT in respect of the conditions of them returning the Centre to EDDC – repairing & maintenance

responsibilities, dealings with sub tenants and other operators, tenant's fixtures and fittings and stock on premises. We will also need to address the keep-open provisions for the period until their lease ends.

The building and all associated liabilities – rates, insurance, utilities etc. will fall to EDDC from the date DWT legally exit the building and until a new occupier is identified and takes on the Centre. These costs are being established but rates alone are £17,465 a year.

The Café Kitchen operated by Taste Of The West was professionally designed and installed fully equipped with microwaves, fridges etc. prior to the commencement of DWT's occupation so will remain as part of the building when they exit and will be available to use by a Café operator.

Principal Funding Agreements are with DCC, CCF & HLF. These documents are currently being reviewed and the legal obligations on both parties will be considered. It is important for EDDC to follow the obligations within these funding agreements to ensure that there is no financial penalty for the Centre closing at this premature date. Any new use of the Centre will likely need to be supported by the Funding agreements. Discussions need to proceed with the funders to ascertain what the funders' positions are at this time and to understand what future use can be made of the premises without jeopardising the funding as this will be key to EDDC next steps.

This work will be resource intensive for the Place, Assets & Commercialisation service but also for other parts of the Council. It is intended the work will be led by an Interim Place & Prosperity Surveyor, already appointed, but it needs to be recognised that the resource costs of taking this forward will be significant – dealing with DWT, liaising with funders, preparing an options report, tendering (if proceed down that route) and putting in place a new lease. For the tendering but also the building issues, the Council is likely to need to bring in external consultants to advice. Furthermore, the building defects will need to be put right before any new use is applied and the costs of this alone will likely be significant. A detailed breakdown of costs will be presented in due course as part of any options report.

Next Steps

Before the Council can make a decision on how this building is to be used after September there are a number of steps that need to be considered as set out below.

1. Further due diligence in respect of:
 - a. The obligations and arrangements for DWT to vacate including service and acceptance of a valid break notice as permitted within the trading agreement.
 - b. The building condition and implications on future uses.
 - c. Obligations through funding agreements over future uses.
2. Options report on future uses – Following soft market engagement and viability appraisals, consider scenarios of EDDC operating versus marketing to 3rd party operators.

There has already been credible interest shown in the future operation of the building and the Council is likely to wish to tie in future use with its own tourism priorities and the promotion of the Wetlands.

3. Options report to be presented to Cabinet/Council for decision.
4. Alongside the 3 steps above, appraise and plan for EDDC holding costs until such time as a new operator (EDDC or other) is occupying and trading. Undertake possible steps to mitigate these costs.

Financial implications:

There are no direct implications at this stage but the future financial implications could be significant.

Legal implications:

Legal Services are assisting in assisting colleagues in dealing with the vacation of DWT from the Seaton Jurassic Building. It is key that the provisions of the legal documentation are followed to avoid additional risk to the Council. The provisions of the funding agreements need to be considered to avoid the risk of early payback of any of the funding streams.

Report to: **Cabinet**

Date of Meeting 12 May 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Consideration of Public consultation by Cabinet to enable variance of the Exmouth ASB Public Spaces Protection Order 2020 – 2023

Report summary:

To seek approval to vary the existing Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) for the control of ASB & consumption of Intoxicating substances in Exmouth, as required by the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014. This order already includes, a restriction on the consumption of intoxicating substances in certain designated streets of Exmouth and Sidmouth. The varied order could include addition of beach areas in Exmouth and certain locations identified as anticipated displacement. Exmouth Town Council will be consulted and invited to suggest amendments where they have evidence of an issue not currently covered by these controls. A public consultation period would be conducted. The council has the ability to further review the order during the next 2 years.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

1 That Cabinet resolve to carry out public consultation on proposals to vary the Exmouth ASB Public Spaces Protection Order 2020 -2023 as detailed in the report and receive a report with recommendations once the consultation has concluded.

Reason for recommendation:

The authority to go to public consultation and the urgent implementation of the variance of the change will allow for the order if agreed to be in place for the summer period 2021. This is a period where an increase in related anti-social behaviour problems can be anticipated due to the staycation.

Officer: David Whelan Community Safety Coordinator

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergencies
- ☒ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☐ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☒ Culture, Tourism, Leisure and Sport
- ☐ Democracy and Transparency
- ☐ Economy and Assets
- ☐ Finance

- ☐ Strategic Planning
- ☒ Sustainable Homes and Communities

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; The review of the PSPO ensuring continuing relevance is a requirement of the Act and allows the council to retain controls over some problems caused by certain other behaviours which affect our residents and visitors. Variances to the order can be made to reflect the recent change in local behaviour and maintain the necessary enforcement mechanism for dealing with these specified issues. The basis of the variance could be misinterpreted by individuals as a ban on alcohol rather than a control on associated Anti-Social Behaviour.

Links to background information [Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ Outstanding Place and Environment
- ☒ Outstanding Homes and Communities
- ☐ Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- ☒ Outstanding Council and Council Services

Report in full

1. PSPOs are tools under the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 which are intended to deal with particular nuisances or problems affecting a specified area that are detrimental to the local community's way of life. They can be used for a wide range of problems. The area may be as small as a play park or as large as the district of the local authority as a whole.

2. A PSPO can be made by the council if it is satisfied on reasonable grounds that the activities carried out, or likely to be carried out, in a public space:

- Have had, or are likely to have, a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality;

And that the effect or likely effect of the activities:

- Is or is likely to be persistent or continuing in nature;
- Is or is likely to be unreasonable and
- Justifies the restrictions imposed.

3. PSPOs are used to control a range of activities where there is evidence of detriment. The following controls were included in the 2017 orders and have been retained in the 2020 orders. Control of anti-social behaviour and the consumption of intoxicating substances in Exmouth and Sidmouth – this order relates to a number of designated streets in Exmouth and Sidmouth where certain controls are needed at the request of Devon and Cornwall Police in order to enable them to manage behaviours. The streets included are those where there have been particular problems in past years. Although only 2 fixed penalty notices have been served under this order since its introduction, the ability to use the power to move individuals on and remove containers of alcohol is implemented weekly by the police. The businesses from the local area of the Strand ring on a weekly basis to report street drinking and anti-social behaviour during warmer weather, which the police respond to and deal with.

4. Over the last 3 years the Environmental Protection team have publicised the order on several occasions, they have talked to town and parish councils, community groups, residents,

businesses and visitors. They have also arranged for all the areas covered by specific orders to be appropriately signed and the orders themselves are on the council's website.

5. A person observed not to be complying with the PSPO is liable to receive a fixed penalty notice of £80. The alternative is to take enforcement action in the Magistrates Court. Some council officers and police officers are authorised to enforce the requirements of the orders.

6. There is a requirement in the legislation for interested parties to be consulted about the proposals of a variation. The last formal review of the PSPO was conducted by the Environmental Protection Team where Town and Parish councils were consulted in November 2019 and a public consultation process was undertaken between 23rd January and 20th March 2020. Council members and town and parish councils were also advised of this. Consultees also included Devon and Cornwall Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner. There was a press release drawing attention to the web based consultation, and paper copies were made available on request. The consultation responses were supportive.

7. In June 2020 on Exmouth Beach we saw a significant disturbance observed over a weekend exiting from Lockdown, these issues continued sporadically over that summer with a significant increase in ASB and littering linked to the alcohol fuelled ASB. It was felt at the time this was likely to be an isolated occasion/period of time.

8. This however reoccurred over the Easter bank holiday weekend 1st April to 5th April 2021 when the ability for groups to meet was released. Again alcohol fuelled ASB was seen on Exmouth beach with littering, Urination and Defecation occurring where the use of toilets has been restricted.

9. It is considered that during this summer and the demand of the Staycation we are likely to see an increased level of Alcohol fuelled ASB linked to the beach area. Holiday periods still to come are the half term break 31st May 2021 which includes a bank holiday Monday. End of summer term 27th July 2021, bank holiday weekend 30th August and the University Fresher's weeks in September.

10. The Police have the power to invoke Section 35 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 which when authorised by an Inspector allows them to move people on from identified locations for a period of 48 hours if they believe that crime and disorder is taking place or individuals are being subjected to Harassment alarm or distress. This has limited impact but is a very useful tool for the police which can be used alongside the PSPO.

11. The ASB PSPO in Appendix 1 gives the police the power to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) to deal with the issues at hand as well as seize containers of alcohol. This allows them to effectively deal with the problems as well as retaining resources at the location of the incident unlike if they arrest individuals and have to take them into custody.

12. The PSPO is already in existence in a number of central streets in Exmouth and allows authorised officers to deal with individuals by way of fixed penalty notices for:

- (i) Possessing intoxicating substance including alcohol
- (ii) Urination and defecation within a street or public place
- (iii) Aggressive requests for money
- (iv) Intimidation, harassment, alarm or distress

13. The beach area and the area's considered displacement areas are likely to see behaviours of (i), (ii) & (iv) but section (iii) is not identified as part of the beach area problem, but a wider problem that is still seen in Exmouth.

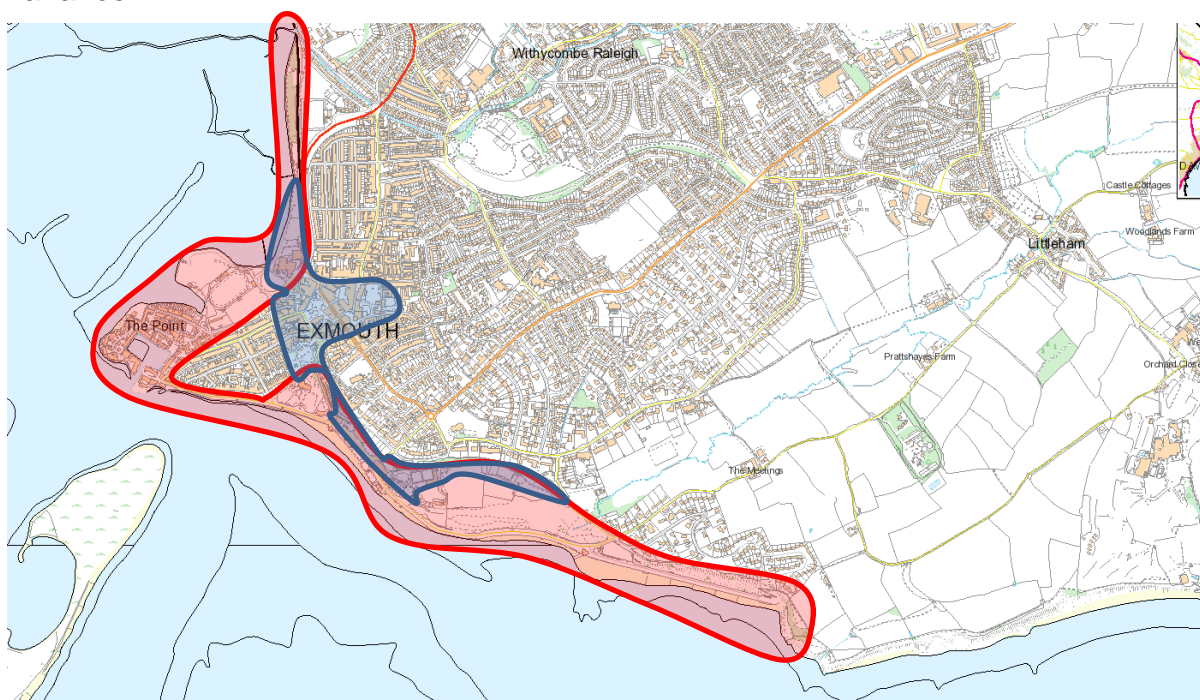
14. The proposal would be for a variation of the existing order in order to simplify understanding and enforcement of the PSPO as the locations are linked. The current locations for the PSPO work from the central Strand area towards the beach and further round towards the Estuary.

The area's of the most recent problems have centred around the beach from Orcombe point up towards Queens Drive(*In red italics*), The displacement considerations; Stretch East round on to

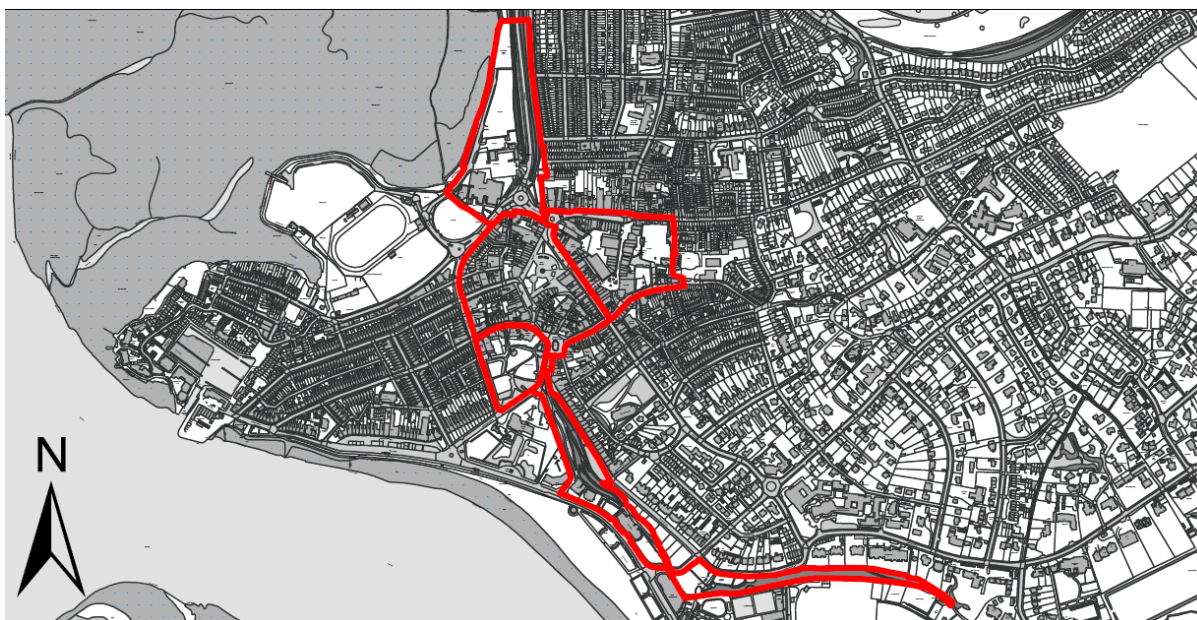
Sandy Bay beach and up onto Fox holes via the Zigzag path and around to The Geoneedle as well as West round to The Half-moon field (in purple underlined)

The Strand and surrounding area including: Manchester Street, Manchester Road, Elm Grove, Chapel Hill, Queen Street, Tower Street, High Street, Rolle Street.
The Magnolia centre and surrounding area including: Parade, Crudges Lane, Market Street, Magnolia Centre and Magnolia Walk, Chapel Street, Church Street, Margaret Street, London Inn car park and Lower Fore Street.
Station car park and surrounding area including: Commercial vehicle park, Bus station, Sports Centre grounds, Marine Way and Imperial Road.
The Manor Gardens
The Plantation and surrounding area: Bath Road, The Pavilion Grounds, Gunfield Gardens and Madeira Walk.
<i>Beach area from Sandy Bay via Orcombe Point; the coastal slopes and donkey field up onto Fox Holes Hill, the zig zag path, the path and area round to The Geoneedle past the RNLI station; past the coastguard look out station, past the Beach Gardens The Esplanade, The Maer, Queens Drive <u>Mamhead view</u> <u>Pier Head</u> <u>The Point</u> <u>Past the Sailing Club</u> <u>Past Camperdown Yard and Imperial recreation Ground Royal Parade</u> <u>Across Shelley bank</u> <u>Along to the half-moon field</u></i>

15. Map of proposed variance. Blue is the current PSPO, red is the considered area of the variance.



Detailed map of current PSPO.



16. Consideration for inclusion of other coastal area's for an ASB PSPO was discounted at an early stage, as there has been limited reporting of historic problems and the transport infrastructure does not give the same level of access to the other coastal towns.

17. A period of consultation would need to be undertaken but this period could be kept to a minimal time frame of 5 weeks as other councils have done, early indications from Police and Exmouth Town clerks are they are supportive of the extension of the PSPO.

18. It can be anticipated that we may receive a number of challenges from the consultation if social media and press messaging is sensationalised that Exmouth has an alcohol ban in place for its beach. This will have normal members of the public airing their concerns that they will have police turning up and routinely just seizing their picnic drinks. The Police are going to need to be proportionate and sensitive around its enforcement, where it is linked as a precursor to ASB occurring or as a result of ASB occurring and use their discretion when to engage, when to educate, when to encourage and when there is a need to enforce.

19. Not extending the time fame for the variance allows it to come up for consideration at the same time period when the others are up for renewal.

20. The proposal would be to go out for public consultation over a five week period looking for a variance to the Exmouth and Sidmouth ASB PSPO. The variance by way of extension of Exmouth footprint. For the varied PSPO to be in place as early as possible for summer 2021.

21. Potential time scales

- Consultation period June – Mid July 2021
- SMT+ report Mid July
- Cabinet report for consideration of variance

Financial implications:

There appears to be no direct financial implication from the recommendation in this report

Legal implications:

While permissible to vary a PSPO to increase the area the relevant tests for having a PSPO are still required to be met in relation to the extended. Before varying formal consultation is required and due consideration ad regard had to the responses prior to taking the decision. The Council should have regard to the public sector equality duty and possible need to carry out an impact assessment as well as human rights considerations prior to a final decision being taken. Further advice will be provided on this as necessary.

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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