



Agenda for Cabinet

Wednesday, 12th July, 2023, 6.00 pm

Members of Cabinet

Councillors: M Rixson, G Jung, D Ledger, M Hall, O Davey, S Jackson, J Loudoun, N Hookway, P Arnott (Chair) and P Hayward (Vice-Chair)

Venue: Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton

Contact: Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer;
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Tuesday, 4 July 2023

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This meeting is being recorded for subsequent publication on the Council's website and will be streamed live to the [East Devon District Council Youtube Channel](#)

- 1 Public speaking
Information on [public speaking is available online](#)
- 2 Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 4 - 7)
- 3 Apologies
- 4 Declarations of interest
Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)
- 5 Matters of urgency
Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online. There is one item to be dealt with in this way at agenda item 20.
- 6 Confidential/exempt item(s)
To agree any items to be dealt with after the public (including the Press) have been excluded. There is one item which officers recommend should be dealt with in this way.
- 7 Minutes of Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group held on 30 May 2023 (Pages 8 - 10)
- 8 Minutes of Housing Review Board held on 15 June 2023 (Pages 11 - 23)
- 9 Minutes of Asset Management Forum held on 19 June 2023 (Pages 24 - 29)
- 10 Minutes of Poverty Working Panel held on 26 June 2023 (Pages 30 - 33)

Key Matters for Decision

- 11 Water Safety & Drowning Prevention Policy (Pages 34 - 36)
- 12 Decarbonising our housing stock and providing affordable warmth for tenants (Pages 37 - 39)

Matters for Decision

- 13 **Revenue and Capital Outturn Report 2022-2023** (Pages 40 - 53)
- 14 **Place & Prosperity Team Resourcing** (Pages 54 - 59)
- 15 **Broadclyst Neighbourhood Plan ('the Plan') to be formally 'made'** (Pages 60 - 63)
- 16 **Delivering Environment Act 2021 new duties** (Pages 64 - 70)
- 17 **Home Office Asylum Hotel - Hampton by Hilton, Exeter Airport** (Pages 71 - 78)
- 18 **New Council Plan Process** (Pages 79 - 81)
- 19 **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 - 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 Key Matters for Decision

- 20 Zed Pods Housing Development (Pages 82 - 123)

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If you are recording the meeting, you are asked to act in a reasonable manner and not disrupt the conduct of meetings for example by using intrusive lighting, flash photography or asking people to repeat statements for the benefit of the recording. You may not make an oral commentary during the meeting. The Chair has the power to control public recording and/or reporting so it does not disrupt the meeting.

Members of the public exercising their right to speak during Public Speaking will be recorded.

[Decision making and equalities](#)

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EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 7 June 2023

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and ended at 6.43 pm

1 Public speaking

Cllr Steve Gazzard spoke on the subject of Exmouth Town Council expression of interest in taking over the toilet block by the Imperial Recreation Ground in Exmouth. In partnership with Transition Exmouth it had become clear that the building could become more than this and a vision of an Eco Hub was launched. They see this as a once in a lifetime project and needed help to move this forward. Cllr Gazzard asked the following questions and that contact was made to the Town Clerk as a matter of urgency.

1. Can these toilets be removed from EDDC's toilet review?
2. Can the deadline for moving the project forward be extended up to 18 months?
3. Can EDDC join the project and assist with their knowledge, staffing and financial input?
4. Can a meeting of the appropriate Portfolio Holders, the Leader and the Climate officers from EDDC and DCC be arranged to highlight the proposals of this project.

In response the Chair stated he could not answer any operational decisions and would refer them to officers to ensure positive discussions would take place.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting of Cabinet held on 29 March 2023 were agreed.

3 Declarations of interest

Min 6. Minutes of Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group held on 14 March 2023.

Councillor Matt Hall, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Relevant Portfolio Holder for this group.

Min 6. Minutes of Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group held on 14 March 2023.

Councillor Nick Hookway, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Exmouth Town Councillor.

Min 6. Minutes of Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group held on 14 March 2023.

Councillor Olly Davey, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Exmouth Town Councillor.

Min 7. Minutes of Asset Management Forum held on 13 March 2023.

Councillor Matt Hall, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Relevant Portfolio Holder for this group.

Min 7. Minutes of Asset Management Forum held on 13 March 2023.

Councillor Nick Hookway, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Exmouth Town Councillor.

Min 8. Minutes of Poverty Working Panel 20 March 2023.

Councillor Matt Hall, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Works for Exeter City Council.

Min 9. Minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 11 April 2023.

Councillor Matt Hall, Affects Non-registerable Interest, Relevant Portfolio Holder for this group.

4 **Matters of urgency**

None

5 **Confidential/exempt item(s)**

None

6 **Minutes of Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group held on 14 March 2023**

Members agreed to note the Minutes of Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group held on 14 March 2023.

7 **Minutes of Asset Management Forum held on 13 March 2023**

Members agreed to note the Minutes of Asset Management Forum held on 13 March 2023.

8 **Minutes of Poverty Working Panel 20 March 2023**

Members agreed to note the Minutes of Poverty Working Panel 20 March 2023.

9 **Minutes of LED Monitoring Forum held on 11 April 2023**

Members agreed to note the Minutes and recommendation of LED Monitoring Forum held on 11 April 2023.

Minute 45 Options to reduce energy consumption at EDDC swimming pools

Cabinet RESOLVED:

That consultants be appointed to advise Council and LED about the most appropriate way of moving forward for achieving carbon neutral swimming pools and leisure centres.

10 **Minutes of Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 20 April 2023**

Members agreed to note the Minutes of Recycling and Waste Partnership Board held on 20 April 2023. Concern was raised over the current Recycling and Waste contract finishing at the end of June with Cabinet not meeting again until mid-July and what, if any, risks this may have for the council. The concern would be raised with relevant officers.

11 **Better Care Fund Financial Assistance Policy**

The Principal Environmental Health Officer Private Sector Housing presented the report. The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration The Housing Grant, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and The Regulatory (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002 introduced grants and loans for residents to undertake home improvements and adaptations to help restore or enable independent living; privacy; confidence and dignity for individuals and families.

The policy outlined how EDDC Environmental Health Private Sector Housing administered and distributed the budget in the Better Care Fund plan.

Cllr Mike Goodman raised an issue over the Equalities impact assessment stating 'Low impact' for the report. He said this was an important paper helping many people and addressed many equality issues. He asked if these should be recorded in more detail even the positive notes. The Principal Environmental Health Officer Private Sector Housing said the assessment was scored 'Low impact' as this was a transparent policy but agreed that this could have been recorded as such.

RESOLVED:

That the adoption of the East Devon Better Care Fund Financial Assistance Policy, in order to meet the Housing Grant, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 and The Regulatory (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002, be agreed.

REASON:

The East Devon Better Care Fund Financial Assistance policy ensures that the eligibility; conditions and use of the mandatory and discretionary grants are transparent and reasonable for the applicants.

The East Devon Better Care Fund Financial Assistance policy is consistent with other Council's in Devon and ensures that the determination and application of the grants are consistent.

The policy demonstrates collaborative working with Devon County Council Social Services to deliver the Better Care Fund plan for residents in East Devon.

The policy supports East Devon residents to adapt their home so that it is safer and easier to get around and to use facilities for everyday tasks like cooking and bathing. And to help restore or enable independent living; privacy; confidence and dignity for individuals and families.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

M Rixson
D Ledger
M Hall
O Davey
S Jackson
J Loudoun
N Hookway
P Arnott (Chair)

P Hayward (Vice-Chair)

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

- R Collins
- P Faithfull
- S Gazzard
- M Goodman
- M Hartnell
- B Ingham
- E Rylance
- S Smith

Officers in attendance:

- Matthew Blythe, Assistant Director Environmental Health
- Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer
- Simon Davey, Director of Finance
- Jody Harding, Principal Environmental Health Officer
- Melanie Wellman, Director of Governance & Licensing (Monitoring Officer)
- Andrew Hopkins, Communications Consultant

Councillor apologies:

- G Jung

Chair

Date:

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group held at Online via Zoom app on 30 May 2023

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 10.29 am

1 Public speaking

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 March 2023

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 14 March 2023 were noted as a true and accurate record.

3 Declarations of interest

Cllr O Davey – Minute 4; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr M Hall – Minute 4; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr B Bailey – Minute 4; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

Cllr J Whibley – Minute 4; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council.

4 Progress update on Placemaking in Exmouth

The Project Manager Place & Prosperity (Exmouth) introduced the progress update report, highlighting the following points:

- The planning consent for the fitness area at Queen's Drive (which expires in July 2023) has been granted for its temporary use for a further two years.
- The Events Space has been marketed but it has not been possible to secure a reliable operator for either the whole season or for the summer holidays.
- Significant progress has been made with Devon County Council (DCC) regarding car parking signage; DCC have confirmed locations for the signage and are awaiting a quote for the works. Additional signs are included in the schedule, to clarify for drivers that car parks are owned by East Devon DC but on-road parking comes under Devon County Council, and to ensure that drivers are directed to pay at the correct parking meters for the location in which they are parked.
- There has been a slight delay with the determination report for planning for the Strand's tables, which is now due in May/June 2023; however, the current permission does not expire until September 2023.
- The mural on the rear wall of the Pavillion will now not commence until July 2023.
- Consultants WSP have agreed to the final version of the Placemaking contract, and an update is expected this week. The contract will run for approximately seven months and members will be consulted as part of that process.

- Following the successful 'Destination Exmouth' Levelling Up Fund Bid, a design team at WSP has been appointed by DCC for the Exmouth Gateway. A Project Manager has also been appointed for the Gateway and will shortly be doing a site visit.
- Key milestones for Placemaking in Exmouth were set out in the report.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- Having been delayed, analysis of consultation feedback was completed by the revised date of 30 September 2022.
- The Events Space could be marketed for one-off events; there had been some ad hoc interest regarding events at the location but they had not come through the formal process, therefore it had not been possible to progress them.
- It would be for the Placemaking consultants to advise on permanent uses for the area that is currently the Event Space; differing views were expressed on whether the area was suitable for a hotel.
- There is a very short window to submit Levelling Up bids and it is important that the Council is well prepared, with applications ready to submit. There is a role for the PETS Group to think carefully about what ideas and initiatives it wants, how to progress with them, and which would need planning permission.

Cllr Arnott expressed thanks to Devon County Council and to Simon Jupp MP for the role they played in the successful Levelling Up Fund Bid. He added that there has been for some years some excellent cross-authority collaboration in the public interest and this is starting to bear fruit.

The Chair commented that he shares Cllr Arnott's enthusiasm and the Council is now in a position to move forward and deliver on some new ideas and initiatives.

Members noted the progress since the PETS Group's last meeting of 14 March 2023.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

P Arnott
O Davey
A Hall (Vice-Chair)
M Hall
P Hayward
N Hookway (Chair)
J Whibley
B Bailey
G Deasy (Exmouth Town Council)

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

S Jackson
G Jung
D Ledger
C Nicholas
E Rylance
A Toye
E Wragg

Officers in attendance:

Amanda Coombes, Democratic Services Officer
Simon Davey, Director of Finance
Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer
Gerry Mills, Project Manager Place & Prosperity (Exmouth)
Anita Williams, Principal Solicitor (Deputy Monitoring Officer)

Also in attendance:

Lisa Bowman, Town Clerk, Exmouth Town Council
Peter Gilpin, CEO, LED

Chair:

Date:

Recommendations for Cabinet that will resolve in an action being taken:

Housing Review Board on 15 June 2023

Minute 10 Results of tenant satisfaction survey

RECOMMENDED by the Housing Review Board:

1. that Cabinet approve the facilitation of a series of focus groups to be held with tenants who have offered to provide further insight and information on their experiences with the housing services. Officers would then review and use these findings to further inform future improvements.
2. that Cabinet approve the further surveying of tenants over the coming months in order to monitor satisfaction levels more closely and more frequently and as a way of assessing whether levels of satisfaction were improving.

Minute 12 Consumer Standards – self assessment

RECOMMENDED by the Housing Review Board:

that Cabinet approve that a joint workshop is undertaken with officers and tenants on receipt of the revised Consumer Standards from the regulator.

Minute 14 Finance report

RECOMMENDED by the Housing Review Board:

that Cabinet note the Housing Revenue Account and Housing Capital Finance 2022/23 year end outturn report, and approve the reserve recommendations.

Minute 15 Chartered Institute of Housing Qualifications

RECOMMENDED by the Housing Review Board:

that Cabinet approve the approach set out in the report and support the drive towards ensuring officers had or worked towards achieving a relevant professional housing qualification, which would improve the ability to deliver a service that met the needs of the tenants and the standards required by the Social Housing Regulator in a sustainable and timely way.

Minute 16 Subscription for Advantage South West

RECOMMENDED by the Housing Review Board:

1. that Cabinet approve to continue paying the annual subscription to maintain the membership to Advantage South West.
2. that Cabinet approve that in future the decision to continue paying the annual subscription for Advantage South West membership be delegated to the Assistant Director Housing.

Minute 20 Interim Housing Operations Manager

RECOMMENDED by the Housing Review Board:

that Cabinet approve that the recently created Housing Operations Manager position be filled on an interim basis using the individual put forward by a recruitment agency with the additional costs to be financed through the Housing Revenue Account.

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Housing Review Board held at Council Chamber, Blackdown House, Honiton on 15 June 2023

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 11.15 am and ended at 2.05 pm

1 Public speaking

There were no members of the public registered to speak. However a request was made via email from a district councillor for responses to the following:

1. Can an up to date report come before the next HRB on voids clearly setting how many are through the district and why it is taking so long to get them back into circulation.
2. Can a report come to the next HRB dealing with the stock condition survey, setting out where the district contractors are with the review, setting out number of houses that have been surveyed and what the surveyors are actually looking at.

2 Appointment of Vice-Chair

The Chair welcomed all those present to the meeting. He informed them that co-opted tenant member Sue Saunders had resigned from the Housing Review Board and thanked Sue for her contribution to and time spent on the Board

Nominations for Vice Chair were received for Councillor Sarah Chamberlain.

RESOLVED: that tenant representative Sarah Chamberlain be appointed Vice Chair of the Board for the ensuing year.

3 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 March 2023 were agreed.

4 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest under the Code of Conduct. Councillor Sarah Chamberlain declared that she was employed by Exeter City Council in the housing department.

Councillor Vicky Johns declared that she had family members who were council housing tenants.

5 Matters of urgency

There were none.

6 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There was one confidential/exempt item.

7 Housing Review Board induction

Prior to the start of the Board meeting the Assistant Directors for Housing and the Housing Task Force gave members of the Housing Review Board and other councillors in attendance an introduction to the work of the HRB. They reminded those present of the priorities and remit of the Housing Review Board, and hoped that it would focus the Board on key activities and areas of service that mattered to tenants and service users.

As well as explaining the background and purpose of the Board they also outlined the aims and purpose for housing services, how the service was organised, future challenges and opportunities for housing, and the housing strategy. The three broad priorities fell under the following categories:

- Providing homes.
- Improving homes.
- Improving communities.

The presentation also covered detail around some of the external and internal pressures that the service was facing including changes in regulation, increasing demand in every area, ongoing sickness and wellbeing issues with officers due to pressure and workload and the ongoing challenges around recruitment.

RESOLVED: that the Housing Review Board note and use the contents of the report as part of the induction process for new Board members.

8 **Housing Review Board forward plan**

The Assistant Director of Housing presented the forward plan and advised members that the forward plan acted as a reminder of agenda items to come forward to future meetings. Members were reminded that they could add further reports and topics for discussion to the next forward plan by either informing herself or the Democratic Services Officer.

The Chair requested that the following items be added to the forward plan:

- A review of the Housing Review Board and its membership, which would tie in well with the Resident Involvement Strategy review.
- A review of the contract with StreetScene services for estate management.

RESOLVED: that with the addition of two items the forward plan be agreed.

9 **Social Housing White Paper action plan**

The Housing Review Board received a presentation from the Assistant Director Housing, along with a report and action plan in order to provide the Board with an update on the preparations that were being made to ensure compliance with the up and coming Social Housing (Regulation) Bill. The Bill provided the legal basis for many of the measures set out in the 2020 Social Housing White Paper. The intention was to deliver transformational change for social housing residents and fulfil the Government's manifesto pledge to empower residents, provide greater redress, better regulation and improve the quality of social housing.

The Assistant Director Housing's report aimed to summarise the Charter for Social Housing Residents (Social Housing White Paper) and consider how EDDC fared against its demands as it currently stood, and set out recommendations on what steps needed to be taken in order to prepare for its full implementation. The Consumer Standard would be given greater focus and status, elevating it to be in line with the Governance and

Finance measures. The proposed new regulations also set out wide-ranging proposals to transform and strengthen the regulatory regime based around new consumer standards and a code of practice with increasing powers of intervention to ensure it held all landlords to account for the services they delivered and drove good services for tenants.

The new transparent approach would bring a fundamental change to social housing regulation. The legislation would set new expectations on the services that landlords needed to provide for their tenants. There were new consumer regulations and standards. There would be reactive inspections every four years considering feedback from tenants, board reports on service performance and evidence from the Housing Ombudsman. There would be new tenant satisfaction measures and the Bill would look at the assurances councillors were getting about the quality of homes, service performance and their engagement with residents. There were stronger powers and harsher penalties on landlords if things went wrong, and a very transparent approach with the publication of conclusions from individual consumer inspections.

The Charter sought to deliver transformational change and respond to the lessons learnt from:

- The Grenfell Tower tragedy.
- The views of residents on the Social Housing Green paper 2018.
- Views on how social housing was regulated, including complaints.
- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the importance of people's homes, communities, neighbourhoods and green spaces, social isolation, support for the vulnerable, wellbeing, mental health, crime and anti-social behaviour.
- To address energy efficiency and building safety.

The new Charter for social housing set out what every social housing resident should be able to expect from their landlord in seven chapters:

1. To be safe in your home.
2. To know how your landlord is performing.
3. To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly.
4. To be treated with respect.
5. To have your voice heard by your landlord.
6. To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in.
7. To be supported to take your first to home ownership.

The Assistant Director Housing explained that EDDC's action plan provided details of where it did and didn't meet the proposed Charter requirements and any further actions it needed to address these areas. It also set out where Charter requirements were yet to be determined/developed by the Regulator and notification was awaited. It was noted that the themes of the Charter could be seen throughout many of the agenda items for the meeting and emphasised the importance of the role of the Housing Review Board.

RESOLVED: that the Housing Review Board note and agree the report, action plan and content of the presentation.

10 **Results of tenant satisfaction survey**

The Information and Analysis Officer's report explained that the results of the March 2023 tenant satisfaction survey saw a significant decline in satisfaction across several aspects of the housing service. The housing leadership team had considered the findings in detail and a communication plan (worked in conjunction with the corporate communications team) and an improvement plan was being put together to address how tenant satisfaction could be improved. The results gave additional evidence to support

the measures being put in place to improve particular areas of the service, such as the complaints process and aspects of the repairs service.

This report also highlighted how performance in some of the key areas was translating into lower levels of tenant satisfaction. An important step to improving the services for tenants and hopefully improving tenant satisfaction was to ensure that the housing service was getting the basics right across the service. The survey was carried out by a third party company called 'Service Insights', which enabled the survey to be sent by email and SMS to general needs tenants (sheltered housing tenants received a postal survey). A lesson learnt from this was to ensure transparency on all aspects of data protection, and to ensure all tenants were aware of the survey in advance.

The Board were made aware that there was a requirement for all registered providers of social housing to run a tenant satisfaction survey annually from 2023/24, with a statutory duty to submit these measures to the Social Housing Regulator. The recent survey provided a 'baseline' to ensure the Council was meeting the requirements for the future. As part of the survey questions, tenants were asked if they would be willing to share further information and a proportion of tenants agreed. These tenants would be further engaged with to help gain more insight into tenant's experiences.

The Information and Analysis's presentation (and report) covered and explained the following satisfaction measures, as well as actions being taken to address the findings:

- Overall satisfaction.
- Satisfaction with repairs.
- Communication.
- Complaints.
- Anti-Social Behaviour handling.
- Cost of living and tenant wellbeing.

The next steps were to track tenant satisfaction much more closely and to monitor this as EDDC went through service changes. Officers acknowledged that there was a link between what tenants were saying they were unhappy with and where there were known service challenges/failures. It was important to be aware of the national context and change. The housing sector was working in a much tougher operating environment than ever before, nationally under increasing pressure in a number of areas. The trend across most other registered providers was showing a decline in tenant satisfaction across all service measures.

Those present expressed concern with the results of the tenant satisfaction survey. The Assistant Director Housing reported that the Housing Leadership Team were reflecting on the results of the survey and using them to feed into a wider improvement plan, with a report being brought to the September meeting of the HRB. The survey highlighted the need to improve the visibility of the service, accessibility for tenants and to build back up the relationship with tenants. The survey linked in directly with the current consultation to renew the resident involvement strategy. The survey also highlighted and provided further evidence that supported tenant dissatisfaction with the current repairs service. There was a review of the current staffing structure underway to ensure there were the right people in the right roles across the housing service as well as sufficient capacity.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that Cabinet approve the facilitation of a series of focus groups to be held with tenants who have offered to provide further insight and information on their experiences with the

housing services. Officers would then review and use these findings to further inform future improvements.

2. that Cabinet approve the further surveying of tenants over the coming months in order to monitor satisfaction levels more closely and more frequently and as a way of assessing whether levels of satisfaction were improving.

RESOLVED: that the Housing Review Board note the baseline tenant satisfaction measure survey report.

11 **HouseMark performance report**

The Information and Analysis Officer's report explained that HouseMark was a data analysis service which gathered performance and cost information from 350 social housing providers across the UK, providing them with the data and insights needed to make evidence based decisions to drive efficient performance and business improvement. Being able to bench mark the housing service across its peers was a very difficult exercise to do alone, but it could play a hugely important role in evaluating the service. The reports and online interactive analytical tools that HouseMark provided helped officers 'dive deep' into the data and compare EDDC's housing service with others.

HouseMark had provided a comprehensive report, giving a useful insight into cost and performance. Understanding costs alongside performance was an important part of knowing how the service was doing, as well as considering this with up to date performance and recent tenant satisfaction results.

RESOLVED: that the Housing Review Board considered, commented on and noted the HouseMark 2021/22 Benchmarking report.

12 **Consumer Standards - self assessment**

The Interim Housing Services Manager reminded the Board that at its last meeting on 16 March the HRB received a report on the Self-Assessment against the Consumer Standards. The HRB agreed the self-assessment and action plan and requested that further consultation should be carried out with tenants and reported back to the Board. This was due to tenants at the previous meeting expressing concern that they had not had sufficient time to consider the content of the self-referral. An extraordinary meeting of the Resident Involvement Management Group (RIMG) took place on 31 March 2021, with 13 tenants taking part in the consultation. Out of 126 assessment requirements the tenants agreed with 74 areas and disagreed with 52 areas. It was reported that the feedback was the view of tenants and officers were not involved in the self-assessment. Officers pointed out that this was useful, direct feedback from tenants and could be considered as part of the preparation work in this area.

It was noted that the tenant self-assessment was undertaken by tenants only without any officer input. It was their view on the requirement and how they felt EDDC were meeting the requirement. The EDDC self-assessment had been carried out by officers using the

evidence and working knowledge of how the requirements were being met. It also included actions where it was felt the minimum standard was being met, but further work could be undertaken to strengthen the service and implement best practice.

The original HRB report proposed that when the revised Consumer Standards were received from the regulator, a self-assessment be carried out with both officers and tenants present so that there was a greater understanding of the requirement, the evidence that could be provided in meeting the standard and a joint assessment of whether EDDC met it.

RECOMMENDED: that Cabinet approve that a joint workshop is undertaken with officers and tenants on receipt of the revised Consumer Standards from the regulator.

13 **Performance dashboard**

The Housing Review Board received a report and presentation from the Interim Housing Services Manager on the key performance indicator (KPI) dashboard and compliance dashboard at quarter 4 and year end. The presentation also outlined actions being taken to improve performance where targets were not being achieved.

KPIs in the presentation included:

- Rent arrears of current tenants as a % of annual rent debit.
- % of self-contained dwellings vacant and not available to rent.
- Average days to relet a social housing dwelling.
- % of rent lost through properties becoming vacant.
- % of routine repairs completed within target.
- % of emergency repairs completed within target.
- % of repairs outstanding and overdue.
- % satisfaction with day to day repairs.
- % of complaints responded to and closed within 20 days.
- % of calls answered within 1 minute.
- Average number of working days per person lost through sickness.

During 2023/24 the KPIs would continue to be cleansed and the data improved. PIs needed to be collected in line with the methodologies and best practice, ensuring it was accurate. New indicators of tenancy visits, tenant satisfaction measures and community development would be introduced. Improvements were planned for how complaints were reported, which would include complaints upheld, partially and not upheld, and learning from complaints. When setting targets for 2023/24, staff and residents would be consulted with to ensure that appropriate targets were set and that services for residents would continue to be enhanced. In addition to this, team targets would be developed and monitored to measure and track performance of teams.

Concern was expressed over staff sickness levels which the Assistant Director Housing agreed were high and an area of concern. Members also raised concerns over call centre response times and the Board were reassured that there were plans in place to improve this.

The eight key areas monitored in the compliance dashboard were:

- Asbestos.
- Electrical systems.
- Fire risk assessment.
- Fire protection systems.
- Gas safety.

- Lifting equipment.
- Smoke and carbon monoxide alarm regulations 2022.
- Water management.

The Interim Housing Services Manager outlined recent concerns in relation to electrical safety. This was being investigated and further information on this would be presented to the Board. Members questioned some of the narrative given and confirmation was received that asbestos surveys were now up to date.

RESOLVED: that the Housing Review Board receive and note the performance report at year end and for quarter 4.

14 **Finance report**

The accountant's report provided the Housing Review Board with current draft financial outturn figures for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and housing capital program for the 2022/23 financial year. The report also considered the implications of any forthcoming regulatory changes.

Producing a Housing Revenue Account had been a statutory requirement for Councils who managed and owned their housing stock for some time, and therefore a key document for the Board to influence.

It was noted that the 2022/23 outturn deficit for the year was £1.264m, £158,000 below the budgeted surplus of £1.422m. The Housing Accountant's report gave a summary by cost driver:

- Employment costs of an additional £0.36m resulting from the 2022/23 pay award.
- Lost income of £0.43m due to void properties.
- Supplies, services and other costs of an additional £0.15m due in part to disrepair claims and legal fees.
- Interest, income and charges of £0.21m from improved returns on investments.
- Expenditure on premises of an additional £0.69m.

The report proposed to cover the in-year deficit of £1.264m from earmarked reserves, leaving the HRA balance at the adopted level of £3.1m through:

- A contribution of £1.12m to be taken from the planned maintenance reserve covering the premises overspend of £0.69m and the void loss of £0.43m. This would in effect reverse the surplus contribution made to this reserve in 2021/22 due to underspends.
- The residual net £0.144m to be taken from the Capital Development Fund.

In terms of capital expenditure and associated funding the housing accountant summarised that:

- A total of 3 acquisitions were completed within the year as opposed to 33 right to buy sales, reducing the stock significantly.
- The £1.816m capital expenditure on Green Homes was funded partially by a central government grant of £0.612m with the majority of the residual funded by non-ring-fenced right to buy capital receipts
- The total revenue contribution to capital made from the HRA was £0.757m rather than a budgeted figure of £0.88m.

The Board noted the year end reserve levels and the 2022/23 right to buy position which were contained in the report.

RECOMMENDED: that Cabinet note the Housing Revenue Account and Housing Capital Finance 2022/23 year end outturn report, and approve the reserve recommendations.

15 **Chartered Institute of Housing Qualifications**

The Assistant Housing Director outlined the reasons that were driving the need to professionalise the housing service and the broader context for this. The report presented to the Board explained what was being done to understand the current levels of professional qualification and the options available to increase the level of professionally qualified managers in the EDDC housing service, taking account of capacity and budget and the requirements of the Social Housing Regulator.

An audit was currently being carried out of all housing employees to understand their qualifications and at what level. Many officers had already undertaken Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) learning. The CIH training was based around seven key characteristics or behaviours:

1. Integrity.
2. Inclusive.
3. Ethical.
4. Knowledgeable.
5. Skilled.
6. Advocate.
7. Leadership.

In many ways these were already aligned to the EDDC behaviours framework and it was therefore anticipated that they could be blended with the existing expectation for behaviour. The report suggested that the CIH professional standards were embedded into the culture and performance of the housing service to ensure they were current and alive. The report went on to outline a number of ways to increase knowledge and learning, as well as the budgetary implications. It was important to ensure a balance between work and any studies required.

It was expected that it would be a requirement for housing sector managers to be qualified, although it was not exactly clear what those levels were. This would make recruitment more challenging. A picture was being built of what the current position was, taking into account capacity, budget and timeframes, in order to achieve the required standards that were set by the regulator.

RECOMMENDED: that Cabinet approve the approach set out in the report and support the drive towards ensuring officers had or worked towards achieving a relevant professional housing qualification, which would improve the ability to deliver a service that met the needs of the tenants and the standards required by the Social Housing Regulator in a sustainable and timely way.

16 **Subscription for Advantage South West**

The Property and Asset Manager's report asked members of the Housing Review Board to note the benefits of membership of Advantage South West (ASW) and to support the continuing membership of the organisation. The advantages of ASW included:

- Maintaining properties to a good standard whilst achieving value of money.
- Assisting in achieving continuity of components and services across the Property and Asset service.

- Assisting in the ongoing training and upskilling of staff through regular product review workshops and continuing professional development events.
- Providing a platform for networking with other authorities and housing providers across the South West.

The Chair suggested that in future the annual ASW subscription be delegated to the Assistant Director for Housing, rather than being brought to the HRB for decision.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that Cabinet approve to continue paying the annual subscription to maintain the membership to Advantage South West.
2. that Cabinet approve that in future the decision to continue paying the annual subscription for Advantage South West membership be delegated to the Assistant Director Housing.

17 Integrated asset management contract context and performance

The Property and Asset Manager's report gave the Board an overview of the first four years of the integrated asset management (IAM) contract, particularly highlighting the growth and performance of the contract over that period. There had been a year on year increase in demands on the contract, and challenges facing the contract.

External factors that had impacted the contract and explained in the report were:

- Covid-19 pandemic.
- Brexit.
- Cost of living crisis/inflation.
- Disrepair cases.
- Damp and mould cases.

Internal factors that had impacted the contract and explained in the report were:

- Staffing.
- Stock investment.
- Processes.
- Resident expectations.
- Partnership ethos.

There had been a consistent year on year growth in responsive repairs and void works, as well as an increase in exclusion jobs and rise in damp and mould cases. The increased work load and factors such as inflation had attributed to the financial growth on the contract.

Key performance indicators (KPIs) contained in the report demonstrated numerous fluctuations in performance across all areas of the contract, with some KPIs showing a slight improvement and other showing a slight dip in performance. It was noted that a detailed review of the price per void was currently underway.

The Property and Asset Manager reported that the management of the contract remained a challenge. A high level review of the structure of the Property and Asset team in terms of resources and job roles was underway. Ian Williams had also had changes in their structure and were facing similar recruitment challenges.

Explanations of many other issues were contained the Property and Asset Manager's report including:

- Reactive repairs.
- Voids.

- Planned works.
- Handyperson service.
- Social value.
- Compliance and cyclical servicing.
- Customer satisfaction and compliments.
- Complaints.

There was a need to review and adapt the delivery model to meet service demand and ensure that the contract was delivered in the most efficient compliant manner possible. There was an ongoing improvement action plan which was a live tool to ensure that those areas highlighted/recorded would be monitored to ensure standards were maintained and improved upon. In addition to the action plan EDDC continued to benefit from the support of Echelon, the specialist consultant engaged to procure the IAM contract, carrying out in depth reviews of certain areas of the contract, specifically:

- Voids.
- Reactive repairs.
- Processes within the Open Housing System for the management of the IAM contract including the interface with Ian Williams.

In response to questions from members, the Property and Asset Manager advised that it was expected that a proportion of the backlog of current void works would be cleared by mid-July 2023. He explained that the repairs part of the voids process was just one phase and that properties also sat at different stages of the void process. He was uncertain why the number of repair jobs had increased so much but attributed some of this to the recent publicity surrounding damp and mould cases. Repairs identified as category one in the stock condition survey were being reported as urgent, other repairs would be assessed and dealt with accordingly.

The Assistant Director Housing reminded the Board that many things had changed since the contract was first tendered and that things were very different to five years ago. It was important to consider this going forward and whether the current contract was fit for purpose given where it was now.

RESOLVED: that the Housing Review Board notes the explanation and context that demonstrates how and why we have had to adapt from the original intentions in the contract to provide a fit for purpose repairs and void service tailored to the requirements of the Council's residents, and to note the performance in quarter 4 2022-23.

18 **Tenant Scrutiny Committee - Review of MSOs**

The report of the Interim Housing Services Manager set out the findings and recommendations made by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel (TSP) following their investigations into the roles of mobile support officers (MSOs) in September 2019 (delayed in being brought to the HRB due to the Covid-19 pandemic). The report sought to find ways to address the differing expectations of the service provided by the MSOs amongst sheltered housing tenants, the MSOs themselves and the wider housing service. The report made recommendations aimed at clarifying the boundaries of the responsibilities of MSOs. Changes had been made to the MSO team since the TSP report was completed, with most of the recommendations already having been undertaken. However, it was important to acknowledge and recognise the work of the TSP and ensure the learning was fully implemented.

RESOLVED: that the Housing Review Board note and endorse the recommendations highlighted within the report.

19 **Exclusion of press and public**

RESOLVED: 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 in the agenda is likely to be disclosed and on balance the public interest is in discussing this item in private session (Part B).

20 **Interim Housing Operations Manager**

The Director of Housing, Health and Environment's report followed on from the agreement at the last meeting of the Housing Review Board to create a new position of Operations Manager within the Housing Service. Having regard to current operational pressures and work demands it was being proposed that this position was filled on an interim basis by a recruitment agency appointment. The costs exceeded those originally budgeted due to the nature of the interim agency arrangement. The longer term intention was to recruit permanently into the position.

Although the Board expressed some concerns about the additional costs they recognised the importance of filling the position and therefore regarded it as a necessary spend.

RECOMMENDED: that Cabinet approve that the recently created Housing Operations Manager position be filled on an interim basis using the individual put forward by a recruitment agency with the additional costs to be financed through the Housing Revenue Account.

Attendance List

Board members present:

Sara Clarke, Independent Community Representative
Rob Robinson, Independent Community Representative
Councillor Sarah Chamberlain
Councillor Peter Faithfull
Councillor Dan Ledger (Chair)
Councillor Tony McCollum
Councillor Helen Parr

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

B Bailey
I Barlow
P Fernley
V Johns
G Jung
M Martin
M Rixson

Officers in attendance:

Graham Baker, Property and Asset Manager
Natalie Brown, Information and Analysis Officer (Housing)
Jo Garfoot, Assistant Director Housing Task Force
Amy Gilbert-Jeans, Assistant Director Housing

Yusef Masih, Interim Housing Services Manager
Andrew Mitchell, Housing Solutions Manager
Giles Salter, Solicitor
Melanie Wellman, Director of Governance & Licensing (Monitoring Officer)
Jacqueline Stokes, Administrator/Paralegal
Alethea Thompson, Democratic Services Officer

Councillor apologies:

Sue Dawson, Tenant
Cindy Collier, Tenant

Chairman

Date:

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Asset Management Forum held online via zoom on 19 June 2023

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 10.35 am and ended at 1.10 pm

1 Public speaking

There were no public speakers.

Councillor John Health advised the Forum that the parish of Beer was still keen to explore asset transfer; and he was pleased that a meeting will be taking place in Beer during July on the long running transfer project. He also wanted to recognise the extensive work by local parish councillor Tim Stephens in the project.

2 Notes from the previous meeting

The notes of the previous meeting held on 13 March 2023 were agreed.

3 Declarations of interest

Minute 7

Cllr Hayward; Affects Non Registerable Interest: Employed as Clerk at Axminster Town Council

Minute 8

Cllr Hall; Affects Non Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council

Cllr Davey; Affects Non Registerable Interest: Member of Exmouth Town Council

Minute 10

Cllr Barlow; Affects Non Registerable Interest: Member of Sidmouth Town Council

Cllr Hartnell; Affects Non Registerable Interest: Member of Seaton Town Council, Devon County Council, and local business owner in Seaton

Cllr Faithfull; Affects Non Registerable Interest: Member of Ottery St Mary Town Council

Cllr Hayward; Affects Non Registerable Interest: Employed as Clerk at Axminster Town Council

4 Matters of urgency

None.

5 Confidential/exempt item(s)

None.

6 Estates Team Update

The Forum received an update from the Estates Team, highlighting:

- Continued improvement in reducing active cases;
- Increase in rental income as cases completed, and as a result of renewal of leases for some beach and seafront kiosk sites;

- Work on renegotiation of management agreements on some dual use leisure sites;
- Demand for workshops remains high;
- Continued assessment to identify opportunities of the disposal of poorly performing assets.

Work for the team in the coming months will include a review of the EPC rating for assets, with a view to identifying those that needed improvement and may generate a wider discussion around that asset's future. The team expected a change to the ratings to further tighten the energy efficiency requirements and were proactively planning for this change. The result of this work would be reported to a future meeting of the Forum.

In response to questions, the target set for the previous year of an increase of 3.25% in rental income had been achieved. Changes in rent income levels occurred either when the tenancy changed, or at regular rent reviews. Sites that were vacant were small in number and typically related to works to develop or change the site. Voids between re-lets were short.

Dual use site management agreements were under negotiation in line with the recently agreed Leisure Strategy. The Forum were advised that many of the existing agreements were no longer fit for purpose in that they did not reflect the current usage. Discussion had to take place with other leaseholders (such as Devon County Council) and the school to reach a consensus on a revised agreement.

RESOLVED that the Forum noted the report.

7 **Place and Prosperity Framework**

The Forum has previously reviewed the existing Commercial Investment Framework to assess its fit alongside the aspirations of Members in supporting economic recovery after the pandemic.

The resulting draft framework, now named the Place and Prosperity Framework has now been prepared. This aligns to the Council Plan 2021-2023 and addresses the opportunity to have a single fund of approximately £20M investing as a first tranche borrowed from the Public Works Loan Board.

The fund would be used to invest in three broad categories which benefit the district as a whole:

- Service delivery
- Economic regeneration
- Preventative action

The draft Framework also included the draft scoring matrix.

Any investment opportunity that achieves the necessary score and indicative return would then be progressed to a dedicated group of officers, termed the Investment Assessment Group, which would comprise of:

- Director – Finance
- Director – Governance and Licensing
- Assistant Director – Place, Assets and Commercialisation
- Other relevant officers on a case by case basis.

Any Full Appraisal arising from this Group would go forward to an Investment Board with delegated power to agree funding up to £5M (£5M or more requires approval from Council) which is suggested should comprise of:

- Director – Finance
- Leader
- Portfolio Holder for Finance and Assets

That Board would need to agree unanimously on the project, following consultation with relevant Ward Members.

In discussing the Board makeup, the Forum agreed that it should also include the Portfolio Holder for Economy; as well as include consultation with other relevant Portfolio Holders as well as relevant Ward members.

The Forum also discussed the need to have in place the agility to act quickly on investment opportunities, which this framework would provide. Seeking approval through Council for investment opportunities below £5M could prove difficult to achieve in a short timescale, and therefore opportunities would be lost, as had happened in the past.

RESOLVED

1. that the Place and Prosperity Framework be updated to include the Portfolio Holder for Economy on the Investment Board, make more explicit that it includes consultation with relevant Portfolio Holders at the Full Appraisal stage but also with other Portfolio Holders as deemed necessary;
2. refer the amended Place and Prosperity Framework to the Overview Committee for consideration, and for the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Assets to make any subsequent amendments from that consideration before referring to Cabinet with onward recommendation to Council for adoption.

8 Progress Update on Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront

The Forum received an update on Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront, which covered a number of elements including the Placemaking Plan, and the Destination Exmouth project.

In addition to the report, the Forum were informed that WSP had now been appointed to take forward the placemaking plan. WSP were also part of the design team for the Destination Exmouth Gateway project so should therefore deliver synergies.

Debate and response to questions included:

- The bookings for the events space at Queen's Drive were single day events;
- The Destination Exmouth project was still at an early stage but would be developed within the funding awarded; an update would be sought from Devon County Council on the DfT payments. Members offered their support to put pressure on the DfT to release the payments;
- Commenting on the car park signage improvements, emphasis was made on both quality and appropriate nature of signage for all the Council's assets.

The Forum were advised that training for members in placemaking, delivered by external facilitators, would take place in September. This was intended to cover Cabinet, Asset Management Forum, and Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Group members in addition to other members who choose to attend this in-person training.

RESOLVED that the Forum noted the report.

9 **Place & Prosperity Team Update**

The Forum received an update on the following projects:

Seaton Jurassic

Negotiations continued but progress was being made

Public Toilets at Esplanade & Drill Hall, Sidmouth

Heads of terms were close to completion. Once done, the next stage would be for Rockfish to submit their planning application for the site.

Debate on this issue included:

- Welcomed development to improve that area of the town, which would provide excellent amenity value and help boost the economy of the town;
- Seeking assurance that adequate toilet provision was in place, as the current provision of approximately ten facilities would reduce to two under the Rockfish development. In response, the Forum were reminded of the changing places facility near the pool and advised that the terms for Rockfish included a financial incentive to ensure the toilet provision in that development was open for the summer season of 2024;
- The Portfolio Holder for Coast, Country and Environment would go back to Sidmouth Town Council to clarify their stance on the toilet provision, as he had been informed that the town council was in full agreement with the plan for toilet provision in that area.

Axe Valley Levelling UP funding bid

Work undertaken for the bid, which was unsuccessful, was still useful to help identify the validity of smaller projects that could be delivered. This included three employment sites for review of viability; as well as re-activating the decision to market the Seaton Moridunum site – now under active marketing.

Discussion took place on the likelihood of a third round of bidding, and how that impacted on a bid if some of the projects listed in the second round were no longer part of that process. The concern was raised that it might be harder to demonstrate the economic benefits to the wider area on the basis of the remaining projects, such as Seaton seafront development, which may be too weak on its own merit to attract funding.

In response, the Forum discussed the balance between waiting for a third round, and being able to deliver some smaller projects through other means. Other projects may also come forward that could form part of a third bid or an alternative bid. To date, there was no clear confirmation of the submission date, or the criteria of a third round under the Levelling Up bid process, although a third round was expected at some point.

Seaton Moridunum

As stated earlier, the site was now under active marketing and some interest in the site had been received.

Devon Place Urban Renewal Project

Board meetings for Axminster and Seaton were scheduled for July.

Depots Review

The review was a collaborative effort with the Streetscene service, in light of the changing demand of the service and the service aspirations. The Portfolio Holder for Coast, Country and Environment informed the Forum of some aspects of the review, including the need to have charging points for electric fleet vehicles.

Community Asset transfer

The expression of interest from Ottery St Mary Town Council was now before the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Assets for a decision.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

10 Property and FM Team Update Report

The Forum received the detailed report on the planned preventative maintenance and compliance works undertaken between March and May 2023.

Works outside of the planned schedule were also detailed.

Reactive work on LED managed assets continued to be the largest proportion of the work at 42.22%.

In response to a question about the maintenance required at Blackdown House, the condition of the building was confirmed to be in good condition. The high level of maintenance requests related to the regular use of the building by staff, with many of the works undertaken by in-house staff.

In response to a question relating to a recent heating installation at Exmouth pool. This installation was undertaken by LED but information would be sought and provided to the councillor after the meeting; however the Forum were told about the work on all three pools sentry system on water circulation that had been successful in delivering energy savings for the pool running costs.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

P Hayward (Chair)
P Arnott
O Davey
M Hall

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

I Barlow
M Chapman
P Faithfull
M Hartnell
J Heath
G Jung
M Rixson

Officers in attendance:

Tim Child, Assistant Director Place, Assets & Commercialisation
Rob Harrison, Senior Estates Surveyor
Gerry Mills, Project Manager Place & Prosperity (Exmouth)
Alison Hayward, Project Manager Place & Prosperity
Jorge Pineda-Langford, Principal Building Surveyor, Property & FM
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer

Councillor apologies:

N Hookway

Chair

Date:

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Poverty Working Panel held at Online via Zoom app on 26 June 2023

Attendance list at end of document

The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 11.20 am

1 Public speaking

There were no members of the public registered to speak.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 March 2023

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 March 2023 were received and noted as a true and accurate record.

3 Declarations of interest

Cllr I Barlow: Minute 4; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: He has a Ukrainian family in one of his houses.

Cllr B Collins: Minute 5; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Director of Foodsafe CIC.

Cllr S Smith: Minute 5; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Community Manager of an organisation which could be affected by the appointment of a Community and Voluntary Service for East Devon.

Cllr M Goodman: Minute 5; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Involved in a campaign with Rotary to fundraise for families at Christmas.

Cllr P Faithfull: Minute 5; Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Trustee on the Ottery St Mary Feofees Trust, as an Ottery Town Council representative.

Cllr P Faithfull: Minute 5: Affects Non-Registerable Interest: Member of Ottery St Mary Refugee Response Group.

4 Update on emergency help for residents and priority areas over the coming months

The Assistant Director – Revenues & Benefits and the Benefits & Financial Resilience Manager delivered a presentation which outlined at length the work of the Revenues and Benefits team and what is planned for this year to provide emergency help for residents.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- The team has received the occasional request for support for Ukrainians, and they have been helped through the Household Support Fund or the Council's own cost of living funds. They are also entitled to welfare benefits.
- The team have identified that some people fall into poverty as a result of Department for Work and Pensions sanctions, and it is often the case that these people have mental health issues. Financial Resilience Officers work actively with job centres to get decisions overturned and have been quite successful, with those affected often getting payments backdated.

- The Assistant Director – Revenues & Benefits will obtain numbers on how many people are sanctioned by DWP in East Devon, for context, in order that the Poverty Panel can explore whether this is something members would like to consider lobbying over.
- The Assistant Director – Revenues & Benefits will raise with the Council Tax Manager reports of potential scam calls concerning Council Tax banding reductions, and consider putting out a press release to warn residents.
- East Devon DC works with Devon County Council on administering the Household Support Fund and it is agreed to split the funding into two parts; i) targeted support where households are identified to get a payment, and the team write to inform these residents how to make a claim; and ii) a smaller pot of money for direct applications. The Benefits & Financial Resilience Manager confirmed that all of the funding will be spent.
- Since it is usually a relatively small sum, financial support is given to households as a lump sum and not in instalments.
- Causes of poverty are often complex and can involve mental and physical health needs, high energy bills and poor budgeting skills. Support is based on assessment of individual needs.
- As well as targeted support, available support is promoted through social media and through partner agencies.
- Where households are identified as needing furniture or electrical appliances, they are referred to Eco for a home visit. Where appropriate, Eco will source the goods and the Council will pay for them through the Household Support Fund.

Members noted the report.

5 **Appointment of a Community and Voluntary Service for East Devon**

The Director – Housing, Health & Environment and the Management Information Officer ran through this report which provided details of the work undertaken to secure a new East Devon Voluntary Community & Social Enterprise (VCSE) support service.

Having been without VCSE support for several years, East Devon DC has secured a contract with Devon Communities Together to establish an overarching support service using grant funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund of £60,000 per year, for three years.

Devon Communities Together are an independent charity with a long-established reputation for working closely with rural communities and the groups and organisations that support them. The new service will be designed in close collaboration with East Devon's VCSE sector to encourage joint approaches and provide support for the whole sector in areas such as governance, training and funding advice.

The VCSE service specification and the Devon Communities Together delivery statement were set out with the report.

Discussion and clarification included the following points:

- It was clarified that the project costs outlined in the report assume a project end date of March 2026.
- One member expressed concern that using the funding in the manner set out in the report could add an additional unnecessary layer of bureaucracy and mean that individual town VCSE coordinators could miss out on the financial support they really need. The Director – Housing, Health & Environment recognised the concerns and responded that Devon Communities Together will do a lot of work around ensuring the various community and voluntary groups receive the targeted support that they want, and where they want it, to help them through complex legal and financial issues, and to secure funding and draft

policies. He expressed confidence that Devon Communities Together will add value in securing investment for the voluntary sector in East Devon.

Members noted the report and supported the direction of travel.

6 Looking back: review of Poverty Action Plan 2022-23

The Public Health Project Officer delivered a presentation concerning the review of the Poverty Action Plan 2022-23, with examples of what has been achieved over the past year. A final annual report for 2022-23 is being prepared.

Members recognised the extent of the work involved in delivering on the action plan across services, and thanked the Public Health Project Officer for her work.

7 Planning forward: Poverty Action Plan 2023-24

The Public Health Project Officer delivered a presentation outlining a proposed new style action plan for 2023-24: recommending:

- To streamline reporting poverty actions along with other reporting processes, by using Service Plans for 2023/24 to identify poverty-related actions.
- If the draft proposed action plan is agreed, to work with any services as needed, to strengthen the links between service plans and poverty actions.

Members thanked the Public Health Project Officer for her work and supported the aforementioned recommendations.

Attendance List

Councillors present:

P Arnott
M Chapman
B Collins
M Goodman
D Haggerty
J Heath
D Ledger (Chair)
M Martin
M Rixson
S Smith

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

I Barlow
T Dumper
P Faithfull
E Rylance

Officers in attendance:

Jo Avery, Management Information Officer
Sharon Church, Benefits Manager
John Golding, Director of Housing, Health and Environment

Sarah James, Democratic Services Officer
Libby Jarrett, Assistant Director Revenues, Benefits, Corporate Customer Access, Fraud
& Compliance
Sarah Jenkins, Democratic Services Officer
Helen Wharam, Public Health Project Officer

Chair:

Date:

Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting: 12 July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Water Safety and Drowning Prevention Policy

Report summary:

The MCA code of practice "Managing Beach Safety" 2019 requires that every council with coastal water have a specific policy detailing how they manage coastal risk. Further the National Water Safety Forum's Drowning Prevention Strategy asks all councils to have strategic plans in place to prevent drowning at their beaches and open water sites. As EDDC currently does not have either policy, this report and policy seeks to address these issues.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

Cabinet are asked to adopt the EDDC Water Safety and Drowning Prevention Policy.

Reason for recommendation:

As per the summary.

Officer: Peter Blyth, Beach Safety Officer pblyth@eastdevon.gov.uk 07734 568866

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

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

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Links to background information

- [Water Safety and Drowning Prevention Policy](#)
- [Managing for health and safety \(HSG65\) \(hse.gov.uk\)](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☐ Better homes and communities for all
 - ☒ A greener East Devon
 - ☐ A resilient economy
-

Report in full

1 Background

- 1.1 In 2022 151 people drown accidentally in English waters each year with another 150 taking their own lives by drowning. In 2016 The National Water Safety Forum (NWSF) formulated the first National Drowning prevention strategy with the aim of “reducing accidental drownings by 50% by 2026 and reducing the risk among the highest risk groups, populations and communities”

The specific targets pertinent to this policy were that:

- Every community with water risks should have a risk assessment and water safety plan
- All recreational activity organisations should have a clear strategic risk assessment and plans that address key risks

- 1.2 The most recent example of coastal drowning risks are the tragic drowning of two children, aged 12 and 17, off Bournemouth beach on the late May bank holiday weekend. There was also a near miss at Exmouth at the same weekend where two children got into difficulties off Maer rocks and would have drowned had it not been for the intervention of our lifeguards.

- 1.3 In part spurred by the NWSF strategy and also by the Camber Sands tragedy in 2016 where 7 people drowned the Marine and Coastguard Agency together with the NWSF and the regional bathing action groups put together guidance on “Managing Beach Safety” published in 2019 which requires:

- Every local authority that has beach ownership and or management should have a specific policy establishing its standards and approach to managing risks on the beach.
- That this policy should be overseen by a named executive, supported by manager, officer and teams.
- That the policy and underlying procedure should demonstrably follow the HSG 65 model of Plan, Do, Check, Act for constant review and improvement

- 1.4 This guidance has the status of an approved code of practice, meaning that although it is not obligatory, if it is not followed and an accident results, failure to follow it could become evidence of contributory negligence.

1.5 The review of lifeguard provision at our beaches will come as a separate paper in September 2023, so that any lessons from this summer season can be included.

2 **Recommendation**

Cabinet are asked to approve the attached policy. The rationale as to why this recommendation is made is set out in 1.3

Financial implications:

The report is not requesting additional budget provision in order to implement the Policy if adopted.

Legal implications:

The legal issues are detailed in the Policy and this report.

Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting 12 July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Decarbonising our housing stock and providing affordable warmth for our tenants

Report

As reported to the Housing Review Board on the 16th March 2023 we have been working with local business Remit Zero who are based at Exeter Science Park, on a proposal to install their “cylo” product in ten council homes as a way of decarbonising council homes and providing tenants with affordable warmth. Cylo is a groundbreaking technology that provides zero emission affordable heating and hot water. Cylo has the potential to support the decarbonisation of most UK homes and is particularly well suited to homes occupied by those on lower incomes given its ability to store electrical energy as heat during low-cost periods from the grid and/or generated by local renewables such as solar PV.

In collaboration with Remit Zero an application has been made to Innovate UK for “Smart Grant” funding to partially fund this 12-month project running from the 15th August 2023. The project has been named “Project Phoenix”.

The total project costs are circa. £475,862 (excluding recoverable VAT). If this application is successful Innovate UK will cover £367,322. The remaining “match” being made up by EDDC and Remit Zero (in total £108,540 excluding recoverable VAT).

It is anticipated that the application will be determined by the 11th August 2023.

As previously reported to the Housing Review Board on the 16.03.2023 should the funding application prove unsuccessful, I would like to continue to progress this project regardless. Approval is therefore sought to issue an order to Remit Zero so that cylo manufacturing may commence, recognising an 8-to-10-week lead time for both manufacturing and material/component supplies to guarantee installation ahead of the autumn. The value of this order will be £285,056.76 plus recoverable VAT.

Cylo offers a serious alternative to gas boilers and ground/air source heat pumps, that does not necessitate extensive building fabric upgrades. Cylo is now a fully UKCA approved product underwritten by TUV so safety can be fully assured.

We have seen cylo installed in a facility at the Exeter Science Park and Remit Zero are in the process of installation the latest version of cylo within MOD properties following successful prototype testing last year. Whilst Remit Zero are a young company they have a very experienced Board of Directors with excellent governance procedures and oversight in place

It should be noted that the standard due diligence checks we would normally undertake in such circumstances are not possible in this instance as this is a pilot for a new and innovative technology being delivered in partnership with a relatively new micro business. However the Cylo system could offer significant opportunities for us in the future if the pilot is successful. There is always risk involved in being at the forefront of anything, but given Cylo’s impressive safety accreditations and the fact it is already in operation in some MOD homes, I believe this is an informed / calculated risk based on facts and scientific / engineering evidence

EDDC have invested Innovation and Resilience funding into the business during 2022.

I would propose funding the programme from our existing HRA budgets for heating upgrades.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

Taking note of the points in the report with regard due diligence Cabinet are recommend to approve:

- (1) Support for the Innovate UK funding bid and our role as a collaboration partner
- (2) Funding of the Council's contribution to the bid of up to £108,540 plus recoverable VAT as outlined in the above mentioned bid
- (3) Regardless of the outcome of the Innovate UK application, commit to funding the project, £475,862 (excluding recoverable VAT) from the HRA, initially authorising the issuing of an order to Remit Zero in the sum of £285,056.7 + VAT to enable the timely delivery of this project ahead of autumn 2023
- (4) To grant a waiver of Contract Standing Orders for the reasons outlined in the report.
- (5) To delegate authority to the Director of Housing to agree the terms of the contractual arrangements with Remit Zero in consultation with the S151 and Monitoring Officer

Reason for recommendation:

The project will advance our commitment to decarbonise the council's housing stock and provide tenants with affordable warmth.

Officer: Joanne Garfoot – Assistant Director Housing Task Force – JGarfoot26@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

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

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change High Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; This is new technology with inherent risks which is why we are proposing to pilot and test installations.

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ Better homes and communities for all
 - ☐ A greener East Devon
 - ☐ A resilient economy
-

Report in full

Remit Zero are using the principals of natural science to develop a portfolio of zero emission high performance products. The Company's first product, the cylo vessel, will change the way many families and businesses heat their homes and premises; a simple, innovative, affordable, and rapidly deployable heating solution which will help reduce CO2 emissions rapidly, while maintaining the user's comfort and convenience.

This project will conduct consumer trials of cylo. Relying solely on water and electricity, the cylo vessel can replace a fossil fuel boiler, without compromise, providing the same familiar functional performance, convenience, and low cost of operation but with absolutely zero emissions.

The cylo vessel is powered by electricity and is both a boiler and a source of hot water. The vessel stores thermal energy highly efficiently, harnessing electricity directly, either from renewables, such as solar PV, or from the grid ideally when it is in abundance and at its cheapest, utilising off-peak electricity tariffs including emerging dynamic Demand Side Response (DSR) based tariffs (economy 7) .

Unlike other thermal batteries, cylo uses pressurised water as its working fluid, taking advantage of its high specific heat capacity and transfer qualities, effectively transporting heat through a co-current heat exchanger to provide emission-free heating and hot water.

Also worth noting is that from an ongoing maintenance perspective these units have an expected component lifecycle of 45 years, potentially offering a significant reduction in our liability in the long term

A waiver of contract standing orders is sought as this is a unique product without any market competition and the Council were part of a bid for resources that Remit Zero were leading, to secure external funds that would only be available to their scheme, if successful.

Financial implications:

The financial implications are considered within the body of the report.

Legal implications:

-Contract Standing Orders require formal tenders to be obtained. For the reasons outlined in this report, a waiver of contract standing orders is sought to enable the appointment of Remit Zero.

Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting 12 July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Revenue and Capital Outturn Report 2022-2023

Report summary:

This report sets out the revenue budget and capital outturn positions at the end of the financial year. The 2022/23 outturn position of the General Fund is a positive one with a surplus balance for reallocation of £1.367m.

Service areas have again had a challenging year with some significant ongoing financial pressures as a result of the pandemic and the current economic conditions. These factors together directly affects the Council in terms of the cost of providing services as well as leading to increased service demand or drop in terms of income lines. The service level budgets have reported a service deficit of £0.961m, although a significant amount of this has been funded by approved use of reserves or the General Fund. Significant favourable variations outside service level budgets namely interest receipts of £1.198m and business rates of £1.149m have resulted in a surplus balance of £1.367m.

The report outlines the implications of these results on the Council's reserves and makes recommendations on reserve transfers.

The Council's General Fund balance at the end of the 2022/23 financial year is forecast to remain at £4.3m.

In respect of the capital programme, the report at section 5 reports capital expenditure of £15.997m against the approved budget of £18.011m.

The report also outlines the year end position of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) at section 4. This includes variance analysis of the outturn deficit of £1.264m, the use of 21/22 underspend to fund this position and also the 31 March 2023 reserve balances.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

1. That Cabinet considers and recommends to Council the outturn position for 2022/23 including the implications and proposals relating to the Balances and Reserves held by the Council.
2. That Cabinet recommend to Council the proposed reserve transfers contained within the report and give delegated authority to the Director Finance in consultation with the Finance Portfolio for any amendments to these transfers as additional year end data becomes available.

Reason for recommendation:

To accord with the Council's financial regulations, this report presents the outturn position for the Council's approved budgets for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Expenditure. This financial position will align to the Council's Statement of Accounts but the position in this report is presented in a style that accords to the budget setting and monitoring reports that members receive.

Members are asked to note the variations from the budgets identified within the report and consider the final position.

It is appropriate at this stage to reflect on the reserves and balances held by the Council and determine if these are the right reserves at the right levels going forward.

Officer: John Symes – Finance Manager, jsymes@eastdevn.gov.uk, 01395 517413

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

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

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk; Financial monitoring reports have kept members informed during the year of budget variations and the projected outturn position of the Council's finances. All predetermined Balance and Reserve levels were predicted to be maintained above the adopted minimum levels. The report also looks at the monies the Council holds in balances and reserves and considers these in the light of the Council's future financial position and future Government funding cuts and other emerging financial pressures e.g. inflationary pressures. Consideration is given to the Council's financial track record, internal and external audit reports on financial controls and is reflective of occurrences from external factors which affect the Council's finances.

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ Better homes and communities for all
- ☒ A greener East Devon
- ☒ A resilient economy

Report in full

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report compares the outturn position (actual amount spent or income received for the year) against budgets set for the financial year 2022/23 for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the Capital Programme.
- 1.2 During 2022/23 budget monitoring reports have informed members of budget variations based on work with budget managers and has provided the anticipated year-end financial position. This report contains the final position for the year and compares this outturn position against the budgets set.
- 1.3 The report looks at the effect the outturn position has on the Council's balances and reserves and considers future policy for holding these sums.
- 1.4 It was agreed in 21/22 that in order to reflect the increasingly volatile and difficult financial environment, including the very real and emerging inflationary pressures we are seeing the General Fund adopted range was increased by £0.5m to the adopted (upper) range of £4.3m. No change is proposed for 22/23.
- 1.5 Please be advised that all numbers are not finalised as we are still awaiting information from other authorities. Estimates have been made where appropriate therefore no significant items or material variances to the below are expected.
- 1.6 The report contains the following sections:
 - Section 2 General Fund Position
 - Section 3 Reserves Position
 - Section 4 Housing Revenue Account
 - Section 5 Capital Outturn

2. General Fund Position

2.1 22/23 Set Budget & Opening General Fund Balance

The 2022/23 budget was set by Council with a Council Tax Requirement of £9.533m with the closing general fund balance in the 21/22 accounts of £4.3m. The following table shows the in year outturn variations versus set budgets with final General Fund surplus being **£1.367m**.

General Fund Position	£000	F/A
Original Budget Requirement	9,533	
Approved Budget Variations during reporting period	135	A
Revised budget Requirement	9,668	
Surplus in Year v Revised budget	-1,502	F
Final Outturn Position 31/3/2023	8,166	
Final General Fund Surplus to allocate	-1,367	F

2.2 Cost of Service Variation to Budget in 22/23 (£0.961m (A))

The variation across the council's portfolio of services can be viewed in Appendix 1 with additional details of the top 5 cost centre variations above £0.2m within Appendix 2.

2.3 Business Rates Income (£1.330m (F))

The business rates income including earmarked reserve contributions in year was £7.819m versus a budget of £6.489m. East Devon's portion of the deficit on the collection fund of

£3.997m in 21/22 has been removed in 22/23 as the collection fund returns to a surplus. We have continued the policy of moving the business rates volatility reserve in line with the deficit to prevent large income fluctuations in the general fund.

£2.831m was the baseline funding from rate income set by Government, to this the Council agreed to add a further £2m as an uplift in budget to reflect the additional income the Council actually received with the remaining being contributions from reserves. This was a prudent sum and mindful of not becoming further reliant on this income stream to support core services in budget setting as the Government had announced a review of Local authority funding and the rebasing of business rates income. This dilemma will have to be considered in the next iteration of the Council Medium Term Financial Plan. Business rate growth has been one of the main factors allowing this Council not to have to make the same serve cuts in services to date seen in a number of authorities; the total business rateable value amount for the district has grown by nearly 25% in the last 7 years.

2.4 Investments and Financing (£1.390m (F))

The interest income the council received in 22/23 was £1.579m versus a budget of £0.381m. The reason for this increase can be explained by the following factors;

- As a result of unpredicted variations in interest rates from the time of budget setting and the subsequent impact that this had on investment returns, the average rate of return on investments was better than expected at 2.21%
- Due to some large grant funding schemes coming into the council which have been reserved for future years the Treasury portfolio balance has been larger than predicted throughout the year with the year-end balance standing at £59.349m.

2.5 Government Grants (£0.108m (A)) & Savings Target (£0.070 (A))

At the time of budget setting the position with regards to the unringfenced central government grant funding was not fully known with new schemes being announced. The New Services grant and Lower Tier Services grant were included in the base budget, however, the councils final allocation was £0.1m lower than initially predicted.

2.6 Use of Reserves (£0.083 (A))

The breakdown of the reserves movements can be found in Appendix one with the £11.35m use of earmarked revenue reserves further detailed within Appendix 3.

2.7 Transfer of Final General Fund Surplus Balance to the Transformation Fund (£1.367 (A))

It is proposed that the final surplus balance remaining in 22/23 be transferred to the Transformation fund, however as a revenue earmarked reserve this uncommitted sum could be utilised to fund council priorities, for example, to further fund and finance the Housing Task Force for an extended period of time. It is also proposed that £10,000 of the general fund surplus be ringfenced in supporting the East Devon Council Plan development.

This proposal leaves the General fund balance per the agreed upper limit of £4.3m.

3. RESERVES POSITION

- 3.1 The overall General Fund Balance position at year end is given below, this shows the effect of the budgeted outturn variation after the transfer to the Transformation fund of £1.367m.

General Fund Balance Position	£000
Opening Balance 1/4/2022	(4,300)
Budgeted Outturn variation 2022/23 after Transfers	0
Closing Balance 31/3/2023	(4,300)

- 3.2 The movement in General Fund Earmarked Reserves in the year can be seen in the below table with additional detail of movements provided in Appendix 3.

General Fund Earmarked Reserves	£000
Opening Balance 1/4/2022	(20,573)
Budgeted Outturn variation 2022/23	(11,349)
Closing Balance 31/3/2023	(31,923)

4. Housing Revenue Account

4.1 Annual Outturn

The 22/23 Outturn Deficit for the year is £1.264m (£1.422m below the final budgeted surplus of £158k). The summary tables of income and expenditure and associated commentaries of material variations can be found in Appendix 4.

A summary by cost driver is as follows;

- Employment Costs +£0.36m resulting from the 22/23 pay award
- Income +£0.43m due to lost income from void properties
- Supplies, Services & Other Costs +£0.15m due in part to disrepair claims and legal fees
- Interest income & charges -£0.21m from improved returns on investments
- Expenditure on Premises +£0.69m, see Appendix 4 for additional detail

4.2 Proposed Contribution from Reserves for Consideration

The proposal is to cover the in year deficit of £1.264m from Earmarked reserves, leaving the HRA Balance at the adopted level of £3.1m is as follows;

- A contribution of £1.12m to be taken from the planned maintenance reserve covering the premises overspend of £0.69m and the void loss of £0.43m. This in effect reverses the surplus contribution made to this reserve in 21/22 due to underspends.
- The residual net £0.144m to be taken from the Capital Development fund.

4.3 Capital Expenditure and Associated Funding

A detailed table of the individual capital expenditure items and their associated funding streams can be found in Appendix 5. In summary;

- A total of 3 acquisitions were completed within the year versus 33 right to buy sales reducing the stock significantly.
- The £1.816m capital expenditure on Green Homes was funded partially by a central government grant of £0.612m with the majority of the residual funded by non-ring-fenced right to buy capital receipts.
- The total revenue contribution to capital made from the Housing revenue account was £0.757m versus a budgeted figure of £0.88m.

4.4 22/23 Year End Reserve Levels

The below table shows the final reserve levels should the allocations proposed be approved.

REVENUE				
Reserve Name	2021 Year End	Movement	2022 Year End	Comment
HRA Balance	-3,102	0	-3,102	Adopted level of £500 per dwelling plus £1m buffer
HRA Volatility Reserve	-1,600	0	-1,600	Earmarked reserve in case of events impacting rental income
Capital Development Fund	-3,651	729	-2,923	Revenue reserve earmarked for new homes & climate change development
Landlord Services Reserve	-124	0	-124	Revenue reserve earmarked for Future Landlord Services Projects & C19 Catch up works
Planned Maintenance Reserve	-4,375	1,120	-3,255	Revenue reserve earmarked for Stock Condition and Catch Up Costs
Fire Risk Assessment Reserve	-1,468	0	-1,468	Revenue reserve earmarked for FRA Building works and Lift replacement
TOTAL USEABLE REVENUE RESERVES	-14,321	1,849	-12,472	
CAPITAL				
Reserve Name	2021 Year End	Movement	2022 Year End	Comment
HRA Capital Receipts	-3,185	-2,546	-5,731	To be used to fund the 30% Government RTB funding of replacements only
Hra Retained Capital Receipts	0	0	0	Capital Receipts used to finance the capital program and new homes

5. Capital Budget

The revised net capital budget (after grants and contributions) for 2022/23 was £18.011m; the outturn position is lower by £2.057m at £15.997m. The majority of this movement is from scheme slippage, which needs to be re-profiled into 2023/24, or later years.

2022/23 Capital Programme Outturn Position by Portfolio

Portfolio	Budget after revisions	Actual	(Under)/Overspend
	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23
	£	£	£
Corporate Services	1,306,481	297,398	(1,009,083)
Community - Housing General Fund	1,589,539	930,432	(659,107)
Economy and Regeneration	5,756,272	7,434,473	1,678,201
Environment	2,761,069	821,153	(1,939,916)
Street Scene	6,824,075	2,285,375	(4,538,700)
Strategic Development	1,250,000	0	(1,250,000)
TOTAL GF GROSS EXPENDITURE	19,487,436	11,768,831	(7,718,605)
Community - HRA	3,578,500	6,247,478	2,668,978
TOTAL GROSS EXPENDITURE	23,065,936	18,016,309	(5,049,627)
Corporate Services	(11,000)	0	11,000
Community - Housing General Fund	(1,473,864)	(1,168,557)	305,307
Economy and Regeneration	(2,249,000)	0	2,249,000
Environment	(538,640)	(155,862)	382,778
Street Scene	(782,620)	(82,000)	700,620
Strategic Development	0	0	0
TOTAL GF EXTERNAL FUNDING	(5,055,124)	(1,406,419)	3,648,705
Community - HRA	0	(612,149)	(612,149)
TOTAL EXTERNAL FUNDING	(5,055,124)	(2,018,568)	3,036,556
Corporate Services	1,295,481	297,398	(998,083)
Community - Housing General Fund	115,675	(238,125)	(353,800)
Economy and Regeneration	3,507,272	7,434,473	3,927,201
Environment	2,222,429	665,291	(1,557,138)
Street Scene	6,041,455	2,203,375	(3,838,080)
Strategic Development	1,250,000	0	(1,250,000)
TOTAL GF NET EXPENDITURE	14,432,312	10,362,412	(4,069,900)
Community - HRA	3,578,500	5,635,329	2,056,829
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	18,010,812	15,997,741	(2,013,071)

To remind members a capital budget is agreed to complete a particular scheme/project (normally in the annual budgeting setting process). Profiling between years is undertaken to help understand yearly financial commitments and for members to understand the annual funding position. Capital scheme slippage will be re-profiled with advice from the project/budget manager but this will be within the total budget approved for the scheme by members.

Financial implications:

The financial details are included in the report.

Legal implications:

Any legal implications are identified in the report and no further comment is required.

APPENDIX 1 – Cost of Services & Associated Earmarked Reserves Movements – by Service

General Fund Revenue Budgets 2023/24

Portfolio Budget - Net Expenditure	Actuals 2022/23	Budget 2022/23	Variation	%age Var	Notes
Corporate Business	236,751	176,698	60,053	25%	1
Corporate Services	961,705	699,197	262,508	27%	2
Economy And Regenrtn Portfolio	126,617	54,831	71,786	57%	3
Environment Portfolio	4,167,901	4,145,243	22,658	1%	4
Finance	-1,423,166	-2,037,896	614,730	-43%	5
Strategic Development & P'Ship	-11,300,412	-11,247,536	-52,876	0%	6
Street Scene Portfolio	9,629,248	9,775,239	-145,991	-2%	7
Sustainable Homes & Communitie	1,338,796	1,210,381	128,415	10%	8
Portfolio Totals	3,737,440	2,776,157	961,283	26%	
Reversal of Capital Charges (Depreciation)	65,552	23,530	42,022	64%	
Portfolio Totals Net of Capital Charges	3,802,992	2,799,687	1,003,305	26%	
Interest Receipts (Net of investment management fees)	-1,578,758	-380,930	-1,197,828	76%	9
Interest Payable	405	300	105	26%	
PWLB Interest	96,714	116,840	-20,126	-21%	
Principal Repayments	118,000	310,000	-192,000	-163%	10
Net Expenditure	2,439,353	2,845,897	-406,544	-17%	
Government Grants					
New Homes Bonus Grant	-2,136,523	-2,136,523	0	0%	
Rural Services Delivery Grant	-236,732	-236,590	-142	0%	
Lower Tier Services Grant	-295,896	-404,000	108,104	-37%	11
New Services Grant	-183,878	-184,000	122	0%	
Savings Target	0	-70,000	70,000	100%	12
Use of Reserves					
Capital Reserve Transfers	761,696	636,523	125,173	16%	13
Use of Collection fund surplus Income	-359,791	-332,270	-27,521	8%	
Use of Collection fund surplus MIRS	134,589	134,590	-1	0%	
Use of Accumulated Absence Reserve	-13,174	0	-13,174	100%	
Use of Other Earmarked Reserves	11,349,785	11,378,790	-29,005	0%	
Budget Requirement	11,459,751	11,632,417	-172,666	-2%	
Business Rates Income	-7,819,043	-6,489,421	-1,329,622	17%	14
Business Rates MIRs	4,524,890	4,524,894	-4	0%	
Council Tax Requirement	8,165,599	9,667,890	-1,502,291	-18%	

Notes

1. Corporate Business
Primarily driven by in year expenditure into the independent investigation ex Cllr Humphreys provided by Verita which it was determined should be funded by the General Fund.
2. Corporate Services
Centralised salary saving expectations not realised by offsetting decreases across the portfolio due to the 22/23 pay award.
3. Economy Portfolio
Increases in demand across the service for unbudgeted Agency staff throughout the year which was not offset by Payroll reductions due to the pay award.
4. Environment Portfolio
LED grants provided over and above budgeted payment schedules agreed to be funded by the General fund were predominantly offset by establishment related salary savings.
5. Finance
Lower than budgeted levels of income in Car Parks across the region. Total actual cash increased by £1.02m despite later than anticipated introduction of new charges. This has previously been reported and taken into account when setting the 23/24 budget.
6. Strategic Development
Salary Savings were offset by increased spending on external consultants.
7. Street Scene
Better than predicted income levels across various recycling material credits was partially offset by small overspends across the service.
8. Sustainable Homes & Communities
Lower than expected income levels in Home Safeguard were partially offset by underspends elsewhere.
9. Interest Income
Higher than anticipated yields on a larger than predicted treasury balance throughout the year.
10. Principal Repayments
Decrease in the Revenue Provision for Capital Expenditure made in the year due to reduced capital spend levels.
11. Lower Tier Services Grant
Less than predicted Grant income than budget due to the timing of information.
12. Savings Target
Annual savings target.
13. Capital Transfer to Reserves
Capital transfer made to reserve for disabled facilities grant underspends.
14. Business Rates Income
Higher than expected levels of Business Rates Income.

APPENDIX 2 – Cost of Services Movements – Material variations by cost code

Rank	4CAST	BUDGET	VaR	COST CODE	9CCN - Level 9 Cost Centre Name	Comment
1	-3,841,323	-4,311,510	470,187	05020	Car Parks + Builds On Carparks	Lower than expected income levels across the region
2	946,944	536,630	410,314	50005	Multi Serv Acty Annual	Centralised salary saving expectations not realised by offsetting decreases across the portfolio due to the 22/23 pay award
3	2,937	-266,740	269,677	21070	Hsg Ben Awarded	The deficit versus budget has been funded by reserve contributions which have released prior years new burdens central government funding.
4	1,666,814	1,424,740	242,074	40001	Led Contract Payment	LED grants provided over and above budgeted payment schedules agreed to be funded by the General fund.
5	4,616,715	4,812,256	-195,541	35001	Refuse Collection & Recycling	Better than predicted income levels across various material credits

APPENDIX 3 – General Fund Earmarked Reserves

REV/CAP RES	Reserve Category /Strategic Line	Reserve Name	-20,573	-11,350	-31,923
			2021	Movement	2022
Capital	Asset Maintenance Reserve	Asset Maintenance Reserve	-748	139	-609
Capital	Capital Res It Projects	Capital Res It Projects	-168	165	-3
Capital	Eth Refurb Reserve	Eth Refurb Reserve	-31	0	-31
Revenue	42021 C19 Reserve (Ex 93595)	42021 C19 Reserve (Ex 93595)	-446	413	-33
Revenue	42021 Financial Resilience Posts X 2 Extended To August 2024	42021 Financial Resilience Posts X 2 Extended To August 2024	-122	-103	-225
Revenue	Business Rates Volatility Res	Business Rates Volatility Res	-4,636	3,986	-650
Revenue	Contingency Reserve For 46091 Hardship Fund	Contingency Reserve For 46091 Hardship Fund	0	-200	-200
Revenue	Corporate Services Reserves Bs	Community (Was Dip) Consultatn	-6	0	-6
Revenue	Corporate Services Reserves Bs	Covid19 Emergency Fund Reserve	-180	100	-80
Revenue	Corporate Services Reserves Bs	Edms Reserve (From Transformat	-33	0	-33
Revenue	Corporate Services Reserves Bs	Elect Reg Reserve	-44	0	-44
Revenue	Corporate Services Reserves Bs	It Repacemt (Systmon) Res	-20	0	-20
Revenue	Corporate Services Reserves Bs	Mobile Working Res Via Capital	-5	0	-5
Revenue	Corporate Training Reserve	Corporate Training Reserve	0	-14	-14
Revenue	Cv T&T Contain Outbreak Mngt Fund Reserve	Cv T&T Contain Outbreak Mngt Fund Reserve	0	-159	-159
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Asset Management Plan Reserve	-18	0	-18
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Beer Coastal Comm Reserve	0	0	0
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Building Control It Enhancemen	-144	0	-144
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Business Support And Adv Res	-39	-28	-67
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Changing Places Reserve	0	-132	-132
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Comm. Invest Framework Reserve	-85	0	-85
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Cranbrook Asset Trf Reserve	0	0	0
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Economic Ptshp And Initive Fnd	-54	0	-54
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Ex & Seaton Visitor Cntr Res	-31	0	-31
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Exmouth Regen Res Via Capital	0	0	0
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Jubilee Field Axminster Reserve	-43	43	0
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Labgi Reserves	-62	0	-62
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Ocean Venue Sinking Fund	-50	0	-50
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Old Drill Hall Dem Via Capital	-2	0	-2
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Portas Towns Pilot Reserve	-1	0	-1
Revenue	Economy Reserves Bs	Relocation Allowances Reserve	-158	0	-158
Revenue	Eddc Elections Reserve	Eddc Elections Reserve	0	-19	-19
Revenue	Eh Comf Funds	Eh Comf Funds	0	-42	-42
Revenue	Environment Reserves Bs	Aonb Landscape Fund	-144	67	-78
Revenue	Environment Reserves Bs	Car Pks Ticket Machine Rsrve	-49	20	-28
Revenue	Environment Reserves Bs	Climate Change Reserve	-512	-235	-747
Revenue	Environment Reserves Bs	E Devon Crime And Disorder	-223	8	-214
Revenue	Environment Reserves Bs	Eh Protection Reserve	-26	0	-26
Revenue	Environment Reserves Bs	Grants For Arts Reserve	-61	-41	-102
Revenue	Environment Reserves Bs	Hls Reserve	-164	-34	-197
Revenue	Environment Reserves Bs	Licensing Reserve	0	-9	-9
Revenue	Environment Reserves Bs	Manor PvlN Sidmth Res	-3	-4	-7
Revenue	Environment Reserves Bs	Water Voles Reserve	0	0	0
Revenue	Environment Reserves Bs	Wild Wetlands Project	-59	1	-58
Revenue	Finance Reserves Bs	100percent Nndr Reserve	-2,071	1,075	-996
Revenue	Finance Reserves Bs	Community Fund Reserve	-12	-29	-41
Revenue	Finance Reserves Bs	Land Charges Sur/Defi Reserve	0	-36	-36
Revenue	Finance Reserves Bs	Localised Ctax Support Reserve	-141	0	-141
Revenue	Finance Reserves Bs	Mtfr Risk Reserve	-2,936	0	-2,936
Revenue	Finance Reserves Bs	New Homes Bonus Community Fund	-1	1	0
Revenue	Finance Reserves Bs	Nndr Project Revenue Reserve	-34	0	-34
Revenue	Finance Reserves Bs	Parish Support Reserve	-55	0	-55
Revenue	Finance Reserves Bs	Parishes Together Reserve	-81	30	-50
Revenue	Finance Reserves Bs	Revs & Bens Reserve	-30	20	-10
Revenue	Gen Res Transform Fund	Gen Res Transform Fund	-2,278	164	-2,114
Revenue	Homes 4 Ukraine 42022 Emp Costs 23-24 Reserve	Homes 4 Ukraine 42022 Emp Costs 23-24 Reserve	0	-58	-58
Revenue	Homes 4 Ukraine 42022 General Reserve	Homes 4 Ukraine 42022 General Reserve	0	-1,369	-1,369
Revenue	Led Nat Leisure recovery reserve	Led Nat Leisure recovery reserve	-388	388	0
Revenue	Private Sector Hsg Reserve	Private Sector Hsg Reserve	-35	-58	-94
Revenue	Small Community Grants Fund Re93080	Small Community Grants Fund Re93080	-11	7	-4
Revenue	Strata Savings Reserve	Strata Savings Reserve	0	-138	-138
Revenue	Strategic Develmt Reserves Bs	3 Towns Regeneration Reserve	-30	23	-7
Revenue	Strategic Develmt Reserves Bs	Consortium Payment Reserve	-350	0	-350
Revenue	Strategic Develmt Reserves Bs	East Devon Great Trees	-24	24	0
Revenue	Strategic Develmt Reserves Bs	Enterprise Zone Reserve	-1,080	-948	-2,028
Revenue	Strategic Develmt Reserves Bs	Habitats Assessments Grant Res	0	0	0
Revenue	Strategic Develmt Reserves Bs	Hndu Expansion Areas Res	-125	125	0
Revenue	Strategic Develmt Reserves Bs	Hnip Revenue Reserve	-362	-14,149	-14,511
Revenue	Strategic Develmt Reserves Bs	Local Plan Inspection Reserve	-94	-33	-128
Revenue	Strategic Develmt Reserves Bs	Neighbourhood Planning Reserve	-133	-9	-141
Revenue	Strategic Develmt Reserves Bs	Ngp Masterplanning Reserve	-99	-171	-270
Revenue	Strategic Develmt Reserves Bs	Planning Reserve	0	-111	-111
Revenue	Strategic Develmt Reserves Bs	River Restoration Proj Res	-9	9	0
Revenue	Street Scene Reserves Bs	Beach Huts Reserve	-59	-2	-60
Revenue	Street Scene Reserves Bs	Burial Software Reserve	-3	3	0
Revenue	Street Scene Reserves Bs	Honeyditches Interpret Panel	-13	0	-13
Revenue	Street Scene Reserves Bs	Jubilee Gardens Reserve	-3	3	0
Revenue	Street Scene Reserves Bs	Lpsa2 Reserve	-49	15	-34
Revenue	Street Scene Reserves Bs	Ottery Cycle Path Dowry (Coler	-12	0	-12
Revenue	Street Scene Reserves Bs	Plant & Equip - Pks & Pls Grds	-104	20	-84
Revenue	Street Scene Reserves Bs	Plant & Equip - Street Cleansg	-54	1	-53
Revenue	Street Scene Reserves Bs	Streetscene Reserves	-109	23	-86
Revenue	Street Scene Reserves Bs	War Memorial Maintenance Reser	-20	0	-20
Revenue	Sustn Homes & Comm Reserves Bs	Community Led Housing Reserve	-900	178	-722
Revenue	Sustn Homes & Comm Reserves Bs	Housing Task Force Reserve	-490	145	-345
Revenue	Sustn Homes & Comm Reserves Bs	Protect And Vaccinate	-11	11	0
Revenue	Ukspf Reserve	Ukspf Reserve	0	-150	-150
Revenue	Treasury Management Reserve	Treasury Management Reserve	0	-275	-275

APPENDIX 4 – HRA outturn Variances & Commentaries

Year to Date			INCOME	4Cast Outturn			
Actuals	Budget	Diff		Actuals	Budget	Diff	
-18,159,671	-18,609,260	449,589	Gross Property Rents	-18,159,671	-18,609,260	449,589	1
-223,211	-215,990	-7,221	Garage Rents	-203,211	-215,990	12,779	
-647,488	-619,600	-27,888	Other Income	-647,488	-619,600	-27,888	
-19,030,371	-19,444,850	414,479		-19,010,371	-19,444,850	434,479	

Year to Date			EXPENDITURE	4Cast Outturn			
Actuals	Budget	Diff		Actuals	Budget	Diff	
5,141,919	4,400,580	741,339	Repairs And Maintenance - General	5,141,919	4,400,580	741,339	2
1,159,443	973,750	185,693	Repairs And Maintenance - Special	1,159,443	973,750	185,693	3
7,977,701	7,119,670	858,031	Supervision And Management	7,977,701	7,119,670	858,031	4
225,732	327,360	-101,628	Other Expenditure	225,732	327,360	-101,628	5
3,669,047	4,027,130	-358,083	Capital Charges & Bad Debt	3,669,047	4,027,130	-358,083	6
18,173,841	16,848,490	1,325,351		18,173,841	16,848,490	1,325,351	

		4Cast Outturn			
		Actuals	Budget	Diff	
Financing & MIRS		2,100,626	2,438,140	-337,514	7

		4Cast Outturn			
		Actuals	Budget	Diff	
Surplus		1,264,096	-158,220	1,422,316	

Commentary

The variation in outturn for forecasted rents is solely due to the impact of rent losses on void properties. The increases in expenditure below partly relate to a large ramp up in works from February onwards to address the issue and to prevent similar losses in 23/24.

The majority of the overspend can be explained by two factors; the large amounts of external decoration undertaken by Ian Williams to be funded by reserve and increases in the number of exceptions which are in effect minor planned works which offset underspends in Major Repairs.

Underspends within certain compliance areas, notably asbestos works, have been more than offset by increases in Fuel Efficiency measures such as retrofits and alternative energy heating supplies.

The impact of the salary review has caused budgets to be exceeded where there is a full establishment within the cost centre, however, the impact was partially mitigated by the vacant posts within the service, most notably within the Property & Asset team.

Lower levels of spending in various areas such as Tenant Engagement, Change of Tenancy/Downsizing and sewerage provision.

Underspends across major repairs categories which have been redistributed into other areas such as external decoration and minor planned works.

The majority of the surplus relates to the contribution that the HRA receives from the General fund for the return on investments. Returns were significantly higher than budgeted due to the impact of interest rate rises in the year.

APPENDIX 5 – HRA Capital Summary with funding

Affordable Housing

Property Purchases completed

Funding Stream

974,312 Expenditure

-584,587 60% HRA Funding from Reserve

-389,725 40% RTB Receipt Funding

Property Purchases incomplete/peripherals

12,636 Expenditure

-12,636 Revenue Contribution to Capital

0

FRA Capital Works

In year expenditure

0 Expenditure

0 FRA Earmarked Reserve Funding

0

HRA Capital Program Including Capital Grants

2 HRA Capital Programme Total

Green Homes Climate Change

730,003 Expenditure

1,816,214 Expenditure

-612,000 Grant Income Received

-1,190,121 HRA CAPITAL PROGRAM FUNDING RECEIPTS

0 RESIDUAL BORROWING FROM 22/23

-744,096 Revenue Contribution to Capital

0



Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting 12 July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Place & Prosperity Team Resourcing

Report summary:

The work of the Place & Prosperity Team within the Place, Assets & Commercialisation Team has significantly increased in recent years with many significant and high profile current and pipeline projects insufficiently resourced.

The Team comprises:

- Project Manager / Team Lead
- Project Officer 0.6 full time equivalent – Vacant
- Administration Officer

Alongside this core Team there is also a Project Manager, but without Team Lead responsibilities who was appointed on a 2 year fixed term contract in January 2022 to lead on Placemaking projects within Exmouth alone. The contract for this post ends in January 2024. The need for this post remains - to deliver projects in Exmouth over the next 5 years at least. The intention and approvals back in 2021 included for this Project Manager post but also a Project Officer post to provide support. This latter post was never then filled, largely as for Exmouth projects alone, the Project Manager – Exmouth had the skills and capacity to deliver both roles. As such there has been a budget saving. With Exmouth being our largest town along with the extent of the Council's land ownership along the seafront but also around the town centre it is important that we retain this dedicated post. That said, with the way the project has evolved we have found this is not a full time role and we have therefore in recent months utilised surplus capacity to support the backlog of wider Place & Prosperity projects elsewhere in the District.

The recommendation within this report is that we make this 2 year fixed term contract post permanent, continuing its lead role in delivering Exmouth projects but also utilising it to boost capacity and therefore delivery in wider Placemaking projects. The current post holder has a skillset that compliments that of others within the wider team.

In addition, the recommendation is that the 0.6 Project Officer vacant post to be made full time and role widened to support both Project Managers in delivery of their projects. There will be additional calls on this post with supporting two Project Managers, but in addition, appointing to a full time post will more likely attract a wider pool of interest.

It is important to note that the work around Placemaking being delivered by the Council is growing considerably and there is great expectation by Town and Parish Councils, businesses and residents that the Council will fulfil its role in this area. Without suitable resourcing we cannot deliver those expectations.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☐ No ☒

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That Cabinet recommend to Council that additional revenue budget is secured to:

- a) Make the 2 year fixed term Project Manager – Exmouth post permanent at Grade 6. Revenue cost including on-costs of an additional £74,000 per annum from 2024/25 with a pro-rata allowance for latter 3 months of 2023/24.
- b) Make the Project Officer post full time. Additional revenue cost including on-costs would be £21,000 per annum from 2024/25 with a pro-rata allowance for latter 6 months of 2023/24.

Reason for recommendation:

To provide an appropriate level of resource to fulfil Service Plan objectives, Council, business, residents and others expectations in Placemaking.

Officer: Tim Child, Assistant Director – Place, Assets & Commercialisation 01395 571692
tchild@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

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

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Medium Impact

Risk: High Risk; Without the Project Manager – Exmouth post being filled post January 2024 the Exmouth Placemaking work will need to cease. Without successful appointment to the Project Officer post, the work capacity of the Team working on projects outside of Exmouth and across the District will be adversely affected.

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ Better homes and communities for all
- ☒ A greener East Devon
- ☒ A resilient economy

Report in full

1.1 What is Placemaking?

1.2 There is no single definition, but a brief description might be that:

“Placemaking is the process of creating quality places that people want to live, work, play and learn in”

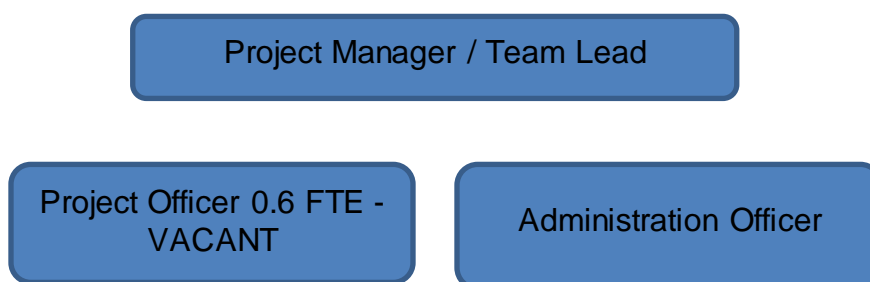
The Place & Prosperity Team deliver this by:

- Developing and delivering place-making strategy and associated development projects
- Securing new funding sources to enable development projects and investment opportunities
- Working with the Council’s own resources to deliver better places e.g. Place & Prosperity Fund (proposed), Enterprise Zone, Levelling Up and other funding sources, along with the General Fund asset base itself
- Identifying strategic and practical means of improving and strengthening the defining places of East Devon: its towns and town centres, commercial centres and other key locations

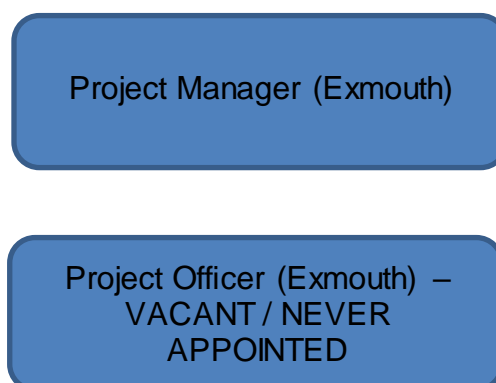
1.3 Current Staffing Structure for Delivery

1.4 Delivery of these elements of Placemaking is through the Place, Assets & Commercialisation Service. There are 2 particular Teams delivering this work:

Place & Prosperity Team



Place & Prosperity (Exmouth) Team



It was an intentional decision in 2021 to create a dedicated Team to deliver Placemaking projects in Exmouth, this being our largest town in the District but also then town with most EDDC owned assets, both on seafront but also close to town centre and therefore the town with greatest opportunities, consequently with the greatest workload. This arrangement has worked well but there is currently insufficient work for the Project Manager and therefore we are utilising surplus capacity to assist the main Place & Prosperity Team. As projects come forward for delivery this workload will increase significantly.

1.5 Both Project Managers report directly to Assistant Director – Place, Assets & Commercialisation.

1.6 Current work being delivered by the two Teams

1.7 Within the Place & Prosperity Team the more significant projects being delivered are:

- Community Asset Transfer – currently land at Canaan, Ottery St Mary being considered
- UKSPF Town Feasibility Studies in Sidmouth, Honiton and Ottery St Mary
- Drill Hall and Public Toilets, Esplanade, Sidmouth - disposals
- Seaton Moridunum disposals and arrangements with adjacent Fosseyway Court development
- Websters Garage site, Seaton
- Bids to future rounds of Levelling-Up being considered
- Devon Place Urban Renewal Projects for Axe Valley – separate projects in Seaton and Axminster with separate Project Boards
- Review of current depot provision to ensure facilities are in the best locations and fit-for-purpose, identifying costed options
- Providing Officer and Member workshops to increase awareness of what is meant by the term Placemaking and to facilitate discussion on this topic and the opportunities available within the District
- Delivering options for stalled employment sites – Hayne Lane in Honiton and Colyford Road and Harepath Road sites in Seaton *
- Adoption and then implementation of a new Place & Prosperity Fund *

1.8 Within the Exmouth Team, the Project Officer coordinates all Placemaking type activities (Strand, Levelling-Up Bid seafront requests etc) in Exmouth along with leading on delivering the Placemaking in Exmouth Town and Seafront Plan. This was consulted on heavily last year and WSP consultants are now being appointed to take forward the work from 2022 and developing a terms of reference and a plan for a Placemaking strategy to include:

- A prioritisation of the key Themes and Characteristics and opportunity sites
- Spatial analysis of the opportunities across Exmouth
- Analysis of what the Council can deliver (i.e. is within its remit) in the short, medium and long term
- Identification of key partners to deliver other elements e.g. Devon County Council
- Preparation of options for sites
- High level feasibility design and costing
- Draft options to Delivery Group
- Preparation of shortlist of options
- Further consultation on the options
- Cabinet and Full Council approvals to move to detailed design and costing
- Implementation phase then to begin in 2024

In addition, to utilise surplus capacity that exists currently and until such times as implementation phase commences, progressing projects outside of Exmouth as asterisked above in para 1.7.

1.9 Trajectory of work for the two Teams

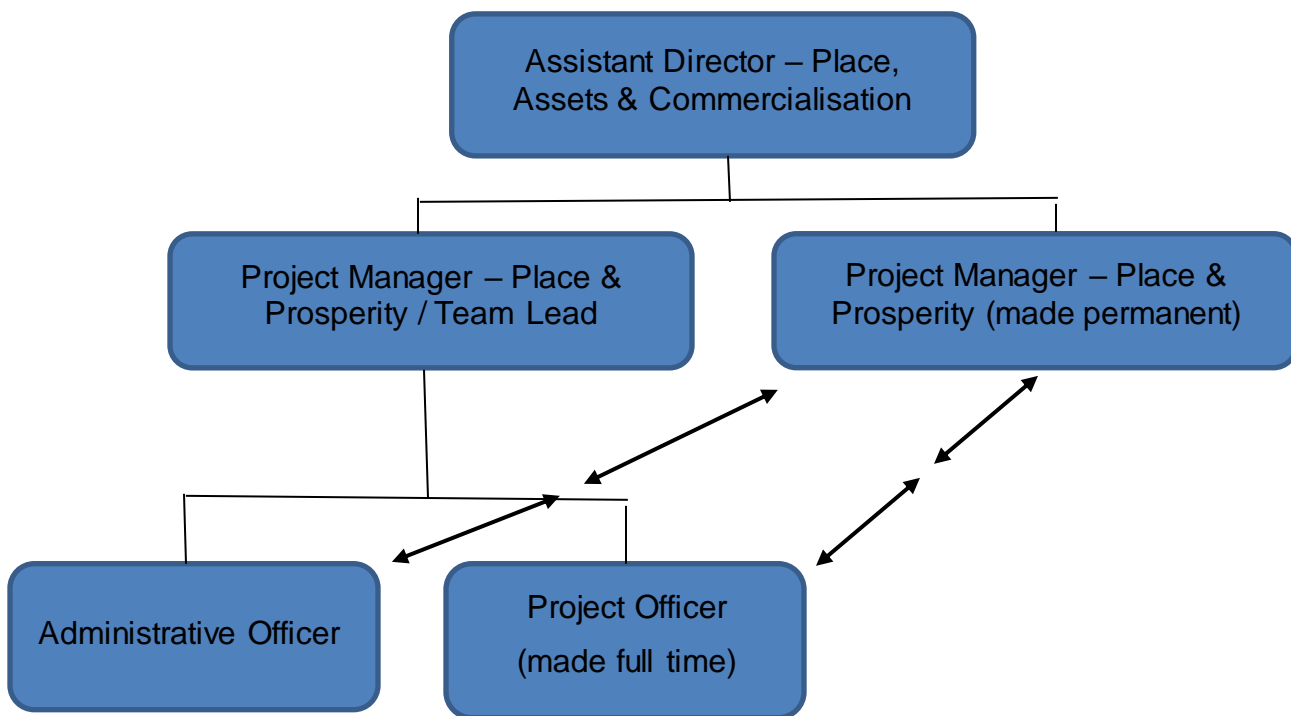
1.10 We are experiencing increased demands on the main Place & Prosperity Team through increasing engagement with Devon Place Board, expectations from our Towns for EDDC to support them in Placemaking projects which assist in economic recovery of their towns, through the Levelling Up agenda and funding streams, but also through the expectations

being set across the District through our focus in recent years on the work of Exmouth. In addition there is also significant expectation and need to focus inwardly on the Council's own assets, whether that be our depots (a workstream now started), but also office and other reviews needed, all of which contribute towards Place Making. The role of a local authority and therefore expectations in this area is greater than ever before and every indication is that our role in this area of work will increase yet further and continue to do so over the next 5 years at least.

1.11 Proposed Resourcing Levels and Structure

1.12 If we do not secure additional budget then the Exmouth work will not be able to progress beyond end on this calendar year meaning that expectations will have been raised, further public monies invested in resource, but with resulting deliverables then not achieved. In addition, we are unlikely to recruit to the Project Officer post meaning that all Placemaking projects will need to be delivered by one post holder. This not only does not provide organisational resilience but is simply not realistic with support to our towns in particular needing to be significantly reduced.

1.13 Proposed Structure:



1.14 The proposed structure ensures:

- Increased resilience and capacity by creating two Project Manager posts within our permanent workforce
- Does not change line management responsibilities and thereby avoids related HR issues
- Increases resilience and capacity by increasing the 0.6 FTE Project Officer post to a 1 FTE (full time). By doing so provides the 2nd Project Manager with the support structure that hasn't existed to-date as never recruited to. Arguably also avoids the need to appoint a 2nd full time Project Officer post agreed back in 2021.
- Formalises arrangements for both Project Managers to have equal administrative support and Project Officer Support
- The 2nd Project Manager post (the FTC being made permanent) would continue to prioritise Exmouth projects but would be utilised to deliver other projects across District as capacity allows. The skillsets of both Project Managers are different but nicely complement each

other. Assuming the Place & Prosperity Fund is adopted, this Officer would lead on delivering this significant area of work.

Note: Both the Administrative Officer and Project Officer continue to have same line manager reporting line as currently

- 1.15 The cost implications of the proposals are as follows:
- 1.16 For the Project Officer post, this is a Grade 4 post. The maximum additional cost for increasing hours of this vacant post to a full time post (within Grade) would be £21,000. This figure includes a 35% allowance for on-costs. The additional amount would require additional budget.
- 1.17 For the Project Manager post, this is a Grade 6 post. The maximum additional cost for making this post permanent (within Grade) would be £74,000. This figure includes a 35% allowance for on-costs. The additional amount would require additional budget. It is worth noting that as current projects progress through this post holder, there will not only be revenue savings to the Council, at this stage not able to be quantified, but potentially significant and exceeding the revenue cost of the post, but also as projects are then delivered, an opportunity to apportion some of the staffing cost to capital budgets.
- 1.18 Discussions have taken place with the Council's Corporate HR Manager who is supportive of proposals for both posts. With the Project Manager post there is no policy or procedural reason not to offer this permanent post to the existing fixed term post holder.

Financial implications:

The financial details are contained in the report. In total going forward this is a request of £95k to be added to the base budget of the Council. Members will be aware of the projected shortfall in the Council's budget for 2024/25 alone of nearly £900k and if approved this will add to that deficit and Cabinet will have to consider the priority of this request. To mitigate the position this post is key in the delivery of key projects which should return additional income direct to the Council through specific schemes and through additional business rates, although this is difficult to quantify at this stage.

Legal implications:

There are no substantive legal issues to be added to this report.

Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting 12 July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



The Broadclyst Neighbourhood Plan ('the Plan') to be formally 'made'

Report summary:

The Broadclyst Neighbourhood Plan has now successfully passed referendum and must be formally 'made' (adopted) by East Devon District Council in order to form part of the development plan.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

- (1) That Members recommend that the Broadclyst Neighbourhood Plan be 'made'.
- (2) That Members note that once made the Plan will carry full weight in the planning decision making process as part of the statutory development plan for this Neighbourhood Plan Area (the parish of Broadclyst).
- (3) That Members congratulate Broadclyst Parish Council and their Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on all their hard work in developing the Plan.

Reason for recommendation:

The Plan received a majority 'yes' vote in the neighbourhood area referendum, as required by the Regulations, and there is no substantive reason not to make the Plan. In addition, to recognise the significant work over a number of years by Broadclyst Parish Council and dedicated volunteers to prepare the Plan.

Officer: Angela King Neighbourhood Planning Officer. Email: Aking@eastdevon.gov.uk, Phone: 01395 571740

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

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

Equalities impact Low Impact

Neighbourhood Planning is designed to be inclusive and extensive consultation is a fundamental requirement. The Broadclyst Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been the subject of significant consultation and engagement with the community, set out in a detailed Consultation Statement. All persons living in the parish have had the opportunity to be engaged in the Plan's production and all persons registered to vote in the area could vote in the referendum.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk; The only reason for the Plan not to be made now is if the Council consider that to do so would be incompatible with any retained EU obligation or any of the Convention rights within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998. There is a risk that should we take that decision it will be subject to legal challenge and that the Parish Council will feel disenfranchised that their right to produce a Neighbourhood Plan under the Localism Act has been prevented.

Links to background information [The Localism Act](#); [Plain English Guide to the Localism Act](#); [National Planning Policy Framework \(2021\)](#); [Neighbourhood Planning Regulations](#); [Neighbourhood Planning Roadmap Guide](#); [East Devon Neighbourhood Planning webpages](#); [Broadclyst Parish Neighbourhood Plan webpage](#); [Broadclyst Parish Neighbourhood Plan Referendum Version](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ Better homes and communities for all
 - ☒ A greener East Devon
 - ☒ A resilient economy
-

Report in full

1.0 Broadclyst Neighbourhood Plan Referendum

- 1.1 On 22 June 2023, a referendum was held on Broadclyst Neighbourhood Plan at Broadclyst Victory Hall from 7am to 10pm.
- 1.2 Voters were asked the following question:

"Do you want East Devon District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Broadclyst to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"
- 1.3 The regulations advise that if more people vote 'yes' than 'no' in the referendum, East Devon District Council should use Broadclyst Parish Neighbourhood Plan to help it decide planning applications in Broadclyst Parish. The Plan once made (adopted) will then become part of the statutory development plan for the area.
- 1.4 In East Devon, the development plan currently consists of the East Devon Local Plan (2013-2031); the East Devon Villages Plan (adopted 2018); any made Neighbourhood Plan; the Devon Waste Plan (2011-2031); and the Devon Minerals Plan (2011-2033). A new Local Plan for East Devon is currently being prepared but this work is at an insufficiently advanced stage for it to carry weight in the development management process. For this reason, it is the adopted Local Plan that the Neighbourhood Plan has been examined

against, and found to be in general conformity with, in meeting the 'Basic Conditions' for a neighbourhood plan to be made.

1.5 The final results of the Broadclyst Neighbourhood Plan referendum are shown below:

- Yes: 494
- No: 71
- Voter turnout: 11.32%
- In favour: 88%

1.6 The results show a clear majority of those voting in favour of the Plan, although it is noted that overall turnout was disappointing. This could have been affected by a variety of factors, including the hot weather.

1.7 The Cabinet must now consider whether it would be appropriate to make the Plan. Once the Plan is formally made it will carry full weight in the planning decision making process. As part of the development plan, any planning applications in Broadclyst Parish will be judged against the Neighbourhood Plan, as well as policies of East Devon District Council and also the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.8 With regards to implementation of this Plan, it should be noted that the Plan makes an allocation for 2 live-work units and 2 houses at Blackhorse on a site which falls within the airport noise contours and where mitigation will be required to help ensure a healthy living environment for future occupiers, which the policy seeks to secure. Under emerging Local Plan policy such noise sensitive uses would not normally be supported in this noise contour (60-63 dBA). However this is a small infill development where housing already exists and where some relaxation may be acceptable, providing suitable mitigation is achieved in the eventual site layout and design. Also, the selection of this site and the nature of the proposals for it have been subject to extensive community consultation by the Parish Council which has evidenced support for its inclusion within the plan proposals. Overall, effective application of the policies of the Plan once made will ensure that the hard work that has gone into its production will translate into the incorporation of local community expectations and aspirations within the decision making process.

1.9 The only reason for the Plan not to be made now is if Cabinet consider that to do so would be incompatible with any retained EU obligation or any of the Convention rights within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998. This has been considered during the examination process, where the Examiner expressed that they were satisfied that the Plan meets these obligations. Officer assessment is that the Council can be satisfied that the Plan meets the legal requirements. There are not considered to be any grounds not to make the Plan.

2.0 Next Steps

2.1 Following the decision whether or not to make the Plan, we will produce a decision notice for the Plan. This will detail the decision and reasons for it and where it may be viewed.

2.2 The decision notice will be publicised by:-

- publishing it on the neighbourhood planning pages of our website

- by sending a copy to the Plan producer and requesting that they notify those persons who live, work or carry on business in the neighbourhood area to which the Plan relates
- by notifying the 'consultation bodies' referred to in the consultation statement
- by advising:-
 - those adjoining authorities
 - anyone who asked to be notified of a copy of the decision
 - all those who made representations on the relevant plan

2.3 In conclusion, Members are now asked to approve the recommendation to enable the Plan to be formally 'made', in accordance with this report.

Financial implications:

Central Government funding is available for Neighbourhood plans. This income covers not only examination fees but also all other associated costs such as employment and all other supplies and services. Any residual funds are placed into an earmarked reserve and utilised to cover funding gaps in subsequent years.

Legal implications:

Following a majority vote in favour of the plan at referendum the Council must proceed to adopt (or 'make') the plan within 8 weeks of the referendum, unless in doing so it would be incompatible with any retained EU obligation or any of the Convention rights within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998. The Council has adopted a Screening Opinion, accepted by relevant statutory consultees, which confirms that there was potential for significant environmental effects arising from the plan proposals and as such a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) was required. This environmental report was prepared and duly submitted with the plan. A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) was not required due to the framework provided by the local plan and existing strategic mitigation plan in place, however one was also prepared and submitted with the plan documentation. This confirmed that there is sufficient policy framework in place via the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of the international designated Exe Estuary site. The Independent Examiner accepted the outcome of the screening assessment and the findings of the environmental reports. The legal position is that the Council must now 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan as modified. As noted, once it had been made, the Broadclyst Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the Development Plan for decision making on planning applications.

Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting 12 July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Delivering Environment Act 2021 new duties

Report summary:

The Environment Act 2021 new duty for Biodiversity Net Gain becomes “live” in November 2023 and it will have a significant impact on the workload and ability of the Development Management team and District Ecologist to meet the demand that will be generated by this new process. It is both a complex and technically specialised area of work, which will require an additional Ecology Officer working alongside Development Management to provide advice and support. There is also a requirement from the Act to put in place a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan that Local Planning Authorities will use as part of the reporting requirements for the 30 years of ‘on and off site’ habitat monitoring. It is proposed that an Ecology Graduate Apprenticeship role could help deliver this requirement. Therefore, it is essential that the Council is as prepared as is possible to meet this new duty from November and provide specialised support to the Planning teams through expert advice and support for those applications that will require this new biodiversity net gain assessment before any planning permission is granted.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☐ No ☒

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

That Cabinet recommends to Council:

- That Cabinet recommend to Council the appointment of an Ecology Officer and an Ecology Graduate Apprenticeship role to help enable the Council to meet its new duty for Biodiversity Net Gain;
- To provide funding for an Ecology Officer role and an Ecology Graduate Apprenticeship role to enable the delivery of the new Environment Act 2021 duties for Biodiversity Net Gain. A request is made to Council for a budget of £47,049 per annum for the Ecology officer role and £27,344 for the Graduate Apprenticeship role to be funded initially from the Government’s new burdens payments and the Council’s General Fund Revenue budget whilst this new burdens payment is made available and thereafter by the Council’s General Fund Revenue

Reason for recommendation:

To be able to meet the Environment Act 2021 duty to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain from November 2023

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

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

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: High Risk; The risk of failure as a Local Planning Authority to meet the new duty through the volume of planning applications due to a lack of resource and capacity

Links to background information <https://www.local.gov.uk/pas/topics/environment/biodiversity-net-gain-local-authorities/biodiversity-net-gain-faqs>

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☐ Better homes and communities for all
- ☒ A greener East Devon
- ☐ A resilient economy

Report in full

1. Background

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a requirement of the Environment Act 2021 (The Environment Act). The Environment Act created four broad requirements for LPAs:

- **Identify and implement measures to further the biodiversity objective** (local plan policies, DM changes, better management/expansion of biodiversity resources).
- **Carry out biodiversity reporting** (reporting what we have done to further the biodiversity objective).
- **Input to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)** (contribute to the LNRS and ensure that NRN mapping aligns with EDDC priorities).
- **Implementing mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of at least the minimum percentage (10%).** However a policy for 20% net gain has been proposed within the Council's Local Plan review.

In general - The Act makes provision for nature recovery by 2030, improved air quality, improved water quality, reduction of waste and better use of our resources.

BNG is a principle, which should result in development increasing the net biodiversity value of an area. BNG is calculated using a metric tool, which consultants use to establish the pre and post construction biodiversity value of a site, in “biodiversity units”. A 10% net gain means that the biodiversity value of the site (in biodiversity units) is 10% greater post construction.

If this cannot be achieved on the development site, off site habitat enhancement/creation can be used to achieve net 10% BNG. There is an emerging off-site BNG “credit” market for offsite habitat creation/ enhancement, which is predicted to be worth £135m - £274m/year.

Offsite credits should be purchased as close to the site of impact as possible, and be focused in strategic nature recovery areas (as per Nature Recovery Network (NRN) mapping). Best practice states this, and so will our emerging policies. It is still possible that credits can be bought out of the Local Planning Authority and even further afield, although there is a penalty for this in the metric, and we have a policy in the draft new local plan which would deter this from happening in the future should the policy be adopted. The mandatory requirement will come in place from November 2023 for all but exemptions and small sites, so all applications with ten dwellings or more will require assessing for BNG. From April 2024, small sites will become part of the BNG assessment process for the Local Planning Authority.

2. Timeline for BNG new duty

- **Autumn 2021: 9th Nov** - Environment Bill gets Royal Assent - now the Environment Act
- **Winter 2021**: Government consultation on BNG statutory instruments and regulations (delayed, still being undertaken, closed start of April 2022)
- **Spring 2022**: Government response to consultation (delayed as above, still delayed at present)
- **Spring 2023**: BNG site register and statutory credits sales platform go live
- **November 2023**: Biodiversity net gain expected to become mandatory for all Town & Country Planning Act developments (except small sites and exemptions)
- **April 2024**: Biodiversity Net Gain consultation will begin for exemptions and small sites

3. Preparing for mandatory BNG

Staffing and training:

One of the most significant shortfalls to BNG is the large burden it will place on LPAs, in terms of staff resource. BNG can be complicated and time consuming to assess, and requires specialist skills. It is estimated that the Development Management workload of East Devon would require approximately two full time staff members indefinitely, to assess BNG applications. This estimation came from discussions with Warwickshire Council, as well as Bath and North East Somerset Council, who have both implemented BNG ahead of it being mandatory.

All planning staff will require some training in the basics of BNG, i.e. where it will be applied, and where it will not, the planning validation requirements and which metric is to be used. The District Ecologist has pulled together a training programme that will be delivered from June to November 2023 for all planning officers, which will help the area teams to better understand what is required with the new duty. However, it is expected that as soon as the duty becomes “live” there will be a significant pressure on the District Ecologist to help support the whole of Development Management. Although the District Ecologist role was partly created to help with BNG it is not feasible for him to be the sole ecologist involved in operating BNG. He has many other tasks including commenting on complex ecological issues associated with planning applications coming through the system, addressing issues of nutrient neutrality in the River Axe catchment as well as supporting nature recovery work. It is clearly unsustainable for one person to do all of this work and implement BNG and so additional resource and capacity is required urgently to be able to put this support in place as close to November as is possible.

The process is envisaged to be based on applicants calculating their own BNG requirement and demonstrating how it will be provided as part of their planning application submission. However, it

will be important that we check their calculations to ensure that they are not underestimating the value of the bio-diversity on the site and ensure that they are therefore provide the correct amount of biodiversity elsewhere on the site or through some form of credit scheme to deliver the net gain off-site.

This work will require quite detailed assessment of the applicant's submission and in some cases a site survey. Investigating any proposals to deliver net gain will also be a key part of the work as well as ensuring that it is secured and then delivered. Clearly the monitoring and checking work will gradually build over time and not require the same level of expertise as the initial assessment of the proposal and hence it is proposed to consider an apprentice for this role who can gain experience and learn on the job with a view to growing our own ecologist for the future. This will also help to keep costs down.

Ecology Officer responsibilities

It is anticipated that the new role will fulfil the following key functions and be fully embedded in the Development Management team to help ensure that the right net gain calculations are applied.

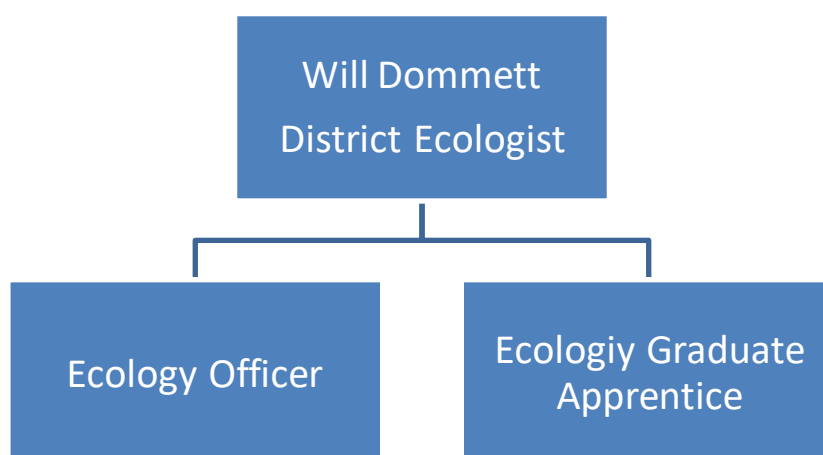
- This includes: assessment of the merits of individual planning applications, assessment of BNG Metric calculations and reports, assessment on expediency for alleged breaches of planning control, assessment and advice on Local Plans/Development Frameworks and policy documents; screening and scoping for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Appropriate Assessments & Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA); (50% time allocation)
- Provide specialist advice to assist in the development and preparation of policies within the Local Plan/framework and other initiatives relating to development and biodiversity. Including support to Habitat Regulations Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal of Local Plan, and meeting the requirements the Environment Act including response to BNG and advice for any other policy documents. (15% time allocation)
- Provide necessary support, advice and appearance at planning and enforcement appeals, inquiries and hearings 5% (time allocation)
- Provide assessment and provision of advice on Council development and other local authorities development (internal and external) (5% time allocation)
- Working as part of a project team, providing ecology advice in the development and subsequent management of Council green infrastructure (5% time allocation)
- Undertake surveys, assessments including BNG assessment & give advice on Protected Species (5% tie allocation)
- Provide training, briefings and advice to other officers, Councillors and other local authorities and other groups on all Ecological matters (10% time allocation)
- Monitor developments to ensure compliance with relevant ecological conditions and obligations (5% time allocation)

The creation of an Ecology Graduate Apprenticeship role will help the Council to also fulfil the habitat monitoring and maintenance, monitoring delivery, enforcement and reporting elements of BNG. The new duty requires LPAs to report on BNG delivery under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities' Act. There will be a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan template developed by Natural England for LPAs to use as part of the reporting requirements for the 30

years on and off site habitat monitoring. The Environment Act in relation to BNG states that habitats should be secured for a minimum of 30 years as a reasonable requirement.

Staffing structure

The proposed two posts will report to our District Ecologist (who reports to the Assistant Director – Countryside & Leisure) to ensure the specialist knowledge and expertise is kept within a small team which will sit within the Countryside & Leisure Service. The Ecology team along with the Tree team will provide specialist support and advice to the Development Management service and to the Countryside team, Green Infrastructure Manager and Habitat Mitigations team. This arrangement reflects the value added of the work of the Ecology team and the strategic need for it to work across many of the Council Plan's priority areas. This reflects the growing urgency and importance of meeting the challenges of our natural environment emergency.



BNG costs

The Government has committed to funding all new burdens on local authorities arising from the Environment Act and Defra is working with DLUHC on the new burdens process. Government announced in February 2023 that they will be providing up to £16.71 million of funding for LPAs to prepare for mandatory net gain up to November 2023. This appears to be being allocated retrospectively and we have recently bid for £43k for East Devon based on work undertaken so far.

Further funding for the remainder of the transition period for the period 1 April 2023 – 31 October 2023 it is understood will be confirmed by government in due course. It is not clear what funding will follow into the future and it seems likely that new burdens funding will only cover the initial work to set up processes and systems but not the long term operation of this. The government has consulted recently on increasing planning applications fees which may partly or wholly cover the cost of these posts.

A benchmarking exercise has been undertaken by looking at comparable roles being advertised nationally to understand the likely costs of providing these roles. The role is subject to a job evaluation assessment however the majority of comparable roles that are being advertised fit within our Grade 4 boundaries and below is an example of the bottom of scale (SCP 25) and a mid point (SCP 28) to build in any flexibility on negotiations.

Grade 4	Salary FT	On costs 35.5%	Total
SCP 25	32,020	11,367.10	43,387.10

The apprenticeship costs are:

	2022/2023			Apprenticeship Rates	
Grade	Spinal Column Point	Hrly Rates	Value	Hrly rate @ 90% (where greater than RLW)	Salary @90% (where greater than RLW)
1	7	£11.59	£22,369.00	10.90	£21,029
	8	£11.81	£22,777.00	10.90	£21,029
	9	£12.02	£23,194.00	10.90	£21,029
	10	£12.24	£23,620.00	11.02	£21,258
	11	£12.47	£24,054.00	11.22	£21,649
	12	£12.70	£24,496.00	11.43	£22,046
	13	£12.93	£24,948.00	11.64	£22,453
2	14	£13.17	£25,409.00	11.85	£22,868
	15	£13.41	£25,878.00	12.07	£23,290
	16	£13.66	£26,357.00	12.30	£23,721
	17	£13.91	£26,845.00	12.52	£24,161
	18	£14.17	£27,344.00	12.76	£24,610
	19	£14.44	£27,852.00	12.99	£25,067

Again, the role would have to be job evaluated to establish at what salary level the role would be advertised.

Development Management process and software

BNG needs to be integrated into the Development Management system so that it runs smoothly. The government has not yet provided information on how this would be achieved, aside from the production of a standardized template which is currently a summary table.

BNG will need to be assessed and secured for 30 years through legal agreements and enforced. This will put a considerable strain on Planning Officers and the S106 officer and Enforcement all of whom will need advice and support from a professionally qualified and trained Ecologist working full time with Development Management on the technical aspects of BNG.

Integration of BNG into existing Development Management modules is therefore essential and may carry additional costs. Having the necessary professional expertise and capacity within the wider Countryside and Leisure Service to provide the expert advice and support that the Planning Officers will require is essential. It is also important that advice can be delivered in a timely fashion so that there are no delays to the delivery of new homes and jobs across the district.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) input

East Devon DC input to the LNRS is important to enable and guide credit creation in the right place. We will not be able to force BNG credit creation to be within strategic areas, but there is a benefit to do so. Areas which are defined as being strategic benefit from a multiplier within the BNG Metric Calculator. This means that they are afforded a higher biodiversity value, meaning more credits can be generated on an area of land. This means that areas which are defined as

being strategic (i.e., LNRS Nature Recovery Network mapped areas) are likely to attract greater interest from BNG credit providers.

Planning policy

A policy for 20% BNG has been drafted for the new East Devon Local Plan. It is currently as follows.

87. Policy – Biodiversity Net Gain

Development proposals will need to result in a Biodiversity Net Gain of at least 20%, to be calculated and reported in accordance with published best practice local and national guidelines at the time of the application (except where published exemptions apply, de minimis or otherwise). This is in recognition of:

- The combined biodiversity and climate emergency
- The large volume of development predicted within the district (particularly within the west end of the district) during the period of this local plan, and the potential significant biodiversity impact of this volume of development
- Requirement to identify measures to further the biodiversity objective under the Environment Act 2021
- The intrinsic health and well-being community benefits of habitat creation
- The flood risk mitigation benefits of habitat creation
- The water and air purification benefits of habitat creation
- Requirement to implement and support the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)
- Commitments to implementing the recommendations of the Lawton Report

Where off-site habitats are created or enhanced in order to provide 20% BNG, these should be located within East Devon District, unless proven and evidenced to be undeliverable.

The policies of the emerging local plan cannot carry any material weight at this time and so it is the statutory 10% requirement that we will seek to secure to start with. The above policy would need to be subject to further consultation and examination alongside the rest of the Local Plan before full weight could be given to this approach.

Financial implications:

The financial details are outlined in the report. The report suggests that initial costs will be met in part from new burdens funding but the balance and future costs will have to be borne by the Council's budget. Members will have to consider the importance of this request as the Council already needs to find saving in the order of £900k in balancing its 2024/25 budget and this will add to that deficit. Government has proposed and consulted on increasing planning fees (consultation was an increase of 35% for major applications and 25% for others) which have not increased since January 2018. Additional income would assist the funding of these posts, however no announcement has been made by Government, consultation closed 25th April 2023.

Legal implications:

The legal issues are dealt within the body of the report

Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting 12 July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Home Office Asylum Hotel – Hampton by Hilton, Exeter Airport

Report summary:

This report provides a position statement on the background and current issues being experienced by asylum seekers placed in hotel accommodation in the district by the Home Office. The Multi-Agency Coordination Group have been very effective in securing services for asylum seekers under partners control, however, a number of issues outside of our control have persisted from mobilisation of the hotel. Despite our best efforts these concerns around the adequacy of food and robust safeguarding arrangements remain issues. The report advocates continuing to work with local partners to ensure that the Home Office respond positively to the issues being raised with them.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☐ No ☒

Policy Framework Yes ☐ No ☒

Recommendation:

That Cabinet endorse the measures being taken to ensure that the Home Office are accountable for providing adequate feeding and safeguarding arrangements in the asylum accommodation they commissioned at the Hampton by Hilton hotel in East Devon.

Reason for recommendation:

To maintain pressure on the Home Office to ensure that asylum seekers in the district are properly fed and safeguarded whilst in their care.

Officer: John Golding Director Housing, Health & Environment.

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

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

Equalities impact Medium Impact

The Home Office equalities impact assessment covers their responsibilities for asylum seekers.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; The risk register reflects partner agencies risks. As Safeguarding Lead for the council I am very aware that safeguarding arrangements at the hotel need to be robust as the scheme is accommodating a cohort of vulnerable adults and children. I am seeking assurance from the Home Office that their service providers are proactively managing safeguarding, are properly trained and competent to do so.

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ Better homes and communities for all
 - ☐ A greener East Devon
 - ☐ A resilient economy
-

1. Asylum arrangements at the Hampton by Hilton hotel

- 1.1 In February 2023 the Home Office advised that they had commissioned an Asylum Hotel in East Devon, The hotel being the Hampton by Hilton on the Exeter Airport facility.
- 1.2 The accommodation would provide a home for up to 400 asylum seekers whilst their claims for asylum were being assessed. This is part of the Home Office programme of accommodating asylum seekers in hotels rather than camps, and a number of hotels were commissioned and mobilised in Devon and across the country. The last report we had indicated that numbers at the hotel remained similar to those reported initially with mainly families and 103 children on site. There are 34 children under 4 years, 40 between 5 and 11, and 29 between the age of 12 and 17. The situation is dynamic as new placements arrive.
- 1.3 Our initial briefing in a Home Office mobilisation meeting advised the following:
 - Commissioned by the Home Office as a contingency asylum seeker hotel
 - We have been formally notified following Ministerial 'sign off'
 - Arrivals imminent, but cohort unknown
 - Hotel has 160 rooms with a maximum capacity of 392 (rooms will be shared)
 - Managed by Clearsprings Ready Homes Home Office contractor for providing asylum accommodation
 - On-site 24/7 with staff who are trained to provide support
 - Security on site 24/7
 - Service Users (Home Office term) given briefing on arrival and induction packs
 - Food, laundry, cleaning services provided
 - Migrant Help phone line available
 - Links with primary Health established
 - Mention of a shuttle bus being provided
 - Recognised need for social, recreational, and wellbeing activities, religious and cultural needs, language issues (no plans)
 - Mobilisation meeting held Monday where we and other agencies were briefed
 - Home Office/Clearsprings recognise the value and contribution that local engagement can make in achieving a successful placement and the value of strong multi-agency partnerships

- There is no additional funding for local authorities available to support asylum seekers
- Home Office briefing suggests that basic needs will be met by them. Question for me is does their rhetoric match what happens in practice?

- 1.4 I briefed Cabinet in February that there were expectations on us (not a requirement) that we coordinate and oversee local statutory and non-statutory organisations to ensure continued safe management of the site. DCC had produced some draft local guidance on what a good local response looks like which is based on experience elsewhere in the county. It was for us to work out what that an effective local response looks like on our patch and react in an agile way.
- 1.5 We were ready for a multi-agency coordination meeting the week after being notified and the initial considerations included:
- Ideally need a single point of contact at EDDC
 - Develop a relationship with Clearsprings, Hotel management, partners, agencies etc.
 - Need sight of the welfare checks and the needs identified as a result – these could be health; medical conditions; clothing; food; education; language; transport; safeguarding; etc.
 - We can mobilise a community development/Financial Resilience Team response to certain requests for support
 - Link with community and voluntary sector including local refugee support groups
 - Assume health colleagues will pick up and address health needs
 - Public Health should address health protection and wellbeing needs
 - Think about access to leisure, transport, education, language services, role of Parish Council and Ward Member etc.
 - Guidance suggests appointing theme leads to deliver local responses for things like welfare; communications; health; community safety; safeguarding; language; education etc.
 - We have the option of being proactive and interventionist or holding back and waiting to receive requests for support
- 1.6 We quickly established a Multi-Agency Coordination Group and have had eight meetings to date with good attendance and support from senior colleagues from DCC; Health; Public Health; GPs; Police; Refugee Support Devon; South West Councils; schools etc. We as the host district were asked to Chair the multi-agency group and agreed our purpose for the group at the initial meeting, which was to welcome and ensure that refugees were safe and comfortable whilst in East Devon.
- 1.7 At the invitation of DCC we agreed to extend their support arrangement with Refugee Support Devon that had been commissioned to provide a support service for the Exeter asylum hotel the aims of which were as set out below:

Outline

This note outlines the proposed scope of a support service for the wellbeing and welfare of residents for an initial period post arrival, alongside the co-ordination of work with local organisations and people wanting to play a positive role in support for asylum seekers placed in East Devon.

The paper seeks to outline an initial six months of support and co-ordination designed to understand, assess, and deliver to meet the initial support needs of residents outside that of Clearsprings or wider statutory services. This service will be reviewed monthly.

Purpose

To ensure humanitarian and basic welfare needs are met whilst asylum claims are assessed.

The delivery of this support service and co-ordination of voluntary & community group support will:

- Help partners understand and respond to the immediate and day to day wellbeing and welfare needs of asylum seekers;
- Undertake a welfare needs assessments to understand the needs of individuals;
- Help partners understand emerging risks and issues for residents and escalate where required;
- Meet the basic and immediate needs of residents beyond those provided by the Home Office and their contractors;
- Provide opportunities for residents to be active, socialise, learn and connect with other people;
- Support language, translation and interpretation services to enable asylum seekers to communicate;
- Support people to connect with local statutory and voluntary agencies;
- Support the development of a positive environment within the hotel and with its residents;
- Develop positive local connections and relationships with the local community;
- Co-ordinate local voluntary and community activity into a single hub/strand of activity.

Key Outcomes

- Connect with each resident and provide an initial assessment of immediate wellbeing needs – Clothing, essential items, language, religious requirements etc.;
- Assess collective requirements of the group – e.g. Activities for children; space for private appointments; prayer room; an additional community venue for activities etc.;
- Develop connections with Clearsprings/Fine Fair and Hotel staff to ensure productive and positive outcomes;
- Support the GP registration of all residents as required;
- Co-ordinate activity to meet identified basic wellbeing needs and provide materials as required;
- With partners, contribute towards a timetable of activities and social/leisure programmes;
- Co-ordinate support and engagement with wider community and voluntary sector partners;
- Support work to create opportunities for learning (ESOL) and leisure activities;
- Attend multi-agency partnership meetings to update work and flag key risks and issues.

1.7 Partners were quick to mobilise a GP surgery on site, provide vaccinations, organise school places, school transport, activities, welfare support etc. We devised a risk register, organised environmental health visits, donations, and managed contributions and interventions that were within partners control and influence. The local response has been impressive with partners working collectively to welcome and settle asylum seekers, providing a safe, secure and healthy setting for all placed in the district.

1.8 One recurring theme that was raised at multi-agency meetings was the availability and adequacy of food supplied within the hotel setting. This was repeatedly raised with the Home Office and their service providers and we never received a satisfactory response. We had

also raised concerns around access to transport for welfare purposes because of the isolated location of the hotel, and the reliability of transport to get to medical appointments.

- 1.9 In June the Chief Executive wrote to the Secretary of State at the Home Office escalating concerns on behalf of partners. I have reproduced the contents of the letter below:

I write in my capacity as chair of the East Devon Multi-Agency Coordination Group and Chief Executive of East Devon District Council, host for the above hotel.

I have resorted to writing to you about our welfare and safeguarding concerns in respect of resident asylum seekers, as your officials and your appointed service providers appear incapable or unwilling to respond adequately to reasonable concerns about the adequacy of food and safeguarding of children in your commissioned hotel in East Devon.

We have established a well-attended, senior level, multi-agency group to support your team, who from just after mobilisation of the hotel have been raising concerns about the adequacy and nutritional value of food served in the hotel, access and transport to medical appointments, and more recently safeguarding of children at the hotel.

You will have seen correspondence from local school leaders and the recent Guardian article published highlighting these same concerns.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/jun/17/children-in-englands-asylum-hotels-suffering-from-malnutrition>

Prior to the May meeting of the Multi-Agency Coordination Group my colleague circulated the questions below anticipating a series of concerns and questions around the adequacy of food at the meeting.

Anticipating that the quantity and adequacy of food for residents is likely to be the main topic for our meeting this week (based on recent emails I have seen), could I ask that colleagues (particularly the Home Office, Clear Springs and FineFair) come prepared to discuss the following:

- Reassurance that residents are receiving sufficient food of adequate nutritional value to sustain a healthy lifestyle
- That the service specification outlined below is being achieved consistently
- That residents are having the NHS advised number of daily calories for an average man 2,500 and an average woman of 2,000
- How widespread are concerns about children losing weight and diet related health conditions
- Has the menu been validated by a qualified nutritionist as required in 5 below
- That menus are addressing cultural needs and preferences
- Can we obtain direct feedback from residents on the issues through an organised survey rather than anecdotal information
- Can residents guide menu choices and assist with food preparation (food hygiene considerations must be paramount)
- Can residents be given access to cooking facilities or part of the kitchen (again food hygiene considerations must prevail)
- To what extent are residents supplementing their diets and using offers of food support outside of the hotel
- What has the Somerset research and investigations into food provision taught us

I have gone back to the Home Office service specification and have reproduced a relevant section below and highlighted a couple of points:

1. The Provider shall provide a full board service to entitled Service Users who are:
 - a. supported under Section 4 or Section 98 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999; and
 - b. accommodated in full board style accommodation without access to facilities for food storage and preparation.
2. The Service shall be provided in a location easily accessible to the Service User and/or within the relevant accommodation within which the Service Users are accommodated.
3. The food provision under the full board service shall include:
 - a. breakfast;
 - b. lunch and evening meals, with a choice of at least one hot and one cold selection. At least one vegetarian option shall be provided at each meal;
 - c. a beverage service with each main meal;
 - d. a food service for babies and small children with the appropriate foodstuffs. This service shall enable babies and small children to be fed whenever necessary;
 - e. options which cater for special dietary, cultural or religious requirements (including, without limitation, gluten free and diabetic options where necessary); and
 - f. additional foodstuffs or meals as required to meet the nutritional needs of Service Users for whom three daily meals may be insufficient.
4. The food service shall meet appropriate nutritional standards for each varied menu and satisfy cultural, religious, health or other specific requirements. The Provider shall also clearly advertise the availability of religious or culturally sensitive meals to relevant Service Users, where appropriate.
5. The Provider shall ensure that each varied menu is validated by a suitably qualified nutritionist or health professional as being appropriate to the dietary needs of Service Users.
6. The full board service shall include additional support items required by Service Users, including:
 - a. baby care equipment and disposable nappies;
 - and b. personal toiletries and feminine hygiene products.

No one attending could answer the issues raised and Home Office officials took the questions away for a response. We are still awaiting a reply.

At our June meeting we pressed for a response to the outstanding issues, which resulted in a site visit and audit. We are awaiting a copy of the audit report and an assurance that your service providers are operating the facility in accordance with your service specification.

I am sure that you would agree that adequate nutrition, safeguarding and medical treatment are urgent matters, yet your officials appear to accept no accountability for the conditions at the hotel.

When asked to intervene on these matters our MP Simon Jupp has been given inadequate platitudes by the Home Office in a dismissive fashion.

Our Multi- Agency Coordination Group have been very effective in arranging school places, school transport, GP surgeries, vaccinations, activities, welfare support etc.

for hotel residents, but on the issues of food and safeguarding we feel ineffective and ignored.

I am therefore seeking your intervention to ensure that asylum seekers, that are your responsibility, are properly safeguarded and that your team are proactively deploying good safeguarding practices in the hotel, and that the food provided meets minimum recommended nutritional guidelines.

I would urge you to ensure that regular inspections of the site are undertaken and that the service providers listen to and act on the feedback from the on-site Welfare Officers. I am sure that you appreciate these facilities require strong and effective on site management, with a compassionate and professional approach.

I look forward to receiving your considered reply and assurance that our East Devon asylum seeker residents are safe and properly looked after in the Hampton by Hilton Hotel.

- 1.10 We are in receipt of Home Office Full Dispersal Grant 3' scheme and the precise sum is £217.5k based on 290 residents at the hotel as at April 1 this year. We are considering how best to utilize this funding to meet some of the additional costs associated with asylum seeker placements in our area. There are a number of calls on this funding including additional Welfare Officer support provided by Refugee Support Devon, school transport, school meals etc. Our current thinking is to increase the hours of Refugee Support Devon so we effectively have a full time Welfare Support Officer albeit this will likely be delivered by part time workers. The cost of this service has been estimated at circa. £31k. We also feel that funding personal transport would benefit the wellbeing/leisure needs of residents providing freedom to travel offsite. This might be achieved by meeting the cost of Stagecoach bus tickets/passes.
- 1.11 I have been made aware that the Children's Commissioner is showing interest in the hotel and asking questions of the Home Office about physical isolation, food, hygiene, and appear to be planning a visit. This interest appears to have been a response to school leaders' letter highlighting concerns for their pupils.
- 1.12 To be clear the Home Office are responsible for the commissioning of arrangements for asylum seekers and we know from media reports that this is one of the Governments top priorities (stop the boats). We also know that the system is not working effectively with the high cost and long waits for asylum claims to be processed. The Home Office are also responsible for the safety and security of asylum seekers.
- 1.13 I intend to keep the pressure on the Home Office and their service providers until we are satisfied that feeding and safeguarding issues are being managed to the satisfaction of our multi-agency partnership. I await a detailed response on the issues raised and will report back to the Multi-Agency Coordination Group in order that all agencies and interested parties can agree what if any further actions are necessary.

Financial implications:

EDDC has received funding direct in the case of the Asylum Seekers (rather than through Devon County Council) and the Council has a number of funding requirements to consider as outlined in 1.10 of the report. The amount received is a one off payment of £750 for each asylum seeker who is in Home Office accommodation on the 1st April 2023 which was recorded as 290 giving a sum of £217,500.

This funding is different to that of other schemes where more directed specific support is given to local authorities for instance the Afghans scheme which help families to integrate:

- £20,520 per person [over three years] to cover resettlement and integration costs.
- Up to £4,500 per child in the first year to cover education.
- £850 for adults requiring additional English language support in the first year.
- £2,600 for health partners to cover healthcare in the first year.

Legal implications:

Local authorities have safeguarding responsibilities under the Children's Acts of 1989 and 2004 and the Care Act 2014. This report details the questions that the Council has raised with the Home Office to ensure that safeguarding issues are being managed to the satisfaction of the multi-agency partnership.



Report to: Cabinet

Date of Meeting 12 July 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

New Council Plan Process

Report summary:

This report is provided to get agreement on the process for developing a new council plan. It includes a draft timetable for that process.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

Recommendation:

- 1) That Cabinet agrees the suggested approach to the development of the new council plan including the member workshops with support from external consultants.
- 2) That cabinet recommend to Council a budget of £10,000 for this work.
- 3) That Cabinet review and agree the timetable for the development of the new council plan.
- 4) That Cabinet agree the continuation of the three council priorities with the inclusion of a fourth covering central services.

Reason for recommendation:

To progress the development of the new council plan with member inclusion and SMT+ support.

Officer: Mark Williams Chief Executive East Devon District Council

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

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

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ Better homes and communities for all
 - ☒ A greener East Devon
 - ☒ A resilient economy
-

Report in full

To support the process of developing a new council plan we propose to run series of member workshops led by external consultants Ann Reader and Dave Burn. This approach was well received by members last time and again we will be looking to workshop each plan priority individually. All members will have the opportunity to attend the workshops and be part of the process. Listed below are the current council plan priorities and the continuation of these needs' agreement.

- Better homes and communities for all
- Greener East Devon
- A resilient economy

To highlight the work of the central support services and to record and monitor some organisational transformation a recommended fourth priority will be added to the list for member's debate.

- Core service delivery/Services that matter

To tie in service planning with the council plan development there is an opportunity through the summer for SMT+ to consider future projects that could be fed into the workshops for members views. Also, the outcomes of the workshops can be fed back to SMT+ for any items that need to be added to service plans.

The draft timetable below sets out how the process will run and includes timings for the workshops and consultation with our stakeholders on our plan.

Draft timetable

	Start	Finish
Report to Cabinet to agree the approach to the new council plan process	12 July 2023	
Joint SMT Cabinet meeting, initial discussions on the collation of the plan and its priorities	26 July 2023	
Pre service planning and workshop preparation by SMT to feed into the workshops	July 2023	September 2023
Council plan workshops with members and SMT+ facilitated by an external consultant, Dave Burn and Ann Reader	September 2023	October 2023
Resources available review by Director of Finance	November 2023	December 2023
First draft to be shared with SMT+ as part of the Service planning process.	November 2023	
First draft to Cabinet	29 November 2023	

Consultation on the plan with residents and other stakeholders	November 2023	December 2023
Results of consultation to be shared with Cabinet	January 2024	
Cabinet adoption of plan	February 2024	
Council adoption	March 2024	
Final Version of Plan Published	March 2024	

Financial implications:

The 2022/23 Outturn report included on the Cabinet agenda recommends that the £10,000 budget required is met from underspends in the budget from 2022/23.

Legal implications:

The Council Plan is an important document that sets out the council's vision, values and priorities moving forward.

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

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