

# Public Document Pack



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Dear Councillor

**SOUTH HAMS COUNCIL - THURSDAY, 17TH DECEMBER, 2020**

I refer to the agenda for the above meeting and attach papers in connection with the following item(s).

<b>Agenda No</b>	<b>Item</b>
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| 6. | <b><u>COVID-19 Recovery and Renewal Plan</u> (Pages 1 - 34)</b> |
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Yours sincerely

Darryl White  
Democratic Services Manager

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Report to: **Council**

Date: **17 December 2020**

Title: **COVID-19 Recovery and Renewal Plan**

Portfolio Area: **Governance and Assurance**  
**Cllr Judy Pearce - Leader of the Council**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Date next steps can be taken: **Immediately following this meeting**

Author: **Drew Powell** Role: **Director of Governance & Assurance**

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**Recommendation:**

**That Council adopt**

- **The Covid-19 Recovery and Renewal Plan (as attached at Appendix A), and**
- **The Consultation & Engagement Strategy and Year 1 Delivery Plan (as attached at Appendix C)**

## **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 The Council has been developing a Recovery and Renewal Plan in recognition of the need to respond to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.2 The draft plan ('The Plan') has now been refined and is presented to Council for adoption through this report.
- 1.3 An action generated through the recovery planning process was to develop a Consultation and Engagement Strategy, which is also presented to Council for adoption.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic has affected the lives of everybody in our District. The response has, by necessity, been large-scale and complex involving all sectors of the

community from the Government through to individual volunteers.

- 2.2 The pandemic continues and, at the time of writing, we have just moved from a second National Lockdown into new 'Tier 2' restrictions that continue to impact on freedom of movement and important sectors of our economy, particularly hospitality.
- 2.3 The long-term impacts are many and varied including the tragic loss of lives, major disruption to education and an unmeasured economic shock.
- 2.4 The Council continues to play a key role, alongside partners, in both response and recovery to the short, medium and long-term impacts of the pandemic and in the implementation of a range of essential support for individuals, the wider community and business.
- 2.5 The Plan, which by necessity remains a living document, has been developed following a series of Member workshops.
- 2.6 The Executive considered the Plan at their meeting on 3rd December 2020 and now recommend the plan to Council for adoption.
- 2.7 At the same meeting, The Executive also considered the Consultation and Engagement Strategy Framework developed by an Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group.
- 2.8 The Executive asked that Officers take steps to develop the Framework in to a final strategy that is set out at Appendix C.

### **3. Outcomes/outputs**

- 3.1 This report seeks to secure the adoption of the Plan by the Council.
- 3.2 Once adopted, work will be undertaken to implement the plan and to provide updates on progress to The Executive.
- 3.3 This report also seeks to secure the adoption of the Consultation and Engagement Strategy.

### **4. Refining the Recovery and Renewal Plan**

- 4.1 It is essential that the adopted Plan focusses on the key work needed to support recovery across the District. In view of this, the Plan has been refined and where actions are better delivered through, for example, existing or emerging strategies or activity, they have been reallocated to allow the Plan to focus on core Recovery and Renewal activity.
- 4.2 Details of Members priorities which we propose to transfer to existing or emerging strategies are included in Appendix B to this document.
- 4.3 The Plan will remain a living, interim document whilst work continues on the development of a new Corporate Strategy.

## 5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 It is proposed that Council adopt the Covid-19 Recovery and Renewal Plan as set out at Appendix A and the Consultation and Engagement Strategy at Appendix C.

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The COVID-19 Recovery Plan and the Consultation and Engagement Strategy are plans or strategies that are reserved to full Council under the scheme of delegation.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	<p>The areas being actioned are set out within the Financial Stability Recovery and Renewal Theme of the COVID19 Recovery Plan.</p> <p>Monthly Government returns on COVID costs and loss of income have been completed.</p> <p>Regular Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring reports have also been presented to the Executive, which included details of the current capital programme for review.</p> <p>The Medium Term Financial Strategy has been updated and was considered by the Executive on 22nd October.</p> <p>The Audited Accounts were published by 30<sup>th</sup> November, having been approved by the Audit Committee for publication, subject to the finalisation of the audit work of Grant Thornton.</p> <p>On 24th September, Council approved an Amended Budget for 2020-21.</p> <p>The Council has responded to Government consultations, in particular on the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), to lobby for fairer funding, early notification of some of the financial elements of the next Finance Settlement for 2021/22 onwards and a change in some of the 'rules' affecting Local Government finances.</p>
Risk	Y	The risk implications are outlined in detail within the original published report to the Meeting (Appendix A refers).
Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	The action plan accompanying this report contributes to all corporate strategy themes
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	Y	The report recommends that a number of actions from the Member Recovery workshops be included within the Climate and Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan.

Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	N	There are no direct Equality and Diversity Impacts as a result of this report
Safeguarding	N	There are no direct safeguarding impacts as a result of this report
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	None
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	N	None
Other implications	N	None

### **Supporting Information**

#### **Appendices:**

- Appendix A – Recovery Plan
- Appendix B – Member priorities for inclusion in alternative delivery plans
- Appendix C – Consultation and Engagement Strategy

#### **Background Papers:**

- Executive 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020 Item E.15/20 –Coronavirus Recovery & Renewal Plan Development Update [Click here for link to open item E.15/20](#)
- Overview and Scrutiny 19<sup>th</sup> November 2020 Item 10 <http://mg.swdevon.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=134&MId=1497&Ver=4>

## Business & Economy

Action	What are we (or partners) already doing / proposing to do	Proposed way forward for SHDC	Timescales	Responsible – Team/Group /Strategy	
<b>Ensuring that we support the skills and training needs of local businesses</b>	1.1 Explore opportunities for the Local Authority to support the Government energy efficiency scheme in order to create local jobs	a) Team Devon Business & Economy Plan (via District Councils and DCC) will roll out an ambitious Domestic Energy Efficiency and Energy Generation Pilot	Monitor the scheme and identify opportunities to benefit South Hams residents / businesses	Medium	Director Place and Enterprise
	1.2 Consider how we work with partners to support developing skills in sustainable trades such as building, plumbing etc.	a) Team Devon Business & Economy Plan has set its aim to provide 150 additional sector skills places within the construction industry. We will play an active role in promoting these opportunities to residents within South Hams and through our links with Colleges.	Monitor the work of Team Devon and promote the scheme when live	Medium	Head of Placemaking
	1.3 Develop a strategy for encouraging diversifying South Hams business sectors	a) Team Devon Business & Economy Plan sets out that DCC will engage additional staff resources to support Agriculture, Food and Drink producers to diversify and access new markets. Additionally £1m of additional resources will be sought in order to support reskilling of those leaving tourism, retail and other hard hit sectors	Monitor and ensure (through our Team Devon links) that local businesses benefit from the available support	Medium	Head of Placemaking
		b) Team Devon (Trading Standards Buy With Confidence South West) Business and Economy Plan will develop a grant scheme to support projects that look to extend the Tourism season and reinforce local supply chains	Ensure that we promote and support applications from businesses within South Hams	Short	Head of Placemaking

		c) Team Devon (Food Exeter, Public Health on, Exeter Uni and NFU) Business & Economy Plan will look to maximise Devon’s sustainable agriculture and food potential	We will explore how existing Planning Policy can support enterprise through, for example, diversification of agriculture and longer term look at policy through the review of the JLP where relevant.	Medium/Long	Head of Development Management / Head of Placemaking
	1.4 Explore opportunities to support businesses adapt to new ways of working (including homeworking where roles permit)	a) Team Devon (LEP Digital Skills Partnership) Business & Economy Plan will explore options for grants of £5,000 to support adaption costs for tourism sector (initially from Kick Start fund)	Promote the scheme to businesses within our area	Short/Medium	Head of Placemaking
		b) Team Devon (Devon, Somerset and Torbay Buy With Confidence South West) Business & Economy Plan will seek to implement a regional certification scheme on opening safely	Promote scheme to local businesses	Short	Head of EH and Licencing
	1.5 Engage with existing businesses to understand what support they require	a) Capacity of the Place and Enterprise team increased with the for creation of an Economic Development Officer post as part of the 2020/21 budget setting process	a) Review of existing roles within the team to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to progress this are of work	Short	Director Place and Enterprise
			b) Hold sector specific discussions/ surveys to understand local need	Short	Head of Placemaking
			c) Re-establish Business Forums as a regular route to engage with businesses across the District (once we understand what our businesses want)	Medium	Head of Placemaking
			d) Support taxpayers who currently find themselves excluded from meaningful support	Short and Medium	Head of Housing, Revenues and Benefits

		e) We have a contract with Business Information Point to provide support and advice to existing businesses that are considering establishing in South Hams.	Work with Business Information Point to consider opportunities to increase support offered to businesses within the area	Short	Head of Placemaking
		f) Team Devon (DCC and Growth Hub) will aim to secure £600,000 of additional business support capacity across Devon	Promote scheme within South Hams and monitor success through links with Team Devon	Medium	Head of Placemaking
	1.6 Encourage a Devon wide approach to tourism.	a) Team Devon (DCC Growth Hub and LEP) Business and Economy Plan will aim to establish an enhanced business support offer for the Tourism Sector	Promote the support that is available through our re-established Business Forums (see 1.5F)	Medium	Business Forums
			Develop the South Hams Place narrative	Medium	Head of Communications
	1.7 Identify and ensure that key infrastructure is in place in order to encourage tourism	a) Team Devon Business and Economy Plan will develop a sustainable tourism, hospitality and leisure support package which will include accessible tourism, activity, culture and wellness tourism		Medium/Long	Director Place and Enterprise
<b>Ensuring adequate Infrastructure</b>	1.8 Lobby for better Broadband to enable diversification of business in South Hams – including increased homeworking	a) Team Devon Business and Economy Plan will work with communities to maximise the Rural Gigabit Voucher Programme and local Mobile Boost Voucher schemes in addition piloting new solutions where poor coverage remains	Monitor at this stage and when launched, consider how we can support applications from within South Hams	Medium	Deputy Chief Executive
	1.9 Better bus provision and strategic park and ride facilities to reduce traffic in towns	a) Team Devon (DCC & Districts) Business and Economy Plan will develop community, town and city transport initiatives and infrastructure for cycling, buses, rail and other forms of sustainable transport within and between communities.	SHDC will engage with Team Devon and support the development of proposals in order to deliver schemes within South Hams	Long term	Head of Placemaking

Short Term – This Financial Year (2020/21)
Medium Term – This Council Term (2023)
Long Term – Beyond 2023

<b>Regeneration and Commercial</b>	1.10 Explore opportunities to purchase larger empty properties in the District to be used as pannier markets to enable small business and Arts to grow		Explore how we could purchase larger properties for use a pannier markets etc and what the business case would look like. Report back as part of action plan update (links to 6.14)	Short	Head of Placemaking	
	1.11 Explore opportunities to Invest in our highstreets by buying empty premises and letting with a rent free period/ other incentives to attract businesses in to the area		Consider as part of review of Asset Management Review (See 6.14)	ST/MT/LT	Head of Assets	
		b) We're already reviewing the Business Rates registration pages and process online as part of our Future IT programme to ensure that it is easy to use	Develop this further to become a 'Business Ready Page' – including clear and relevant planning guidance, discount guidance, financial support etc	Short	Head of Housing Revenues and Benefits	
	1.12 Host a webpage detailing local produce to support local South Hams suppliers	a) Through Covid-19 we developed a basic platform for advertising local food and produce suppliers.	We will maintain this platform for now as it could provide a useful tool to support emergency supplies in the event of a local lockdown.	Ongoing	Head of Strategy	
		b) Team Devon (Food Exeter, Devon and Cornwall Business Council, LEP Rural Post) Business and Economy Plan sets out that the collective will become an active partner in the South West Good Food Network which will include the development of logistics and digital solutions to utilise more local produce closer to home. A 'Made in Devon Campaign' will also be run	Collaborate with Team Devon	Promote the platform to SH businesses to ensure that they are a prominent feature within the website and marketing materials	Short	Head of Placemaking
			Explore further the 'Made in Devon' concept and local branding opportunities			
1.13 Develop a plan to encourage pop up shops		Identify options for supporting this type of business	Medium	Head of Placemaking		

## Place and Environment

Action	What are we (or partners) already doing?	Proposed way forward for SHDC	Timescales	Responsible Team / Group	
<b>Built Environment</b>	2.2 Consider how we bring forward <b>commercial development</b> sites in order to ensure jobs in South Hams.		a) Consider if applications for employment sites could be given a priority by Develop Management to eliminate delays wherever possible	Short	Head of Development Management
	2.3 Develop plans to support our <b>future highstreets</b> :  Seek views of retailers on what they consider the future high street experience could be <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retention of shop windows while accommodation sits behind?</li> <li>- Use of shop spaces for workshop/ training activity</li> </ul>	a) Team Devon (DCC, Districts, DCC Highways and Strat Planning) Business and Economy Plan is pursuing up to £15m funding for regeneration projects within Towns which will contribute to the visitor economy in 8 coastal and rural locations	SHDC to engage with Team Devon to ensure that Towns within the District are in the best position to access this funding.	Short	Head of Placemaking
			b) Ensure that SHDC Officer resource is available to support Towns in any application / bid process	Short	Director Place and Enterprise
			c) Team Devon Business and Economy Plan will seek investment to facilitate city/town centre living with an initial investment in development of vacant high street property in 3 pilot locations	Ensure that if considered appropriate, we bid for pilot funding for a South Hams town	Short
	2.4 Consider what support / lobbying the Council can provide to the issue of <b>high rents</b> in our highstreets		Leader to engage with MP's and Council to respond to any future consultations	Medium	Leader/ Council
	2.5 How do we encourage more <b>shared spaces in our highstreets</b> ? Costly to develop but can do in small parts. Also a Devon wide approach to marketing our highstreets	a)Team Devon (Districts with Town Councils) Business and Economy Plan will facilitate the safe use of public spaces through effective licencing and planning to encourage market traders to bring in activity and animate places	Ensure that our planning and licencing approach support the Team Devon proposals	Short / medium	Head of DM / Head of EH and Licencing
		b) Team Devon (Districts) will Lobby MP's re licencing changes as set out in its Business and Economy Plan	Provide local lobbying of MP's aligned to Team Devon approach	Short	Leader /Council

## Residents, Communities and Partnerships

Action	What are we (or partners) already doing?	Proposed way forward for SHDC	Timescales	Responsible Team / Group	
<b>Local Knowledge and expertise</b>	3.1 Improve awareness of the support available from the Council and partners		c) Develop briefings / resources for our Town and Parish Council Colleagues on support available	Medium	Head of Communications / Head of Housing, Revenues and Benefits
<b>Supporting Future Resilience</b>	3.5 Develop plans for how we harness and support the successful community response demonstrated through Covid-19	Team Devon (People strand) are currently developing their response to any local lockdowns. SHDC is an active participant in these discussions.	Carry out a Covid-19 Lessons Learnt with key stakeholders including community groups and other responders (foodbanks etc)	Short	Head of Strategy
			Explore Asset Based Community Development – how we identify the community strengths	Medium / Long	Head of Strategy
			Consider developing a resilience network across South Hams to share key messages and support requests	Medium / Long	Head of Communications

## Service Recovery

Action	What are we (or partners) already doing?	Proposed way forward for SHDC	Timescales	Responsible Team / Group	
How will we resource activities included within this plan	4.1 Consider the Accommodation Strategy in light of revised requirements for the future.	Work commenced pre-Covid-19 on defining the future accommodation strategy for Follaton House. This work now needs to be reconsidered.	Accommodation Working Group to be re-established to consider our future accommodation requirements and any joint opportunities with West Devon Borough Council (link in to developing Customer Access Strategy 4.4)	Short	Accommodation Working Group

## Communications and Governance

Action	What are we (or partners) already doing?	Proposed way forward for SHDC	Timescales	Responsible Team / Group	
Strengthen the decision making process	5.9 Identify ways of understanding member views when developing policy and strategy – for example online polls		Identify best practice from other Local Authorities	Short	Leader and Chief Exec
	5.10 Ensure that the Constitution reflects current ways of working and is easier to access online			May 2021	Leader and Chief Exec
Realising the benefits of remote meetings	5.12 Look to build on the benefits of remote meetings (supporting our carbon neutral aim and increasing ability to attend)	Current legislation enables formal remote meetings until May 2021. We continue to hold successful remote meetings.	Explore range of meetings that we could continue to hold remotely , which we should aim to reinstate face to face and where there is a hybrid opportunity	Ongoing	Leader and Chief Exec

		We have already begun looking at options for streaming meetings and better linking that stream to the associated papers	Officers will consider the process and technology used for participating in streaming meetings to see if any further improvements can be made or better public participation can be included	Short  Head of ICT	
	5.13 Understand the limitations of the Council Chamber for meetings given the likelihood for longer term social distancing	Consider utilising 3 day fallow periods before and after a single meeting to open up our rooms without the need for cleaning, together with broadcast streaming to include off-site attendees	Consider future accommodation options	Short/ Medium	Accommodation Working Group
	5.15 Identify options for jointly procuring of supplies and services with other Devon Local Authorities	South Hams is already a key stakeholder in the Devon and Cornwall Procurement Group. This forum brings together procurement experts to consider Procurement activities and processes.	Undertake spend analysis to fully understand key areas of spend and synergies with other Councils	Medium	Procurement Lead Officer
		We have developed effective working relationships with other Devon Councils. Team Devon will support inclusive growth and community wealth building by bringing together anchor institutions (those large, typically public organisations) in order to maximise social gain through our procurement practices	South Hams Procurement Officer will engage with this group and identify potential joint opportunities.	Short	Procurement Lead Officer
		Revised Procurement Strategy will be considered by Council Spring 2021 to include potential thoughts around increasing spend with local suppliers	Short/Medium	Head of Strategy	

## Financial Sustainability

Action	What are we (or partners) already doing	Proposed way forward	Timescales	Responsible Team/Group /Strategy	
<b>Ensure the financial sustainability of the Council</b>	6.1 Complete Government Returns on COVID costs and loss of income	We have been submitting returns to Government setting out the financial impacts on South Hams District Council	Continue to submit returns. It is hoped that the Government will act with further funding when the national picture is collated	Short	Director Strategic Finance
	6.2 Government lobbying for extra funding	This is underway as a joined up Team Devon approach		Short	Chief Executive/ Leader
	6.3 Monthly Budget Monitoring Reports	Since June we have been providing monthly budget monitoring reports to closely monitor the impact on the Council	Continue with monthly monitoring including monitoring reserves, collection rates, arrears levels and write offs	Short	Head of Finance Practice
	6.5 Leisure Provision	Members have agreed support for the immediate provision of leisure facilities	Discuss future options for leisure provision	Short/medium/long	Director Place and Enterprise
	6.10 Lobby Government for a change in some of the 'rules' for Councils		Lobby to change the accounting rules for capital repayments on borrowing and capital receipts flexibility	Short/Medium	Director Strategic Finance/ Leader
	6.11 Press Government for an early decision on factors affecting our 2021/22 Budget		Include - New Homes Bonus Funding - Negative Revenue Support Grant - Rural Services Delivery Grant	Short	Chief Executive/ Leader
	6.12 Build the case for Fair Funding for rural Councils	We work closely with the Rural Services Network to build the case for our fair share of funding	Continue to work with the Rural Services Network to build the case for a fair allocation of funding	Medium	Director Strategic Finance / Leader
	6.13 Business Rates Review		Submit evidence as part of 'national call for evidence' by September 2020	Short	Director Strategic Finance
	6.14 Asset Management Review		Identify opportunities for further investment and a review of existing portfolio • Assets Register • Borrowing	S/M/L Short/Medium	Head of Assets Director Strategic Finance
	6.15 Devolution White Paper		Consider the impacts and opportunities of the following from the Devolution White Paper - Future of Local Government - Procurement - Shared Services	Short/Medium/Long	Chief Executive

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Appendix B – Recovery Plan – **Actions that are now transferred to other plans or closed as complete (December 2020)**

**Business and Enterprise**

1.14 Consider the benefits of the Council becoming a social landlord	a) We have begun developing a Housing Strategy which will consider options for the Council becoming a social landlord	Member Survey – August Member workshops – September Consultation Dec/Jan	Propose to transfer this action to the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
	b) Formation of a Housing Company has been considered with full due diligence being required on the proposal	Due diligence to be undertaken	Propose to transfer this action to the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan

**Place and Environment**

2.1 Raise awareness of Community and Affordable Housing Schemes	a) Housing Strategy being developed which will include Community and Affordable Housing	Strategy to be adopted by Council (see 1.14a)	Propose to transfer this action to the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
		b) Arrange a Member Workshop to specifically raise awareness of support available in delivering Community and Affordable Housing Schemes	Propose to transfer this action to the Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
2.6 Could we increase wildflower spaces on Council land rather than mowing frequently? Joined up approach with DCC and TAPCs		C)Ensure included in upcoming review of grounds maintenance specification	Propose to transfer to the Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan
2.7 Consider how the Council can protect wildlife corridors		a) Include Nature recovery as part of future JLP review	Propose to transfer to the Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan
		b) Develop a plan to link in to organisations already working within this area – for example RSPB working on Environmental Land Management Scheme	Propose to transfer to the Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan
		c) Identify opportunities to increase the number of trees across the District. Balance with the use of land for trees at the detriment of other biodiversity	Propose to transfer to the Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan
2.9 Support and encourage green travel methods for tourists to our coastal natural	a)Team Devon (DCC) Business and Economy Plan will take action to support the development of a clean, sustainable economy through	Ensure that Team Devon plans are reflected in our Climate and Biodiversity action plans	Propose to transfer to the Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan

Appendix B – Recovery Plan – **Actions that are now transferred to other plans or closed as complete (December 2020)**

environment. A different type of tourism.	Development of a sustainable/ green growth toolkit		
2.10 Encourage children to stop littering to protect our environment	Included under the 'Behaviour Change' strand of Climate Action Plan	a) Consider potential for increased focus on climate in Junior Life Skills programme	Propose to transfer to the Waste Working Group
		b) Engage with Devon County Council to deliver education on littering through schools	Propose to transfer to the Waste Working Group
2.11 Take a lead in encouraging people to maintain the positives from lockdown – less travel, more exercise etc.	a) Team Devon Business and Economy Plan sets out a number of clean and sustainable economy actions - Development of a bespoke business support offer 'Go Green' grants to reduce carbon footprints etc	Raising profile of available grants to South Hams businesses	Propose to transfer to the Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan
2.12 Influence the development of active travel schemes within the South Hams including development of strategic routes inside hedge routes to connect our communities	a) Team Devon (DCC & Districts), through its Business and Economy Plan, will seek government support of £1.83m for a comprehensive and future proofed electric vehicle and shared mobility infrastructure network across 58 of Devons communities with a population of over 1,100	Develop an understanding of schemes already underway in the area	Propose to transfer to the Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan
		Increase the possibility of schemes being funded within South Hams by actively supporting them	Propose to transfer to the Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan

**Residents Communities and Partnerships**

<b>Local Knowledge and expertise</b>	3.1 Improve awareness of the support available from the Council and partners		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Undertake mapping of support and partner organisations across South Hams to ensure we have a good understanding of who provides what support and how we can work better together</li> <li>b) Build on the Covid-19 support page approach to develop a long term support page</li> </ul>	<p>Propose to transfer to the delivery plan for the Consultation and Engagement Strategy</p> <p>Close - Now Business as Usual ('BAU')</p>
	3.2 Improve data sharing in order to improve support to our residents	a) A number of new Data Sharing agreements were agreed through Covid-19 in order to ensure that support could be provided to the most vulnerable	Carry out a review of our privacy notices to ensure that when we capture personal data, we are clear what we will do with it	Close - Now BAU
	3.3 Explore opportunities to share best practice from Covid-19 response	a) Members have been asked to share their experiences with officers so that this can be shared with all Members	Bring together foodbanks for a webinar to understand issues and consider longer term support plans	Close - action complete
<b>Involving our residents</b>	3.4 Ensure that we engage with our residents and partners at the right stage in developing proposals	a) Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish has been formed to oversee the development or Consultation and Engagement principles	Consultation and Engagement Strategy to be adopted	Close – Strategy being considered by O&S, Exec and Council
<b>Supporting Future Resilience</b>	3.5 Develop plans for how we harness and support the successful community response demonstrated through Covid-19		Encourage Town and Parish Councils to update emergency plans including considering details of volunteers	Complete - work delivered by Devon Communities Together – series of workshops were held
	3.6 Develop the Councils Community Response function in to a longer term solution to support local responses to issues	a) We will continue to maintain a core function that can be ramped up to support any local outbreaks. Currently this is limited to monitoring local issues through the Incident Management Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b) Update the remit of the Localities Task and Finish Group to consider how we can best integrate this into a refreshed longer term function</li> </ul>	<p>Close - included as part of localities and clusters task and finish</p> <p>Close - complete</p>

**Service Recovery**

How will we resource activities included within this plan	4.1 Consider the Accommodation Strategy in light of revised requirements for the future.	We're continuing to ensure we support the health and wellbeing of staff working remotely.	Review policies and procedures to ensure they remain fit for purpose	Close - now BAU
	4.2 Review Strategic Capacity to deliver our future priorities.	Business Managers have undertaken a review of how we adapted service delivery during the initial Covid-19 response in order identify any future opportunities.	As Members priorities are developed from each of the themes, we will firm up resourcing and delivery plan.	Close - Now BAU
			Recognise the impact of Covid-19 on individual service areas and ensure that we take a data driven approach to design responsive services	Close - now BAU
			Monitor ongoing benefits delivered through the implementation of our Future IT platform and consider where this could enable a reprioritisation of resource	Close – now BAU
	4.3 Develop ways for Members to engage with local communities and businesses with a clear route to report back any concerns or ideas	We continue to provide scaled back community cluster support as a route to identify and manage local issues	Consider this following the development of Consultation and Engagement Strategy	Propose to transfer to the delivery plan for the Consultation and Engagement Strategy
How do we change the ways that we work a who are working together to develop action plans and specific deliverables and interact with the public	4.4 Enable our customers to engage with us easily when required	We have begun implementing a new online platform for customers to engage with us easier (Future IT Programme). New processes will begin rolling out in September 2020.	We will develop a Customer Access Strategy that sets out the future contact channels given the new IT and the work of the Accommodation Working Group	Close - BAU
		An updated Localities Strategy was due to be developed pre-covid-19 but has been delayed	Widen the scope of the Localities Task and Finish to explore how we build on the work of the community clusters formed to support our Covid-19 response, including outreach and services for vulnerable people	Close - complete

## Communications and Governance

Improving communication through what we have learnt from our response	5.1 Ensure that our external communication is delivering what our customers need to know	a) We temporarily increased the frequency of Member updates and bulletins as well as other newsletters during the pandemic	Review the format of the Member bulletin and Intranet	Propose to transfer to Communications Team Plan
			Training for services in order for informative content to be developed	Propose to transfer to Communications Team Plan
			Provide content that can be easily shared by members on Social Media	Propose to transfer to Communications Team Plan
			Ask our residents and other key stakeholders what they want from the Council – via a survey or other engagement	Propose to transfer to Consultation and Engagement Strategy Delivery plan
		b) We have closer working relationships with other Devon Councils as a result of Covid-19 which means that where possible, messaging is consistent	Continue to actively participate in Team Devon, LRF comms cells and HOTSW LEP groups	Close - BAU
Strengthening our community leadership voice	5.2 Develop ways in which our Members can share best practice as to how they can communicate and engage with residents	a) We have previously delivered Social Media training to Members through induction in May 2019	Arrange further Social Media training for Members (part or fully Member led)	Propose to transfer to Member Development Plan
			b) Include best practice resources on the refreshed Member Intranet	Include within Consultation and Engagement delivery plan
	5.3 Engage with existing networks working within our communities to highlight the work of the Council		This will be defined by Consultation and Engagement Strategy (See 3.4)	Propose to transfer to the Consultation and Engagement Strategy

Appendix B – Recovery Plan – **Actions that are now transferred to other plans or closed as complete (December 2020)**

		A first draft corporate narrative was developed pre-covid 19	Agree a SHDC Corporate narrative	Propose to transfer to Communications Team Plan
Using newly formed channels into communities to have conversations, consult and engage	5.4 Members can take a lead role in capturing local activities that the Council is involved in, taking photos/ videos to enable Comms to promote		Arrange Member training on Social Media including how to use it for community conversations	Propose to transfer to Member Development Plan
			Consultation and Engagement Strategy to be developed (See 3.4)	Close- see 3.4
	5.5 Identify local influencers to reach out to residents and communities		As defined by Consultation and Engagement Strategy (See 3.4)	Close - see 3.4
Strengthening our regional voice and messaging	5.6 Play an active part in the Team Devon response and recovery	This is ongoing. Officers and Leaders are already participating in Team Devon planning to ensure that our voice is reflected in final plans.	Continued engagement with HOTSW LEP, best practice sharing, horizon scanning etc	Close - now BAU
	5.7 Explore potential for Member 360 reviews as a way to support our Member Development programme		Engage with Devon Member Development team to develop an outline proposal	Close – Leader has considered and at this point will not be rolling out Council wide. Political groups can consider own arrangements
Strengthen Member engagement and development	5.8 Include Member development opportunities from this action plan in the future programme including - Refresh on Council and Committee process – raising motions to Council etc		Forward Plan of member training and development to be updated	Propose to transfer to Member Development Plan
	- Social Media Engagement		Roll out E-Learning for Members for some of the courses that need a regular refresh – Data Protection / FOI / Information Security / Safeguarding etc	Propose to transfer to Member Development Plan
Strengthen the decision	5.11 Review the Developer Forum Process			Transfer to DM workplan

Appendix B – Recovery Plan – **Actions that are now transferred to other plans or closed as complete (December 2020)**

making process				
Realising the benefits of remote meetings	5.12 Look to build on the benefits of remote meetings (supporting our carbon neutral aim and increasing ability to attend)		Consider, budget permitting, developing a reserve for the replacement of Member IT for the next Council term given the potential for more online meetings	Close – process of replacing current devices with laptops has commenced
Closer Working with other Local Authorities	5.14 Identify options to develop more shared services working		Continue to engage with other Devon Local Authorities and explore options where they arise	Close - BAU
			Explore opportunities for joint bid submissions to support our future ambitions	Close - BAU

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**Financial Sustainability**

	Action	What are we (or partners) already doing	Proposed way forward	Responsible Team/Group /Strategy
Ensure the Financial	6.4 Service Delivery discussions	As set out in 4.2, we continue to identify opportunities to adapt service provision	Consider what services might look like under the 'new normal' including future working practices	Consider as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy

Appendix B – Recovery Plan – **Actions that are now transferred to other plans or closed as complete (December 2020)**

<b>Sustainability of the Council</b>	6.6 Review of statutory vs discretionary expenditure		Undertake a review of statutory versus discretionary expenditure, to include corporate priorities	Consider as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy
	6.7 Review of the Council's Capital Programme	Extended Leadership Team have been asked to consider the current capital programme in order to inform in-year budget discussions	Set out proposals for changes to the Councils Capital programme for members to consider	Consider as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy
	6.8 Revise the Medium Term Financial Strategy	Accounts outturn for 2019/20	Revise the Medium Term Financial Strategy by October 2020	Complete
	6.9 Propose options to Councillors for an amended budget for 2020/21	Member budget workshops held – August 2020	Member workshop outputs to inform a revised MTFS	Complete



South Hams District Council  
**CONSULTATION AND  
ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

[www.southhams.gov.uk](http://www.southhams.gov.uk)



South Hams  
District Council

# FOREWORD

## I am pleased to introduce the new Consultation and Engagement Strategy for South Hams District Council.



Cllr Nicky Hopwood

This strategy is about us improving our understanding of our community's needs, views and experiences, through consultation and engagement. We will then use this information alongside other evidence, to inform the design and delivery of our services.

We are by no means starting from scratch; South Hams District Council has always been committed to listening to local people to help shape where they live, and the services that they receive. This is however an opportunity to provide a clear commitment for how we will consult and engage in the future and the principles that we will use in that engagement.

The years ahead will continue to be challenging for Local Government with many uncertainties around future funding and the changing pressures that will no doubt come

about as the full impact of Covid-19 is realised. It will therefore be even more important that through effective communication, consultation and engagement, we can help to manage public expectations as well as understanding their views on our future direction.

Over the coming months we will be developing toolkits for both our Councillors and Officers setting out how they can support delivery of this Strategy.

I am confident that through delivery of this strategy we will further strengthen both our partnership working and engagement with our local communities.

**Cllr Nicky Hopwood**



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# WHY DO WE NEED A CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY?

Our communities have a central role to play in influencing and shaping what happens in South Hams. We recognise that our role as a local authority is changing, and we're committed to helping people to do more for themselves, for each other and for their community.

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In adopting a Consultation and Engagement Strategy it is our aim to not only reach out to the community but to ensure it has a sense of ownership over the future policies and actions of its district council.



# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT?



Community Engagement is a planned process, which has the specific purpose of working with identified groups of people, whether they are connected by place, interest or identity, to encourage them to actively take part in making decisions about their community and empower them to take leadership on matters of local need.

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**'Communities of Place'** where people identify with a defined geographical area ranging from the whole district, a town, a parish, a hamlet, a street or estate.

**'Communities of Identity'** as defined by those people, such as ethnic groups, people who share a particular experience, interest or stake in an issue, or characteristics such as young people, older people, disabled people, ethnic groups, or lesbian, gay and bisexual people.

**'Communities of Interest'** where people share a particular experience or interest, which might include tenants and resident groups, parking permit holders, people involved in environmental projects, or people who come together to use services such as parks, green spaces, or community buildings.



# WHAT ARE THE AIMS AND BENEFITS OF EFFECTIVE CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT?



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Aims	Benefits
 Better communication and understanding	Community more aware of the Council's initiatives and the reason for their introduction
 Improving further the relationship between the community and the Council	Build trust through the effective use of the Community Engagement Strategy
 Policy and Practice that reflects the views and needs of the community	Community, by its involvement, shows its enthusiasm for the actions on which it has been consulted
 Increase customer satisfaction and sense of ownership of service provision	Enthusiastic support from community for policies on which they have been consulted
 Increased transparency and accountability	Our communities feel that we communicate honestly and openly with them, giving them a greater understanding of the reasons for the Council's decisions and actions
 Encouraging connections to develop within the community	Communities working together in consultations bring about a cohesiveness

# WHY IS CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT??

We are in challenging times, so it is more important than ever that we keep our communities informed and listen to their ideas. Through effective community engagement:

- ◆ Residents will have a better understanding and trust in the work of the Council and the decisions we make
- ◆ Residents will play a greater part in decision-making
- ◆ The relationship between the Council and residents is mutual, instead of residents being passive recipients
- ◆ Community members and groups are involved in work to support their area
- ◆ We have greater numbers of people interested in the change we need to make, and willing to help us shape that change
- ◆ Innovation and change takes place through diverse networks and community action

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# OUR APPROACH TO CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT



**Planning** – We will be clear on the purpose for the engagement which is based on a shared understanding of community needs and ambitions



**Inclusion** – we will identify and involve the people and organisations that are affected by the focus of the engagement



**Methods** – we will use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose



**Support** – We will identify and overcome barriers to participation by engaging through a range of methods



**Communication** – We will communicate clearly and regularly with the people, organisations and communities affected by the engagement



**Impact** – We will assess the impact of the engagement and use what has been learned to improve our future community engagement



**Empowerment** – We will endeavour to empower our communities to take leaderships roles where appropriate

# WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION?

Increasing levels of community involvement

Level	Informing	Consulting	Involving	Collaborating	Empowering
Aim	By providing Information that people need to know, we are ensuring we are transparent.	Capture residents' views on issues.	To have a more in-depth form of consultation where we invite communities to test Council procedures and processes.	To work alongside the community, giving equal power in the decision-making process.	Promoting community leadership. Encouraging, and supporting where possible, our residents to take the lead on initiatives.
The Intention	That our communities know what is happening within the Council and are aware of any information that relates to them.	To provide opportunity for the community to inform us of their views within our decision making process. We will communicate clearly as to where the ultimate decision making power rests. We will provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision making.	Through involving members of the public we have policies and procedures that are effective and represent the needs of the communities.	To increase the communities ownership and engagement in formulating solutions, innovations or improvements through working together.	To support communities to take responsibility in designing and delivering local innovation.
Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Social media / online</li> <li>● Face-to-face local meetings</li> <li>● Newsletters</li> <li>● Papers</li> <li>● Exhibitions</li> <li>● Roadshows</li> <li>● Factsheets</li> <li>● Websites</li> <li>● Public notices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Engagement Panel</li> <li>● Residents' Panel</li> <li>● Service User Panels</li> <li>● Community Clusters</li> <li>● Consultation survey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Community testing of services before roll out</li> <li>● Community boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Co-production</li> <li>● Residents' Panel</li> <li>● User involvement in decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Parish Plans</li> <li>● Participatory budgeting</li> <li>● User led commissioning</li> <li>● Referendums</li> </ul>

# THE PRINCIPLES WE'LL APPLY TO OUR ENGAGEMENT WITH YOU

## Trustworthiness

We should aim to build trust with the community by communicating clearly, honestly and transparently through:

- Being clear with you what our intentions of the engagement are
- Being upfront about how much influence your engagement will have
- Reporting back on the results of the engagement so that you know what impact your input has had



## Openness

We should be open to new ideas and keep our communities informed about what is happening at the Council.

- Tell you about the work of the Council and the challenges faced
- Encourage and listen to ideas about how we can do things differently

## Inclusivity

We should understand that innovation, vision, and creativity are born of diversity. We should try to consult and engage with a diverse range of people; especially including those who are often marginalised.

- We will identify and develop plans to reach our hard to reach groups so that your voice can be heard



## Collaboration

We see that our community is facing many issues that no one group, or sector, can address. In our engagement, we should find ways of bringing people together to regenerate the community, and to build resilience for our district, found in the connections between people.



## Learning and evolving

We will learn from the feedback we receive through our engagement to ensure that we continuously evolve

# OUTCOMES

## KNOWLEDGE



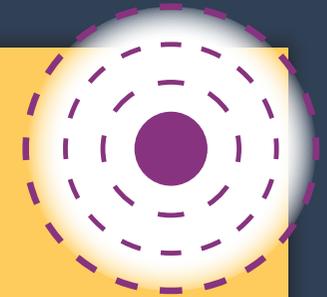
The collective knowledge of our communities helps to shape ideas that make South Hams a great place to live, work and visit

## AWARENESS



Local people in our communities are aware of how and when they can get involved

## INFLUENCE



Our communities influence issues that affect their communities and are involved in improving their local area

## FEEDBACK



The Council learns and evolves based on the engagement we undertake. Communities participating in engagement understand how their views have made a difference

## SUPPORT



Councillors and officers are supported to involve communities effectively in everything we do

## EMPOWER



Our community is empowered to meet both current and future challenges

# 2021/22 DELIVERY PLAN

The following sets out the specific actions that we will deliver during 2021/22 to support delivering our outcomes.



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## KNOWLEDGE



The collective knowledge of our communities helps to shape ideas that make South Hams a great place to live, work and visit.

How we'll work towards it	By
Undertake mapping of partner organisations and key groups across the South Hams including how we currently engage with them and how we might engage better in the future	June 2021
Survey our residents and key partners to understand how they want to engage with the Council (linked to Corporate Strategy development)	May 2021

## AWARENESS

Local people in our communities are aware of how and when they can get involved.

How we'll work towards it	By
Develop a forward plan of consultation and engagement activities for each year - co-ordinated with local partners to avoid 'consultation fatigue' and to join up opportunities to engage	April 2021
Adopt a consistent campaign theme for all consultation and involvement activity to increase recognition and encourage participation	May 2021
Review and enhance the 'Get Involved' web page and engagement portal to include greater information on the range of opportunities for engagement and improve feedback on engagement activities	September 2021
Develop our digital communications offer through a review of social media to improve our reach and interaction with residents (use of polls etc.)	Autumn 2021

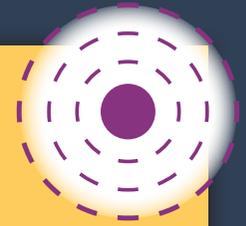
## FEEDBACK



The Council learns and evolves based on the engagement we undertake. Communities participating in engagement understand how their views have made a difference.

How we'll work towards it	By
Introduce an online involvement tracker to provide information on how feedback from consultation has shaped outcomes	April 2021
Include a review of consultation and engagement activity alongside the delivery plan for the following year	May each year

## INFLUENCE



Our communities influence issues that affect their communities and are involved in improving their local area.

How we'll work towards it	By
Improve access to Council committee meetings by introducing digital tools so that people can better follow or participate in meetings.	Jan 2022

## SUPPORT



Councillors and officers are supported to involve communities effectively in everything we do.

How we'll work towards it	By
Development of an officer toolkit to support delivery of the strategy	April 2021
Deliver staff training on what 'Good Engagement' looks like – developing a network of staff trained in engagement across the Council	May 2021
Develop a Member Engagement Toolkit to support councillors to promote opportunities to get involved in local activities and decision-making	April 2021
Capture best practice from across the District and share on a refreshed Member Intranet	Sept 2021

## EMPOWER



Our community is empowered to meet both current and future challenges.

How we'll work towards it	By
Work to develop online platforms to enable showcasing of best practice in community engagement between the Council and our communities to enable our communities to connect to achieve specific outcomes. (Climate Change Boards as an example)	March 2022
Refresh our crowdfund platform and SeaMoor Lotto schemes to empower communities to get their schemes off the ground	March 2021
Enable our communities to advertise volunteering opportunities to the Council to enable staff to volunteer to support community schemes that will make a difference to South Hams. This both builds capacity but also creates links across the South Hams.	Ongoing
Improve the awareness of support available to community groups and social enterprises in South Hams	April 2021



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