

# West Devon Hub Committee



West Devon  
Borough  
Council

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Agenda</b>								
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Tuesday, 1st December, 2020</b>								
<b>Time:</b>	<b>2.00 pm</b>								
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Via Teams</b>								
<b>Full Members:</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Chairman</b> Cllr Jory</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Vice Chairman</b> Cllr Samuel</p> <p><i>Members:</i></p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr> <td>Cllr Edmonds</td> <td>Cllr Moody</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Mott</td> <td>Cllr Pearce</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Leech</td> <td>Cllr Sellis</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Cheadle</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Cllr Edmonds	Cllr Moody	Cllr Mott	Cllr Pearce	Cllr Leech	Cllr Sellis	Cllr Cheadle	
Cllr Edmonds	Cllr Moody								
Cllr Mott	Cllr Pearce								
Cllr Leech	Cllr Sellis								
Cllr Cheadle									
<b>Interests – Declaration and Restriction on Participation:</b>	Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any disclosable pecuniary interest not entered in the Authority's register or local non pecuniary interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda (subject to the exception for sensitive information) and to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on an item in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest.								
<b>Committee administrator:</b>	Democratic.Services@swdevon.gov.uk								

**1. Apologies for absence**

**2. Declarations of Interest**

Members are invited to declare any personal or disclosable pecuniary interests, including the nature and extent of such interests they may have in any items to be considered at this meeting.

If Councillors have any questions relating to predetermination, bias or interests in items on this Agenda, then please contact the Monitoring Officer in advance of the meeting.

**3. Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

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

**4. Confirmation of Minutes**

**1 - 6**

Minutes of meeting held 20 October 2020;

**5. Public Questions**

a period of up to 15 minutes is available to deal with issues raised by the public;

**6. Hub Committee Forward Plan**

**7 - 12**

**7. COVID-19 Recovery Plan Progress Update**

**13 - 38**

**8. Housing Strategy Public Consultation**

**39 - 70**

**9. Broadband Community Support**

**71 - 76**

**10. Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site: Management Plan 2020-2025**

**77 - 84**

# Agenda Item 4

At a Meeting of the **HUB COMMITTEE** held via Skype on **TUESDAY** the **20<sup>th</sup>** day of **October 2020** at **2:00 pm**

**Present:**

Cllr N Jory – Chairman  
Cllr L Samuel – Vice Chairman

Cllr R Cheadle	Cllr C Edmonds
Cllr A F Leech	Cllr J Moody
Cllr C Mott	Cllr T G Pearce
Cllr D K A Sellis	

**In attendance:**

Chief Executive  
Deputy Chief Executive  
Director of Place and Enterprise  
Section 151 Officer  
Director of Governance & Assurance  
Head of Democratic Services  
Deputy Monitoring Officer  
Head of Housing, Revenues and Benefits  
Head of Strategy and Projects  
Senior Specialist, Accountant Business Partner  
Specialist Democratic Services

**Other Members in attendance:**

Cllrs Bolton, Bridgewater, Crozier, Daniel, Ewings, Heyworth, Hipsey, Kemp, Kimber, Moyse, Ratcliffe, Renders, Southcott, Spettigue, Vachon, Wood and Yelland

**\*HC 21**

**APOLOGIES**

No apologies were received.

**\*HC 22**

**DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**\*HC 23**

**MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Hub Committee meeting held on 15 September 2020 were confirmed as a correct record.

**\*HC 24**

**PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions submitted by the Public

**\*HC 25**

**HUB COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN**

Members were presented with the Hub Committee Forward Plan setting out items on the agenda for Hub Committee meetings for the next four months.

**\*HC 26**

**CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING QUARTER 1 AND QUARTER 2**

The Lead Member for Resources and Performance gave an update on the attendant report. There were no questions to this report.

Proposed by Cllr Edmonds and seconded by Cllr Cheadle.

It was then **RESOLVED** to endorse the contents of the attendant Report.

**HC 27**

**MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2021/22 TO 2025/26**

The Leader presented Members with a report that outlined the Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2021/22 to 2025/26.

The budget gap for 2021/22 was estimated at £176,000. It was noted that the Amended budget this year had used some of the reserves but it would not be expedient to use for next year's budget gap, therefore there may be a need to look at a structured approach to tackle the gap. Options for closing the gap would be reported to Hub Committee at the meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> December which would be the start of the normal round of budget review that would culminate in Full Council being asked to adopt the budget at its meeting on 16 February 2021. It was confirmed that lobbying of Central Government for more funding would continue. The recommendations asked for the Hub Committee to note the gaps and the timetable to tackle them.

During the debate it was clarified that the anticipated income from Leisure Centres had been based on the current renegotiated situation. The S151 Officer confirmed that the Members Locality Fund had now been built into the base budget and that it was still available for Members to use, with any unspent carried forward. However, monies could not be rolled over at the end of a four year Council administration.

Following a discussion regarding the cumulative budget gap, it was agreed that this aspect of the Medium Term Financial Strategy would be discussed at the next Financial Stability Review Group meeting to determine whether this figure should still be included.

It was noted that no council tax collection fund surplus was assumed. The collection rates within West Devon Borough Council (WDBC) remained at one of the highest levels within Devon, however, the Revenues Team were monitoring the situation with reminder notices going out in early November and a review on collection rates would be held thereafter. Any deficit or surplus would be highlighted to the precepting authorities as they would also be impacted.

Following a Member's enquiry, the S151 Officer confirmed that representatives from the Community Safety Partnership were due to present their annual report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> November which would detail the current contribution (just under £17k) in staffing costs from the Council. In the event of any Members wishing to recommend any increase in funding to the Partnership, then this would be considered during the normal budget setting process as follows:

- Hub Committee meeting: 1 December 2020;
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting: 19 January 2021;
- Hub Committee meeting: 2 February 2021; and

- Council meeting: 16 February 2021.

It was acknowledged that although WDBC has a good pictorial pie chart of where Council Tax was spent, it was felt that more could be done to show this, perhaps outlining how much a teacher costs, as an example. The Communications Team were tasked with working on this request.

The Leader moved the recommendations which were then seconded by Cllr Cheadle (and carried by a Unanimous vote).

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Hub Committee has considered the Medium Term Financial Strategy and **RECOMMEND** to Council:

Recommendation 1: To set the strategic intention to raise council tax by the maximum allowed in any given year, without triggering a council tax referendum, to endeavour to continue to deliver services. The actual council tax for any given year would be decided by Council in the preceding February.

Recommendation 2: To continue to respond to Government consultations on Business Rates Reform

Recommendation 3: To continue to actively lobby and engage with the Government, Devon MPs, South West Councils, and other sector bodies such as the District Councils' Network and the Rural Services Network, for a realistic business rates baseline to be set for the Council for 2022 onwards, when the business rates reset would happen.

Recommendation 4: That West Devon Borough Council continued to lobby in support of the Government eliminating Negative Revenue Support Grant in 2021/22 (and thereafter) and continued to lobby for Rural Services Delivery Grant allocations which adequately reflected the cost of rural service provision.

Recommendation 5: – That the Council maintained an Upper Limit on External Borrowing (for all Council services) as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy of £50 million.

The Hub Committee also **RESOLVED** to note:

- i) the forecast budget gap for 2021/22 of £0.175 million (2.2% of the current Net Budget of £7.7million) and the position for future years.
- ii) the current options identified and timescales for closing the budget gap in 2021/22 and future years, to achieve long term financial sustainability.

**\*HC 28**

### **HOUSING STRATEGY PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Lead Member for Homes gave an update on the Housing Strategy progress, aiming for adoption in 2021 for a 5 year strategy linking in with South Hams District Council. The draft strategy would go out for public consultation in December 2020. Better homes better lives – suggested strategy. It was noted that the Housing, Revenue and Benefits Team had been under pressure to develop processes to deal with the Covid-19 situation and attendant grants. It was noted that a further spike in Covid may impact on the team's ability to stay on target but refocusing attention from recovery phase back to response phase may impact on this project.

The recommendations were moved by Cllr Sellis and seconded by Cllr Samuel, and carried by a unanimous vote.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

1. the progress of the Housing Strategy to date be acknowledged; and
2. the proposed way forward be endorsed and for all Members to continue to contribute to this key policy development

## **HC 29**

### **SPRING HILL UPDATE**

The Lead Member for Homes then presented a report that updated on the Spring Hill project. This was outlined as an exciting opportunity with the best option to demolish the existing building and then rebuild using material salvaging, to produce 1 or 12 units.

In discussion, it was confirmed that energy efficiency measures would be at the forefront of the project design. A number of Members welcomed this assurance and reiterated the importance of the Council's Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency declaration.

Cllr Sellis moved the recommendations, which were seconded by Cllr Pearce, and carried by a unanimous vote.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Hub Committee **RECOMMEND** to Council to:

1. Note the project aims and objectives as detailed in Section 3 of the attendant report.
2. Support the current design direction, as detailed in Section 4 of the attendant report, recognizing the opportunities for external funding, and
3. Note the draft business case in the Exempt Appendix B of the attendant report.

## **\*HC 30**

### **EMERGENCY POWERS – TRACK & TRACE HARDSHIP PAYMENTS**

The Committee considered a report presented by the Leader that outlined the need for urgency powers to respond to the track and trace hardship payments scheme, as the scheme was required to be set up by 12<sup>th</sup> October with a very short lead time. Therefore the Chief Executive had exercised his urgency powers to enable the Council to adopt a scheme: the attendant appendix detailed the arrangements that had been put in place.

Cllr Jory proposed the recommendations, which were seconded by Cllr Leech and carried unanimously.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Hub Committee noted the urgency action taken by the Head of Paid Service, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Hub Committee, to approve the discretionary element of the Track and Trace Support Payment.

**\*HC 31 GREEN HOMES GRANT – LOCAL AUTHORITY DELIVERY SCHEME**

The Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing introduced the Green Homes Grant report. The grant is to be used to raise energy efficiency of low income homes. It was acknowledged that a large amount of the housing stock in WDBC was old houses which were hard to treat. The grant would allow for 14 external wall installations and six heat pumps and the work needed to be done by end of March 2021.

During discussions, it was confirmed that there were several Government schemes running concurrently which would impact on the availability of companies able to perform the upgrades, and potentially also on the availability of the hardware. However, officers confirmed a good working relationship with a provider and that they were confident this work could be accomplished in time.

Officers confirmed they would be taking forward leads raised during previous grants but would ensure good coverage across the whole Borough. Members acknowledged the Officer's work in achieving this grant.

Cllr Leech then proposed the recommendations, which were seconded by Cllr Mott and unanimously approved.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Hub Committee **NOTED** the successful bid and award of the sum of £224,500 from the Government's Green Homes Grant Scheme.

(The meeting terminated at 3:21 pm)

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Chairman

***(NOTE: THESE DECISIONS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF MINUTES HC 27 AND HC 29 WHICH ARE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 8 DECEMBER 2020, WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE FROM WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2020 UNLESS CALLED IN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULE 18).***

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## WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL: HUB COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN

This is the provisional forward plan for at least four months starting November 2020. It provides an indicative date for matters to be considered by the Hub Committee. Where possible, the Hub Committee will keep to the dates shown in the plan. However, it may be necessary for some items to be rescheduled and other items added.

The forward plan is published to publicise consultation dates and enable dialogue between the Hub Committee and all Councillors, the public, and other stakeholders. It will also assist the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee in planning their contribution to policy development and holding the Hub Committee to account.

The Plan is published on the Council's website ([www.westdevon.gov.uk](http://www.westdevon.gov.uk))

The Hub Committee consists of nine Councillors. Each has responsibility for a particular area of the Council's work.

*Leader – Cllr Neil Jory*

*Deputy Leader – Cllr Lois Samuel*

*Lead Member for Environment – Cllr Caroline Mott*

*Lead Member for Health and Wellbeing – Cllr Tony Leech*

*Lead Member for Enterprise – Cllr Ric Cheadle*

*Lead Member for Communities – Cllr Terry Pearce*

*Lead Member for Customer First – Cllr Jeff Moody*

*Lead Member for Resources and Performance – Cllr Chris Edmonds*

*Lead Member for Homes – Cllr Debo Sellis*

Further information on the workings of the Hub Committee, including latest information on agenda items, can be obtained by contacting the Democratic Services Section by e-mail to [democratic.services@westdevon.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@westdevon.gov.uk)

**All items listed in this Forward Plan will be discussed in public at the relevant meeting, unless otherwise indicated**

Portfolio Area	Report Title and Summary	Lead Member / Officer	Documents to be considered in making decision	Date of Meeting	Consultees and means of consultation
<p>Homes</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 8</p>	<p><b>Title: Community Housing Project – Lamerton</b>  <b>Purpose:</b> To consider a report that seeks to authorise:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer to seal the option agreement to enable the Council to acquire the land at Greenhill Lamerton; and</li> <li>2. the Director of Place and Enterprise to apply for planning permission under Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 1992.</li> </ol>	<p>Cllr Sellis / David Fairbairn</p>	<p>Report of the Monitoring Officer</p>	<p>1 December 2020</p>	
<p>Environment</p>	<p><b>Title: World Heritage Site Management Plan</b>  <b>Purpose:</b> To recommend to Council the adoption of a revised Management Plan</p>	<p>Cllr Mott / Pat Whymer</p>	<p>Report of the Head of Development Management</p>	<p>1 December 2020</p>	
<p>Strategy</p>	<p><b>Title: Draft Housing Strategy</b>  <b>Purpose:</b> To present the final draft Housing Strategy and to seek approval to commence stakeholder consultation</p>	<p>Cllr Sellis / Issy Blake</p>	<p>Report of the Head of Housing, Revenues and Benefits</p>	<p>1 December 2020</p>	<p>Partner organisations and the public.</p>
<p>Strategy</p>	<p><b>Title: Recovery and Renewal Plan</b>  <b>Purpose:</b> To provide an update on the development and delivery of the Recovery and Renewal Plan</p>	<p>Cllr Jory / Drew Powell</p>	<p>Report of the Director for Governance and Assurance</p>	<p>1 December 2020</p>	

Portfolio Area	Report Title and Summary	Lead Member / Officer	Documents to be considered in making decision	Date of Meeting	Consultees and means of consultation
Enterprise	<b>Title: Broadband Community Support</b> <b>Purpose of report:</b> To agree a strategic approach for supporting Community Broadband Schemes.	Cllr Jory / Steve Mullineaux	Report of the Deputy Chief Executive	1 December 2020	
Council	<b>Title: Revenue Budget Monitoring up to October 2020</b> <b>Purpose of report:</b> A revenue budget monitoring report to monitor income and expenditure variations against the approved revenue budget for 2020/21 up to October 2020	Cllr Edmonds / Lisa Buckle	Report of S151 Officer	8 December 2020	
Council	<b>Title: Draft Revenue Budget Proposals</b> <b>Purpose of report:</b> To consider a report that presents a first draft of the Revenue Budget Proposals for 2021/22 before their onward consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting to be held on 19 January 2021	Cllr Jory / Lisa Buckle	Report of S151 Officer	8 December 2020	
Council	<b>Title: Draft Capital Budget Proposals</b> <b>Purpose of report:</b> To consider a report that presents the draft Capital Budget Proposals for 2021/22.	Cllr Jory / Lisa Buckle	Report of S151 Officer	2 February 2020	
Council	<b>Title: Write Off Report for Quarter 1</b> <b>Purpose of report:</b> The Council is responsible for the collection of: Housing Rents, Sundry Debts including Housing Benefit Overpayments, Council Tax and	Cllr Edmonds / Lisa Buckle	Report of S151 Officer	2 February 2021	

Portfolio Area	Report Title and Summary	Lead Member / Officer	Documents to be considered in making decision	Date of Meeting	Consultees and means of consultation
	National Non-Domestic Rates. The report informs members of the debt written off for these revenue streams.				
Council	<b>Title: Revenue Budget Monitoring Quarter 3</b> <b>Purpose of report:</b> A revenue budget monitoring report to monitor income and expenditure variations against the approved revenue budget for 2020/21, and to provide a forecast of the year end position	Cllr Edmonds / Pauline Henstock	Report of Head of Finance	2 February 2021	
Council	<b>Title: Capital Budget Monitoring Quarter 3</b> <b>Purpose of report:</b> The report advises Members of the progress on individual schemes within the approved capital programme for 2020/21, including an assessment of their financial position	Cllr Edmonds / Pauline Henstock	Report of Head of Finance	2 February 2021	
Council	<b>Title: Write Off Report for Quarter 3</b> <b>Purpose of report:</b> The Council is responsible for the collection of: Housing Rents, Sundry Debts including Housing Benefit Overpayments, Council Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates. The report informs members of the debt written off for these revenue streams.	Cllr Edmonds / Lisa Buckle	Report of Strategic Lead of Finance	2 February 2021	
Council	<b>Title: Revenue Budget Proposals 2021/22</b>	Cllr Jory / Lisa Buckle	Report of Strategic Lead of Finance	2 February 2021	

Portfolio Area	Report Title and Summary	Lead Member / Officer	Documents to be considered in making decision	Date of Meeting	Consultees and means of consultation
	<b>Purpose:</b> To present Budget proposals for 2021/22				
Council	<b>Title: Capital Programme Proposals 2021/22</b> <b>Purpose:</b> To present Capital Programme proposals for 2021/22	Cllr Jory / Lisa Buckle	Report of Strategic Lead of Finance	2 February 2021	
Council	<b>Title: Devon Districts Procurement Strategy</b> <b>Purpose:</b> To consider the adoption of an update Procurement Strategy for the Council	Cllr Jory / Neil Hawke	Report of Head of Strategy	2 February 2021	South Hams, Teignbridge, Torrridge, Exeter, Mid, and North Devon Councils
Strategy	<b>Title: To present for consideration the final Housing Strategy and to make a recommendation to Council</b> <b>Purpose:</b> To present the results of the consultation and engagement and the final Housing Strategy 2021 – 2026 for adoption by 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2021	Cllr Sellis / Issy Blake	Report of the Head of Housing, Revenues and Benefits	16 March 2021	
Environment	<b>Title: 3 weekly waste update</b> <b>Purpose:</b> To provide Members with an outcome report on the 3 weekly waste trial	Cllr Mott / Jane Savage	Report of Head of Contracts and Commissioning	16 March 2021	

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Report to: **Hub Committee**

Date: **1 December 2020**

Title: **COVID-19 Recovery Plan Progress Update**

Portfolio Area: **Governance and Assurance**  
**Cllr Neil Jory - Leader of the Council**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Date next steps can be taken: **Upon the expiry of the Call-in period on Wednesday 9 December 2020**

Author: **Drew Powell** Role: **Director of Governance & Assurance**  
**Neil Hawke** **Head of Strategy & Projects**

Contact: [Drew.Powell@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:Drew.Powell@swdevon.gov.uk)  
[Neil.Hawke@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:Neil.Hawke@swdevon.gov.uk)

## **Recommendations:**

### **That the Hub Committee:**

- 1. Note the Council's continuing response to the COVID-19 Pandemic;**
- 2. Note the Council's progress in developing and delivering the Recovery and Renewal Plan;**
- 3. Note the progress of the Localities and Communities and the Consultation and Engagement Task and Finish Groups; and**
- 4. Request that Officers finalise the Recovery and Renewal Plan in-line with the approach outlined in this report and present it to Council on 8<sup>th</sup> December for adoption.**

## **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 The Hub Committee considered a report on 15 September 2020 (minute HC15) on the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and emerging Recovery and Renewal Plan ('The Plan')
- 1.2 To progress key emerging priorities around our community support and the role of the localities team and how we consult and engage with our communities, Members formed two Task and Finish groups.
- 1.3 This report provides an update on the progress of the Task and Finish Groups, and the Council's ongoing response and recovery activity.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic has impacted the lives of everybody in our Borough. 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 are in the midst of a second National lockdown. The impacts are many and varied including the tragic loss of lives, major disruption to education and, as yet, unmeasured economic shock.
- 2.3 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.

## **3. Outcomes/outputs**

- 3.1 This report sets out an update on the Recovery and Renewal Plan considered by Overview and Scrutiny at their meeting on 1 September 2020.
- 3.2 Further work has been undertaken to refine the Recovery and Renewal Plan which is presented to the Hub Committee for consideration and recommendation to Council for adoption.

## **4. Recovery and Renewal Plan Updates**

- 4.1 A significant amount of activity has taken place to ensure that the Council begins to recover from the impacts of COVID-19 while also planning for, and now delivering, activities to support our businesses and residents through the second National lockdown.
- 4.2 Members will be re-assured to note that the Council continues, during this lockdown, to deliver all core services to the public through a combination of in-person and on-line channels.
- 4.3 The following are some of the key activities undertaken since the last update.  
Ongoing Response to COVID-19 Pandemic



- 4.4 While developing our recovery plans, officers have also needed to implement measures to support the second National lockdown which commenced on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2020.
- 4.5 To support the newly announced Local Restriction Support Grants for businesses, a new IT process has been implemented to allow impacted businesses to make claims. There has been a significant demand already with 1,556 applications being received within the first week. Each claim will need to be assessed and verified before being processed although we hope that the number of claims received for this fund will be lower than during the first national lockdown.
- 4.6 There has also been a marked increase in the number of applications received from individuals for emergency welfare support. We processed 40 claims during the first national lockdown and have received a further 19 since 5<sup>th</sup> November. To provide additional capacity to manage the scheme, we have extended our contract with Homemaker (who provide our Money Advice Service) while we recruit a Vulnerability Support Officer. This role will be a two year contract in order to help meet the increased demand for welfare support. The post will be funded through funds from Devon County Council.
- 4.7 The Council continue to work with partners through a range of strategic and operational partnership arrangements including the Local Resilience Forum and the Health Protection Board.
- 4.8 These arrangements are crucial to secure the capacity and resilience to continue to support the community through these challenging times and will be vital if, as expected, we return to tiered, local restrictions when the National lockdown is lifted.

#### Recovery Actions

- 4.9 Prior to the November restrictions being implemented, the Council provided funding to each Town within the Borough through a Town Centre Kick-start grant. It is up to each of the Town Councils to decide how they wish to use this funding but will provide a condition free funding source to support any measures to restart the high-street.
- 4.10 In addition to the kick start funding, we are finalising agreements with the Ministry Housing, Communities and Local Government for funding to contribute to activities related to reopening the High Street safely. West Devon will receive £49,919 which will need to be spent by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. Town Councils have been asked if they require any support from the fund and these applications will be considered in early December.
- 4.11 To further support safety of the high-street, two COVID-19 compliance officers have been appointed for a six month period. The primary focus of these roles is to enable customers to better understand the current COVID-19 rules and guidance in order to ensure future compliance. The roles will also assist in taking enforcement action in relation to COVID-19 regulations where necessary while ensuring confidence in as safe a shopping experience as possible.

- 4.12 We have extended our contract with Business Information Point ('BIP') who have provided 58 hours of business support and advice to 8 pre start-up businesses and 15 existing businesses in the period April 2020 – September 2020.
- 4.13 The localities team were a key frontline service supporting our response through the COVID-19 lockdown. Overview and Scrutiny have formed a Task and Finish in order to consider opportunities to develop further the Localities function and consider how we might continue with some of the positives from the Community Cluster structure that we implemented during the first national lockdown.
- 4.14 The Task and Finish group, chaired by Cllr Ratcliffe have received a number of briefings from officers as to the current localities arrangements and will conclude their deliberations early in the New Year, making recommendations to Overview and Scrutiny.
- 4.15 Ensuring that we build on the positive relationships and communications delivered through the pandemic was a key theme from the Member workshops. To take this work forward, a Task and Finish has been formed to develop a Consultation and Engagement Framework for the Council. Chaired by Councillor Cheadle, the group have considered best practice and developed a draft framework. This work will be concluded in the New Year with recommendations being made to Overview and Scrutiny.
- 4.16 The first of a series of briefing sessions has been held for Members setting out the work that is being undertaken to develop COVID-19 response plans and the impact that this may have on service delivery should there be any local outbreaks or further changes in restrictions.
- 4.17 We continue to ensure that we support wellbeing of all staff and have trained a number of staff to be Mental Health First aiders. The First Aiders are now trained with tips on spotting the early warning signs of mental ill-health and how to support colleagues, guiding them towards appropriate professional health.
- 4.18 The above provides a summary of some key actions taken to date in both supporting the response to COVID-19 and in delivering some of the Recovery Plan actions set by Members earlier this year.

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

- 5.1 It is essential that the adopted Plan focusses on the key work needed to support recovery across the Borough. In view of this the Plan is being refined and where actions are better delivered through, for example, existing or emerging strategies or activity, then they are being reallocated to allow the Plan to focus on core Recovery and Renewal activity.
- 5.2 The approach, which is ongoing, is outlined in Appendix 1 and it is proposed to finalise this work with a view to adopting the revised Plan at Council on 8 December 2020.
- 5.3 The Plan will remain a living, interim document whilst work continues on the development of a new Corporate Strategy.

## 6. Proposed Way Forward

- 6.1 It is proposed that committee note the update on actions taken both in responding to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the development of recovery plans.
- 6.2 A refined version of the Recovery and Renewal Plan will be taken to Council on 8 December for adoption.

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	In accordance with the Council Constitution, the Hub is required to give formal consideration to the recommendations that are generated from formal meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
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 Hub Committee.</p> <p>The next Revenue Budget Monitoring report is an item on the Hub Committee agenda for 8<sup>th</sup> December, alongside Draft Revenue Budget Proposals for 2021/22.</p> <p>On 16<sup>th</sup> November, the Financial Stability Review Group (FSRG) reviewed the current Capital Programme for 2020/21.</p> <p>The Medium Term Financial Strategy has been updated and was considered by the Hub Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> October.</p> <p>The Audited Accounts will be 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 22<sup>th</sup> 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.
<b>Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications</b>		
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 – Revised Recovery Plan

#### **Background Papers:**

- Item HC15 –Coronavirus Recovery & Renewal Plan Development Update [Click here for link to Item HC15 - September 2020 Hub Report](#)

### **Approval and clearance of report**

<b>Process checklist</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Portfolio Holder briefed/sign off	<b>Yes</b>
SLT Rep briefed/sign off	<b>Yes</b>
Relevant Heads of Practice sign off (draft)	<b>Yes</b>
Data protection issues considered	<b>Yes</b>
Accessibility checked	<b>Yes</b>

## Business & Economy

Action	What are we (or partners) already doing / proposing to do	Proposed way forward for WDBC	Timescales	Responsible – Team/Group /Strategy	
<b>Ensuring that we support the skills and training needs of local businesses</b>					
1.1	Consider the role that the Council can play in encouraging the sharing of best practice	Online Pop up business schools delivered	Develop a plan for future business support training (including further pop up business schools)	Short term	Recovery Management Team
1.2	Explore opportunities for Enterprise Hubs to encourage sharing of best practice and networking	a) Team Devon will look to extend the Devon Workhubs programme, securing £1m to build on the existing network and enable rural communities and smaller towns to grow their own local service provision	Engage with Team Devon and HOTWS LEP to ensure West Devon benefits from the Work Hub programme	Medium term	Recovery Management Team
1.3	Develop a strategy for supporting businesses to adapt skills for the future	a) Team Devon 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 term	Recovery Management Team
		b) Team Devon 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 West Devon	Short term	Recovery Management Team
		c) Team Devon will look to maximise Devon's sustainable agriculture and food potential	West Devon will explore how Planning Policy can support enterprise through, for example, diversification of agriculture[1]	Medium term	Development Management

		d) Team Devon exploring 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	Recovery Management Team
		e) Team Devon – implementing a regional certification scheme on opening safely	Promote scheme to local businesses	Short term	Environmental Health
<b>Ensuring that we engaging with Businesses to understand the challenges they are facing and the support they require</b>					
1.4	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	b) Review of existing roles within the team to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to progress this area of work	Short term	Recovery Management Team
			c) Hold sector specific discussions/ surveys to understand local need including online workshops	Short term	Recovery Management Team
			d) Re-establish Business Forums as a regular route to engage with businesses across the Borough (once we understand what our businesses want)	Medium term	Recovery Management Team
		e) We have renewed our contract with Business Information Point for 2020/21 to provide support and advice to existing businesses that are considering establishing in West Devon	f) Consider the support packages we want to commission from the end of the current contract on 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021	Short term	Recovery Management Team
		g) Team Devon will aim to secure £600,000 of additional business support capacity across Devon	h) Promote scheme within West Devon and monitor success through links with Team Devon	Medium term	Recovery Management Team,

Developing our tourism offer					
1.5	Encourage a Devon wide approach to tourism.	a) Team Devon are establishing an enhanced business support offer for the Tourism Sector	b) Promote the support that is available through our re-established Business Forums (see 1.4C)	Medium term	Recovery Management Team
			c) Develop the West Devon Place narrative	Medium term	Recovery Management team
1.6	Identify and ensure that key infrastructure is in place in order to encourage tourism	a) Team Devon will develop a sustainable tourism, hospitality and leisure support package which will include accessible tourism, activity, culture and wellness tourism		TBC	Recovery Management Team
Ensuring adequate Infrastructure					
1.7	Lobby for better Broadband to enable diversification of business in West Devon – including increased homeworking	a) Team Devon 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	b) Monitor at this stage and when launched, consider how we can support applications from within West Devon	Medium term	Recovery Management Team
		c) WDBC have supported a bid from Plymouth City Council to connect public buildings across the Borough – this will increase potential for better broadband for residents / businesses	d) Continue to work with PCC to ensure the benefits of the scheme are realised	Medium term	Head of IT Practice
1.8	Understand from our businesses what infrastructure they need in place for the 'new normal'		Discuss with businesses through the actions set out in 1.4b to inform an infrastructure plan	Short term	Recovery Management Team
Regeneration and Commercial					
1.9	1.9 Consider how we attract and retain businesses in West Devon	We have begun talking to Town Councils to jointly consider options.	a) Consider a West Devon 'Backing Business Campaign	Medium Term	Recovery Management Team
			b) Lead the development of 'Buy Local' Campaigns	Medium Term	Recovery Management Team

1.10	1.10 Engage with other partners including Western Power, South West Water etc to understand the impact of Covid-19 on their plans for West Devon	Team Devon will engage with Western Power distribution to enable smart energy management infrastructure and renewable energy generation through upgrading the national grid network	Engage with Team Devon to ensure that West Devon is represented in lobbying of Government	Medium term	Recovery Management Team
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## Place and Environment

Action	What are we (or partners) already doing / proposing to do	Proposed way forward for WDBC	Timescales	Responsible – Team/Group /Strategy	
<b>Built Environment</b>					
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	Short term	Propose to remove from Recovery Plan and include in Housing Strategy Delivery Plan
			b) Arrange a Member Workshop to specifically raise awareness of support available in delivering Community and Affordable Housing Schemes	Short term	
2.2	2.2 Consider if there is potential for a new village in West Devon – maybe near the A30 in order to reduce pressure on existing villages and town developments.		a) Consider options and viability	Medium/Long	Propose to remove from Recovery Plan and include in longer term 'Place' planning
2.3	2.3 Develop plans to support our <b>future highstreets</b> :	a) Team Devon are pursuing up to £15m funding for regeneration projects within Town's which will contribute to the visitor economy in 8 rural and coastal locations	WDBC to engage with Team Devon and Town Councils to ensure that Towns within the Borough are in the best position to access this funding.	Short term	Recovery Management Team
2.4	Seek views of retailers on what they consider the future high street experience could be		b) Ensure that WDBC Officer resource is available to support Towns in any application / bid process	Short term	Recovery Management Team

2.5		c) Team Devon 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 West Devon town	Short term	Business Forums
	2.4 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 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 term	Recovery Management Team
		b) Team Devon will Lobby MP's re licencing changes for use of public spaces	Provide local lobbying of MP's aligned to Team Devon approach	Short term	Leader /Council
2.6			c) Link in to action 1.2 to encourage Workhubs in empty high street spaces		
	2.5 Explore the potential of public wifi access in our town centres		a) Discuss potential with key public broadband providers and link in with action 1.7a	Medium / Long term	Business Forums
<b>Natural Environment</b>					
2.7	Take a lead role in encouraging other organisations to also build back in a more sustainable way.		a) Develop a Sustainable Business awards scheme  b) Promote best practice through business newsletters etc	Medium term	Propose removing actions 2.7 – 2.10 from recovery plan and including within the Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan
2.8	Consider how the Council can protect wildlife corridors and rewilding brownfield sites		a) Include Nature recovery as part of future JLP review	Medium term	
			b) Develop a plan to link in to organisations already working within this area – for example RSPB working on Environmental Land Management Scheme	Short term	

			c) Take the lead in allowing more Council sites to become wildflower sites which would also reduce maintenance. Encourage TAPCs to do the same	Medium term	
2.9	Develop a different type of tourism – Wildlife Tourism	a) Team Devon will take action to support the development of a clean, sustainable economy through:  - Development of a sustainable/ green growth toolkit	Ensure that Team Devon plans are reflected in our Climate and Biodiversity action plans	Short term	
2.10	Promote roof and window gardening for those without traditional garden spaces		Include under the 'Behaviour Change' strand of Climate Action Plan	Medium term	
<b>Active Travel</b>					
2.11	Take a lead in encouraging people to maintain the positives from lockdown – less travel, more exercise etc.	a) Team Devon 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 West Devon businesses	Medium term	Propose removing actions 2.11 to 2.13 from the recovery plan and including within the Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan
2.12	Influence the development of active travel schemes within West Devon	a) Team Devon 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 for example options around the A386/Rail/Cycle link.  Increase the possibility of schemes being funded within West Devon by actively supporting them	Medium term/ depending on grant scheme funding	
2.13	Identify ways to promote more sustainable transport means	Climate Action plan sets out a number of actions around promoting sustainable travel	Develop a campaign to promote sustainable travel (look at the Lake District 'See Moor' campaign) Link to work on our Place narrative	Medium term	

			<p>Talk to TAPC's to identify opportunities to promote more cycle parks and routes across West Devon</p> <p>Take an active role in promoting car sharing, particularly during winter months when active travel is less of an option</p>	<p>Medium Term</p> <p>Medium term</p>	
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## Residents, Communities and Partnerships

Action	What are we (or partners) already doing / proposing to do	Proposed way forward for WDBC	Timescales	Responsible – Team/Group /Strategy	
<b>Local Knowledge and Expertise</b>					
3.1 Improve awareness of the support available from the Council and partners		a) Undertake mapping of support and partner organisations across West Devon to ensure we have a good understanding of who provides what support and how we can work better together	Medium term	Proposed to include as a Year 1 Deliverable of Consultation & Engagement Strategy	
		b) We have maintained the Covid-19 'Support' pages which can be expanded for non-covid-19 support	Medium term	Complete - now BAU	
		c) Develop briefings / resources for our Town and Parish Council Colleagues on support available	Medium term	Recovery Management Team	
	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	Ongoing	Complete - 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	Short term	Complete - now BAU

Involving our residents				
3.4 Ensure that we engage with our residents and partners at the right stage in developing proposals		<p>Consider an Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish to consider the development of Consultation and Engagement principles</p> <p>To include our relationships with Town and Parish Councils, and</p> <p>A recognition of issues of community interest and how they are best consulted upon and communicated</p>	Short term	O&S Consultation and engagement T&F
Supporting Future Resilience				
3.5 Develop plans for how we harness and support the successful community response demonstrated through Covid-19	Team Devon are currently developing their response to any local lockdowns. WDBC 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 term	Being carried out by Team Devon
		Engage with partners such as CVS and CAB to develop plans for future support	Medium / Long term	Localities and Clusters T&F
		Consider developing a resilience network across West Devon to share key messages and support requests	Medium / long term	Localities and Clusters T&F
		Encourage Town and Parish Councils to update emergency plans including considering details of volunteers	Medium term	Recovery Management Team

		Discussions commenced with CVS on how we could jointly identify and promote funding opportunities to Community Groups to support their sustainability	Develop simple processes and resources to promote available funding to community groups	Short term	Community Clusters
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			<i>Complete</i>
		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		Immediate	Localities and Clusters T&F

## Service Recovery

Action	What are we (or partners) already doing / proposing to do	Proposed way forward for WDBC	Timescales	Responsible – Team/Group /Strategy
<b>How we will resource activities within the recovery plan</b>				
4.1 Consider the Accommodation Strategy in light of revised requirements for the future.	Work has been ongoing to ensure that we maximise the use of accommodation at KP	Accommodation Working Group to be re-established to consider our future accommodation requirements and any joint opportunities with South Hams (link in to developing Customer Access Strategy 4.4)	Short term	Accommodation Working Group
	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	Ongoing	Propose to remove from recovery plan as Business as Usual
		Exploring and adjusting the balance between virtual and physical ways of working		Accommodation Working Group
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.	Short term	Business Managers
		Recognise the impact of Covid-19 on individual service areas and ensure that we take a data driven approach to design responsive services	Ongoing	Propose to remove from recovery plan as Business as Usual
		Monitor ongoing benefits delivered through the implementation of our Future IT platform and consider where this could enable a reprioritisation of resource	Short /medium	Propose to remove from recovery plan - monitored by Future IT Member working group



	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	Medium term	Propose to remove from the recovery plan and include in Year 1 delivery plan for Consultation and Engagement Strategy
<b>How do we change the ways that we work and interact with the public</b>					
	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	Medium term	Remove from recovery plan - include within the remit of Accommodation working group
		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	See 3.6	Remove from Recovery Plan - Task and Finish underway

Communications and Governance

Action	What are we (or partners) already doing / proposing to do	Proposed way forward for WDBC	Timescales	Responsible – Team/Group /Strategy
<b>Improving communication through what we have learnt from our response</b>				
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	Short term	Remove from recovery plan - BAU
		Training for services in order for informative content to be developed	Short term	Remove from recovery plan - BAU
		Provide content that can be easily shared by members on Social Media	Complete	Remove from recovery plan - BAU
		Ask our residents and other key stakeholders what they want from the Council – via a survey or other engagement	Medium Term	Propose to remove from recovery plan and include as a deliverable under 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	Ongoing	Remove from recovery plan - BAU
<b>Strengthen our community leadership voice</b>				

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)	Short term	Propose to remove from recovery plan and include in Member Development Plan
	Members have led a number of community zoom calls which have been successful in understanding local issues	b)Continue with the successful Member led Zoom calls with community groups	Short term	Members
		c) Explore the potential for a Community Newsletter	Medium term	Propose to remove from recovery plan and include as a deliverable under Consultation and Engagement Strategy delivery plan
	A first draft corporate narrative was developed pre-covid19	Agree a WDBC Corporate narrative To include our culture and how we want to be perceived by our community	Short term	Remove from recovery plan - include in Communications Strategy
<b>Using newly formed channels into communities to have conversations, consult and engage</b>				
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	Short term	Remove from recovery plan include in delivery plan for Consultation and Engagement Strategy
		Consultation and Engagement Strategy to be developed (See 3.4)	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)	See 3.4	
<b>Strengthening our regional voice and messaging</b>					
	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	Ongoing	Recovery Management Team
			Undertake a mapping of key stakeholders we should be engaging with and a clear plan of how we will do that	Short term	Remove from recovery plan and include in delivery plan for Consultation and Engagement Strategy
			Look at how we engage with MP's LGA, DCN etc to maximise our voice	Medium term	Remove from recovery plan - BAU
<b>Strengthen Member engagement and development</b>					
	5.7 Explore potential for Member 360 reviews / appraisals as a way to support our Member Development programme		Engage with Devon Member Development team to develop an outline proposal	Short term	Political Structures Working Group
	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 – consider timing of training – maybe half day formal meetings, half day training	Short term	Political Structures Working Group

	- 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	Short term	Democratic Services / HR
<b>Strengthen the decision making process</b>					
	5.9 Identify ways of understanding member views when developing policy and strategy – for example online polls		Identify best practice from other Local Authorities for consideration by PSWG	Short term	Political Structures Working Group
	5.10 Ensure that the Constitution reflects current ways of working and is easier to access online		Update by Monitoring Officer and PSWG	Medium term	Political Structures / Monitoring Officer
	5.11 Consider how the public can engage with the decision making process		Undertake a review of public participation in formal meetings to ensure those that wish to, can participate.  Look at best practice from other local authorities	Medium term	Remove from recovery plan and consider through the delivery plan of consultation and engagement strategy
	5.12 Build on the positives of Informal Council	Informal Councils work well for free-flowing debate	Consider shorter, single topic discussions / briefings etc	Short term	Leader / Dem Services
	5.13 Opportunities to strengthen scrutiny		Explore opportunities for more 'experts' to inform Scrutiny discussions using technology	Medium term	Dem Services
<b>Realising the benefits of remote meetings</b>					

	5.14 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	Ongoing	Political Structures working Group
		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 term	Recovery Management Team
			Consider, budget permitting, developing a reserve for the replacement of Member IT for the next Council term given the potential for more online meetings	Short term	Remove from recovery plan - include in budget plans
			Survey TAPC's to understand the blockers to them hosting remote meetings and if anything we can do to help overcome that	Short term	Remove from recovery plan - action for DALC through workshops
	5.15 Understand the limitations of the Council Chamber for meetings given the likelihood for longer term social distancing		Consider future accommodation options	Short/Medium term	Accommodation Working Group
<b>Closer Working with other Local Authorities</b>					
	5.16 Identify options to develop more shared services working		Continue to engage with other Devon Local Authorities and explore options where they arise	Long term	Remove from recovery plan - BAU
			Explore opportunities for joint bid submissions to support our future ambitions	Medium term	Remove from recovery plan - BAU

5.17 Identify options for jointly procuring of supplies and services with other Devon Local Authorities	West Devon 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	Short term	Remove from recovery plan - include within Procurement Strategy (to be considered by Councils 2021)
	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	West Devon Procurement Officer will engage with this group and identify potential joint opportunities.	Short term	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	Remove from recovery plan - included in committee forward plan

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Report to: **Hub Committee**  
Date: **1<sup>st</sup> December 2020**  
Title: **Housing Strategy Public Consultation**  
Portfolio Area: **Homes Cllr Debo Sellis**  
Wards Affected: **All**  
Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken:

Author: **Isabel Blake** Role: **Head of Housing, Revenues & Benefits**  
Contact: **01822 813551 isabel.blake@swdevon.gov.uk**

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## **Recommendations:**

That the Hub Committee is recommended to:

1. approve the draft Housing strategy 2021-2026 for consultation
2. authorise the Head of Housing Revenues and Benefits to carry out a public consultation on the draft strategy; and;
3. note that a report on the outcome of the consultation in March 2021

### **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 The draft joint housing strategy for West Devon & South Hams sets out the priorities, opportunities and challenges for the next 5 years.
- 1.2 The Strategy is titled "Better Homes, Better Lives" and has clear links to health, wellbeing, and the climate agenda and is split into 2 themes, each with 3 priorities

#### **Housing for Place**

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

#### **Housing for People**

- Homes that support the Health & wellbeing of our residents
- Make the best use and improve quality of existing housing
- Ensuring that people can access the support and advice they require and make best use of data

- 1.3 The strategy has been developed by Members, Officers and through a partnership event and a rich evidence base. Wider consultation will inform work to date, and ensure we are accurately representing the priorities of our residents, stakeholders and partners.
- 1.4 This report recommends that the Hub Committee approve the draft strategy for consultation purposes and that the Council undertakes a public consultation commencing on the 7<sup>th</sup> December and running for 5 weeks.
- 1.5 The results of the public consultation and the final strategy would then be considered by the Hub Committee and Council in March 2021. This would be accompanied by a Year 1 delivery plan.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 As was highlighted in the October report considered by the Hub Committee (HC28), the Council does not currently have a housing strategy however it is clear that Homes remains a corporate priority. Through Member workshops and questionnaires, we have set out the vision for what we want to achieve.
- 2.2 Since the October 2020 report, we have shared the draft priorities with a number of partners by holding an online workshop. The workshop was attended by representatives from 23 partner organisations to seek their views and to ensure that our partners felt the Council priorities would complement their own.
- 2.3 The session included an introduction of the key themes and we have been reassured by partner agencies that our priorities chime with theirs as a strategy for West Devon & South Hams and that "Better Homes, Better Lives" is a message they share in improving the wellbeing of our residents through the homes they live in. Wider public consultation will be the test of this.

## **3. Outcomes/outputs**

- 3.1 It is important that the Hub Committee considers the draft strategy as set out in Appendix A and ensure that it reflects Members priorities.
- 3.2 It is then proposed that the draft strategy be made available to a wide range of stakeholders including Residents, Government Departments, neighbouring authorities, statutory agencies, voluntary groups, Registered Providers, private developers and both the County Council and our Towns & Parishes for them to comment on.
- 3.3 In any other year we would have held a series of face to face events during the consultation period, however due to the restrictions on meeting and the increased workloads of our key partners related to responding to the pandemic the value of this is limited.
- 3.4 We will make the draft strategy available on the Consultation and Engagement Portal along with a summary of why we have chosen

- our priorities and some key statistics. We will then include a survey link to seek views of stakeholders and this is included as Appendix B to the report. In addition to this there will be opportunities for residents to comment via each Council's Social Media channels.
- 3.5 All comments received will be reviewed and considered before a final version of the strategy is presented to Hub Committee for approval and then Council for adoption.

#### 4. Options available and consideration of risk

- 4.1 The Strategy is being developed at a time when there is a fast moving national policy agenda. The upcoming planning white paper could have implications for the future deliverability of the Strategy not least because of the proposed changes to the threshold for affordable housing.
- 4.2 We have also yet to fully understand the long term impacts that the Covid-19 pandemic will have on the Council and West Devon communities. We know that there will be increased financial challenges for individuals and families which will have an impact on the housing options available to them.
- 4.3 Given the uncertainties currently faced, it has been important to develop a Strategy with enough flexibility so that the Council can adapt to meet future demands but also to develop any possible opportunities that may present.
- 4.4 It is anticipated that this strategy will be considered for adoption by Council in March 2021. This is however dependent on future impacts of Covid-19 as many of the officers required to support the development of the Strategy are the same officers that have the knowledge and skills to support our communities should this be needed.

#### 5. Proposed Way Forward

- 5.1 That the Hub Committee agrees the draft Housing Strategy 2021-2026 "Better Homes, Better Lives" and that both West Devon & South Hams Council's begins public consultation from the 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021. This will be dependent on South Hams District Council also making the same decision at their Executive Meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> December

#### 6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance		Whilst not a legal requirement to publically consult on a Housing Strategy it is best practice and is the best available gage that our priorities are aligned to those of our communities.
Financial implications to include reference		There is a small cost, predominantly in Officer time preparing for public consultation.

to value for money		
Risk		It is our intention to adopt the strategy from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2021. It is important to make a decision through this report to enable the maximum time for public consultation and to properly consider the responses and comments.
Supporting Corporate Strategy		Homes & Wellbeing
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact		There are actions in the strategy around climate change and carbon reduction, however this report and the request to go out to public consultation does not have any impact.
<b>Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications</b>		
Equality and Diversity		We will be completing a full Equality Impact Assessment as part of the consultation
Safeguarding		None as a direct impact of this report
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		None as a direct impact of the report
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		None as a direct impact of the report
Other implications		None

### **Supporting Information**

#### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 Draft Housing Strategy

#### **Background Papers:**

### **Approval and clearance of report**

<b>Process checklist</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Portfolio Holder briefed/sign off	<b>Yes/No</b>
SLT Rep briefed/sign off	<b>Yes/No</b>
Relevant Heads of Practice sign off (draft)	<b>Yes/No</b>
Data protection issues considered	<b>Yes/No</b>
Accessibility checked	<b>Yes/No</b>



South Hams & West Devon

# *Better Homes, Better Lives*

## **Housing Strategy 2021-2026**

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



South Hams  
District Council



West Devon  
Borough Council



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# Foreword

We are pleased to introduce the joint Housing Strategy of South Hams and West Devon Councils, which sets out our Housing Priorities for the next five years.

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This strategy comes at a time of great uncertainty for our Country following a year of restrictions and lockdowns as a result of the Global Coronavirus pandemic. A time when “home” took on a stronger meaning.

As our areas start to emerge and recover from the pandemic, it is important that we build back better, revisit our priorities and make commitments to change. That’s why we have called our strategy **Better Homes, Better Lives**.

Under our themes of Housing for Place and Housing for People we have listed our key priorities for the next 5 years. These are:

## Housing for Place

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



## Housing for People

- Homes that support the Health & wellbeing of our residents
- Make the best use and improve quality of existing housing
- Ensuring that people can access the support and advice they require and make best use of data



We want to deliver on these key commitments to ensure all our residents, current and future benefit from a strategy that makes the best of our beautiful natural environment, but also delivers for those who need it the most.



Cllr Hilary Bastone



Cllr Debo Sellis

Both our Councils have declared a climate emergency and greener initiatives that deliver on carbon reduction, green energy and improving homes in a sustainable way are key aspects of this strategy that we are keen to deliver for our residents and communities.

It goes without saying that the objectives of this strategy would not begin to be met without working in partnership with a great number of statutory and voluntary agencies. So we would like to extend our thanks to our partners for the part they play in the outcomes for our area.

We believe that through this strategy and it’s supporting delivery plans we have made clear our ambition for the next 5 years and how we will meet our future challenges, to ensure that both South Hams and West Devon continue to be great places to live.

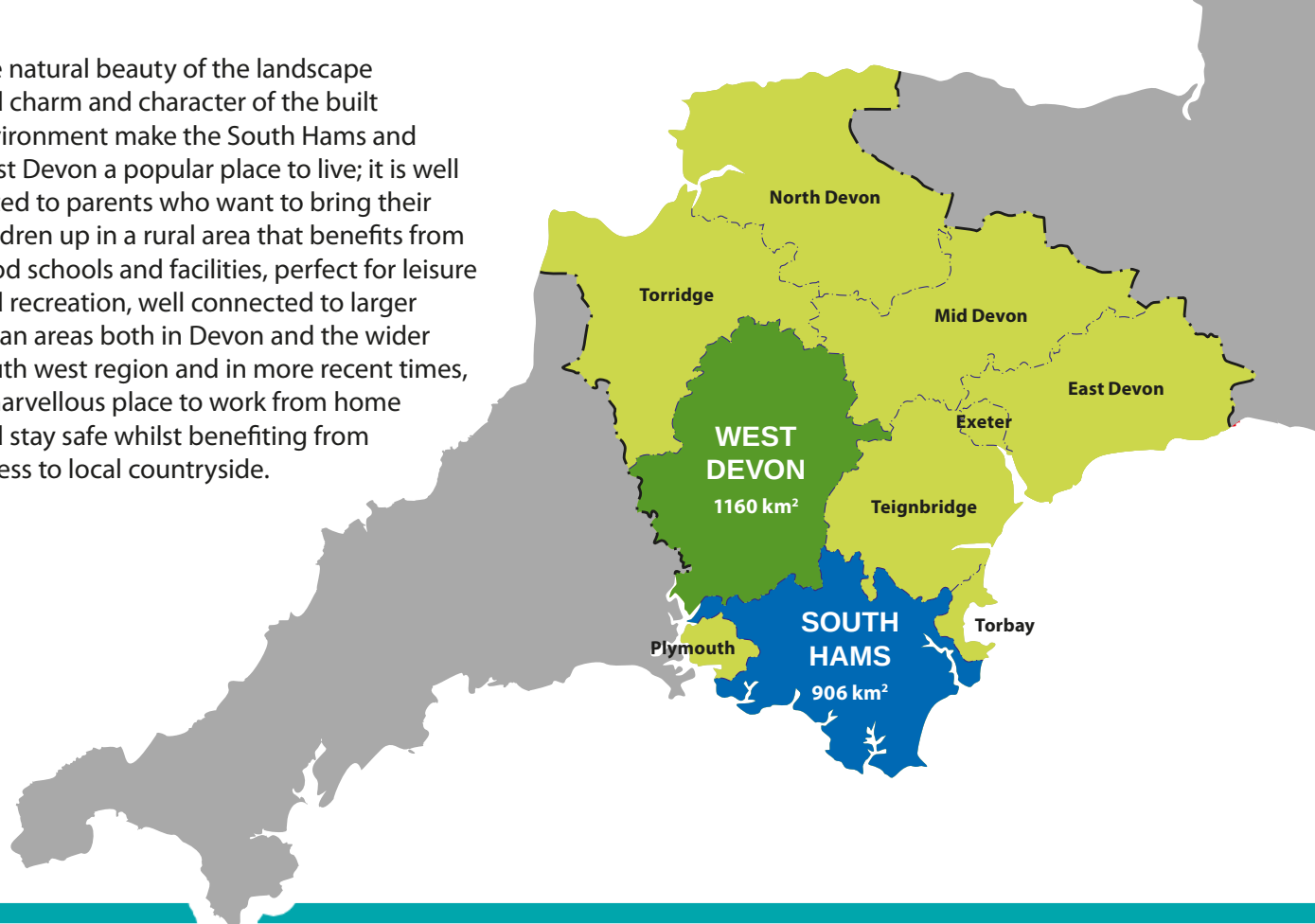
**Cllr Hilary Bastone, South Hams District Council**  
**Cllr Debo Sellis, West Devon Borough Council**

# Introduction



South Hams and West Devon occupy the south west corner of Devon and comprise a mix of traditional rural settlements and rolling agricultural landscapes. Between them the two local authority areas boast two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park and a World Heritage Site. It is little surprise that both South Hams and West Devon boast enduring appeal for visitors, and the tourism industry remains an important element of the local economy.

The natural beauty of the landscape and charm and character of the built environment make the South Hams and West Devon a popular place to live; it is well suited to parents who want to bring their children up in a rural area that benefits from good schools and facilities, perfect for leisure and recreation, well connected to larger urban areas both in Devon and the wider South west region and in more recent times, a marvellous place to work from home and stay safe whilst benefiting from access to local countryside.





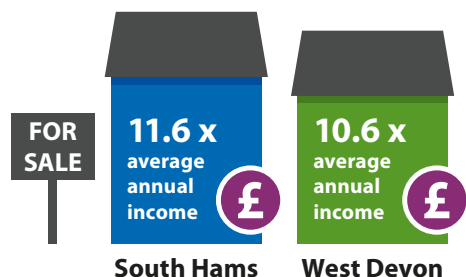


This popularity has over a number of years had an impact on the affordability levels of housing for local people. Average house prices have continued to rise well beyond the rise in the average local wage, making home ownership an unrealistic aspiration for many people living and working the area today. Most recent estimates show the average house costing 11.6 times the average wage in South Hams, and 10.6 times in West Devon.

The sensitive natural landscape present challenges in terms of building large numbers of new homes, and most of the towns and villages are ill-equipped to adapt to the additional of large scale housing development, with local infrastructure, particularly transport networks in town centres, unable to be adapted to accommodate significantly greater usage.

South Hams and West Devon are non-stock holding authorities, having transferred their housing stock in 1999 to Tor Homes and West Devon Homes (now LiveWest). The Councils have retained their strategic housing responsibilities and continue to act as the enabler of affordable housing. We also deliver a range of vital services including housing allocations and homelessness support, aids and adaptations and ensuring decent housing standards

Understanding the key characteristics of a place can help to devise plans for the future that will deliver healthy and well-balanced communities that are resilient to change. In order to create a housing strategy for South Hams and West Devon, it was important to know what issues needed to be addressed. Whilst the affordability challenges are well understood, the implications of this are less well known, for both the built environment and the people that live in South Hams and West Devon.



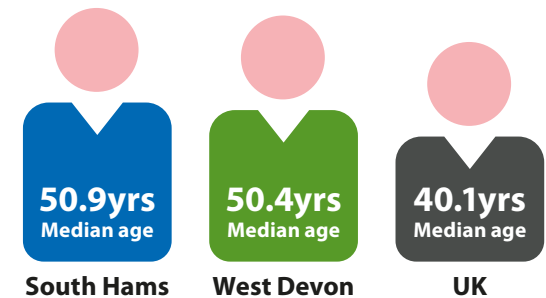


## People

One associated impact of ever-increasing house prices is the continued shift in demographic profile for both South Hams and West Devon. Whilst the age profile for the UK in general shows a gradual increase in life expectancy, this is more acute in rural areas where house prices extend far beyond local wages. The median age in South Hams at 2017 was 50.9, and in West Devon 50.4. This is compared to a median age of the UK in 2017 of 40.1. This has a detrimental impact on community resilience, and will create a disproportionate amount of pressure on certain local services such as healthcare facilities, whilst undermining the viability of services required by younger age groups like schools and further education facilities.

The economic displacement of younger age groups will be a sustained result of increases in both the median age increase and house prices in South Hams and West Devon. This brings with it serious social challenges that are difficult to address within the limited remit of a local authority. Indeed the social impact of market failures to provide sufficient housing options for lower income groups will only get worse unless there is direct policy intervention to deliver a broader range of housing types and tenures; this will allow local areas the flexibility to meet specific local needs, either through bespoke lettings plans or through the creation of specific local housing policies in neighbourhood plans.

Whilst available information helps to provide an understanding of an area, it does not always provide an accurate picture, and the use of averages can often hide inequalities that sit at either end of the spectrum. There is anecdotal evidence of an increase in home ownership from people outside Devon since the start of lockdown in March 2020. These home owners are relocating to a more desirable area, and taking advantage of the fact that very few people needed daily access to their place of work, indeed in a lot of cases people were actively discouraged from physically going to work. There is a chance that if remote working remains the norm for many people, the baseline data for average earnings in South Hams and West Devon will be artificially increased by virtue of people living in the area but working further afield in areas where average earnings are typically much higher. The displacement of people earning lower wages does not mean that the affordability problem has gone away, but simply that the people earning lower wages can no longer afford to live in the area, and have had to find somewhere to live in a cheaper area.



# Place

It is not unusual to find rural areas that have a higher than average proportion of larger dwellings than urban areas. The built form is often less dense in rural areas, with smaller homes easier to build at a higher density within towns and cities. The most recent census data shows that the dwelling stock in South Hams and West Devon is distinctly different from the national average. Both areas have far fewer one and two bed homes, 34%, than the national average for England which is 40%. The same is true at the other end of the spectrum, with the housing stock of South Hams and West Devon comprising an average of 27% of four and five bed homes compared to 19% nationally.

Household sizes have been getting smaller for a number of years, and this trend is projected to continue well into the medium term, and is just as applicable to rural areas as it is for urban areas. The difficulty this creates is that with every passing year the housing stock of South Hams and West Devon is becoming less aligned with the needs of the households that live in these areas. Combine this with the fact that larger homes typically cost more in South Hams and West Devon than in many other parts of the country, and you get a formula for further economic and social displacement for people living here. Of course many people will choose to under-occupy their home because it allows for flexibility of use like working from home or for accommodating occasional guests.

The proportion of homes that are significantly under-occupied in South Hams and West Devon however is also well above the national average. This identifies homes with at least two unused bedrooms, and data shows that 46% of homes in both South Hams and West Devon are considered to be significantly under-occupied compared with the national average of 34%. It may be that the home owners do not wish to live in smaller accommodation, but the data suggests a housing stock that does not align well with household sizes, and without a significant increase in the delivery of smaller homes this trend is only going to get worse.

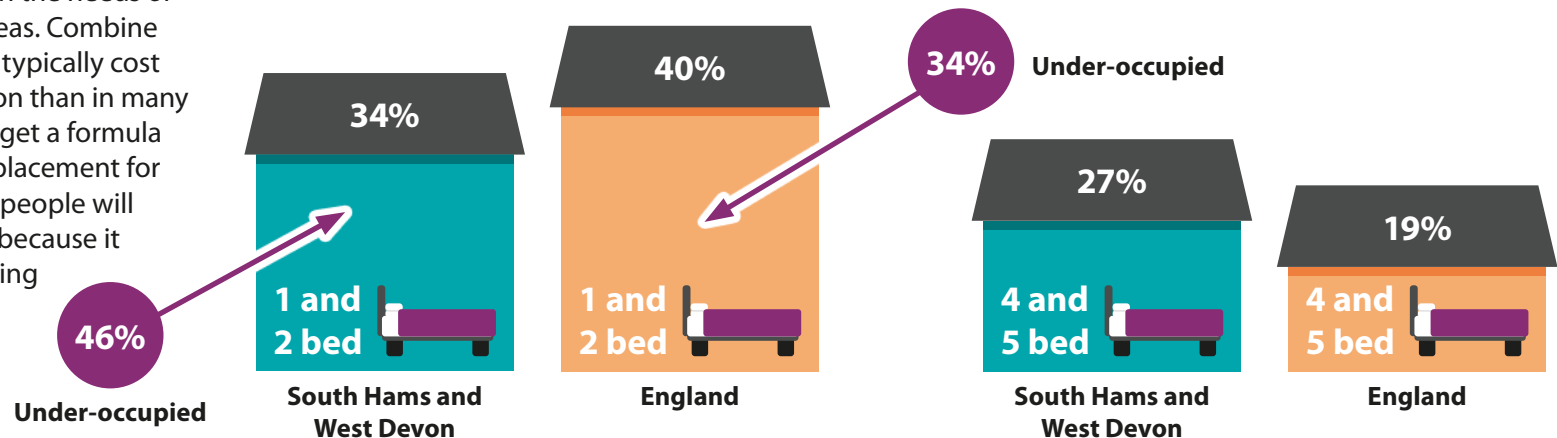
There are also pockets of poor quality housing located in South Hams and West Devon that feature both disrepair and overcrowding. The quality of housing has a direct impact upon the health and wellbeing of its occupants. Housing conditions can influence our physical health, for example, a warm and dry house can improve general health outcomes and specifically reduce respiratory conditions. However, housing also

has a huge influence on our mental health and wellbeing – for example children living in crowded homes are more likely to be stressed, anxious and depressed, have poorer physical health, and attain less well at school. (Reference; The Health Foundation 2017)

Equality of opportunity is an ambition that both South Hams and West Devon Councils aspire to deliver for our communities. South Hams and West Devon Councils have created a housing strategy that responds to the challenges faced by certain sectors of our community, by:

- Driving the delivery of new homes that people can afford and meeting the different needs of our communities
- Ensure the best use and improved quality of existing housing

Success for the South Hams and West Devon Housing Strategy will be measured in how we respond to these priorities and deliver **“Better homes, Better lives”**.



# Policy & Context



The South Hams & West Devon Housing Strategy 2021-2026 has been developed against a backdrop of Covid-19 and also the UK leaving the European Union. Both of these are likely to have consequences for the local housing market in relation to the economy and health & wellbeing. The strategy has been designed with flexibility for us to continue to strive to meet our priorities.

This strategy in its development has had regard to both local and national policy and a number of complex legal duties and powers. For it to be successful it must integrate across the Council, its corporate plan and priorities and should be read within the context of all the Council's strategies.

## National Housing Context

Housing remains a key element of political debate, with interdependencies on a number of other areas including health, wellbeing, welfare reform and economics. It is likely to remain this way for some considerable time.

Some of the national priorities include:

- Building more housing to meet demand
- Delivering more affordable housing
- Welfare Reform
- The Planning white paper Planning for the Future: Planning Policy changes in England in 2020
- Preventing Homelessness
- A Government commitment to halving rough sleeping by 2022 and ending it by 2027.
- Improving standards in the Private Rented Sector

- Health & Safety in the social housing sector (Following the Grenfell Tower disaster)

- Support for first time buyers

Furthermore Homes England – the Government sponsored national agency for housing acceleration has 6 key objectives to assist in housing delivery through grant funding and expertise assistance which have been published in their Strategic Plan 2018/19-2022/23. South Hams District Council has secured Investment Partner status with Homes England in order to directly draw down grant funding.



# Local Priorities

## Adopted Local Plans

The local authority areas of South Hams and West Devon include large parts of Dartmoor National Park, where Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) is the local planning authority, with an adopted Local Plan, and an emerging new Local Plan for the National Park. Outside Dartmoor, South Hams and West Devon, together with Plymouth published their Joint Local Plan in 2019 which sets out the shared direction of travel for the area up to 2034, bringing together the vision for the growth and transformation of Plymouth with the approach of fostering sustainable thriving towns and villages in the surrounding rural areas.

### Vision for Plymouth and South West Devon

Plymouth and South West Devon will be a highly successful sub-region, whose people and businesses benefit greatly from having both a

major city and a network of high quality market towns and sustainable rural settlements, set within beautiful and natural environments. It will have made the most of its economic, social, cultural, heritage and natural assets, and its settlements will play complementary and mutually beneficial roles for the urban and rural economy.

Development will be delivered proactively, meeting the needs of its people for new homes, jobs and services, and will recognise the diversity in characteristics between our urban, sub-urban and rural areas. We will be a good neighbour to neighbouring areas and play a key economic and social role both in the region and beyond.

South West Devon's Thriving Towns and Villages will be thriving rural communities where the following outcomes have been met:

- Residents are empowered to create strong communities.
- Places are created for enterprise to thrive and business to grow.
- Homes have been built to meet local needs.
- The services and facilities which meet the needs of our communities have been secured.
- The built and natural environment has been protected, conserved and enhanced.
- The past is celebrated and our heritage for the future is protected.



## Dartmoor National Park

Dartmoor National Park is in the process of adopting a new Local Plan. The Local Plan for Dartmoor reflects that National Parks were created with two purposes. These shape what the National Parks are, the reason for their designation and how they should be managed. There is also a socio-economic duty upon the Authorities themselves.

- ◆ **First Purpose:** To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.
- ◆ **Second Purpose:** To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the Special Qualities of the National Park by the public.
- ◆ **Duty:** To seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the local communities within the National Park.

All relevant authorities, including South Hams and West Devon Councils, are required by law to have regard to National Park purposes.

Dartmoor National Park has a strong focus upon sustainable development, with affordable housing to meet local needs a key priority. Its Vision includes:

- ◆ **Decent Homes:** There is access to well-designed, energy efficient and affordable housing for those who contribute to Dartmoor's thriving communities.
- ◆ **A place to do business:** Businesses which respect, value and contribute to Dartmoor's Special Qualities have the opportunity to thrive and innovate.
- ◆ **Prosperous and vibrant communities:** Dartmoor's towns and villages provide opportunities for communities to thrive.
- ◆ **Exemplars for outstanding development:** All new development has a character which respects local distinctiveness, vernacular and materials, and leads the way on sustainable building.

## Corporate Strategy

Responding to the Covid-19 pandemic has caused both Councils to consider its priorities and is in the developmental stages of introducing a new corporate plan with a new set of priorities. This may adjust the delivery plan of the Housing Strategy but it is not anticipated it will change the priorities. Indeed the existing priority for Homes is "enabling the homes that meet the needs of all" through the Covid 19 recovery planning it was clear that Members wished to be more ambitious with their aim which has been changed to "**Better Homes, Better Lives**".



## Climate Emergency

Both South Hams & West Devon declared a climate emergency in 2019 and plan to adopt a climate change and biodiversity strategy in December 2020.

The following commitments have been made:

- That the Councils aim to reduce its organisational carbon emissions to net-zero by 2030;
- That the Councils commit to working with partners through the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group to aim to reduce both councils carbon emissions to net zero by 2050 at the latest;
- That the Councils aim for a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain in the habitat value of its green and wooded public open space by 2025;

Dartmoor National Park Authority declared a climate emergency in July 2019, and have adopted an action plan that is intended to ensure the organisation is net zero carbon by 2025. DNPA are also active participants in the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group.

The aims of the Housing Strategy must wherever possible, contribute positively to these commitments, and in doing so also seek to address fuel poverty, the cost of home ownership and other key housing outcomes.

## Other related policies and strategies

This is a list of policies that have been used in the formation of this strategy which can all be found on our websites [www.westdevon.gov.uk](http://www.westdevon.gov.uk) and [www.southhams.gov.uk](http://www.southhams.gov.uk). Whilst they all have their own set of priorities, it is our intention to revisit them and ensure they help to deliver the priorities set by this strategy:

- Community Housing Strategy
- South Hams & West Devon Investment Strategies
- Asset Management Strategy
- Homeless Strategy 2017 - 2022
- Rough Sleeper Strategy
- Private Sector Housing Renewal Policy
- Tenancy Strategy
- Devon Home Choice Policy
- South Hams & West Devon Allocation Policies
- Safeguarding Policy
- The Tenants Incentive Scheme
- Devon County Councils Housing and Accommodation Strategy
- Local letting policies

The Housing Strategy 2021-2026 will rely on a number of key partnership arrangements to deliver the priorities, which in turn will deliver positive outcomes for a range of different organisations and their priorities. It is both Councils ambitions to strengthen partnership relationships. Working together is key to make a success of this strategy and to deliver **“Better Homes, Better Lives”**.

## Reducing our Carbon Footprint and increasing Biodiversity



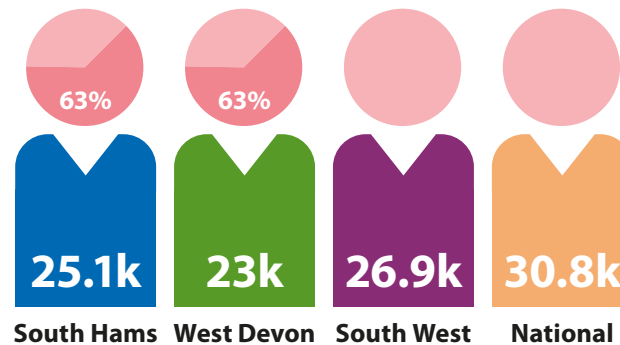
# The Evidence Base



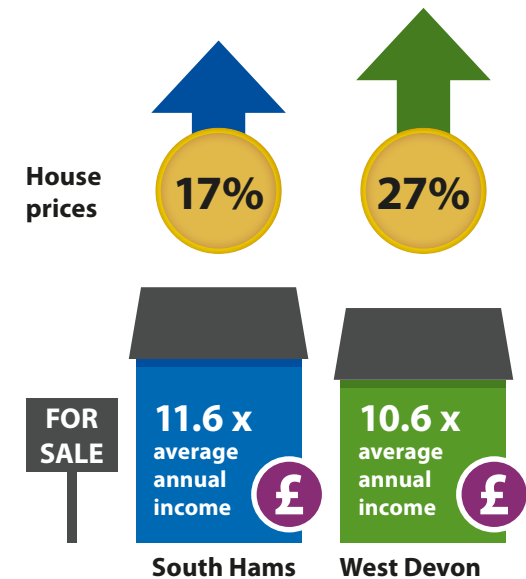
The Council has gathered evidence from a number of different sources to inform the Housing Strategy. The key headlines arising include:



Demographic projections suggest a 5% increase in population in the next 5 years in the South Hams and 4% increase in West Devon. 20% of the current population in South Hams and West Devon are aged 70 plus and this is set to increase over the next 20 years. (Census 2011 & NOMIS).

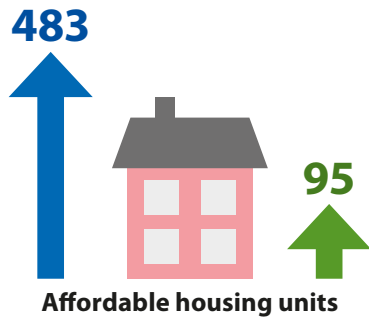


63% of residents in South Hams and West Devon are economically active with median earnings of £25,104 and £23,083 respectively. This represents a lower level than the South West regional average of £26,946 and the national median of £30,800. (ONS).

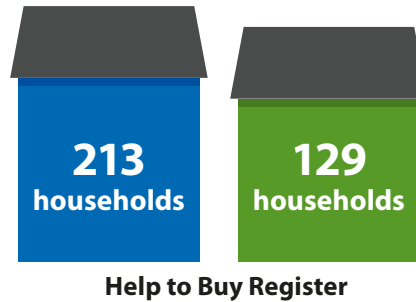


House prices have been increasing in the area with a 27% increase in house prices in West Devon in the last 5 years and a 17% increase in the average house price in South Hams. The ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile gross earnings has correspondingly increased such that it is now 11 times the average earnings in South Hams and 10.42 in West Devon. (ONS).





Since 2016/17, South Hams has enabled 483 units of new affordable housing and West Devon 95 units.



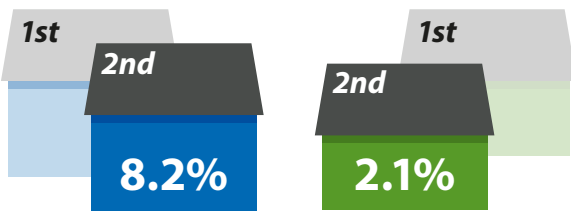
There are 213 households on the Help to Buy Register in the South Hams and 129 households in West Devon. (*Help to Buy South*).



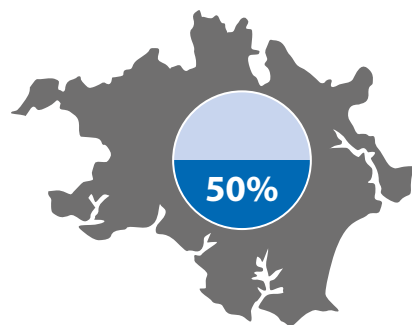
Waiting list Need by property	South Hams	West Devon
1 bed	57%	50%
2 bed	28%	28%
3 bed	12%	16%
4+ bed	4%	6%

The Council's Housing Register has approximately 2,000 households registered, and 70% of those earn less than £20,000 per annum. (*Devon Home Choice*).

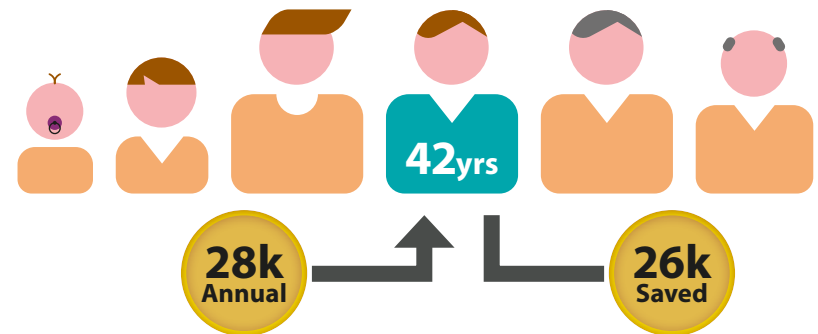
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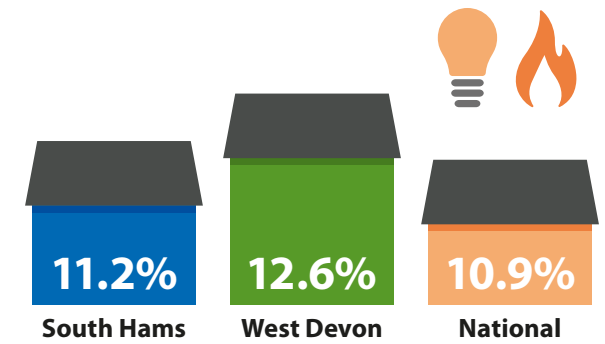
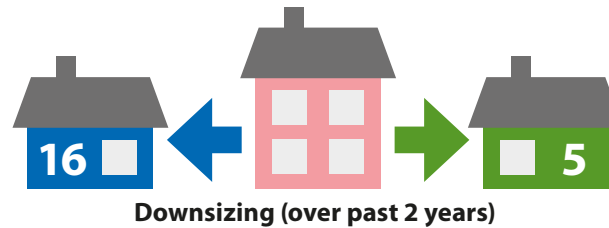
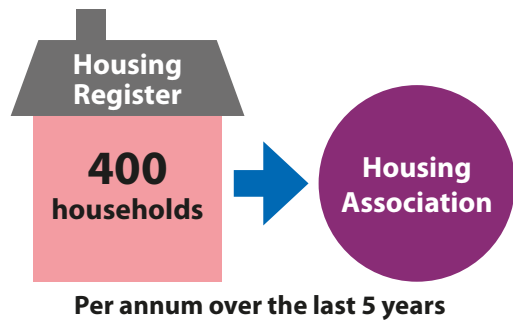
8.2% of the total dwellings in the South Hams are second homes with up to 50% in some areas. In West Devon the figure is 2.1%. The availability of housing is further restricted by many otherwise available homes being registered as a holiday homes business.



The average customer seeking shared ownership in South Hams and West Devon is 42 years old, earns £27,891, and has savings of £25,818. (*Help to Buy South*).



The Council's Housing Register	South Hams	West Devon
Active applications	1261	810
% of households with income < £25,000 (includes '0' answers)	83%	79%
No. of active applications where at least one household member is under 65	1038	699
% of above households where main applicant is in work	45%	40%
% of above households where at least one household member is in work	49%	47%



On average, over the last 5 years, South Hams and West Devon nominated 400 households from the Housing Register to housing association homes per annum. (*Devon Home Choice*).

Over the past 2 years, The tenants Incentive scheme has supported 16 households in South Hams and 5 households in West Devon to downsize to smaller accommodation. This has resulted in those larger size social housing properties becoming available for use by families who need them, via the housing register.

Levels of fuel poverty in the District and Borough are above the national average, affecting occupants of existing housing stock. The national average proportion of households in fuel poverty in 2017 was 10.9% compared to West Devon 12.6% and South Hams 11.2%.

Private Rentals	Average Rental Per Month	Max Local Housing Allowance - renting from a private landlord	Average Rental Per Month	Max Local Housing Allowance - renting from a private landlord
1 bed	£538	£449	£468	£449
2 bed	£650	£599	£595	£585
3 bed	£825	£730	£750	£695
4+ bed	£1,120	£899	£995	£850

The local rented housing market has become increasingly expensive, including the social housing sector, and the proportion of net income required to cover housing costs for low income households has increased.



To reduce fuel poverty the Council has been active in ECO funding and Warm Front funding as part of the Central government's Energy Company Obligation scheme. It successfully brought in over £1.2 million in SH and WD in 2019/20.

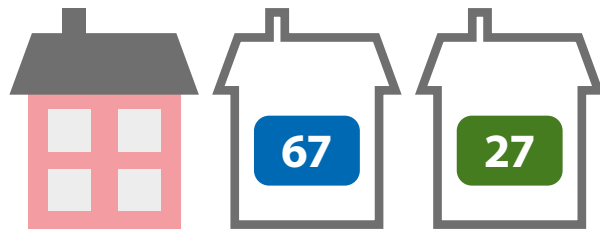


◆ The ability of a person to remain healthy in their own home is greatly improved by the provision of a disabled facilities grant (DFG). 75 DFGs were made in West Devon and 104 in SHDC in 2019/20.

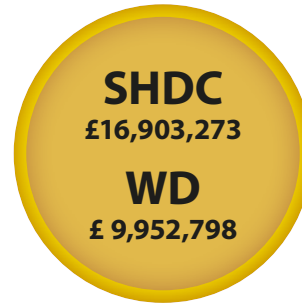


◆ In 2019/20 228 Households in West Devon saw their homeless prevented following an intervention from the Council. This was 348 households in South Hams.

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◆ In 2019 there were 67 properties identified as being long term empty properties in South Hams and 27 in West Devon. This is 0.14% of the total housing stock in South Hams and 0.10% of the total housing stock in West Devon.



◆ The Councils are reimbursed for their Housing Benefit expenditure by central Government. This figure for 2019/20 includes all tenure types i.e. social housing, supported housing and private rented sector housing.



# Better Homes, Better Lives

## Our Themes



### Housing for Place

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



### Housing for People

Ensure the best use and improved quality of existing housing



Reducing our Carbon Footprint and increasing Biodiversity



Working with partners



## Theme 1

# Housing for Place

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

Under this theme we have three headline priorities:

### Place Priority 1

Ensuring sustainable housing growth

### Place Priority 2

Promote balanced and sustainable communities

### Place Priority 3

Ensuring that homes support the health and wellbeing of the area

## Place Priority 1: Ensure sustainable housing growth

Housing needs to be delivered in places that are well served with services and amenities, and in sufficient quantity to meet the identified housing needs of the area. If new development is going to contribute to making better places for people to live, we need to look beyond the number of new houses, and ensure that new homes are of the right type, in the right place and are accessible for those in most need. In meeting this priority we can be sure that the new homes that are delivered in the plan area can be considered genuinely sustainable.

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### How we will deliver

- Use strategic planning policy to ensure sustainable housing growth.
  - ➔ Through the JLP deliver 7,000 high quality, sustainable and affordable housing during the lifetime of the plan across South Hams and West Devon.
  - ➔ Continue to drive the JLP affordable homes agenda.
  - ➔ Support the application of DNPA sustainable development policies that require new housing to meet identified local housing needs.
- Support opportunities for self-build.
- Explore the concepts of the Council as a developer and landlord of new housing.
- Support alternative ways to deliver affordable housing and manage local housing needs, such as co-operatives and community land trusts.
- Encourage provision of a wide range of housing options including social housing, managed shared accommodation and managed intermediate assured short hold private rental, part ownership and market sale.
- Invest in affordable housing with and without Joint Venture (JV) partners where it improves affordable housing and “placemaking” outcomes.
- Support creation and development of Neighbourhood plans with Town & Parish Councils and Local community groups.
- Work creatively with Devon County Council to provide quality specialist adapted housing and housing for people requiring support to live independently, to be managed by SeaMoor Lettings.
- Redevelop existing homeless provision in West Devon to ensure good quality accommodation for people when they need it the most.
- Build genuinely affordable high quality housing for our communities through a cost efficient standardised model.
- Achieve high quality environmental standards (for affordable housing at the right price) - utilising modern energy efficient methods of construction (modular construction, using recycled materials where possible to reduce the embodied carbon in their construction and securing new tree planting to aid carbon sequestration where possible.
- Work with Homes England to maximise grant funding for housing wherever possible to help achieve genuinely affordable pricing levels.
- Encourage opportunities for people interested in custom build / self-build development, both within community housing schemes and wider housing delivery.
- Work creatively with RPs and Homes England to draw down investment to deliver more affordable housing including more social rented homes.
- Utilise Section 106 Affordable Housing Contributions and other funding available to the Council’s in the most effective way.
- Work collaboratively with communities in the formation of Neighbourhood Plans to deliver the right development available to meet local needs.

## Place Priority 2: Promote Balanced and Sustainable communities

The long term resilience of rural communities depends upon having a diverse housing stock that can meet the needs of a wide range of households. By ensuring that new development adds diversity to the housing stock we can help ensure our communities are inclusive and equitable places to live, and that can create communities that are well prepared to respond to change.

### How we will deliver

- Actively encourage housing developments that reduce carbon footprint, fuel poverty and will be resilient to future changes in our climate.
- Ensure developments contribute to biodiversity net gain wherever possible.
- Support the creation of innovative neighbourhood plan policies that are responsive to local housing needs.
- Innovate the delivery of key worker housing to meet localised need.
- Promote effective partnership working to meet the needs of Gypsy and Travellers.
- Utilise existing policies and strengthen them into the future, to ensure the reduction of housing carbon footprints, aiming for carbon neutral development as standard.

## Place Priority 3: Ensuring that homes support the Health and Wellbeing of the area

The Council wants to meet the housing needs of all communities and the challenges of an ageing population. This Strategy aims to promote the best use of current housing stock, whatever the tenure, and enable new housing that is built to a standard that will enhance the health and wellbeing of future occupants.

### How we will deliver

- Plan for future health needs.
- Support an appropriately located planning application for an Extra Care housing scheme in West Devon.
- Ensure new affordable housing for older people adequately meets future needs (including mobility needs and issues such as dementia), in locations close to local amenities and of a design and type that is attractive to older people.
- Encourage the development of energy efficient affordable homes to reduce carbon emissions and reduce household heating costs.
- Enable wheelchair standard accommodation on new housing developments in line with adopted planning policy requirements to actively increase the stock of this type of affordable housing.



## Theme 2



# Housing for People

Ensure the best use and improved quality of existing housing

Under this theme we have three headline priorities:

### Priority 1

Homes that support the Health and Wellbeing of our residents

### Priority 2

Make the best use and improve the quality of existing housing

### Priority 3

Ensure that people can access the support and advice they require and make best use of data



## People Priority 1: Homes that support the Health and Wellbeing of our residents

The Councils are compelled to addressing hardship, deprivation, ill health and inequalities that exist within our areas.

### How we will deliver

- Promote and support energy efficiency in homes.
- Ensure the Private rented sector meets the requirements of The Domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Regulations.
- Proactively support independent living and also support people with disabilities to remain in their homes through disabled facility grants and make effective use of the better care fund.
- Optimise matching of adapted housing stock to those most in need through the Disabled Adapted Needs Panel.
- Develop a Fuel Poverty Action Plan; that will incorporate closer working with partner organisations, that Pool knowledge and resources to ensure that fuel poor residents receive support; Target wards which have higher fuel poverty rates than the regional average. Target all F & G rated properties.
- Assist self-funders of disabled adaptations to make informed choices and support them with trusted contractors at a fair price.

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

The Council is committed to making better use of already existing housing to meet the needs of residents.

### How we will deliver

- Seek to expand our own in-house private lettings service Seamoor Lettings.
- Encourage long-term empty homes back into use.
- Develop proactive relationships and work collaboratively with Registered Providers for mutual benefit and to improve standards in Registered Provider housing stock.
- Embed and implement a new Tenancy Strategy to supersede the current out of date version.
- Address under occupation & overcrowding within social housing stock and by doing so reduce length of time on the housing register.
- Promote the Tenants Incentive Scheme to encourage and incentivise tenants in social housing to downsize.
- Work with our partners to seek re-development opportunities to enhance the current housing stock and to meet the needs of residents.
- Work with our Registered Provider partners to identify and improve issues in their stock.
- Work with Registered Providers to deliver low cost aids and adaptations in their housing stock to support their tenants and develop improvements in the recording and identification of adapted units within the existing affordable housing stock.

- ◆ Develop and promote an intermediate housing register specifically for key workers with supply from the private rented sector through Seamoor and property developed by the Councils.
- ◆ Monitor and actively promote high standards in the rented sector and take appropriate action where standards are not being met, to tackle disrepair, poor housing conditions and criminal landlords.
- ◆ Support and encourage new, high quality and well managed, Houses in Multiple Occupation in the local area, including offering a management service ourselves, whilst licensing all HMOs that are subject to mandatory licensing.
- ◆ Deliver Private Rented Sector Landlords' & Letting Agents' Forums and other networking opportunities for private landlords; promoting the events widely and using them to consult the Private Rented Sector on the issues that are affecting them.
- ◆ Meet the priorities of our standalone Homeless Strategy and Rough Sleeping Strategy.
- ◆ Promote, deliver and review the Council's private sector renewal policy and home adaptation policy to ensure it makes a positive difference to people's lives and meeting locally identified need.
- ◆ Support Tenants and stand firm in situations where Landlords attempt retaliatory evictions.



## People Priority 3: Ensure that people can access the support and advice they require and make best use of data

The Council will adopt an intelligence led approach to early identification of needs. This will ensure future plans and resources can be directed to those in the most need.

### How we will deliver

- ◆ Work with partners to reduce anti-social behaviour in our neighbourhoods.
- ◆ Prevent homelessness.
- ◆ Ensure that people who need to use our service can continue to access it when required.
- ◆ Ensure people can access services with a range of communication options quickly and efficiently in a way that is appropriate to their needs and regularly share information.
- ◆ Create advice and information sharing pages including interactive functioning for questions posed. Consider using social media platforms and email sign up for bulletin updates.
- ◆ Interrogate new Census data to predict future housing trends and needs.
- ◆ Regularly communicate with residents, agencies, partners and our Communities to ensure an up to date, two way, understanding of current needs and services.
- ◆ Achieve Dementia Friendly Status as a Council and work towards becoming a dementia friendly district and borough.
- ◆ Collaborative working with other authorities to share best practice.
- ◆ Work proactively with the data available in the DHC register to identify trends and potential solution on a local and individual level.

# Resources

The Councils has had its resources severely tested during the response to Covid-19 and the downturn in income from core finance streams such as car parking and licensing.

By operating as a shared workforce on behalf of West Devon & South Hams, each Council saves around £3.9m in South Hams & £2.2m in West Devon in staffing costs. We have also reduced our workspace significantly in the last 5 years operating from a fraction of our existing offices, renting the majority of the building to tenants both in the private and public sector. Nevertheless the Council's resources are limited.

This strategy is dependent on a partnership approach to deliver outcomes for our Residents. Our priorities are not ours alone and are shared by a great number of other services such as Health, Social Care, Criminal Justice, Community Safety Partnership as well as Registered Providers, house builders and developers.

Both South Hams & West Devon have declared a climate emergency. Therefore this strategy cannot be at odds with our priorities around reducing our carbon footprint and priorities for biodiversity This will prove challenging, particularly in relation to for example fuel poverty

In terms of delivering on the priorities of this strategy, the Housing functions for the Council are funded through a mix of council tax, Government grant funding and a rebate from the Department of Work & Pensions for Housing Benefit and additional funding for both Councils discretionary housing payment fund.

The Council maintains a Capital Programme, a community housing programme and receives developer contributions in lieu of onsite affordable housing contributions. In South Hams there is also capital receipts from former Council Property (Which was transferred to Tor Homes, now Livewest in 1999) sold through the Right to Buy to tenants who were formally tenants of the Council. Whilst this still provides income at the moment this will decrease gradually over the next few years such is the length of time since the stock transfer and number of original tenants from that time. In West Devon the agreement was different and the minimum number of properties has not yet triggered any income to the Council.

Both Councils deliver a Disabled Facility Grant (DFG) programme using allocated Better Care Funding from Devon County Council. Devon County also provide a grant to assist with the homeless prevention of 16 & 17 year olds and children leaving care.

Whilst the current funding arrangements at the moment ensures we continue to receive a flexible homeless support grant, which was the replacement funding for replaced temporary accommodation subsidy in and additional homeless prevention grant to use on measures and activity to prevent people.

The Council continues to submit bids and access funding where possible from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Homes England.

Staffing and budgetary resources required to deliver the ambitions in the Strategy will be set out in detail in the Operational Delivery Plan and will be fully costed.

# Monitoring of this housing strategy

The Housing Strategy has a lifespan of 5 years.



Producing it during the covid-19 pandemic, which no doubt will have far reaching consequences into the future both economically and for health & wellbeing has proved to be challenging. New priorities may emerge and legislation may fundamentally change. However, It is likely that both Councils will want to continue the themes they seek to deliver through this strategy.

The Housing Strategy will be subject to an annual review, which seeks endorsement of our partners and our Elected Members. It is anticipated that we will make our updated delivery plan available annually in the spring with a progress report setting out our key challenges for the forthcoming year and achievements of the last.

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## Annual Delivery Plan



This strategy document highlights the priorities for both Councils and high level plans to deliver them.

An operational delivery plan will be developed annually with SMART (Specific, measurable, achievable and timely) actions which will be regularly monitored and reviewed.

It is anticipated that there will be a requirement to be flexible because of the current unprecedented times and the strategy, as a live document will be subject to change over its lifespan.

# Glossary

<b>Affordable Housing</b>	<p>Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing (including Low Cost Home Ownership options), provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Affordable rented housing - Rented housing let by Registered Providers to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent.</li> <li>◆ Intermediate rented housing - Housing at prices and rents above those of social rent but below market price or rents.</li> <li>◆ Social rented housing - Rented housing owned and managed by Local Authorities and Registered Providers for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime.</li> </ul>
<b>Allocations policy</b>	<p>The way in which homes owned by the local authority and registered providers are let. The scheme sets out who will be prioritised for these homes and how they will be allocated.</p>
<b>Balanced community</b>	<p>A community in which the mix of housing types and tenures is appropriate to the size, character and function of the area and will therefore be different depending on the community in question.</p>

<b>Category 1 Hazard</b>	<p>Housing Standards - A category 1 hazard is a hazard that poses a serious threat to the health or safety of people living in or visiting a home. Examples can include a leaking roof, mould on the walls / ceilings, excess cold, exposed wiring or overloaded electrical sockets, a dangerous or broken boiler etc. There is a scoring system to assess whether any hazard is 'Category 1'. Councils must take action to remove or reduce Category 1 hazards.</p>
<b>Community Land Trust</b>	<p>Community Land Trusts are a form of community-led housing, set up and run by ordinary people to develop and manage homes as well as other assets. CLTs act as long-term stewards of housing, ensuring that it remains genuinely affordable, based on what people actually earn in their area, not just for now but for every future occupier (National Community Land Trust Network).</p>
<b>Custom build</b>	<p>Custom build homes are where an individual or a group works with a developer to help deliver a home. The developer may help to find a plot, manage the construction and arrange the finance for the new home. This is more of a hands-off approach compared to self-build but the home will be tailored to match the individuals/groups requirements.</p>
<b>Devon Homechoice</b>	<p>The Council's Allocations Scheme</p>
<b>Decent Homes Standard</b>	<p>Quality standard for public sector housing designed to ensure minimum Standards for kitchens, bathrooms, heating and general repair.</p>

<b>Empty Home (long term):</b>	A home that has been unoccupied for more than six months Fuel poverty: Fuel poverty in England is measured using the Low Income High Costs (LIHC) indicator. Under the LIHC indicator, a household is considered to be fuel poor if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They have required fuel costs that are above the average (the national median level), and</li> <li>Were they to spend that amount they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line</li> </ul>
<b>Fixed term and flexible tenancies:</b>	New types of tenancies for social or affordable housing which were introduced from April 2012 and which landlords have the option to use instead of the secure tenancies which have traditionally been used in the sector. Where a secure tenancy lasts indefinitely, a fixed term or flexible tenancy will be reviewed after a set period of time and may not be renewed.
<b>Fuel poverty:</b>	A term used to refer to households with high heating costs relative to income. In 2013 the government changed the definition and methodology used to calculate fuel poverty although the basic principle remains the same.
<b>Help to Buy:</b>	A government scheme offering mortgage guarantees or equity loans for people who want to buy a home.
<b>Homes and Communities Agency (HCA):</b>	A government agency with responsibility for housing and regeneration including providing investment for new housing development and acting as the regulator for social housing providers in England.
<b>Local Housing Allowance:</b>	The type of Housing Benefit paid to people who rent their home from a private landlord. The rate is calculated based on how many bedrooms the household needs. It does not apply to people renting from a registered provider.
<b>Local Plan:</b>	The key document setting out the strategic policies upon which local planning decisions will be based with regard to new housing, community facilities, shops and employment.

<b>New Homes Bonus:</b>	A grant paid to councils by the government for increasing the number of homes in their areas, including new builds, conversions and long-term empty properties which have been brought back into use.
<b>Registered Provider:</b>	A term used to refer to any Registered Provider of Social Housing, previously known as Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). The local authority, housing associations and
<b>Rough sleepers:</b>	Homeless people who do not have anywhere to spend the night and end up sleeping rough. This could include urban streets, car parks etc., but in Devon also includes more remote and rural areas where people are less likely to be disturbed.
<b>SHMNA – Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment:</b>	The Government’s National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) requires each Local Authority to undertake a SHMNA as part of the evidence base required to inform Local Plans. A SHMNA seeks to assess the long term need and affordability of housing in the area, and is based on demographic and economic trends. The latest SHMA for South Hams and West was published in 2017.
<b>SHWD:</b>	South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council
<b>Single-room rate entitlement:</b>	The rate of Local Housing Allowance for single people with no dependents under the age of 35 who live in the private rented sector. It is based on the cost of renting a room in a shared house.
<b>Social housing:</b>	A general term used to refer to any housing that is rented from the local authority, a housing association or other registered provider at a social or affordable rent.
<b>Universal Credit:</b>	A new benefit being introduced to replace Jobseeker’s Allowance; Employment and Support Allowance; Income Support; Housing Benefit and Tax Credits.
<b>Welfare reform:</b>	A term used to refer to a series of changes to the benefit system introduced by the government since 2012 including high profile changes such as the ‘bedroom tax’ and Universal Credit among many others.



***Better Homes,  
Better Lives***



South Hams  
District Council

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



West Devon  
Borough Council

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



Report to: **Hub Committee**  
Date: **1<sup>st</sup> December 2020**  
Title: **Broadband Community Support**  
Portfolio Area: **Leader**  
Wards Affected: **all**  
Urgent Decision: **N** Approval and clearance obtained: **Y**

Date next steps can be taken:

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

Contact: **01803 861412** [steve.mullineaux@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:steve.mullineaux@swdevon.gov.uk)

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## **Recommendations:**

That the Hub Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve development of a Broadband Community Support Strategy to support the Councils Economic and Health & Wellbeing Objectives.
2. Recommend to Council to approve the creation of a Broadband Community Support earmarked reserve of £100,000, to be financed by;
  - a. Transferring £50,000 from the existing Business Rates Retention earmarked reserve.
  - b. Transferring £50,000 from the Business Rates Discretionary fund (Additional Restrictions Grants, ARG Scheme)
3. Approve the Council entering into a memorandum of understanding with the Sydenham Damerel Community Fibre Partnership on terms to be agreed by the Director of Customer Service Delivery in consultation with the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
4. Subject to completion of the memorandum of understanding, Approve the Council entering into a contract with BT Openreach to provide a scheme in Sydenham Damerel on behalf the Sydenham Damerel Community Fibre Partnership.
5. Note and endorse the current actions taken to date.

### **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out how the Council will support communities that will not be included in the current Connecting Devon and Somerset programme.

- 1.2 The rationale is that effective Broadband is a factor that impacts all aspects of the Borough.
- 1.3 For small start-up businesses it is a key avenue to market, for school children, a key educational tool, by enabling home working it can reduce commuting and have a positive impact on climate change and of course in the current pandemic for individuals and communities it can help reduce isolation and for some is a lifeline.
- 1.4 Therefore in conclusion, effective Broadband solutions impact on the economic prosperity and the health and wellbeing of our individuals and communities within the borough.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 In England 97.1% of households have access to superfast broadband (defined as speeds of 26mbps). West Devon currently sits at 93.5% and in the bottom quartile of local authority areas. <https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/councils>
- 2.2 At a constituency level, there are two parliamentary constituencies in West Devon: Torridge and West Devon & Central Devon. Superfast coverage in the two constituencies are 88.7% and 89.3% respectively - figures that are significantly below the UK figure of 96%. Out of the 650 parliamentary constituencies, Torridge and West Devon is ranked 613th for broadband coverage, and Central Devon is ranked 611th. <https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/index.php?tab=1&council=2>
- 2.3 Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) is a programme that is centrally funded by Central Governments Building Digital UK (BDUK) department to improve broadband and increase superfast connectivity across the Devon and Somerset County Council areas. This scheme continues to operate and only recently agreed a further roll-out with a supplier to provide broadband Fibre To The Premise (FTTP) in a number of communities across West Devon. It should be noted that this scheme will not be completed until the end of 2021.
- 2.4 Even with this additional CDS scheme and existing commercial providers, it is estimated that approximately 2,700 homes / business premises in the Borough will not have access to Superfast Broadband.
- 2.5 BDUK have an offer known as the Gigabit Voucher Scheme and support additional communities. This scheme enables rural communities (residents and businesses) with broadband speeds of less than 100Mbps can use vouchers to apply for funding for a commercial provider to provide superfast / FTTP solutions that otherwise would not be commercially viable. The vouchers are

worth **£1,500** per home and up to **£3,500** for each small to medium-sized business (SME). Details of the scheme are available here;

[Gigabit Vouchers – Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport](#)

- 2.6 How the Gigabit Voucher Scheme works;
- a. A community agrees on the need for a scheme.
  - b. They then apply to a provider for a quotation to provide a service.
  - c. On receiving the quotation, the community assess whether they will have enough interest to pay for scheme with the vouchers.
  - d. If they do, they can apply for the vouchers from the DCMS. Residents and Businesses apply for the vouchers and once the value of the vouchers applied for reaches the quotation value, DCMS authorise the provider to start the delivery of the scheme.
  - e. Within 12 months of completion of the scheme the residents must apply for a broadband connection.
  - f. At this point the supplier is paid by DCMS.

### **3. Proposal for supporting West Devon Communities**

#### 3.1 Sydenham Damerel Community Fibre Partnership (CFP)

3.1.1 This group have approached the scheme in an exemplary fashion, providing clear community leadership and as a result they are now very close to achieving the point where the provider commences the engineering work. However as part of the process the supplier (in this case BT Openreach) insist on a contract between them and a legal entity before they will commence the work. The purpose of this is to ensure that once the scheme is completed that residents and communities do indeed take up a service and that they (the supplier) can recover their costs from DCMS.

- 3.1.2 Details of the Sydenham Damerel Scheme are set out below;
- a. 138 addresses will be provided with FTTP
  - b. The suppliers quoted costs are £174,202
  - c. 73 residential properties and 33 businesses have indicated that would sign for vouchers achieving a voucher total of £225,000, which is 129% (£50,798) above the required costs.

3.2 Whilst the above CFP have been extremely successful in engaging the wider community, it is anticipated that others may need support and guidance. This 'support' could go beyond being the legal entity, it could be around engagement or could be financial in that the

scheme could have a gap between the value of the vouchers and the cost of the scheme.

- 3.3 It is then proposed that as stated in Recommendation 4 that West Devon Borough Council becomes the legal entity and signs a contact with the provider on behalf of the Sydenham Damerel CFP.
- 3.4 That the Council uses the process followed by the above CFP to develop a template that can be used to support other community groups as best practice and develops a longer term strategy as set out in Recommendation 1.
- 3.5 By creating an Earmarked reserve as set out in Recommendation 2, that the Council can support a number of schemes to reach a successful outcome.
- 3.6 That officers investigate what resources can be used from external funding to support the Council in its aspirations. Discussions are ongoing with the Economic Development Team in Devon County Council, the CDS team and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). Officers have also bid for a match funded grant from the LGA to support a post of a Community Broadband Support Officer.
- 3.7 If the bid is successful the post would be responsible for liaising and supporting communities, identifying additional funding streams for individual projects, proactively working with CDS to identify areas and communities that could benefit from a scheme, and ensuring that the community (individuals and businesses) maximise the potential benefit of the new broadband infrastructure.

#### **4. Consideration of risk**

- 4.1 Having had discussions with CDS and the supplier, officers can confirm that;
  - a. There are no risks should the cost of the scheme exceed the original supplier estimate. These costs sit with the supplier.
  - b. If the number of vouchers does not meet the original supplier estimated cost of the scheme the Council can decide to subsidise the gap, as it will be aware of the financial implications before making any decision to commit.
  - c. In entering a contract with the supplier on behalf of a Community group the Council could be liable to the loss of income of the supplier if those residents and businesses do not take out a broadband service with any provider on the infrastructure that the supplier has provided with the scheme.
    - i. As an example if a scheme needed 100 residents or businesses to proceed and on completion of the scheme 50% of residents failed to take out a service in year one we estimate that the Council could be liable for approximately £9,000. However it would be highly unlikely that this would happen.

4.2 In order to try to mitigate any risks for the Council, it is proposed that a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is signed between the Community Group and the Council before any contract signature with Council. The MOU would set out the responsibilities and expectations of both parties.

4.3 It is recommended that any future agreement with any other community group is presented to Hub Committee for approval in line with the strategy that is to be drafted.

## 5. Proposed Way Forward

5.1 That the Hub Committee agrees the recommendations and officers provide a further update in April 2021.

## 6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Localism Act 2011 section 1 gives the Council a general power of competence to do anything not prohibited by legislation, albeit subject to the usual public law principles. The purpose underlying the power is to enable local authorities to explore innovative solutions to deliver more or the same services with less, and to generate income by charging and trading in line with existing powers, and to provide indemnities and guarantees.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	The creation of a Broadband Community Support Earmarked Reserve of £100,000 is recommended to Council, to be financed by; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transferring £50,000 from the existing Business Rates Retention earmarked reserve.</li> <li>• Transferring £50,000 from the Business Rates Discretionary fund (Additional Restrictions Grants, ARG Scheme)</li> </ul>
Risk	Y	See section 4. There is a limited financial risk that would be mitigated by ensuring that the number of rural gigabit connectivity vouchers granted by the Department for Communities, Housing and Local Government exceeds the supplier's estimated costs and by making provision for any losses by the earmarked reserve stated above.
Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	Economy Health and Wellbeing
Climate Change - Carbon /	Y	Agreeing to these recommendations will make a small positive difference to carbon reduction by enabling homeworking for more residents

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

**Supporting Information**

**Appendices: Not Applicable**

**Background Papers: Not Applicable**

**Approval and clearance of report**

<b>Process checklist</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Portfolio Holder briefed/sign off	<b>Yes</b>
SLT Rep briefed/sign off	<b>Yes</b>
Relevant Heads of Practice sign off (draft)	<b>Yes</b>
Data protection issues considered	<b>Yes</b>
Accessibility checked	<b>Yes</b>

Report to: **Hub Committee**  
Date: **1 December 2020**  
Title: **Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape  
World Heritage Site: Management Plan 2020-  
2025**

Portfolio Area: **Cllr Caroline Mott**

Wards Affected: **Tavistock North, Tavistock South East,  
Tavistock South West and Bere Ferrers**

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

Date next steps can be taken: This recommendation will be presented to the Council meeting to be held on 8 December 2020.

Author: **Graham Lawrence** Role: **Heritage Specialist**

Contact: **graham.lawrence@swdevon.gov.uk**

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Hub Committee RECOMMEND to Council that the World Heritage Site Management Plan 2020 – 2025 be endorsed for immediate adoption.**

### **1. Executive summary**

1.1 The report outlines the process for, and progress in, reviewing the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site (WHS) Management Plan and asks Committee to endorse the draft final plan for adoption.

1.2 The partner local authorities are asked by the World Heritage Site Team to adopt this final version of the reviewed and updated Management Plan.

### **2. Background**

2.1 The Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site (CMWHS), also known as “Cornish Mining”, was Inscribed by UNESCO on its World Heritage List in 2006. The World Heritage

designation covers ten geographical areas, nine in Cornwall and one in West Devon covering the Tamar Valley and Tavistock.

The purpose of the Management Plan is to create a strategic policy framework within which the various management interests can operate. To do this it explains the reasons for designation, describes the WHS and its key features, defines how it is protected, outlines the key management issues and defines policies and strategic actions.

Both UNESCO and the UK Government require those responsible for World Heritage Sites to produce and periodically update a Management Plan, to identify the site's principal management needs and strategies to address them.

2.2 A review of the previous Management Plan (2013-18) commenced in 2017, guided by a steering group that included officers from both West Devon Borough Council and Devon County Council. The revision was informed by an ongoing process of monitoring, review and analysis of progress during the previous Plan period, but also factors in significant developments in UNESCO guidance and the strategies of key partner organisations. This included the declaration of a Climate Emergency by all three partner local authorities (Cornwall, Devon County and West Devon Borough Councils) in 2019. This has shaped the Partnership's shared policy aims and strategic management objectives, in consultation with the communities living within and around the WHS.

2.3 The initial draft Management Plan as signed off by the Partnership Board, on which the Council is represented by Cllr Mott, on 18 June 2020 was released for public consultation on 10 July, with a closing date of 31 August. The resulting comments have been collated and potential amendments are outlined below.

The public consultation included:

- Uploading the draft Plan, appendices and the sustainability analysis to the WHS website, with an online survey to capture views on new key policy areas, and inviting written submissions via email response;
- Placing a notice in the planning section of local newspapers advertising the consultation, and inviting those without internet access to request hard copies of all the above;
- Issuing a press release to local print and broadcast media
- Posting items on social media;
- Direct email to all 57 Parish and Town Councils in the WHS areas;
- Technical Panel members circulating to colleagues and elected members in the organisations that they represent; and
- Email to 87 stakeholder organisations.



The findings were:

- Online questionnaire – 171 responses in total (partial and fully completed), providing over 420 comments. The most often quoted concern of all responses (online survey and e-mails) were with planning issues and the perception that the WHS policies on protection and conservation were not always observed;
- 82% of respondents supported or strongly supported the new Policy C5 - Proposals for renewable energy installations will be supported where they do not adversely affect the OUV of the Site.
- 87% of respondents supported or strongly supported the new Policy C7 - Development proposals should ensure that the biodiversity and geodiversity that contributes to the distinctiveness of the CWDMLWHS is conserved and where appropriate enhanced, having due regard to maintaining the authenticity and integrity of the Site. Developments of a significant nature will be expected to deliver appropriate biodiversity net gain.

In terms of general management priorities, the most frequently listed was conservation and regeneration of settlements in the Site, followed by presentation and learning. Further detail of the consultation response can be found in the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape WHS Management Plan 2020-2025 – consultation response review of findings.

### **3. Outcomes of the Management Plan review**

3.1 The Plan encompasses both the substantial physical assets and landscapes that make up the WHS, together with the cultural traditions that created them, as elements of its Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

Significant improvements in the conservation, interpretation, access to and public information about the Site's OUV were delivered during the last seven years, with:

- 15 conservation projects – including Tavistock Guildhall and Museum;
- a cultural events programme that delivered over 150 performances to an audience of 180,000 – including 'The Man Engine';
- £10.1m investment in heritage-led regeneration;
- education projects that reached 9,000 pupils.

3.2 During that time knowledge of climate change and its impacts on planetary ecosystems grew significantly, together with the recognition of how humanity depends upon these. UNESCO has also highlighted the combined value of cultural and natural heritage (<https://whc.unesco.org/en/biodiversity/>). As a result, the Partnership have incorporated biocultural protection and stewardship across the Site into the scope of this Plan, to respond to UNESCO's focus. This will require the WHS Partnership to access new areas of expertise and offers opportunities for new collaborations.

3.3 The Partnership has also aligned its delivery of the World Heritage Convention with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), incorporating cultural, social, economic, environmental, and ecological objectives for the benefit of all. In 2015 UNESCO's General Assembly adopted its Policy on the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the World Heritage Convention, with the goal of assisting Member States, WHS management bodies and communities to harness the potential of World Heritage to contribute to sustainable development. The CMWHS Vision, Mission and Aims were reassessed in terms of how they meet this Policy, with the conclusion that the existing CMWHS management approach serves the UN SDGs well, whilst considerable scope exists for enhancing its environmental contribution. Section 5 of the Plan articulates the value of the WHS landscape in that wider sustainable development context, with the emphasis on the priority areas of activity for the period 2020/2025 of:

- Social equity;
- Climate resilience; and
- International partnerships.

3.4 Related planning policy documents, strategies and programmes that were considered during the review process include:

- National Planning Policy Framework;
- Cornwall Local Plan (2017);
- Cornwall Council Environmental Growth Strategy (2015);
- Cornwall Council Mineral Safeguarding DPD (2018);
- Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (2019);
- Devon County Council Minerals Plan (2017); and
- Local Climate Emergency Declarations/Action Plans (as referenced above).

Section 6 of the Plan sets out the key management challenges and opportunities to address them. Specific conclusions from this review were that the Local Plans and related strategies set out cross-cutting provisions relating to development that highlight the importance of environmental infrastructure, ecosystem services and biodiversity, green spaces, and restoring and enhancing habitats and their connectivity. Improving the resilience of ecosystems can enhance the preservation of cultural landscapes and the wider historic environment, protecting important views and/or the setting of designated and non-designated assets, and the character of settlements within the WHS.

3.5 Early formative consultation with key stakeholders had identified that the existing policies in the 2013 -18 Plan were still relevant and fit for purpose and, therefore, remain unchanged from the 2013-2018 Management Plan. The assessment of the CMWHS Vision, Mission and Aims and the policies that flow from these concluded that, whilst the existing CMWHS

management approach serves sustainable development and achievement of UN SDG goals well, its environmental contribution could be increased.

As a result, the Partnership is proposing two new policies in this Management Plan:

- Policy on Support for renewable energy (Policy C5) - Proposals for renewable energy installations will be supported where they do not adversely affect the OUV, authenticity and integrity of the Site.
- Policy on Biodiversity net gain from major developments (Policy C7) - Development proposals should ensure that the biodiversity and geological diversity that contributes to the distinctiveness of the Cornwall and West Devon mining landscape is conserved and where appropriate enhanced, having due regard to maintaining the authenticity and integrity of the Site. Developments of a significant nature will be expected to deliver appropriate biodiversity net gain.

The policy frameworks to guide management of the Site, with a prioritised list of agreed strategic actions for the next five years, are identified in Section 7. Section 8 describes the monitoring and evaluation system whereby the progress in delivering this Plan will be measured.

Three appendices accompany the Plan, including the World Heritage Site Area Statements A1-A10, and these can be viewed online at: [www.cornishmining.org.uk](http://www.cornishmining.org.uk)

#### **4. Options available and consideration of risk**

- 4.1 A Management Plan is required by UNESCO as a condition of inclusion on the World Heritage List. The WHS Partnership is charged with overseeing the creation of the document, and Cornwall Council, as the lead partner, took responsibility for the review and redrafting process, in close consultation with WDBC and DCC. The final draft of the revised Management Plan reflects and contributes to several of this Authority's strategic priorities.
- 4.2 If this Council does not adopt the Plan it would call in to question its commitment to upholding the World Heritage Convention and maintaining the WHS. The Plan has been adopted by both partner Authorities, DCC and CC.

#### **5. Proposed Way Forward**

- 5.1 The Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape World Heritage Site Management Plan 2020 – 2025 should be endorsed and adopted by WDBC.

## 6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	<p>Although there is no statutory duty to produce a management plan The Convention on the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage (UNESCO 1972) (“the WH Convention”) sets out the obligations that the State Party signatories to the Convention commit to, which recognises their ‘duty of ensuring the identification, protection, conservation, presentation and transmission to future generations of the cultural and natural heritage’. (WH Convention, Article 4)</p> <p>Appropriate management frameworks and Management Plans are the main mechanism by which the UK Government, as the State Party, meets this obligation to the World Heritage Convention in demonstrating effective WHS management is in place. The overall responsibility for meeting the obligations are part of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) remit. However, many of the responsibilities of the State Party are in practice delivered by other organisations, most notably local authorities.</p>
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	N	<p>WDBC currently contributes £5,000 per annum towards the work programme of the WHS Partnership targeted towards implementation of Management Plan policies. The Management Plan review process is part of this work programme and does not incur additional costs.</p> <p>This contribution represents outstanding value for money for WDBC.</p>
Risk	Y	<p>Risks associated with the Management Plan can be categorised as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reputational: relating to not having a live adopted Plan in place and the potential criticism from UNESCO that this could result in.</li> <li>• Legal: relating to not having statutory plans in place to ensure protection of the WHS</li> <li>• Financial: related to lack of strategic context for making funding bids to deliver activity. Risks related to the asset itself are covered in Section 6.3.3 (Climate risks) and 6.3.4 (Risk Management and Emergency Preparedness).</li> </ul>

Supporting Corporate Strategy	Y	Environment is the primary theme supported but also Communities and Wellbeing.
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	Y	The Plan aligns local delivery of the World Heritage Convention with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), incorporating cultural, social, economic, environmental, and ecological objectives for the benefit of all. In 2015 UNESCO's General Assembly adopted its Policy on the integration of a sustainable development perspective into the processes of the World Heritage Convention, with the goal of assisting Member States, WHS management bodies and communities to harness the potential of World Heritage to contribute to sustainable development.
<b>Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications</b>		
Equality and Diversity	Y	No implications beyond accessibility of documents to all. Plan policies encourage awareness of equality and diversity issues where appropriate.
Safeguarding	N	No implications
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	No implications
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Y	Positive management of the WHS is beneficial to the health and wellbeing of many residents.
Other implications		None

### **Supporting Information**

#### **Background Papers:**

- National Planning Policy Framework
- Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (2019)
- Devon County Council Minerals Plan (2017)
- Local Climate Emergency Declarations/Action Plans
- Cornwall Local Plan (2017)
- Cornwall Council Environmental Growth Strategy (2015)
- Cornwall Council Mineral Safeguarding DPD (2018)

#### **Document link for the Plan:**

<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/conservation/world-heritage-site/news/world-heritage-site-draft-management-plan-consultation/>

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