

# South Hams Overview and Scrutiny Committee



<b>Title:</b>	<b>Agenda</b>												
<b>Date:</b>	<b>Thursday, 20th January, 2022</b>												
<b>Time:</b>	<b>10.00 am</b>												
<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Repton Room - Follaton House</b>												
<b>Full Members:</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Chairman</b> Cllr Birch</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Vice Chairman</b> Cllr Smerdon</p> <p><i>Members:</i></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">Cllr Austen</td> <td style="width: 33%;">Cllr Pennington</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Chown</td> <td>Cllr Rose</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Jackson</td> <td>Cllr Spencer</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr Jones</td> <td>Cllr Sweett</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr McKay</td> <td>Cllr Thomas</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Cllr O'Callaghan</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Cllr Austen	Cllr Pennington	Cllr Chown	Cllr Rose	Cllr Jackson	Cllr Spencer	Cllr Jones	Cllr Sweett	Cllr McKay	Cllr Thomas	Cllr O'Callaghan	
Cllr Austen	Cllr Pennington												
Cllr Chown	Cllr Rose												
Cllr Jackson	Cllr Spencer												
Cllr Jones	Cllr Sweett												
Cllr McKay	Cllr Thomas												
Cllr O'Callaghan													
<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												

<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Minutes</b> to approve as a correct record the minutes of the Committee held on 4 November 2021;	<b>1 - 10</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Consideration of Informal Meeting Notes</b> Informal meeting held on 16 December 2021;	<b>11 - 14</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Urgent Business</b> brought forward at the discretion of the Chairman;	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Division of Agenda</b> to consider whether the discussion of any item of business is likely to lead to the disclosure of exempt information;	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b> 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;	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Public Forum</b> A period of up to 15 minutes is available to deal with issues raised by the public;	<b>15 - 16</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Consideration of Views arising from the Informal meeting of the Joint Overview &amp; Scrutiny and Development Management Committee on 13 January 2022</b> To follow;	
<b>9.</b>	<b>Performance Management Report</b>	<b>17 - 28</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Better Lives for All Thematic Update: Climate &amp; Biodiversity</b>	<b>29 - 36</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan Update</b>	<b>37 - 80</b>
<b>12.</b>	<b>Devon Home Choice Review</b>	<b>81 - 102</b>
<b>13.</b>	<b>Task and Finish Group Updates:</b>	<b>103 - 108</b>

a) Housing; and

b) Bioenergy industry-Mid Devon DC proposal for Devon wide Inquiry

**14. Committee Work Programme**

**109 - 110**

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**MINUTES of the MEETING of the  
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE,  
Held in the Repton Room, Follaton House, Totnes, on  
WEDNESDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2021**

<b>Panel Members in attendance:</b>			
* Denotes attendance		∅ Denotes apology for absence	
*	Cllr L Austen	*	Cllr J T Pennington
*	Cllr J P Birch (Chairman)	*	Cllr J Rose
*	Cllr M Chown	*	Cllr P C Smerdon (Vice Chairman)
*	Cllr S Jackson	*	Cllr B Spencer
*	Cllr L Jones	*	Cllr J Sweett
*	Cllr J McKay	*	Cllr D Thomas
*	Cllr D M O'Callaghan		

<b>Other Members also in attendance:</b>
Cllrs K Baldry, T Holway, N A Hopwood and J Pearce
<b>Other Members joining via Teams:</b>
Cllrs V Abbott, J Brazil, J Hawkins, K Kemp, M Long, G Pannell, H Reeve, and R Rowe

<b>Item No</b>	<b>Minute Ref No below refers</b>	<b>Officers in attendance and participating</b>
All		Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Governance & Assurance, Monitoring Officer, and Democratic Services Specialist
Item 3	O&S.30/21	Chief Executive
Item 7	O&S.33/21	Director of Place and Enterprise
Item 8	O&S.34/21	Community Safety and Safeguarding Manager and Environmental Health Specialist
Items 9 & 10	O&S.35/21 & O&S.36/21	Head of Waste and Environmental Services and Case Management Team Leaders
Item 11	O&S.37/21	Senior Specialist Climate Change

**O&S.29/21 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 13 October 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

**O&S.30/21 URGENT BUSINESS – CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE MINUTE E.56/21: GARDEN WASTE SERVICE**

The Chairman introduced the agenda item and advised that, in accordance with Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 12.5, the resolution arising from Minute E.56/21: 'Garden Waste Service' had been formally called-in for further consideration by the Committee. The process of call-in was then outlined.

Following a question from a Member, it was clarified that the decision was a key decision because the issue, ie garden waste service, related to the whole District.

The Chairman advised that there would be three options available to the Committee when considering the call-in. These were that the Committee:

1. was content with the original Executive resolution and that decision would therefore take immediate effect;
2. could refer the decision back to the next Executive meeting (on 2 December 2021) for further consideration; and
3. could opt to refer the decision to the next full Council meeting (on 25 November 2021).

The Chairman then explained his reasoning behind the decision to invoke a call-in. In so doing, the Chairman made specific reference to:-

1. Failure to adequately consult with Members prior to the Executive meeting of 14 October 2021 at which the decision was taken;
2. Late delivery of the report in support of the recommendation. The report was only made available to Members on the morning of the meeting and, as such, many Members were not made aware of the serious nature of the recommendation until the last minute, if at all, prior to the decision being made; and
3. Lack of openness in respect of the content of the report and the reaching of the decision. For example, it was not made clear as to whether or not FCC (the Council's Waste Contractor) had requested a continued suspension.

Following questions put to the lead Executive Member with responsibility for Waste, it was clarified that:

- The report had been published late because Officers and the Executive Member had been working on the report right to the last minute in a desperate attempt to get a one off garden waste collection carried out before the decision had to be taken to suspend the service until Spring.
- The lead Executive Member confirmed that it had been his decision to recommend to his Executive colleagues that the suspension be extended so that residents were given some certainty and not waiting month to month to be told about the service.
- Other neighbouring Local Authorities had been approached to see if there was an opportunity for a one-off collection with their service, but all were suffering from the national HGV driver shortage and no one had any spare capacity within their own service.
- It was confirmed that the Council's contractor, FCC Environment (FCC), were unable to give any idea when they would be able to restart the service.
- Members were asked to give any alternative suggestions to the Executive Member or Officers who would explore any potential avenue.

- One Member stated that a resident in her local Ward had turned this into a business opportunity and was offering to empty a bin at £14.00 per bin, whilst another Member remarked that he too had made a number of calls to providers but had been unable to find any provider who could carry out a collection service for his Ward.
- The Executive Member stated that there were 46,000 bins to be collected over the whole District. It was his responsibility to ensure that the same service was provided to all households in the South Hams, no matter the ease or difficulty in reaching their bins.
- The recent letter that had been sent to all residents had been to keep every resident informed, not just those who used social media.
- Whilst recognising the value of local composting schemes, it was acknowledged as not being a replacement to the garden waste collection scheme.
- When questioned on funding for any alternative collections, the Executive Member confirmed that there would be a report presented to a future Executive meeting to address this matter.
- It was noted that the original decision to suspend the garden waste service (taken in August 2021) had had to be made quickly, hence limited consultation with Members. The Member acknowledged that the now disbanded Waste and Recycling Working Group had been useful, and he would be supportive should there be the political appetite to establish another working group.

Upon the conclusion of the questions to the lead Executive Member, the Chairman then **PROPOSED** a recommendation, which was **SECONDED**, and, when put to the vote, was declared **CARRIED**.

It was then:

### **RESOLVED**

That the Council Constitution provides for O&S to express its concerns and to call for reconsideration of the decision of the Executive taken at its meeting held on 14 October 2021 in respect of the suspension of the garden waste collection. The O&S has concerns and it calls for reconsideration. These concerns and a call for reconsideration be submitted to the Full Council meeting to be held on 25 November 2021. Full Council will then be able to make its views known to the Executive.

These were the concerns to be submitted.

1. There was insufficient consideration and/or reporting given to the implementation of Option 3 being the use of an alternative provider and in particular the possibility of the garden waste collection being taken back in-house;
2. The supporting report incorrectly states that there are no financial implications arising. The suspension of the garden waste collection service from mid-August 2021 until Spring 2022 will in all probability have financial implications;
3. There was insufficient consideration and/or reporting given to the provisions of the contract with FCC;

4. The decision to suspend the garden waste collection until an open-ended Spring date leaves many residents with their brown bins containing waste for an indefinite period; and
5. Council tax levied by the Council includes a sum for the collection of garden waste and yet taxpayers are not receiving a service for which they have paid for.

#### **O&S.31/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members and officers were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting but there were none made.

#### **O&S.32/21 PUBLIC FORUM**

In accordance with the Public Forum Procedure Rules, the Chairman informed that no questions had been received for consideration.

#### **O&S.33/21 RESPONSE TO THE HOUSING CRISIS – REQUEST FROM EXECUTIVE OF 14 OCTOBER 2021:- E.51/21**

Following the Executive meeting held on 14 October 2021, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been tasked to review the attendant report (Minute E.51/21 refers).

The Leader of the Council informed the Committee that the housing crisis action programme was in its infancy and, as the decision had only been taken recently, officers had not yet had the time to discuss with Members any proposed actions. It was acknowledged that there may be need for extra resources to support the programme, but that officers would review this and a report, including budget proposals, would be brought to the Executive meeting on 2 December 2021.

The Leader confirmed that the Executive wished to progress this at pace and that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could help speed the process by forming a Task and Finish Group, rather than the Working Group that the recommendation was proposing. The Task and Finish Group could explore what other rural districts had done to provide affordable housing, with the suggestion to review Staffordshire as they had provided affordable housing for the last 15 years. The Task and Finish Group could also look at successful Community Land Trusts (CLTs) and report their conclusions back to the Executive. The Chairman responded by stating that these requests should be added to the Committee's recommendations when they were placed before the Executive. The Chairman recommended the Cornwall CLT as a successful model to study.

One Member felt that there were sufficient housing numbers already, and the figure of houses required had only been a broad estimate. The types



of houses that were being built were also not of the stock that were required. The overriding need was for affordable housing. Another Member stated that the definition of affordable should be reviewed.

A Member commented on Empty Dwelling Management Orders which could now only be invoked after two years instead of six months as had been originally stated. The Member felt this was an area that the Council could lobby on to return the time empty to the previous six months.

It was then:

### **RESOLVED**

That the O&S Committee welcomed and supported the Executive's response in addressing the housing crisis and commented on the report as follows:

1. The ambitious programme for tackling the housing crisis warrants the employment of a full-time project management & delivery officer dedicated to ensuring that the measures proposed are implemented without delay. It is recommended that the cost of the employment of a housing emergency officer be allowed for in the 2022/23 budget and beyond. If possible, funds be allocated to enable the officer to commence employment before the commencement of the next municipal year.
2. Strongly supports the priority of engagement with the town and parish councils and local Members to establish a means of locating sites within their area that can be mutually supported for development of affordable housing. This should start with sites that have the benefit of some feasibility work. To assist officers in this process a politically balanced Members' working group, and an all member workshop, will be held at the soonest opportunity to discuss possibilities within wards and the wider district. These to be set up and report back to the Executive on a regular basis.
3. The housing crisis programme include a provision for the Council to encourage and assist in the formation of further Community Land Trusts in South Hams for the provision of affordable housing and based on the model of the Cornwall Community Land Trust

### **O&S.34/21 SOUTH DEVON AND DARTMOOR COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP**

The Committee was presented with a report that provided Members with the opportunity to scrutinise the work of the South Devon and Dartmoor Community Safety Partnership (CSP). During the presentation, attention was drawn to an increase in hate crime and racist graffiti, with increased work on prevention. Targeted intervention had been aimed at drug abuse. Following a question from a Member, it was confirmed that there would be more police officers employed in Devon but it was not known when they

would begin their work. Various work with partner organisations was outlined, including working closely with the Dartmoor National Park Authority on increased instances of anti-social behaviour on the Moor.

The Chair then thanked the officers on behalf of the Committee

It was then:

### **RESOLVED**

That the Committee thank the officers and note the contents of the published agenda report.

## **O&S.35/21 REVIEW OF LOCALITIES NEW SERVICE**

The Executive Member with responsibility for service delivery presented the report outlining the outcome of the changes that had been made to the Localities Service, following the report presented to the Executive at its meeting held on 28 January 2021 (Minute E.57/20 refers). The Deputy Chief Executive stated that Cornwall Council had asked for a presentation on the Council's Localities Service, with a view to bringing in a similar service themselves.

Following questions from Members, it was clarified that:

- clearance of fly tipping was primarily the responsibility of FCC Environment, the Council's contracted waste operator. If addresses were found within the fly tip which identified the perpetrator, they would be vigorously pursued.
- not all planning site notices were laminated and therefore were susceptible to wet weather destroying the notice and potential for littering. The lead Executive Member confirmed that she would ensure this was remedied and that all site notices would be laminated in the future.
- Reorganisation of the service had streamlined contact with Members which had resulted in a slight dip in local knowledge but that this would now be regained as the team was now at full staffing capacity.
- Waste contract and performance issues had been divided in order that Waste and Localities were no longer part of a single team of officers.

An addition was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** to the published agenda report recommendation to add congratulations to the service for its excellent work during the high summer season. When put to the vote, this was then declared **CARRIED**.

It was then:

### **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

1. continue to support the current Locality working arrangements, pending on-going monitoring and a further report in 12 months.

2. note and acknowledge the work of the Locality service and the success of the seasonal working, and congratulate the service on the success of its seasonal working.

## O&S.36/21 **CONTACT CENTRE PERFORMANCE**

The Committee considered a report that provided a high level overview on the current performance of the Contact Centre since April 2021. A formal review of the Contact Centre, and its performance in its entirety, had not been carried out in upwards of five years.

It was **PROPOSED** and **SECONDED** that an additional recommendation be added that requested a report be presented back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in six months times. This was then declared **CARRIED** when put to the vote.

It was then:

### **RESOLVED**

That the Committee:

1. note the work of the contact centre over this financial year, and continue to support the work that will be undertaken to improve the contact centre and its performance;
2. note and endorse a comprehensive review of the contact centre to be carried out, to assess its performance and ability to meet customer demand, and
3. update its annual work programme to include a further report in six months' time.

## O&S.37/21 **TASK AND FINISH GROUP UPDATES**

### **a) Climate Change & Biodiversity Action Plan**

The Committee reviewed the concluding report from the Task and Finish Group.

Thanks were made to the Working Group, the Chairman of the Working Group, and to the officers for their time and guidance.

It was then:

### **RECOMMENDED**

That the Committee **RECOMMEND** to the Executive that:

- a) The Action Plan should contain recognition of the finite carbon budget available to the District of South Hams as well as the organisation of South Hams District Council, and the consequential targets taken over 5 years that are relevant to all who live here. These targets should define the purpose and

- goals of the Action Plan together with the final version of the Devon Carbon Plan;
- b) The targets and indicators should align with the Devon Carbon Plan and be monitored on an annual basis. The first review of the strategy (specifically its monitoring framework) should commence following the adoption of the Devon Carbon Plan to update the action plan with relevant actions from the Devon Carbon Plan, and where relevant, its governance and monitoring framework.
  - c) The Action Plan should continue to acknowledge that the Council has an important facilitation and coordination role in the community it serves and that it is uniquely placed to be actively bringing key local organisations together, working with them to resolve issues where it has the relevant powers and/or influence, helping to access funds as the need arises, helping to create a common understanding of goals and timescales and working with groups to achieve them. In light of this, a review of the adopted funding model will take place with a view to ensuring that, within available budgets, support is available to enable community groups to undertake specific tasks, such as community engagement, as required by the Council's adopted CC&B strategy.
  - d) In recognition of the role outlined in 3, the Council should setup a CC&B Community Partnership Group that brings together the range of expertise and energy to achieve the goals of the Action Plan. This could be established through a revision of, the current Community Forum. It is suggested that the six organisations that presented to this Task and Finish Group are invited to join the existing Community Forum members) along with relevant officers, any elected member, and the lead member for Climate Change and Biodiversity. A revised Terms of Reference will be agreed to set the context for the group with a rotating chair
  - e) It is recognised that officer resources are limited, notwithstanding the remit of the Task and Finish Group, urgent consideration should be given to identify additional funds for CC&B and accessing other available funding streams to support our specialist Adam Williams either through recruitment or through employing relevant expertise.

#### O&S.38/21 **2021/22 PANEL WORK PROGRAMME – LATEST VERSION**

The Committee reviewed its work programme and agreed its content with the addition of an extra meeting to be added into the Member Meeting Calendar for January 2022. The Chairman and Vice Chairman would meet with officers to agree a date in January 2022, and to review the work programme for the 16<sup>th</sup> December 2021 meeting, with a view to moving some agenda items to the new January 2022 date.

It was also agreed that the Housing Crisis related Task and Finish Group proposal, suggested by the Leader (Minute O&S.33/21 above), would be discussed under the item of Task and Finish Group updates at the next Committee meeting to be held on 16 December 2021.

(Meeting started at 2:00 pm and concluded at 4:31pm – a ten minute break was taken at 3:30pm)

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Chairman

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**MINUTES of the INFORMAL MEETING of the  
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE,  
Held over Teams on  
WEDNESDAY, 16 DECEMBER 2021**

<b>Panel Members in attendance:</b>			
* Denotes attendance		∅ Denotes apology for absence	
∅	Cllr L Austen	*	Cllr K Pringle (substituting for Cllr Jones)
*	Cllr J P Birch (Chairman)	∅	Cllr J Rose
*	Cllr M Chown	*	Cllr R Rowe (substituting for L Austen)
*	Cllr S Jackson	*	Cllr P C Smerdon (Vice Chairman)
∅	Cllr L Jones	*	Cllr B Spencer
*	Cllr J McKay	*	Cllr J Sweett
*	Cllr D M O'Callaghan	*	Cllr D Thomas
*	Cllr J T Pennington		

<b>Other Members also in attendance:</b>
Cllrs K Baldry; H Bastone; J Hawkins, T Holway; N Hopwood; J Pearce

Item No	Minute Ref No below refers	Officers in attendance and participating
All		Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Governance & Assurance, Director of Place & Enterprise; Monitoring Officer, Democratic Services Manager; Head of Strategy & Projects; IT Officer; and Democratic Services Officers
Item 11	O&S.46/21	Community Digital Specialist

**O&S.39/21 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 4 November 2021 were confirmed as a correct record for approval at the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

**O&S.40/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members and officers were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting. Cllr Smerdon declared that he was the Council's representative on the Dartmoor National Park Authority.

**O&S.41/21 PUBLIC FORUM**

In accordance with the Public Forum Procedure Rules, the Chairman informed that no questions had been received for consideration.

**O&S.42/21 2021/22 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME: LATEST VERSION**

The Committee reviewed the latest version of its work programme and agreed that the joint meeting with the Development Management Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022 would be held remotely as an informal meeting, with any decisions ratified at the formal Overview and Scrutiny meeting to be held during the afternoon of 13<sup>th</sup> January.

The Committee reviewed the proposed agenda for the next meeting, and agreed to the Chairman's request to include and review Mid Devon District Council's proposal to jointly undertake a scrutiny review into the planning controls and regulatory requirements associated with the bio-energy industry, including Anaerobic Digesters, within Devon.

**O&S.43/21 PRESENTATION BY DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The Vice Chairman introduced Dr Kevin Bishop, the Chief Executive of Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) to the Committee. Dr Bishop then gave an informative overview of DNPA's aims, achievements, and ethos.

Following questions from the Members, the following were raised and clarified:

- The public consultation on use of the park had recently closed and the DNPA were now analysing the responses.
- The areas available for wild camping on common land would be reviewed as part of the consultation. It had been identified that there was a need to educate some recent visitors regarding the protocols of wild camping, ie people should walk in, walk out, leave no trace, and only stay a couple of days.
- DNPA were working together with Natural England to develop a future plan to ensure the protection of Wistman's Wood. Dr Bishop confirmed that rangers had been posted near the woods to educate visitors about the importance of the wood and the best ways to preserve it, ie keeping dogs on their leads, no wild fires and no moss art, but this had been heavy on DNPA's resources.
- The Authority worked closely with Commoners over grazing rights at the Park, and a new project had been set up to trial an alternative stocking calendar, which was potentially proving to be an improvement and may become the blue print for the new Environmental Land Management Scheme.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the Chief Executive for his presentation.



**O&S.44/21 PRESENTATION BY CHIEF OFFICER OF SOUTH HAMS  
COMMUNITY and VOLUNTARY SERVICES**

The presentation given by the Chief Officer of South Hams Community and Voluntary Services (SHCVS) outlined the achievements of the last year, including the responses to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Chief Officer gave details of the new social prescribing service which had been established, helping lonely and isolated people to form first virtual contacts with others, and then meeting in person once the Covid restrictions had lifted.

The details of the National Lottery bid was shared with Members, which had resulted in a grant of £28,000 to help people return to work and to support local residents.

The new strategic plan was outlined and current issues for SHCVS highlighted: these included continuing change, increasing demand, wellbeing and mental health, recruitment, funding and fund raising, community cohesion, and digital inclusion.

The Executive Member with responsibility for Health and Wellbeing then thanked the Chief Officer and her team for their hard work and effort in supporting residents in South Hams over the last two years. He then outlined that the Council were looking at the possibility of launching a well-being grant in the new year, which would be available to all voluntary groups to apply for.

The Chairman then thanked the Chief Officer for her presentation and answering the questions raised by Members.

**O&S.45/21 TASK AND FINISH GROUP UPDATES**

Further to the request from the Leader, at the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021 (Minute O&S.33/21 refers), to set up a task and finish group to look at delivery of affordable houses by other local authorities, the Members of the Committee then reviewed the proposed Terms of Reference and the proposed make-up of the Task and Finish (T&F) Group.

It was then agreed that the T&F Group would have eight Members, four from the Conservative Group and four from the Opposition, with the Group to be chaired by Cllr Peter Smerdon. The constituent Members would be proposed by the Leaders of both Groups and the Task and Finish Group would meet before the next Overview and Scrutiny meeting, due to be held on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2022, when the T&F Group would update the Committee on their target date for reporting back to the Committee.

The Committee then unanimously agreed to the above.

**O&S.47/21 BROADBAND UPDATE**

The Committee was given a verbal update from the Community Digital Specialist, during which the following points were covered:

- Monthly meeting with all key suppliers across SH
- Weekly engagement with CDS and Airband, however there were still issues with Connecting Devon and Somerset sharing information but this was being resolved.
- Digital connectivity webpages had been developed, which was the only site that brought connectivity issues all in one place
- 400 people had responded registering their need for better broadband, including 130 businesses
- 90 broadband champions, covering 56 of 85 parishes
- Two webinars for broadband champion programme had been run: the Council had run these because CDS had the largest geographical area but did not have the resources to do the webinars. South Hams District Council had moved into the gap to help local residents.
- Next steps included continuing engagement with suppliers; assist champions; policy development with the Joint Local Plan; increased transparency with CDS; ensure District prioritisation in any further Central Government.
- It was clarified that when Airband got a certain number of signups, they would repay some funding to CDS who could then reinvest and the Local Authority should get a proportionate amount ring fenced in the South Hams area.
- BT vouchers system had not been closed in April 2021, and the vouchers were now easier to attain. Established communities groups with vouchers could now apply for Outreach.
- It was confirmed that areas with a bad mobile signal could apply for a mobile booster, which would then allow access to broadband through the 4G signal.

The Chairman thanked the Officer for giving a comprehensive presentation and asked that the slides and link to the webinar be sent to Committee Members. It was requested that the officer returned in six months to give the next update.

(Meeting started at 2:00 pm and concluded at 3:48 pm)

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Chairman

## **PUBLIC QUESTIONS AT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

There is a period of 15 minutes at meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during which members of the public can ask questions about items on the agenda.

Any member of the public who wants to ask a question should ensure that the question:

- a) is no more than 50 words in length;
- b) is not be broken down into multiple parts;
- c) relates to an item included on the agenda; and
- d) is suitable to be considered. A question will not be suitable if, for example, it is derogatory to the Council or any third party; relates to a confidential matter; it is about a specific planning matter; or it is substantially the same as a question asked in the past six months.

Questions should be sent to Democratic Services ([Democratic.Services@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@swdevon.gov.uk)) by 1.00pm on the Monday before the meeting (the deadline will be brought forward by a working day if affected by a bank holiday). This will allow a detailed response to be given at the meeting. If advance notice of the question cannot be given the Chairman of the meeting has the discretion to allow questions on matters that are felt to be urgent;

For any further advice on questions to the O&S Committee, or to request a copy of the full Public Questions Procedure Rules, please contact Democratic Services ([Democratic.Services@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:Democratic.Services@swdevon.gov.uk))

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Report to: **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Date: **20<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

Title: **Performance Management Report**

Portfolio Area: **Performance: Cllr Nicky Hopwood**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Author: **Jim Davis** Role: **Customer Improvement Manager**

Contact: **Jim.davis@swdevon.gov.uk**

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## **Recommendations:**

1. That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the performance figures shown in the Pentana report attached at Appendix A

### **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide a high level overview of performance across the Council.
- 1.2 Due to the timing of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee this report contains the data for both Quarters 2 & 3 although due to the proximity to the end of the month some data is not available.
- 1.3 Performance has stabilised across most areas as covid generated demand reduced and backlogs generated by covid were addressed.
- 1.4 The Contact Centre performance has stabilised in Q2 and improved into Q3 in response to the reduction in calls experienced over the quarter.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 There is still a significant amount of additional process and systems implementation work happening alongside the covid pressures so maintaining performance at the level recorded for

- the past two years is a testament to the staff commitment and flexibility throughout the pandemic.
- 2.2 Most existing grant work was completed (excluding the audit and post-assurance checks) during Q2 as the major schemes came to a conclusion. This led to a reduction in contact and workload for Q3. We don't expect this situation to continue as the government have released two new schemes which will see a large increase in contact and workload in January.
  - 2.3 Additional absences from covid sit on top of our usual sickness levels. The agile nature of the workforce has reduced the impact of this but there was around 25-30% higher short term sickness than usual over the period which reduced capacity in some areas. This added pressure is likely to continue with the Omicron variant

### 3. Outcomes/outputs

- 3.1 **Appendix A** contains screenshots of Pentana Dashboards showing monthly or quarterly performance levels over previous years.
- 3.2 Contact centre performance is hugely dependent on the volume of calls and performance has improved across most areas for a number of reasons:
  - a. Decrease in business grant and waste calls.
  - b. Continued deployment of Queuebuster technology to most call queues.
  - c. Reduced turnover enabling increased training and upskilling across the team
- 3.3 Calls answered within 5 minutes has improved across Quarter 3 for every call queue.
- 3.4 Missed collections are being recorded differently from November. Previous calculations were all customer reported missed bins whereas now we additionally record all rounds not fully completed by 5pm the following day, irrespective of whether the customer reports the miss. This increases the number of reports but shows a truer picture of performance.
- 3.5 Both short and long term sickness has increased slightly above the long term average. The increase for short term sickness is mainly due to additional covid sickness on top of usual sickness levels. Long term sickness instances have been for wide range of reasons, mostly not related to work. Most instances have been managed or resolved over the quarter so it is expected to be lower in the coming quarter.
- 3.6 Web transactions have stabilised through Q2 & Q3 but this will likely increase as new grant processes are created and further processes go online.
- 3.7 Planning Enforcement has continued its downward trajectory for the past 5 quarters and Planning workload has been managed down over 10% from its July peak.

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

- 4.1 The plan was to deliver a Member portal within the new system at the same time we create and go live with a customer portal at the end of the financial year. Delays implementing Northgate Assure has absorbed IT capacity and the newly announced Omicron Grants will reduce capacity to work on new projects until the end of the payment period in March 2022. The intention is to deliver the customer portal with a range of customer benefits to encourage uptake and we are working with other Liberty Create customers to share knowledge and experience. The additional workload will delay delivery of this project to the end of Quarter 1.
- 4.2 A new reporting format focused on the Council Strategy will be delivered in the next Overview & Scrutiny meetings incorporating performance as well as action delivery.
- 4.3 Screenshots of performance data as appended to this report will still be provided to deliver snapshots of performance throughout the year in addition to the live dashboard reporting.

#### 6. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is responsible for both an overview of performance and for scrutinising how the Council is performing as an organisation.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	N	There are no direct financial implications of this report
Risk	N	
Supporting Corporate Strategy	N	
Climate Change - Carbon / Biodiversity Impact	N	
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	N	
Safeguarding	N	

Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	N	
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	N	
Other implications	N	

**Supporting Information**

**Appendices:**

Appendix A – Screenshots of latest data from Pentana

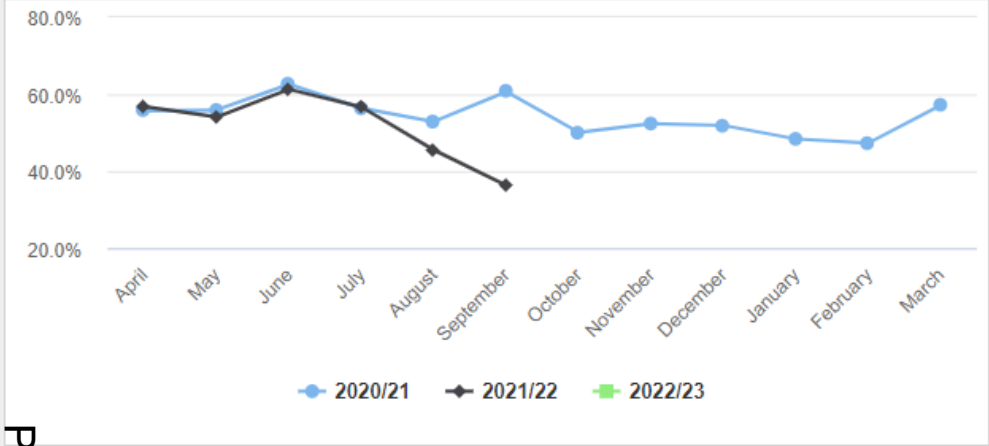
**Background Papers:**

None

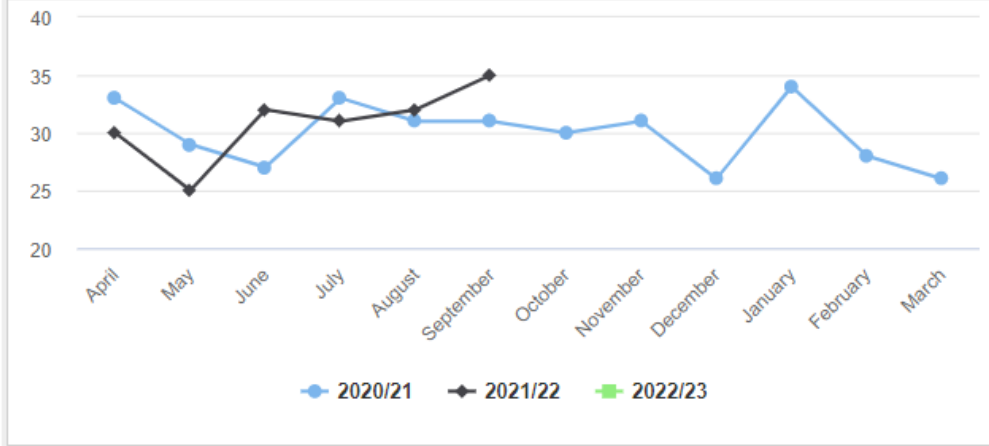
<b>Process checklist</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Portfolio Holder briefed/sign off	<b>Yes/No</b>
SLT Rep briefed/sign off	<b>Yes/No</b>
Relevant Heads of Practice sign off (draft)	<b>Yes/No</b>
Data protection issues considered	<b>Yes/No</b>
Accessibility checked	<b>Yes/No</b>



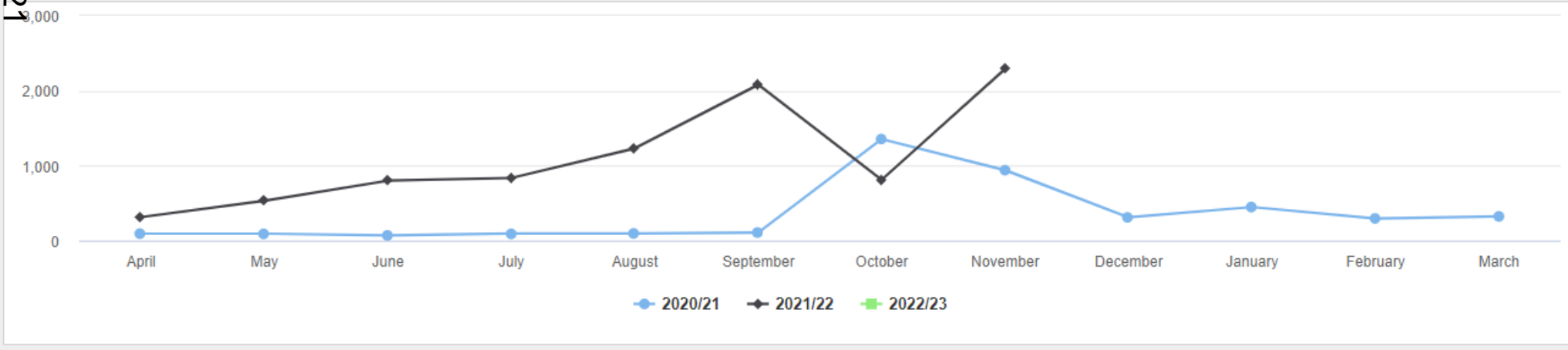
NI 192 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and com...



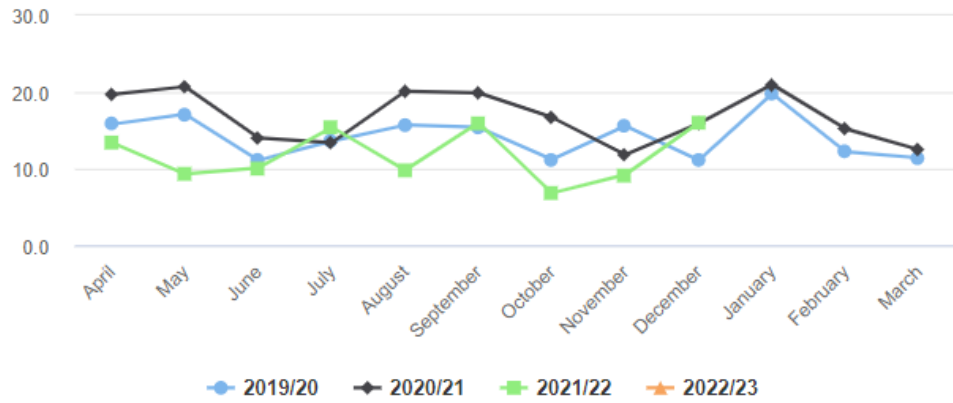
NI 191 Residual household waste per household (average kgs per house...



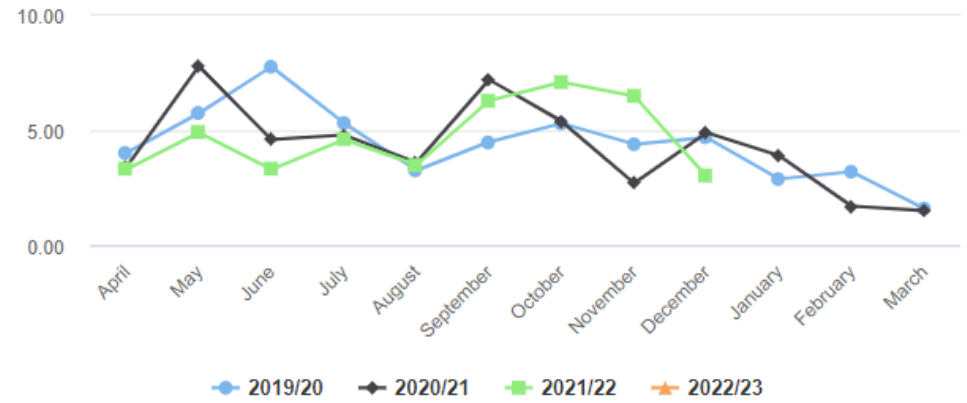
20b Average No. of collections missed per 100,000 collections of household waste



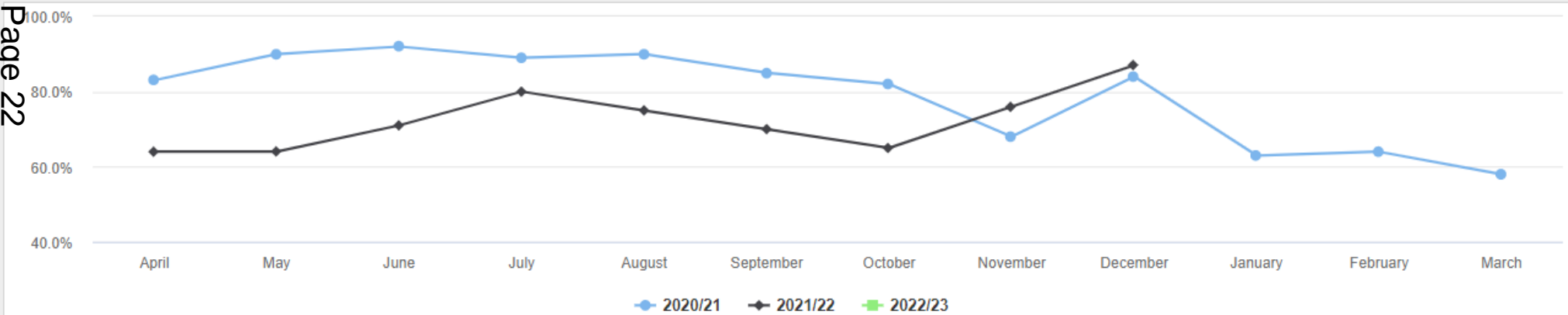
BV78a1 Processing Speed (New claims) avg days

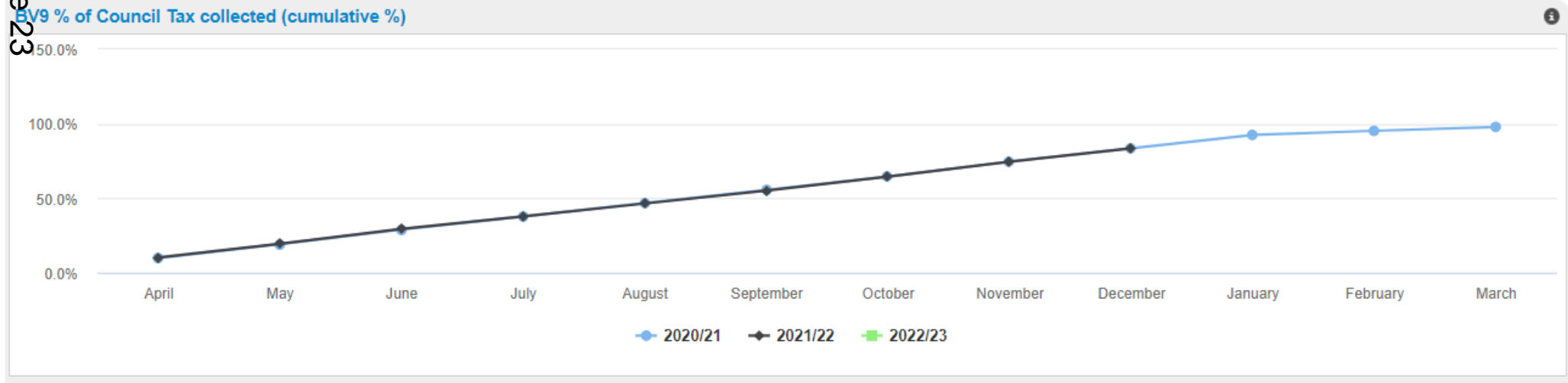
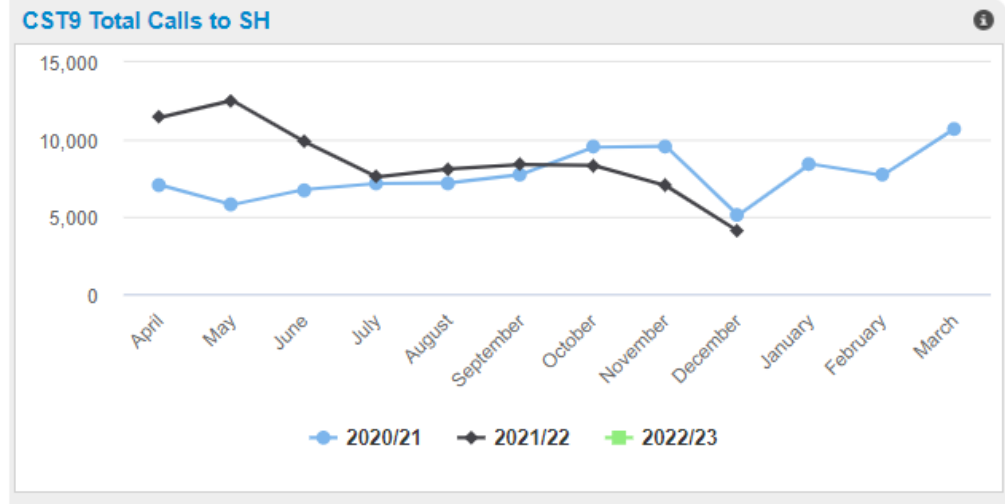
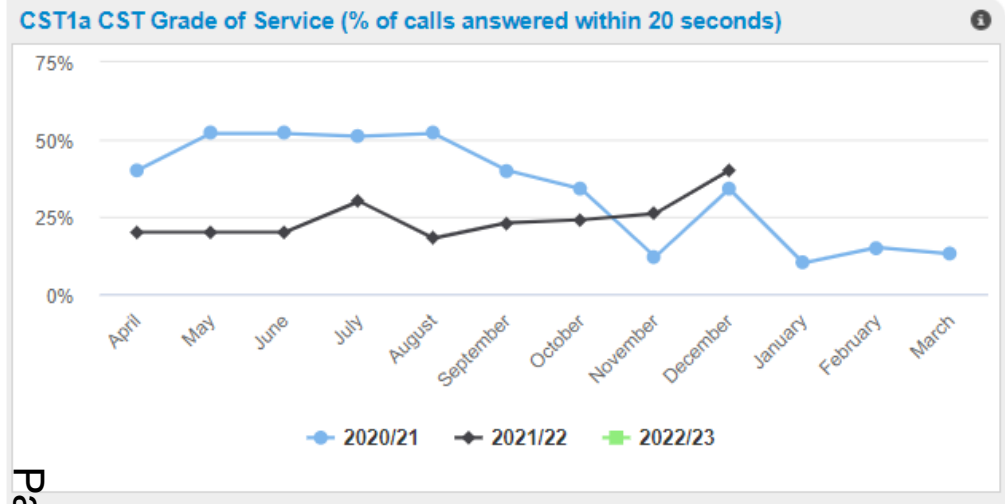


BV78b Processing Speed (Change of circumstances) avg days

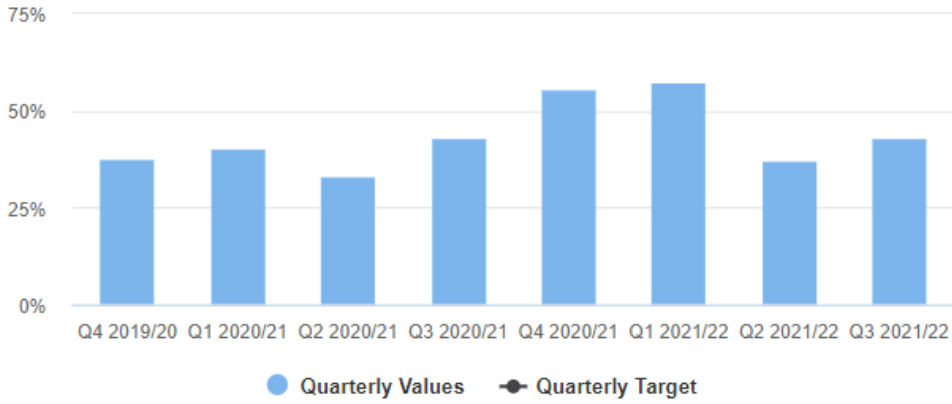


CST2a CST Percentage of telephone calls answered

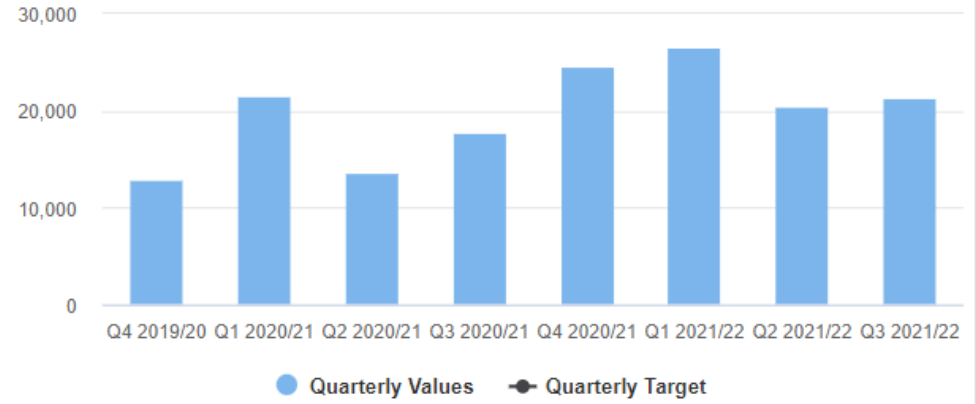




ICT&CS 7 % of customer contact through online interaction (W2)



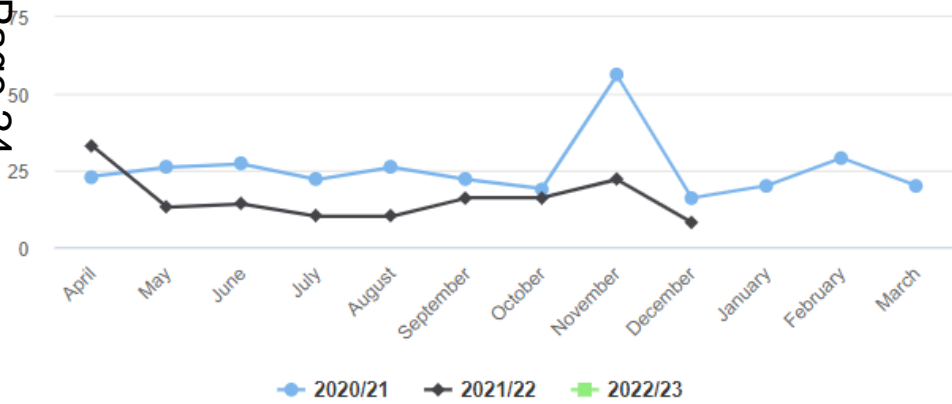
WEB Online submissions - Goss & W2



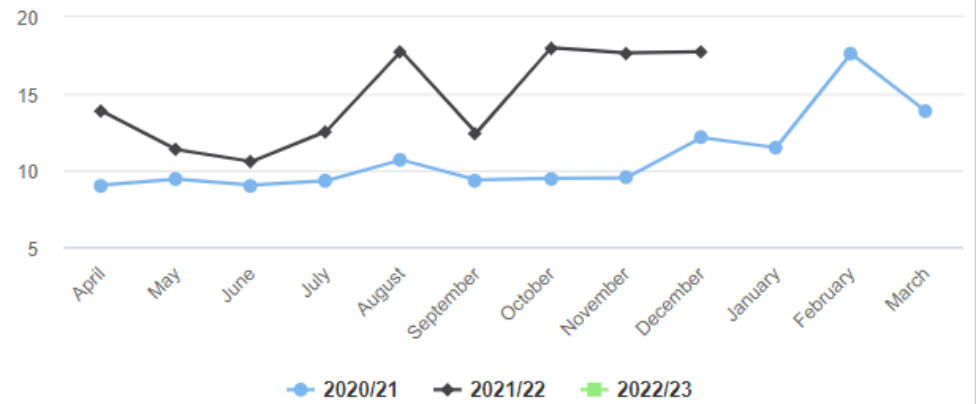
BV213\_Local SH Preventions - No. of cases where homelessness preven...



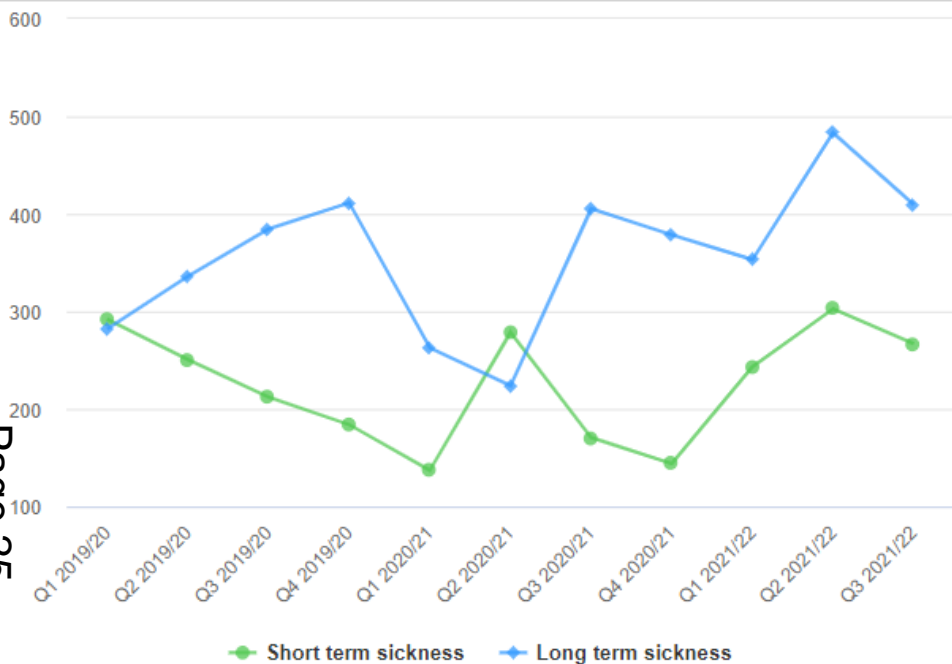
Page 24



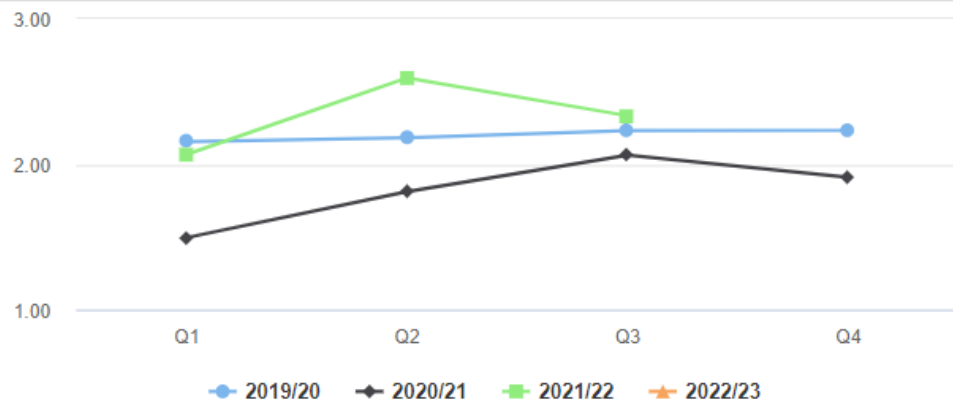
ICT&CS 6 Level of temporary accommodation use (Avg over the month)



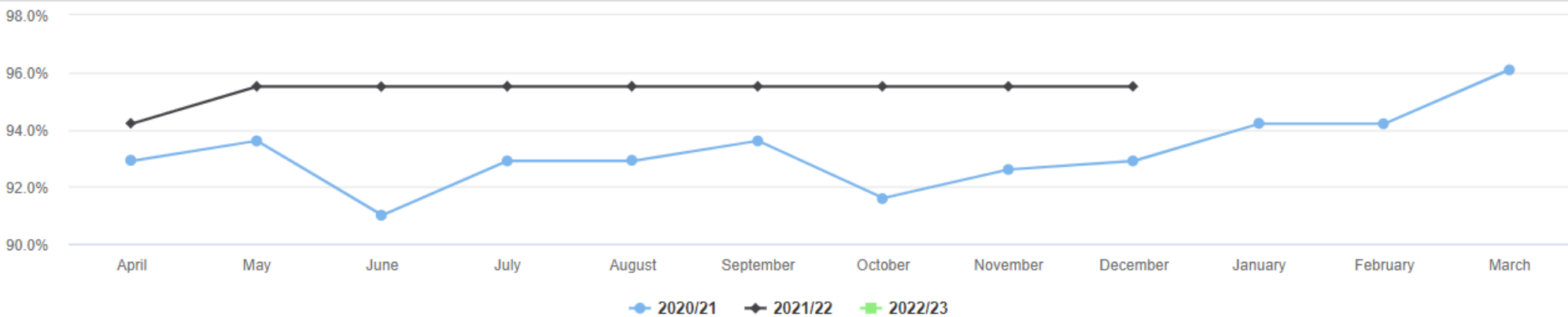
### SH Sickness

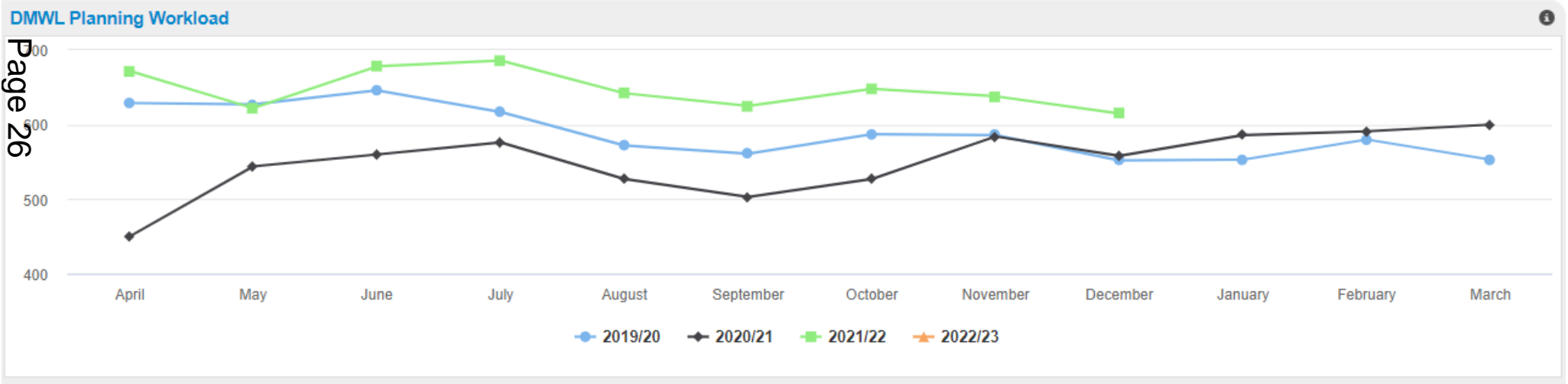
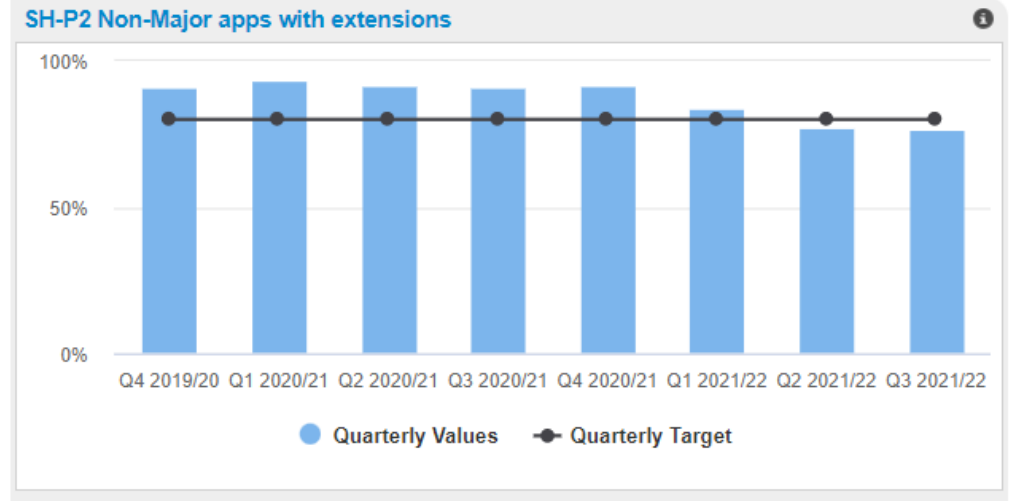
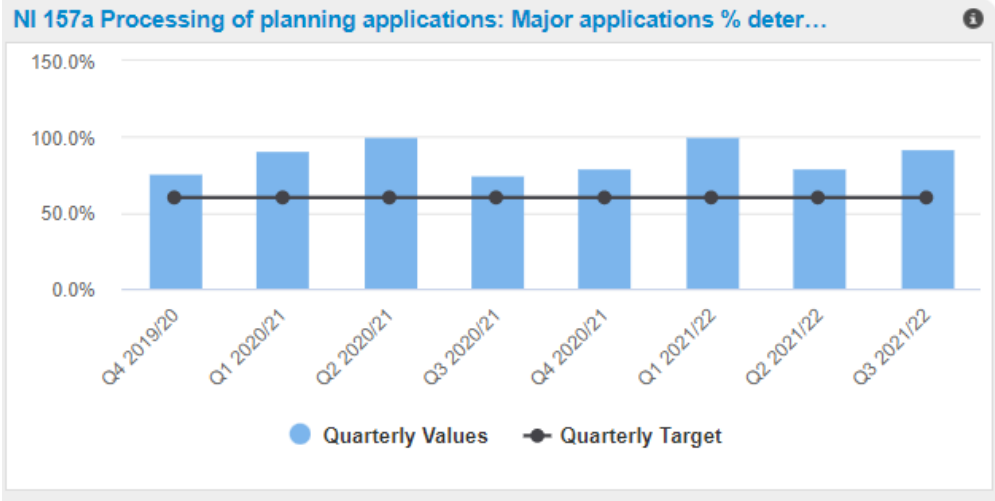


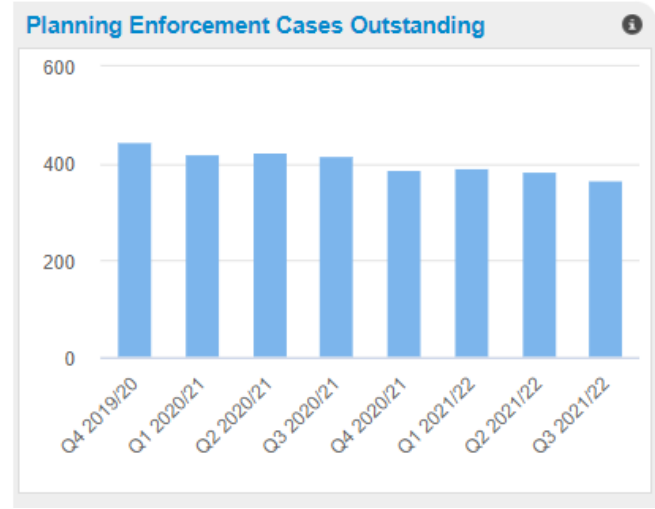
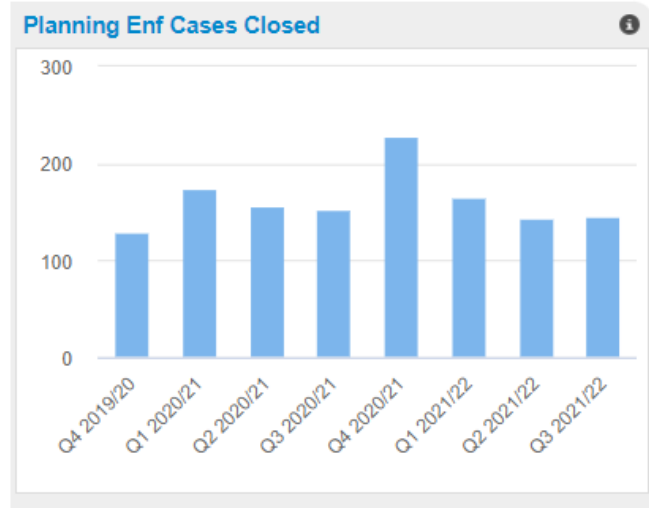
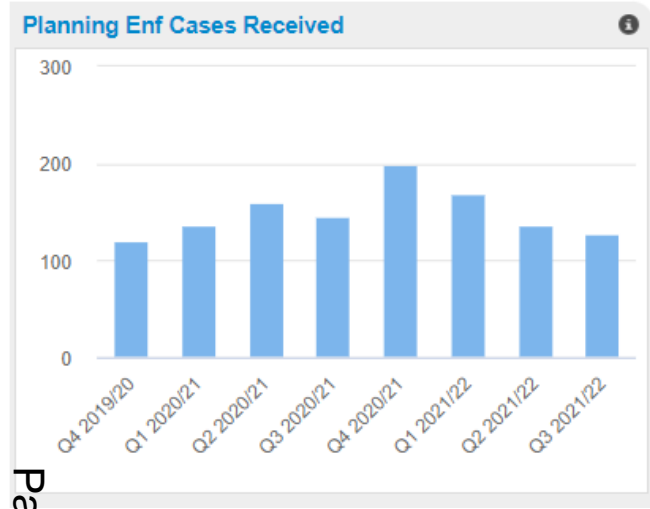
### BV12 Working Days Lost Due to Sickness Absence (average days per full...)



### P1 Employment Estates Occupancy Level (snapshot %)







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Report to: **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Date: **20th January 2022**

Title: **Better Lives for All Thematic Update:  
Climate & Biodiversity**

Portfolio Areas: **Cllr Tom Holway  
Executive Lead for Climate**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Author: **Adam Williams** Role: **Climate Change Specialist**

**Neil Hawke** **Head of Strategy and  
Projects**

Contact: **Email: [adam.williams@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:adam.williams@swdevon.gov.uk),  
[neil.hawke@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:neil.hawke@swdevon.gov.uk)**

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the progress in delivering the progress in delivery against the Better Lives for All 'Climate' Thematic Delivery Plan.

### **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 The Council adopted its Better Lives for All Strategy in September 2021, alongside detailed Thematic Delivery Plans for each priority area.
- 1.2 This report provides the thematic update on the Climate & Biodiversity strand of the Better Lives for All strategy.

### **2. Thematic Update Report**

- 2.1 The Performance Management Framework included with the Better Lives for All strategy commits that Overview and Scrutiny will receive a thematic update at each meeting in order to consider the progress against the agreed Thematic Delivery Plans.
- 2.2 The Climate Thematic Update Report is set out as Appendix A to this report.

### 3. Next Steps

- 3.1 Progress against the Thematic Delivery Plan will be regularly monitored by the Lead Member for Climate & Biodiversity.
- 3.2 Following consideration by Overview and Scrutiny, the progress report will be published on the Councils new strategy reporting pages <https://www.southhams.gov.uk/better-lives-for-all>

### 4. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/ Governance	Y	Providing performance updates in respect of our strategic priorities contributes to Principle F of the CIPFA Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework. This principle is about managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	N	This report does not include any direct financial implications
Risk	Y	The thematic update report considers the key risks for the Council in delivering each action within the Better Lives for All delivery plan.
Supporting Corporate Strategy		Climate
Equality and Diversity		No direct implications
Safeguarding		No direct implications
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		No direct implications
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		No direct implications
Other implications		

### **Supporting Information**

#### **Appendices:**

**Appendix A** – Thematic Update (Climate)



# Adapting and Mitigating Climate Change & Biodiversity

Thematic Progress Update  
January 2022

# Lead Member Introduction

In 2020, the Council declared a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency and I am pleased to see that we have quickly taken steps to implement a full action plan and are working with partners to deliver key actions.



**Cllr Tom Holway**  
Lead Member for adapting and mitigating climate change and increasing biodiversity

Having adopted our new Better Lives for All strategy in September, this update reflects the progress of those actions that we have identified to support our response to the Climate and Biodiversity emergency over the next three years.

This is by all means not all that we are doing and I continue to provide regular updates to Executive and Overview & Scrutiny on progress against our detailed Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan, with the latest update being provided to today’s meeting as a separate agenda item.

There are a number of achievements during this period (remembering that the Better Lives for All Strategy was only adopted in September)

- ✓ **Climate and Biodiversity Crowdfunding platform launched enabling the Council to match fund schemes that are taking positive action to reduce their carbon emissions - £4,800 so far awarded**
- ✓ **Funding secured from the Urban Tree Challenge Fund project. This project will see 300 trees planted at 15 sites in early 2022 and a further 300 will follow early in 2023 at another 15 sites**
- ✓ **1,000 responses received and analysed in respect of proposal for more wildflower areas on Council land**
- ✓ **Completed Carbon Literacy Training for the Senior Leadership Team and Extended Leadership Team in partnership with Torbay Council to embed the climate emergency into our organisation**

Activities on Track	Activities slightly off track but plan in place	Activities at risk of not completing as agreed	Activities not yet due to start
<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>

Over the coming pages, we set out more in-depth updates for each action.

*Cllr Tom Holway*

Cllr Tom Holway

Executive Member for Climate and Biodiversity



**AM1.1 – Converting our environmental management vehicles to electric**

- **Scoping requirements and holding initial discussions with providers re feasibility**
- **Upgrading of power to depot and Follaton House and install electric charging points**

**Key Highlights**

The action consists of a number of different strands of work – logistics, HR, procurement- and will be delivered as a project. The officer originally identified to undertake the work has been reallocated and therefore a replacement officer will be recruited, via secondment, to deliver the project in line with the delivery plan timeline. We are in discussion with other Councils regarding potential joint approaches to elements of the project.

**Key Risks / Issues**

The lack of existing EV charging infrastructure, limited range of some EVs and the large area covered by some roles/vehicles represents a challenge in terms of ensuring that service delivery remains efficient with an EV fleet.

**Looking ahead to the next 6 months**

- Scoping of project
- Recruitment of officer
- Review of feasibility

Overall Rating **Green – On Track**

**Action AM1.2 – Carrying out feasibility studies for renewable energy on our land and buildings**  
**- Review existing and further commission a feasibility study to assess opportunities for renewable energy scheme across Council owned assets**

**Key Highlights**

Progress is planned in advance of the end of March deadline through either commissioning a feasibility report or by utilising resources from within the Assets Team to deliver the same – to be confirmed

**Key Risks / Issues**

None at this stage

**Looking ahead to the next 6 months**

Review options arising from feasibility study.

Overall Rating **Green – On Track**

**Action AM 1.3 – Explore renewable energy opportunities across the District**

**Key Highlights**

NOT DUE TO COMMENCE UNTIL 2022/23

**Key Risks / Issues**

**Looking ahead to the next 6 months**

Overall Rating **Not yet due to commence**



**Action AM1.4 – Deliver funding for community projects**

- **Launch Crowdfund for Climate Projects**
- **Member Locality Fund promoted to residents**

**Key Highlights**

We have launched our Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Fund on Crowdfunder and a revised funding model has been agreed by the Councils Executive which will result in a two phase direct grant scheme which will seek projects to deliver specific outcomes, the first fund will be related to community engagement. So far, £4800 has been pledged through Crowdfunder and £21,986 has been committed through the members Climate Change and Biodiversity Locality Fund to help towards realising £120,000 worth of community projects.

**Key Risks / Issues**

Devon County Council have advised that they are likely to withdraw from Crowdfunding from April. This means we may need to source an alternative platform for provision of the Crowdfund climate fund. Work is in progress and will mean that the scheme can continue relatively unaffected from a customer perspective.

**Looking ahead to the next 6 months**

- Explore options for continuing to deliver a Crowdfund platform.
- Publishing the new direct grant scheme in February which will seek applicants to provide community engagement activity, £50,000 will be on offer.

Overall Rating

AMBER – Due to unforeseen possibility that Crowdfund platform will become expensive to run if DCC pull out.

**Action AM1.5 Adopting an electric vehicle (EV) Strategy**

- **9 more EV installations in Public Car Parks**

**Key Highlights**

During this period we have signed the Initial lease signed for Electric Vehicle charging bays for Mayors Avenue car park in Dartmouth

- 

**Key Risks / Issues**

- Delays with WPD for cabling works
- Delay in installation of charging equipment

**Looking ahead to the next 6 months**

Western Power Distribution (WPD) works to be scheduled  
Further 8 leases to be signed ready for installation  
Procurement to take place for ORCS funding bid (4 car parks)

Overall Rating

Green – On Track

**Action AM1.6 – A 10% increase in biodiversity on Council Land**

-Commence review of Ground Maintenance specification with Lead Member and consult residents on proposals

**Key Highlights**

During Summer 2021, the Council undertook a public consultation on the principle of managing Council owned land to increase biodiversity and wildlife value across the District.

The public engaged positively with the consultation resulting in over 1,000 responses, with over 700 respondents adding further comments or ideas. Over 97% of responses were in favour of the general principle of improving biodiversity and wildlife value. Furthermore over 90% were in favour of relaxing of cutting regimes, leaving areas of long grass on verges and peripheries of parks and enabling new areas of wildflower planting. The full report to Executive on the consultation response can be seen [here](#)

Following the consultation, officers are now reviewing Council owned green spaces (namely 'grass' sites) District-wide to compile a proposed Grounds Maintenance map layer reflecting how the aspirations could translate on a site by site basis.

#### Key Risks / Issues

It will be important that the Council takes steps to manage the public expectations but also ensure a robust communications plan to avoid the perception that Council land is being neglected.

Equally important is ensuring that a well-planned and delivered period of adjustment for the Grounds Maintenance operatives and managers to become accustomed with delivering the new site maintenance and habitat creation schedule.

#### Looking ahead to the next 6 months

- Undertake mapping of proposed sites and embed on the Council's interactive mapping as a layer. This will firstly be shared with SHDC Members and then Town and Parish Councils for review and comment.
- Detailed proposals , equipment specification, revenues and capital expenditure to deliver the biodiversity gain will be considered by Executive on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Overall Rating **Green – On Track**

This update will be considered at South Hams District Council Overview and Scrutiny Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at 10am. Watch live on  [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/user/southhamscouncil) <https://www.youtube.com/user/southhamscouncil>



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Report to: **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Date: **20 January 2022**

Title: **Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan Update**

Portfolio Areas: **Cllr Tom Holway**

Wards Affected: **All**

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

Author: **Adam Williams** Role: **Climate Change Specialist**

Contact: **Email: [adam.williams@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:adam.williams@swdevon.gov.uk)**

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the update on the Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan.**

**1. Executive summary**

- 1.1 The Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and an updated Action Plan were developed and presented to the Council on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020. These were then adopted at this meeting. At the same meeting, it was agreed that updates on the progress of the action plan would be provided on 6 monthly intervals.
- 1.2 The first 6 monthly update was provided to the Overview and Scrutiny committee on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021. It was resolved that a Task and Finish Group be set up to consider the report of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan.
- 1.3 The Group was tasked to report back with any recommendations to the meeting of the Panel which was held on Thursday 4 November 2021 and these recommendations were agreed and made to the Executive.

- 1.4 Proposals for one of the Task and Finish Group recommendations were deliberated and agreed at the meeting of the Executive on 2 December 2021.
- 1.5 The other recommendations will be considered by the Executive on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022.
- 1.6 This report provides an update on progress on the action plan since 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan was adopted on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020 by the Council. It was noted that the Action Plan will be a continually evolving document and that delegated authority be granted to the Director of Governance and Assurance, in consultation with the lead Executive Member for Climate Change and Biodiversity, to make revisions to the Plan as and when deemed necessary
- 2.2 In addition, it was resolved on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020 that performance against the Action Plan should be monitored by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a six-monthly basis.
- 2.3 The first update was provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021. In view of the complexity and scale of the Action Plan it was proposed, and agreed at that meeting, to set up a Task and Finish Group to undertake a review and then present its conclusions back to a future Committee meeting.
- 2.4 The Task and Finish Group met on four occasions and reported back to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on Thursday 4 November 2021 and recommendations made to the Executive (minute O&S.37/21 refers).
- 2.5 A report has since been taken to the Executive to progress one of the recommendations (minute E.71/21 refers) and this is covered in **section 3** of this report.
- 2.6 The update on progress against the Councils Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan, since the last update in July 2021, is covered in **section 4** of this report and an updated, reformatted version of the Plan can be found at Appendix 1.

## **3. Task and Finish Group Recommendation update**

- 3.1 At the meeting on 2 December 2021, the Executive considered a proposal for a reviewed funding model to accelerate one of the

Task and Finish Group Recommendations, specifically recommendation c) as follows;

- c) The Action Plan should continue to acknowledge that the Council has an important facilitation and coordination role in the community it serves and that it is uniquely placed to be actively bringing key local organisations together, working with them to resolve issues where it has the relevant powers and/or influence, helping to access funds as the need arises, helping to create a common understanding of goals and timescales and working with groups to achieve them. In light of this, a review of the adopted funding mechanism will take place with a view to ensuring that, within available budgets, support is available to enable community groups to undertake specific tasks, such as community engagement, as required by the Council's adopted CC&B strategy.
- 3.2 The Executive resolved to set aside £100,000 of the £200,000 originally dedicated to Crowdfunder and the small direct cash grants scheme, to fund projects targeted to accelerate the delivery of the Council's adopted Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan as set out in the report (minute E.71/21 refers).
  - 3.3 Officers are working on the methodology and process for the new scheme which is planned to go live in February 2022.
  - 3.4 The Executive requested additional time to consider the other five detailed recommendations that had been generated by the Task and Finish Group. These recommendations will be considered further at the Executive meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

#### **4. South Hams District Council Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan Progress Update**

- 4.1 A proposed revised action plan structure was presented to the Task and Finish Group which is found at Appendix 1, this revision of the action plan provides details on the latest position on each individual action as well as providing an estimate on action impact level as well as providing detail on the organisation responsible as well as key partners. This revised action plan now includes operational actions to bring together all the work related to the climate emergency into one place, as well as data sources to monitor progress on key metrics, such as carbon emissions, EV registrations, financial and grant funding expenditure. It is expected that a redesign and a refresh of the strategy will be conducted upon the adoption of the Devon Carbon Plan, expected in August 2022.

- 4.2 Key progress has been made in the following areas since June 2021;
- a. The Council benefitted from a funding opportunity to either initiate or enhance their enforcement procedures in association with the minimum energy efficiency standard (MEES) regulations. The Council's application to the PRS MEES Compliance and Enforcement Competition was successful and we (SHDC and WDBC combined) received a grant allocation of £44,331. The work will involve gathering all the available information and data on the rental market, so that we can target the relevant landlords and promote compliance. Improving properties in private rental sector will help the council's climate change agenda. Recruitment of an officer to carry out the work failed – no suitable applications were received– so we are now talking to local energy groups to do the required work and for energy groups to provide advice to landlords. The Council will retain the enforcement responsibility.
  - b. The Council continues to hold funding under the Government's Green Homes Grant (GHG) scheme and continues to work towards the delivery of the scheme. The grant will be used to deliver energy saving measures for eligible households and will be delivered during 2021/22. However, due to major supply chain difficulties nationally a review of the process has been needed and we have now secured a locally approach to delivering these grants. Since then we have now approved grants with an average grant allocation of £11080 so far with most applicants using a local installer based in Plymouth.
    - i. Currently there are ten grants currently approved in South hams totalling £96k (including 6 air source heat pumps) out of a total budget of £900k. There are more surveys being booked and planned, so further requests for approvals are expected.
    - ii. Applications are still being accepted and all existing applicants have been written to just before Christmas, encouraging them to take up the revised offer. Further communication will be sent in January encourage residents to apply.
    - iii. We are working with partners in Community Energy to support the leads we have generated. Discussions are also being had with BEIS for an initial (possibly more) 4 week extension from the end of April 2022 to complete the project, we are confident the grant allocation we have will remain secured and spent on measures across the district.

- iv. South Hams is also part of the Devon Sustainable warmth project, which is a consortium of Devon Authorities and is the next green home grant phase. South Hams has been allocated £750k and is due to start in the spring.
- c. Monthly Climate and Biodiversity Newsletters have continued to be produced and released monthly and subscriber have grown month on month from 226 in October 2020 to 614 in October 2021
- d. The next engagement campaign with Carbon Savvy, South Hams District Council, West Devon Borough Council, Torridge District Council and North Devon Council was developed and took place during the COP26 fortnight (1 November – 13 November 2021). The focus of the campaign was shopping, titled Shop4good, the campaign follows new research that shows consumer interest in sustainability has increased significantly since the pandemic, and suggests consumer buying power may be doing more to help the climate than originally thought. Since shopping makes up a big part of our carbon footprints, the campaign highlights ways to reduce this and tasks participants to consider this impact and complete a carbon emissions footprint calculator to enter a prize draw.
- e. Completed a feasibility study into the Councils role around EV charging as well as reviewing opportunities for solar and battery storage on our car parks.
- f. Completed Carbon Literacy Training for SLT and ELT in partnership with Torbay Council. The next steps will be to collate the commitments made by trainees and include this as part of a revised action plan when the Devon Carbon Plan is completed and adopted. In addition, we can now apply to become a carbon literate organisation at bronze level.
- g. Commissioned Exeter University to conduct an update of the Councils Greenhouse Gas emissions. This will then lead into a new piece of work to develop an Operational Emissions Decarbonisation Plan.
- h. Scoping work started for a 'DEV32 plus' initiative to prepare an informal planning policy/guidance document which sets out specifically how the LPAs will use the climate emergency and the Climate Emergency Declarations as a material consideration in the planning process, in addition to the implementation of the JLP and SPD.
- i. Completed a District wide survey with CoCars and CoBikes to review the scope for shared EVs and Bikes for in the area. The next steps will be to discuss the opportunities with

CoCars and CoBikes with a view to looking at potential test sites subject to feasibility/funding

- j. The Climate Change website has undergone an overhaul to include the strategy and action plan, links to funding opportunities offered by SHDC, tips for residents and businesses as well as the current newsletter.
- k. Developing a guide for Parish and Town Councils and Net Zero, a draft was presented to the Climate Change and Biodiversity Community Forum in November. This guide will be web based and will go live on our Climate Change website on 18<sup>th</sup> January.
- l. Funding secured from the Urban Tree Challenge Fund project. This project will see 300 trees planted at 15 sites in early 2022 and a further 300 will follow early in 2023 at another 15 sites.
- m. Following overwhelming support to change our Grounds Maintenance procedure as a result of our target to improve biodiversity on our land by 10% a report seeking endorsement of the proposed changes as well as to approve spending from the earmarked Climate Change and Biodiversity reserve will be taken to the Councils Executive on 27<sup>th</sup> January.

## **5. Plans for short term (next 6 months)**

- 5.1 The Action Plan will continue to be worked on in accordance with 'Better Lives for All', the Councils new Corporate Strategy. Integrating carbon reduction and increasing biodiversity will be embedded within the strategic approach with a shift over the next year to turn our focus towards our operational carbon reduction target to reach net zero by 2030
- 5.2 Over the next 6 months we will expect to see a final version of the Devon Carbon Plan which will trigger an update of our own action plan, bringing in actions from that plan as well as its monitoring indicators.
- 5.3 The Councils Greenhouse Gas account for 20/21 will be finalised and work started on a decarbonisation plan across Scopes 1, 2 and 3.

## **7. Implications**

Implications	Relevant to	Details and proposed measures to address
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	proposals Y/N	
Legal/Governance	N	
Financial implications to include reference to value for money	Y	<p>Climate Change and Biodiversity Earmarked Reserve which has a balance of £241,000 subtracting the commitments made through the Better Lives for All Corporate Strategy, which includes Crowdfunder.</p> <p>On an annual basis, the Council's auditors, issue an opinion on their Value for Money conclusion for the Council.</p> <p>As part of Grant Thornton's external audit of the Statement of Accounts for 2020/2021, they have concluded that the Council has made proper arrangements for securing economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.</p>
Risk	N	
Supporting Corporate Strategy		Wellbeing, Homes, Climate Change and Biodiversity
Equality and Diversity		No direct implications
Safeguarding		No direct implications
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder		No direct implications
Health, Safety and Wellbeing		The provision of energy efficiency measures will have a positive impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of the households.
Other implications		

## **Supporting Information**

### **Appendices:**

**Appendix 1** - South Hams Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan Update

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ID	Action	Activity	Latest Update	Estimated Completion Date	Potential Impact Level	Direct or Indirect responsibility	Who is mainly responsible	Who else is involved/Partners	Data/Monitoring Source
1.1	Investigate procuring truly renewable energy.	a. Council to discuss with community energy providers and aid and support them in developing their renewable sites.	Opportunity to generate solar over car parks being explored. APSE report considering the feasibility of Solar above some SHDC car parks completed	Ongoing	Medium	Direct	South Hams District Council		
		b. The Council to discuss with Western Power Distribution to determine the actions required to increase local network resilience to increase renewable energy capacity in the area	On going, we have a direct contact and participated in a WPD consultation session in September. Devon County Council working with Regen to scope a Devon renewable energy tariff. Officers to monitor and keep pace		Medium	Influence	South Hams District Council		<a href="#">Data</a>
1.2	Explore forming a non-profit green energy company and understand the capacity of renewable energy generation in the area.	a. The Council to discuss with Western Power Distribution and other stakeholders to determine the actions required to increase local network resilience to increase renewable energy capacity in South Hams as a basis of forming a green energy company or advising on network resiliency or as a vehicle to supporting seed funding.	Suggest deletion, other models emerging for green energy procurement emerging resulting in true renewable energy additionality.	2022	Medium	Direct	South Hams District Council		<a href="#">Data</a>
1.3	Allocate sites for renewable energy, in particular strategic scale solar and wind for both commercial and community energy development.	a. Allocate land for renewable energy production within the Joint Local Plan Area. This work will require a call for sites which could take place alongside the plan review due to begin in 2021.	Preliminary work underway and brief developed for potential Joint Local Plan allocations ready for tender	2024	High	Direct	South Hams District Council	Joint Local Plan Team	<a href="#">Data</a>
1.4	Identify options for how smart renewable heat, power generation and storage could be considered when the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan are reviewed.	a. Appraise the potential for low carbon heat networks, heat pumps, and hybrid boilers, including identifying current potential funding models and barriers to uptake.	Pre-feasibility work identified as next step. Discussion with Local Enterprise Partnership and Growth Hub being progressed to identify a funding source for it to be commissioned at the appropriate time.	Mid 2022	Medium	Direct	South Hams District Council	Joint Local Plan Team	
		b. South Hams to monitor funding opportunities to commission and collaborate on future appraisals.	ongoing		Medium	Direct	South Hams District Council		
1.5	Aim for a higher result in the energy performance certificates.	a. Continue to apply the new guidance on Policy DEV32 contained within the 2020 Joint Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document.	ongoing	2024	Medium	Direct	South Hams District Council	Development Management and Joint Local Plan Team	<a href="#">Data</a>
		b. Review policy DEV32 at Plan Review Stage	Scoping work started for a 'DEV32 plus' initiative. The climate emergency and need for urgent action towards net zero is an important material consideration in the planning process. This is recognised by the Secretary of State and explicitly supported in a recent appeal at Dartmouth	2022	High	Direct	South Hams District Council	Joint Local Plan Team	

		c. Monitor Grant opportunities for retro fit work	b. The Council continues to hold funding under the Government's Green Homes Grant (GHG) scheme and continues to work towards the delivery of the scheme. The grant will be used to deliver energy saving measures for eligible households and will be delivered during 2021/22. However, due to major supply chain difficulties nationally and locally we are reviewing our approach to delivering these grants. The installations will reduce fuel poverty and reduce carbon emissions from the households benefitting from the grants. A range of metrics including lifetime financial and carbon savings will be calculated and reported back at the end of the project. In addition, Secured £44,331 as part of the Private Rental Sector Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) Compliance and Enforcement Competition	2022	Medium	Direct	South Hams District Council	Climate Change Specialist	
1.6	Promote and administer grants for home insulation, efficient heating systems and sustainable energy sources for owner occupied and tenanted properties.	a. Raise awareness for grant schemes and the Solar Together scheme as part of a Climate Change communication strategy involving newsletters, web and social media.	Ongoing	Review communications activity each year	Medium	Influence	South Hams District Council	Climate Change Specialist and Communications	
		b. Continue to administer funding as and when it arises			Medium	Direct	South Hams District Council		
1.7	Local Energy Support	a. Council to actively support the Local Energy Bill.	new action Q3 2021 - no progress		Medium	Influence	South Hams District Council		<a href="#">Data</a>
		b. Support local energy groups through the South Hams Climate and Biodiversity Action Fund on Crowdfunder platform.	new action Q3 2021 - no progress		Medium	Direct	South Hams District Council		
		c. Investigate business rates reductions for farmers who wish to use land for renewable energy production in excess of the needs of the farm. Council to meet with NFU to ascertain appetite and support needs			Medium	Direct	South Hams District Council	NFU	
		a. Team Devon will roll out an ambitious Domestic Energy Efficiency and Energy Generation Pilot.			Medium	Direct	South Hams District Council	Team Devon	



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ID	Action	Activity	Latest Update	Estimated Completion Date	Potential Impact Level	Direct or Indirect responsibility	Who is mainly responsible	Who else is involved/Partners	Data/Monitoring Source
3.1	Securing tree planting through development proposals and Biodiversity Net Gain from new development including pushing the new Defra Biodiversity Metric 2.0 at pre-app and for new applications.	a. Clear numbers now in a newly adopted Supplementary Planning Document for tree replacement. For new planting, this is tied to a 10% biodiversity net gain requirement as required by the Supplementary Planning Document using the DEFRA biodiversity metric.	Defra has now released version 3.0 of the Metric, along with a 'minor applications' metric. The Environment Bill has now (in November 2021) received royal assent and is now the Environment Act, this now mandating a requirement for 10% Biodiversity Net Gain. Officers are working with other LPAs in Devon to write a Devon Net Gain guidance note to assist the LPA, developers, applicants and consultant ecologists.	2021-2024	Medium	Direct	Development Mangement, Joint Local Plan Team		
		b. Review process and method for spending 10% net gain developer contributions.	To review once the outcome of the Nature Recovery Network Project is finished.	2022	Medium	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Placemaking Team	Devon Local Nature Partnership, Devon County Council	
		c. Review metrics and policy requirements at Plan Review Stage.	Subject to Joint Local Plan Review Timescales	2024	Medium	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Placemaking Team		
3.2	Support more approaches by communities for tree planting on our land where there aren't any trees and is consistent with land use and not likely to lead to conflict with neighbours or conflict with the outcomes from the Devon Nature Recovery Network Mapping project (DNRN) (i.e. right trees in the right place)	a. <del>Investigate the creation of a formal system whereby someone with an ability to pay for the upfront cost of planting and a contractual arrangement for South Hams to manage as part of a new grounds-maintenance scheme.</del> Seek opportunities to incorporate tree planting or natural regeneration on SHDC owned sites	Funding secured from the Urban Tree Challenge Fund project. This project will see 300 trees planted at 15 sites in early 2022 and a further 300 will follow early in 2023 at another 15 sites.	Ongoing	Medium	Direct	South Hams District Council	Devon County Council, Town and Parish Councils, Community Groups, Woodland Trust	

3.3	Develop and adopt a more biodiversity/environmentally conscious Grounds Maintenance procedure.	<p>a. A new Grounds Maintenance procedure with a review of the following. - Fix more carbon in vegetation cover (relaxing cutting regime) whilst managing community expectations and a level of complaint about 'unkempt/untidy' sites, lazy Councils, etc.)</p> <p>- Scrape sites, reseed with wildflower mix, annual cut, use mixes that increase soil carbon sequestration</p> <p>- Look to reduce/eliminate weed killer use on hard surfaces</p> <p>- Assess potential to increase wildlife value balanced against amenity requirements (e.g. for short grass for dog walking/recreation, etc.)</p>	A report will be presented to the Executive Committee in January 2022 detailing a more biodiverse conscious approach to Grounds Maintenance and seeking Member endorsement.	Spring 2022	High	Direct	South Hams District Council		
3.4	Pushing tree planting agenda within Neighbourhood Plans (allocating spaces for woodland creation and sustainable management) Supporting mapping of local ecological networks/corridors within Neighbourhood Plans	a. Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy to be sent to Neighbourhood Plan groups to deliver on actions and provide advice on how to apply findings from the Devon Nature Recovery Network process.	Mapping work ongoing, expected reporting timescale August for first issue.	Ongoing	Low	Direct	Neighbourhood Planning, Climate Change Specialist		
3.5	Ring-fencing and promoting a % of Members grant schemes (SCLF/Localities Fund) towards tree planting schemes for community groups, Town and Parish Councils, or money towards a 'Tree Planting grant scheme' (we did this in 2010 for the International Year of Biodiversity)	a. Investigate options with a view to developing a formal process and framework	Proposed Deletion - now an action in 'sustainability' 2.22	Report update at the end of 2021	Medium	Direct			

3.6	Aim to develop and adopt a Natural Environment Design Guide to support Development Management proposals – establishing the importance of street trees in urban/built environment proposals, trees in new hedge lines, and tree/woodland planting as part of on-site public open space provision.	a. Investigate and review during the Joint Local Plan Review stage and using the outcomes from the Nature Recovery Network Project.	This is now an Interim Devon Carbon Plan proposal (action F2) - Develop a Biodiversity Net-Gain Supplementary Planning Document that can be adopted by local planning authorities	2022	Medium	Influence and Direct	Devon County Council	Joint Local Plan Team, Placemaking Team	
3.7	Natural coastal and flood management approaches to increase carbon sequestration, reduce erosion, and deliver improved catchment management	a. Explore and scope options with the South Devon AONB unit to establish what intervention methods are available.	Collaborated with the AONB unit and Ambios on an application for £99k under the Natural Environment Investment Readiness Grant. Bid was unfortunately unsuccessful.	Report update at the end of 2021	Medium	Influence and Direct	Environment Agency, Climate Impacts Group (DCE & DCC), Devon Local Nature Partnership, South Devon AONB unit, SHDC	Assets	
3.8	Investigate the potential to apply a % management fee to offsite compensation/Biodiversity Net Gain payments (via s106) to part-fund a new/existing role (there will be an additional pressure) in terms of findings sites to delivery this offsite habitat creation (which the LA could either buy and manage or work in partnership with another, e.g. DWT, RSPB).	a. Review in 2021 once a fund of Biodiversity Net Gain Payments has built.	At present it is considered that the requirement for offsite compensation/Biodiversity Net Gain payments may be less than anticipated. Nonetheless, where appropriate a management fee will be applied to cover offsite contributions/arrangements where they would incur officer input and this secured by section 106. Officers are working with counterparts in other Devon LPAs with respect to a guidance document on Biodiversity Net Gain to assist with a clear and consistent approach.	TBC	Medium	Direct	South Hams District Council	Devon Wildlife Trust, RSPB, DCC	
3.9	New development led by South Hams to be exemplar (e.g. Building with Nature, bird and bat boxes, good design with GI, etc.)		Ongoing	2020-2050	High	Direct	South Hams District Council		<a href="#">SHDC project summaries</a>

3.10.	Support the Forestry Commission in planting 20 Hectares of woodland throughout South Hams.		Forest for Plymouth and South Devon bid successful - SHDC, PCC Forestry Commission bid for mass Tree Planting around Plymouth Urban Fringe, partially in South Hams		High	Influence and Direct	South Hams District Council and Plymouth City Council	Forestry Commission	
3.11	Contribute to the creation of a Devon Nature Network and assist with the recovery of Devon's biosphere.	a. Enable landowners to express an interest in hosting biodiversity net gain initiatives related to development	Develop project once the DNRN project is finalised (expected 2022) The North Devon Biosphere have done some initial work on setting up a Natural Capital Marketplace as a means of linking landowners with sites that could facilitate nature recovery/carbon sequestration, with developers/LAs/companies that are looking to offset/invest. Officers will monitor.	Ongoing	High	Influence	Devon Local Nature Partnership, Devon County Council	West	
		b. Potentially allocate land for Carbon Sequestration as part of Joint Local Plan Review	no progress	2024	High	Direct	Joint Local Plan Team, Placemaking Team		
		c. Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan reviews to incorporate the principles of the Land Use Framework when setting spatial planning policies and allocating land for development	The first iteration of the Nature Recovery Network map is being launched at the end of November. The role these play in underpinning a Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy will evolve over the coming year/s particularly with the Environment Bill passing into law (now Environment Act 2021) and its requirement for Local Nature Recovery Strategies.	2022	Medium	Influence	South Hams District Council	Neighbourhood Planning	
		d. Support community land ownership and management by engaging with communities to designate land/farms as community assets under the Community Right to Bid scheme.	suggest deletion - advised this is unlikely to take place with current resources	Ongoing	Medium	Influence	Community Groups, Town and Parish Councils	South Hams District Council	
3.12	SHDC engages with members of the public and farmers to look at alternatives to using herbicides and pesticides (in particular glyphosate).	a. To form part our communications and outreach work in the first instance	no progress	Ongoing	Medium	Influence	South Hams District Council	Communications, Climate Change Specialist, NFU	



ID	Action	Activity	Latest Update	Estimated Completion Date	Potential Impact Level	Direct or Indirect responsibility	Who is mainly responsible	Who else is involved/Partners	Data/monitoring source
4.1	Raise awareness of Climate Change and Biodiversity issues as part of a communication strategy involving newsletters, web updates and social media activity.	a. A new engagement scheme to inform and advise our residents on the following issues;	Monthly Newsletters continue to be created and publish, subscriber counts have risen from 226 in October 2020 to 614 as of October 2021. Shop4good Campaign Launching 30 October 2021 and ran between 13th November 2021	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency	<a href="#">Data</a>
		- Encourage individuals to plant wildflowers and maintain environments which encourage pollinators, such as bees, to thrive.	no progress but expected example leading through new GM procedure	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency	
		- Encourage individuals to look at the impact of their diet and consider reducing their meat consumption, and increase the proportion of in-season, locally grown food eaten across Devon.	Ran a Carbon Footprint/Lifestyle Campaign with Carbon Savvy, North Devon Council and Torridge in March. Shop4good Campaign Launching 30 October 2021 and ran between 13th November 2021	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency	
		- Support individuals to make better transport choices, this will require better infrastructure, however.	Ran a Carbon Footprint/Lifestyle Campaign with Carbon Savvy, North Devon Council and Torridge in March	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency	
		- Provide advice on choosing truly renewable energy electricity tariffs (rather than REGOS / greenwashing)	no progress	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency	
		- Encourage reduced energy consumption at home – install greater insulation, use less hot water, use less heating, turn off electrical appliances when not in use, don't use unnecessary appliances like tumble dryer etc.	Ran a Carbon Footprint/Lifestyle Campaign with Carbon Savvy, North Devon Council and Torridge in March	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency	

		- Inform residents about how they can recycle. Link in more with recycle Devon and all of the other efforts that people are going around the Borough.	Comms recycling activity underway	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency	
		- Involve residents about what we are doing with climate change.	Monthly Newsletters continue to be created and publish, subscriber counts have risen from 149 in October 2020 to 614 as of October. New comms strategy finalised summer 2021	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency	
		- Encourage children to stop littering to protect our environment (R&R action 2.10).	Monthly Newsletters continue to be created and publish, subscriber counts have risen from 149 in October 2020 to 614 as of October. New comms strategy being finalised	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency	<a href="#">Data</a>
4.2	Volunteer/support collective action via community groups and provide time and resourcing to Town and Parish Councils.	a. Have a presence at community events.	Climate Change Specialist present at Devon County Show at DCE stand and presented to Sustainable South Hams in April	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency	
		b. Develop a 'Community Forum' of stakeholders in the area to discuss actions and collaborate.	Done	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency	<a href="#">View Community Forum Activity</a>
		c. Work with Town and Parish Councils over changes to their practices and activity they can do to contribute to local, borough and county action plans.	Work underway on a Town and Parish Guide to Net Zero, developed in collaboration with our Community Forum plans.	ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency	
4.3	Key steps for change: 100 significant cross cutting actions we can all do (to be populated at a later date)			ongoing	Medium	Direct and Influence	Climate Change Specialist, Communcations	Devon Climate Emergency	

Action reference	Action	Activity	latest position	Key Officer/Team
OP.1	Investigate procuring truly renewable energy		Currently on a fixed renewables tariff but this includes nuclear	Stuart Truss, Assets
OP.2	Explore installing low water delivery taps/plumbing to all our toilet facilities at Follaton House			Stuart Truss, Assets
OP.3	Investigate energy efficient measures could be retro-fitted to Council owned properties	Conduct an Energy Audit of Council Buildings to understand the issues associated with each building and determine what fabric measures are required. This area of work will need to be split between operational assets and leased assets to keep manageable		Stuart Truss, Guy Pedrick & Assets
		Carry out a feasibility study to investigate alternative heating systems ( Biomass boilers, Air/Ground source heat pumps) and additional PV at relevant buildings		Stuart Truss, Guy Pedrick & Assets
OP.4	Energy Efficiency – light fittings changed to LED			Stuart Truss, Assets
OP.5	Investigate installing much more sophisticated thermostats for the heating system at Follaton House			Stuart Truss/Guy Pedrick
OP.6	Investigate use of electric car between Tavistock and Totnes plus other business routes			
OP.7	Explore the use of electric vehicles for all fleet.	Production of a feasibility study and forward fleet plan		Dale Cropper
OP.8	Increase EV charging points at key Council buildings and depots			Emma Widdicombe and Dale Cropper
OP.9	Explore a rolling programme of electric/manual equipment to move away from petrol/generators.			Dale Cropper/Mark Capper
OP.10	Explore a reduction in number of 'cuts' and promoting wild flowers etc.	Production of a Grounds Maintenance review		Rob Sekula/ Mark Capper
OP.11	Embed the Climate and Ecological emergency into day to day function	Carry out Carbon Literacy Training for ELT and SLT	Completed	Adam Williams
		Collate participants proposed actions to include in Operational Action Plan refresh		
OP.12	Reduce supply chain emissions	Work with top 10 suppliers to explore their approach to carbon reduction	no update	
OP.13	Introduce culture of agile working, working from home & skype meeting to reduce unnecessary travel.	Introduce further advice on working in an agile way to reduce commuting miles for 2021. Suggest that subject to personal circumstances and operational needs, employees reduce commute to office to 1 day a week		Andy Wilson
OP.14	Reduce commuting and business mileage by reviewing internal practices and incentivising greener alternatives	Introduce business train booking account to encourage journeys by rail		Andy Wilson
		Introduce a car sharing scheme publishing on the intranet the intended journey and times		Andy Wilson

Introduce a company scheme incentivising the purchase of electric cars	Completed	Andy Wilson
Encourage car sharing by paying 5p per mile if sharing on a business journey		Andy Wilson
Explore changing the criteria for essential car user allowance, remove minimum mileage requirement and don't reimburse between FH&KP		Andy Wilson
Investigate electric bikes for some facility servicing. For example, toilet cleaners. This would require having supplies and cleaning kit at each locality.		Stuart Truss
Reduce business mileage by greater use of technology to reduce need to attend meetings	Since the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2020, the Council has now rolled out Teams functionality to all staff and there is now an understanding that face to face meeting should be reserved for collaborative project work	Mike Ward
Reduce business mileage by encouraging customer self-service and reduce need for officer/customer to travel		Lesley Crocker
Encourage/incentivise greater use of cycles for commuting		Andy Wilson
Identify individual commute and business usage and set reduced targets. Could form part of PCI discussions. Manager to discuss reduction in commuting based on personal and operational needs		Andy Wilson

Tab	Source	Latest publication or update
<a href="#">Area Emissions</a>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-emissions">https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-emissions</a>	Jun-21
<a href="#">Renewable Energy</a>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics">https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics</a>	Sep-20
<a href="#">Energy performance of buildings</a>	<a href="https://epc.opendatacommunities.org/">https://epc.opendatacommunities.org/</a>	Mar-21
<a href="#">Sub regional fuel poverty</a>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fuel-poverty-sub-regional-statistics">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/fuel-poverty-sub-regional-statistics</a>	Apr-21
<a href="#">Local Authority Collected waste</a>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/env19-local-authority-collected-waste">https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/env19-local-authority-collected-waste</a>	May-21
<a href="#">How often people cycle</a>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/cw011-proportion-cycling">https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/cw011-proportion-cycling</a>	Dec-20
<a href="#">EV Vehicles</a>	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/all-vehicles-veh01">https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/all-vehicles-veh01</a>	May-21
<a href="#">Investment Secured for Nature Intervention</a>		
<a href="#">Climate Change Newsletter Subscribers</a>		Monthly
<a href="#">Solar Together</a>		

Definitions  
2020 Baseline Refers to data captured during development of the Climate Change Strategy between June and October 2020

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Local Authority	Code	Year	Industry Electricity	Industry Gas	Industry 'Other Fuels'	Large Industrial Installations	Agriculture	Industry Total	Commercial Electricity	Commercial Gas	Commercial 'Other Fuels'	Commercial Total	Public Sector Electricity	Public Sector Gas	Public Sector 'Other Fuels'	Public Sector Total	Domestic Electricity	Domestic Gas	Domestic 'Other Fuels'	Domestic Total
South H&E	E070000	2005	74.5	28.3	67.2	5.6	33.4	<b>209.1</b>	88.7	43.6	2.7	<b>135.1</b>	11.8	13.0	2.0	<b>26.8</b>	120.6	69.9	39.5	<b>230.0</b>
South H&E	E070000	2006	78.1	28.2	60.9	5.6	32.1	<b>205.0</b>	93.0	43.4	2.2	<b>138.6</b>	12.4	12.9	1.5	<b>26.8</b>	122.2	66.9	40.6	<b>229.8</b>
South H&E	E070000	2007	79.7	18.7	60.5	5.6	29.6	<b>194.1</b>	94.9	28.8	2.0	<b>125.7</b>	12.6	8.6	1.6	<b>22.8</b>	121.7	62.1	37.0	<b>220.9</b>
South H&E	E070000	2008	74.3	16.9	46.9	2.8	29.7	<b>170.6</b>	88.6	26.0	2.0	<b>116.5</b>	11.8	7.7	1.2	<b>20.8</b>	115.9	64.9	39.3	<b>220.2</b>
South H&E	E070000	2009	58.2	13.7	47.2	0.0	29.2	<b>148.3</b>	69.3	21.0	2.2	<b>92.5</b>	9.2	6.3	1.1	<b>16.6</b>	105.6	59.3	37.2	<b>202.1</b>
South H&E	E070000	2010	58.9	16.8	51.9	0.0	29.1	<b>156.7</b>	70.1	25.8	1.8	<b>97.8</b>	9.3	7.7	1.0	<b>18.1</b>	108.7	65.7	41.9	<b>216.3</b>
South H&E	E070000	2011	55.3	14.6	48.3	0.0	29.9	<b>148.1</b>	64.0	19.9	1.7	<b>85.6</b>	8.6	6.5	1.3	<b>16.3</b>	102.0	53.0	33.8	<b>188.8</b>
South H&E	E070000	2012	55.9	17.0	45.8	0.0	29.8	<b>148.5</b>	67.1	21.2	1.4	<b>89.7</b>	9.0	7.1	1.0	<b>17.1</b>	111.2	58.4	34.0	<b>203.7</b>
South H&E	E070000	2013	49.4	11.4	42.0	0.2	28.1	<b>131.1</b>	59.3	20.9	1.5	<b>81.6</b>	8.2	6.1	0.9	<b>15.2</b>	99.5	61.2	34.1	<b>194.8</b>
South H&E	E070000	2014	40.8	8.5	46.5	0.0	29.4	<b>125.1</b>	51.2	20.1	1.8	<b>73.1</b>	6.9	4.6	1.0	<b>12.4</b>	84.8	51.4	30.6	<b>166.8</b>
South H&E	E070000	2015	33.1	9.6	48.6	0.0	30.0	<b>121.4</b>	43.0	20.7	1.9	<b>65.7</b>	5.8	5.6	0.3	<b>11.7</b>	72.7	55.2	30.8	<b>158.6</b>
South H&E	E070000	2016	29.2	10.9	49.9	0.0	31.1	<b>121.1</b>	38.6	19.3	1.7	<b>59.6</b>	5.0	6.1	0.3	<b>11.4</b>	59.1	57.4	31.0	<b>147.5</b>
South H&E	E070000	2017	27.9	7.9	50.4	0.0	30.9	<b>117.0</b>	33.3	24.2	0.6	<b>58.1</b>	4.3	5.6	0.3	<b>10.2</b>	51.9	56.6	29.7	<b>138.2</b>
South H&E	E070000	2018	25.9	8.0	50.1	0.0	30.5	<b>114.6</b>	30.0	25.0	2.0	<b>57.0</b>	3.7	5.6	0.4	<b>9.7</b>	47.2	59.0	30.9	<b>137.1</b>
South H&E	E070000	2019	20.4	7.3	52.9	0.0	32.3	<b>113.0</b>	24.2	21.1	1.8	<b>47.1</b>	3.3	5.0	0.3	<b>8.5</b>	42.4	60.6	31.3	<b>134.3</b>

Road Transport (A roads)	Road Transport (Motorways)	Road Transport (Minor roads)	Diesel Railways	Transport Other	Transport Total	Net Emissions: Forest	Net Emissions: Cropland	Net Emissions: Grassland	Net Emissions: Wetland	Net Emissions: Settlement	Net Emissions: Harvest	LULUCF Net Emissions	Grand Total	Population ('000s, mid-)	Per Capita Emissions (t)	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Emissions per km <sup>2</sup> (kt)
194.4	0.0	58.8	3.6	1.8	<b>258.6</b>	-44.6	30.9	-26.8	-6.3	25.0	0.0	<b>-21.9</b>	<b>837.8</b>	82.5	<b>10.2</b>	905.2	<b>0.9</b>
187.4	0.0	60.7	3.5	2.7	<b>254.3</b>	-45.5	30.3	-27.9	-6.3	25.1	0.0	<b>-24.2</b>	<b>830.3</b>	83.0	<b>10.0</b>	905.2	<b>0.9</b>
184.2	0.0	63.9	3.9	2.7	<b>254.7</b>	-45.8	29.4	-28.3	-6.3	25.3	0.0	<b>-25.7</b>	<b>792.4</b>	83.4	<b>9.5</b>	905.2	<b>0.9</b>
173.1	0.0	64.6	3.8	2.7	<b>244.2</b>	-46.3	29.0	-29.0	-6.3	25.5	0.0	<b>-27.1</b>	<b>745.2</b>	83.5	<b>8.9</b>	905.2	<b>0.8</b>
172.5	0.0	61.8	3.8	2.6	<b>240.7</b>	-46.5	28.9	-29.3	-6.3	25.7	0.0	<b>-27.5</b>	<b>672.6</b>	83.4	<b>8.1</b>	905.2	<b>0.7</b>
169.3	0.0	62.1	3.8	2.6	<b>237.9</b>	-47.2	28.1	-29.6	-6.3	26.3	0.0	<b>-28.5</b>	<b>698.2</b>	83.5	<b>8.4</b>	905.2	<b>0.8</b>
170.4	0.0	60.0	3.6	2.4	<b>236.5</b>	-47.6	27.7	-29.9	-6.3	26.7	0.0	<b>-29.5</b>	<b>645.8</b>	83.6	<b>7.7</b>	905.2	<b>0.7</b>
169.1	0.0	58.1	3.7	2.4	<b>233.2</b>	-47.3	27.2	-30.7	-6.3	27.1	0.0	<b>-30.1</b>	<b>662.1</b>	83.7	<b>7.9</b>	905.2	<b>0.7</b>
166.3	0.0	60.7	3.8	2.3	<b>233.0</b>	-47.8	26.7	-31.8	-6.3	27.2	0.0	<b>-32.0</b>	<b>623.7</b>	84.1	<b>7.4</b>	905.2	<b>0.7</b>
168.2	0.0	64.9	3.8	2.2	<b>239.2</b>	-48.0	26.0	-31.3	-6.3	27.5	0.0	<b>-32.1</b>	<b>584.5</b>	84.4	<b>6.9</b>	905.2	<b>0.6</b>
164.5	0.0	65.6	3.7	2.2	<b>236.0</b>	-48.7	25.7	-32.7	-6.3	28.2	0.0	<b>-33.9</b>	<b>559.5</b>	84.9	<b>6.6</b>	905.2	<b>0.6</b>
167.2	0.0	70.2	3.6	2.2	<b>243.3</b>	-49.0	25.4	-32.5	-6.3	29.1	0.0	<b>-33.3</b>	<b>549.6</b>	84.8	<b>6.5</b>	905.2	<b>0.6</b>
173.6	0.0	71.5	3.6	2.3	<b>250.9</b>	-49.1	25.1	-34.0	-6.3	29.1	0.0	<b>-35.1</b>	<b>539.3</b>	85.3	<b>6.3</b>	905.2	<b>0.6</b>
166.1	0.0	72.8	3.4	2.2	<b>244.4</b>	-49.1	24.6	-34.4	-6.3	29.4	0.0	<b>-35.8</b>	<b>527.0</b>	86.2	<b>6.1</b>	905.2	<b>0.6</b>
158.6	0.0	74.9	3.3	2.2	<b>239.0</b>	-48.8	24.5	-34.8	-6.3	29.6	0.0	<b>-35.7</b>	<b>506.2</b>	87.0	<b>5.8</b>	905.2	<b>0.6</b>



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## Renewable electricity: Installed Capacity (MW) at Local Authority Level

Reporting Year	Local Authority Code <sup>4</sup>	Local Authority Name	Region	Country	Estimated number of households <sup>1, 2</sup>	Photovoltaics	Onshore Wind	Hydro	Anaerobic Digestion	Offshore Wind	Wave/Tidal	Sewage Gas	Landfill Gas	Municipal Solid Waste	Animal Biomass	Plant Biomass	Cofiring	Total
2017	E0700004	South Harr	South	Wes	England	42,377	121.8	0.9	1.4	0.5	-	-	0.1	-	-	-	-	124.6
2018	E0700004	South Harr	South	Wes	England	42,377	122.5	0.9	1.4	0.5	-	-	0.1	-	-	-	-	125.4
2019	E0700004	South Harr	South	Wes	England	42,377	123.0	0.9	1.4	0.5	-	-	0.1	-	-	-	-	125.9

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number of properties  
with an EPC D - G  
2020 baseline

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	Mar-21
17747	24885

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				Percentage
At least:	Once per month	Once per week	Three times per week	Five times per week
Area name	2018-2019	2018-2019	2018-2019	2018-2019
South Ham	88.11483	77.29232	46.94341	33.29708

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**Local**

<b>Authority</b>	<b>2020 Q4</b>	<b>2020 Q3</b>	<b>2020 Q2</b>	<b>2020 Q1</b>	<b>2019 Q4</b>	<b>2019 Q3</b>	<b>2019 Q2</b>	<b>2019 Q1</b>	<b>2018 Q4</b>	<b>2018 Q3</b>	<b>2018 Q2</b>	<b>2018 Q1</b>	<b>2017 Q4</b>	<b>2017 Q3</b>	<b>2017 Q2</b>	<b>2017 Q1</b>	<b>2016 Q4</b>	<b>2016 Q3</b>	<b>2016 Q2</b>	<b>2016 Q1</b>
South Hams	448	398	353	336	309	281	244	225	208	187	169	157	156	136	125	119	102	100	93	87

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2015 Q4	2015 Q3	2015 Q2	2015 Q1	2014 Q4	2014 Q3	2014 Q2	2014 Q1	2013 Q4	2013 Q3	2013 Q2	2013 Q1	2012 Q4	2012 Q3	2012 Q2	2012 Q1	2011 Q4
75	68	62	46	38	29	22	19	17	16	14	11	9	9	9	8	7

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Fund Name    Type of investment    Value    Nature intervention type    Where    Sequestration data    Habitat Data

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	October 2020	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21
<a href="#">Back to Data Contents Tab</a>	baseline							
South Hams	226	515	522	542	577	614	638	608

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Authority	# Accepted	# Installations	% Installed	# Post-survey drop-out	# Panels installed	Total KW installed	Installed Co2 reduction Kg	Total investment	# Battery installed	Total kWh installed battery
South Hams	67	14	21%	11	164	56	13,813	79,937	8	39

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Project Name   Project Lead   Project Summary   Added Value   Related Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy Theme

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Report to: **Overview and Scrutiny**  
Date: **20<sup>th</sup> January 2022**  
Title: **Devon Home Choice Review**  
Portfolio Area: **Homes / Cllr Pearce**

Wards Affected: **all**

Relevant Scrutiny Committee:

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

Date next steps can be taken: NA

Author: **Stephanie Rixon** Role: **Senior Housing Specialist**

Contact: **01803 861234** email: [stephanie.rixon@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:stephanie.rixon@swdevon.gov.uk)

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## **Recommendations:**

**That the Committee recommend to the Executive that the Council continues to be a member of Devon Home Choice.**

### **1. Executive summary**

- 1.1. Devon Home Choice (DHC) has been the joint housing register for all local authorities in Devon since 2009. This report looks to review and analyse the waiting list and allocation trends to better inform members and officers of the housing needs across the area and how well these needs are being met.
- 1.2. The full Devon Home Choice policy can be found at [www.devonhomechoice.com](http://www.devonhomechoice.com)
- 1.3. The key DHC statistics are:
  - 1.3.1. Average waiting times range from 373 – 430 days depending on property size.
  - 1.3.2. Overall housing need currently stands at 1513 properties.
- 1.4. DHC is an effective administrative tool which provides a good user experience for those in housing need and through which the Council can discharge its statutory duty.

## 2. Background

2.1. It is a statutory requirement for local authorities to have allocation schemes which give "reasonable preference" to certain categories of those in housing need. In addition, housing can only be allocated to those who are "qualifying persons", in accordance with the provisions of the Housing Act 1996.

Statutory guidance was issued in June 2012 regarding the factors which could affect eligibility and qualification. Housing authorities are required to have regard to this in exercising their functions under Part 6 of the Housing Act 1996.

2.2 Devon Home Choice operates a Choice Based Lettings approach to allocations. This places people in a level of priority based on their circumstances and properties are then allocated according to priority and the length of time they have been in that level of priority. Priority is issued in the form of Bandings:

Band A – Emergency, where the need for housing is assessed as being so exceptional that they take priority over all other applicants.

Band B – High, where the need to move is urgent but there is no immediate risk.

Band C – Medium, where the housing situation is having a negative impact on the applicant's wellbeing but the situation is manageable in the medium term.

Band D – Low, where the situation is having a negative impact on the applicant's well-being but it is not causing any significant deterioration to their health or ability to live independently.

Band E – No housing need.

*(More detailed information regarding Bandings can be found at [https://www.devonhomechoice.com/sites/default/files/DHC/devon\\_home\\_choice\\_policy\\_v9.3\\_january\\_2021.pdf](https://www.devonhomechoice.com/sites/default/files/DHC/devon_home_choice_policy_v9.3_january_2021.pdf))*

2.3 Customers check the website each week and express an interest in up to 3 properties per week that meet their housing needs. This system places the customer at the centre of the process allowing them to have control over the properties they are offered. It also offers a transparent allocations system, which does not allow for officer or registered provider influence and lettings are reported so the band and waiting time of the successful applicant is in the public domain.

2.4 There are currently 1513 households on the Devon Home Choice register in South Hams, of these 489 are in housing need.

## 3. Key Themes:

### 3.1 The Numbers:

<b>Housing Need</b>					
	<b>General Needs</b>	<b>Maximum of 3 Steps</b>	<b>Step Free</b>	<b>W/chair Accessible</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Band A</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Band B</b>					
1 Bed	32	20	19	4	65
2 Bed	39	10	10	2	61
3 Bed	13	2	3	2	20
4 Bed	6	1	0	0	7
5 Bed	6	1	0	0	7
6 Bed	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Band C</b>					
1 Bed	12	12	6	2	32
2 Bed	25	4	7	0	36
3 Bed	60	0	2	0	62
4 Bed	27	0	0	0	27
5 Bed	2	0	0	0	2
<b>Band D</b>					
1 Bed	293	28	1	5	346
2 Bed	75	2	1	1	79
3 Bed	16	2	0	0	18
4 Bed	1	0	0	0	1
5 Bed	0	0	1	0	1
6 Bed	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Band E</b>					
1 Bed	324	56	38	1	419

2 Bed	199	17	6	0	142
3 Bed	85	3	3	0	91
4 Bed	4	0	1	0	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1220</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1513</b>

Of note in these figures is the number in Housing Need is 856 with 657 being in Band E for no housing need.

### **Bedroom need and waiting times**

<b>Bedroom size</b>	<b>Average waiting time in days</b>	<b>Number of lets</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>292</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>387</b>	<b>271</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>16</b>

3.2 There are 51 households requiring a 4-bed or larger property in housing need with 15 of these of these being categorised as high housing need. Comparatively in the last 2 years, only 16 properties with 4 bedrooms have been let with no 5- or 6- bed properties becoming available. While recent policy updates have been implemented to enable these high need households to bid on properties one bedroom smaller than is required this will not diminish the demand for this property type and supply is currently limited.

3.3 The data would suggest that the supply of 1-bedroom properties is highest, however, this information can be misleading due to limitations on the reporting system being unable to sort the number of age restricted properties advertised. These are the lowest demand property types however it is estimated that 40-50% of one-bedroom properties advertised would be for older people (over 55s) only.

### **Local Connection**

3.4 Operating alongside the Devon Home Choice Policy, the Council has retained its own Local allocations policy. This allows the Council to allocate properties in a rural location (and not covered by a section 106 agreement) to people in housing need with local connection to that parish, then cascading to the wider area. This ensures that the Council is



able place community at the centre of its allocations approach alongside housing need.

- 3.5 In addition to this and section 106 restrictions, the Council monitors the number of people moving into its area who do not have a local connection to the area and the number of people who move out of our area and do not have a local connection to their new local authority area. Where the balance of these figures accounts for 2% or more of the homes let within that area, homes in that local authority area are advertised with preference to applicants with a local connection our area.
- 3.6 South Hams has currently had more than 2% of applicants moving into the area than those moving out of the area, therefore properties will be allocated in the first instance to applicants with local connection to the South Hams. Since April 2019 of the 210 households moving into South Hams 122 had Local Connection to the area through family, recent residency or employment. Of a total number of 689 lets via Devon Home Choice in South Hams 88 were to people with no Local Connection to the district, however 11 of the 88 were exempt from Local Connection restrictions due to their circumstances, this is 11.2% of total allocations. In addition to this 84 households have moved out of the South Hams into other areas of Devon via Devon Home Choice.

Properties let	No. let to apps. currently living in SH	No. let to apps currently living outside SH	No. let to apps from outside SH with LC
689	479	210	122

### **Wheelchair Adapted properties**

- 3.7 There are currently 17 households on the register in housing need requiring a property with some adaptations needed. In response to this, the Council has developed and implemented the Disabled Adapted Needs Panel which includes representatives from the Devon Home Choice Team, the Disabled Adapted Needs Team, the Affordable Housing Team and Occupational Therapists from various care assessment and provider teams cross South Hams. Through the interventions of the Panel, we have housed 18 over the last 2 years.
- 3.8 While the number of applicants waiting for an adapted property is not high compared to those needing a general needs property, the number of adapted properties available over the past five years is only 15 compared to 674 general needs properties.
- 3.9 An additional pressure point is demand for properties that are step free, or have a maximum of 3 steps which stands at 275 households. The number of properties matching this criteria is 147.

## **Accessibility**

- 3.10 It is vital that the register is accessible to all those who are in housing need. The accessibility of the Devon Home Choice register was reviewed by the Management Board in April of this year with a particular focus on Digital inclusion and BAME inclusion.
- 3.11 The review found that the system is well equipped to meet the needs of customers. While primarily a web based system there are alternative ways of registering and accessing information including the continued use of paper forms where needed, staff taking phone as well email enquiries and letters being sent via the post as well as via email where requested.
- 3.12 Currently the DHC register does not hold information on the number of BAME customers on the register. We are currently investigating whether we are legally able to request and store this data. However, in addition to the support outlined above the website is equipped with a full translation module enabling customers to access the information and forms in different languages.
- 3.13 Recent consultation showed that 88% of the 391 respondents understood the way in which priority was awarded (or were neutral) demonstrating that the system appears to be clear to the majority of applicants. (The full consultation report and feedback can be found at [https://www.devonhomechoice.com/sites/default/files/DHC/devon\\_home\\_choice\\_2021\\_consultation\\_feedback.pdf](https://www.devonhomechoice.com/sites/default/files/DHC/devon_home_choice_2021_consultation_feedback.pdf))

## **4. Outcomes/outputs**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to recommend to the Executive the continuation of the Council's membership in the Devon Home Choice Partnership.

The performance of the Devon Home Choice Allocations will continue to be monitored.

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

- 5.1. If the Council does not continue in the Devon Home Choice Partnership, it would need to set up its own system of allocation. As a non-stock holding authority, the Council would be likely return to a nomination arrangement with our partner landlords (currently in all but exceptional circumstances all properties are allocated through Devon Home Choice). Typically this is in-between 65%-80% of all homes available with the rest retained by the Registered Provider (and likely to remain advertised through Devon Home Choice). Residents would be required to register on two schemes to ensure they were able to apply for all suitable homes. In addition to this, leaving Devon Home Choice will affect the current partnership working with specialist schemes for supported accommodation and extra care housing working through Devon Home Choice to assist some of our more

vulnerable applicants. The practicalities of securing Registered Provider agreement beyond the previously agreed nominations agreement would be unlikely due to the replication of work required and the likelihood that the Council would be unable to offer the same value for money as Devon Home Choice due to being solely liable for the running costs which are outlined in more detail below.

## 6. Proposed Way Forward

It is proposed that the Council continues as a member of Devon Home Choice. The costs of implementing our own allocations system would be prohibitive and would cause difficulties with getting buy in from Registered Providers who would have little incentive to let any properties outside the agreed nominations agreement through us at the exclusion of the rest of Devon.

## 7. Implications

Implications	Relevant to proposals Y/N	Details and proposed measures to address
Legal/Governance	Y	The Housing Act 1996 provides the legislative framework for the allocation of social housing. While local housing authorities are not required to maintain a housing register they must have an allocation scheme for prioritising and allocating social housing. An allocation scheme must include a statement of the authority's policy on offering applicants a choice of housing accommodation or the opportunity to express preferences about the accommodation to be allocated to them
Financial	Y	No additional funding is sought at this time.  The total cost (which is funded through property adverts) of the software is: Year 1: £29,002 Year 2: £29,727 Year 3: £30,470  Our only cost associated with the register is a Full Time Equivalent at Level 7 and a £1000 contribution which the additional funding is raised

		<p>by Registered Providers paying £25 per advert to advertise their properties on the Website.</p> <p>The joint register offers an efficient and customer led approach to managing the housing register, delivering on customer service and value for money.</p>
Risk	y	Failure to provide a framework for the prioritisation of applicants and allocation of social housing would be a failure to meet statutory requirements.
Comprehensive Impact Assessment Implications		
Equality and Diversity	Y	The Devon Home Choice Policy is checked by an independent specialist housing barrister when any fundamental changes are made to ensure that meets all the legislative requirements.
Safeguarding	Y	
Community Safety, Crime and Disorder	Y	The Devon Home Choice Policy contains detailed information about relevant offending and other relevant disorderly conduct. The decision to operate a Choice Based Lettings system is to help communities thrive by enabling people choice over where they want to live.
Health, Safety and Wellbeing	Y	The prime objective of the Devon Home Choice Policy is to assist people with securing sustainable, safe long-term accommodation which is vital to improving the health and wellbeing of people living in the area.
Other implications		

### **Supporting Information**

#### **Appendices: Local Lettings Allocation Policy Appendix 1**

#### **Background Papers:**

**None**

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# **SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **LOCAL ALLOCATION POLICY**

**South Hams District Council is committed to reflecting the full diversity of the community it serves and to promoting equality of opportunity for everyone.**

**This policy and all associated documentation and leaflets can be made available in large print, Braille, tape format or in any other languages, on request.**

**December 2017**

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# **SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **LOCAL ALLOCATION POLICY**

### **1 Scope of the policy**

- 1.1 This Local Allocation Policy sets out how the Council will deal with specific local issues outside of the Devon wide Choice based lettings system called Devon Home Choice. The document also sets out 'exceptions' to the Devon Home Choice Scheme i.e. where the Council will allocate outside of the scheme.
- 1.2 In exceptional circumstances South Hams District Council reserve the right to depart from any aspect of this policy. Any decision to depart from the policy will be taken by the Community of Practice Lead for Housing, Revenues & Benefits in conjunction with the lead Executive Member for Customer First.
- 1.3 Homes delivered in the Dartmoor National Park, on exception sites or on Community Led schemes are controlled by very specific needs in a particular parish. The criteria for these schemes will be set out within the Section 106 Agreement relating to the specific site.
- 1.4 The Devon Home Choice Policy is a separate document and should be read in conjunction with this policy.

### **2 Introduction**

- 2.1 South Hams District Council (SHDC) no longer holds any housing stock, having transferred the entire stock to various Registered Providers (RPs) in 1999.
- 2.1 Devon Home Choice is the model adopted by the Council, and RPs operating within the District, to allocate housing through this jointly operated Choice Based Lettings Scheme.
- 2.2 Devon Home Choice covers all 10 Devon Authorities including Plymouth and Torbay, enabling applicants to apply across Devon for vacant properties.
- 2.3 SHDC coordinates Devon Home Choice within South Hams and maintains the common housing register for all partners operating within the area.

- 2.4 Registered Providers label, advertise and let their properties. They have their own allocation policies and will verify applicants details to ensure they meet their criteria.
- 2.5 This policy document sets out:
  - a. the common policies adopted by all partners within Devon Home Choice
  - b. Council specific policies, and
  - c. exceptions to the Devon Home Choice Scheme

### **3 Statement of Choice**

- 3.1 South Hams District Council is committed to offering the greatest choice possible in the allocation of housing within the District, whilst ensuring that such choice is compatible with ensuring that housing goes to those with the greatest need.
- 3.1 Within this it must be recognised that there is very high demand for affordable housing in the South Hams and that this demand cannot currently be fully met from available resources. Consequently, more often than not, only those in the greatest housing need are likely to obtain suitable accommodation, which means that the degree of choice will always be limited.
- 3.2 South Hams District Council is also committed to extending choice to homeless households as far as is compatible with the effective use of council resources and the need to reduce the use of temporary accommodation. (paragraphs 5.1 – 5.5 of this policy which set out our policy relating to homeless households).

### **4 COMMON POLICIES**

#### **Devon Home Choice**

- 4.1 By joining the Devon Home Choice partnership all partners have agreed to the Devon Home Choice Policy.
- 4.1 The Devon Home Choice Policy document sets out in detail how the scheme will operate, how applicants will be prioritised and how properties will be let.
- 4.2 The Devon Home Choice Policy forms the best part of the Council's allocation policy, being the document which sets out the fundamental principles upon which the scheme is based.

- 4.3 The Devon Home Choice Policy is a separate document and should be read in conjunction with this policy.
- 4.4 South Hams District Council reserves the right to deviate from this policy in exceptional circumstances. Any decision to depart from this policy will be taken by the Community of Practice Lead for Housing, Revenues and Benefits along with the Executive member for Customer First.
- 4.5 Homes which are delivered through Dartmoor National Park, through the Village Housing Initiative (VHI) or on exception sites within South Hams are controlled by specific legal criteria relating to housing needs in a particular Parish. These criteria will be detailed in the Section 106 agreement.
- 4.6 Housing developments for the Over 60s are excluded from the Local Allocation Policy.

#### **HOUSING ACT 1996**

- 4.7 The Housing Act 1996 as amended requires all Councils to give 'reasonable preference' in their allocations schemes to groups in high housing need such as the homeless, those who need to move on welfare and medical grounds, people living in unsatisfactory housing and those who would face hardship unless they can move to a particular locality within the district. However guidance states that Local Authorities can take into account local pressures with regard to this.
- 4.8 Further guidance was issued in August 2012 in relation to the armed forces stating that local allocation policies should not be utilised for this group in certain circumstances, this is explained in detail in paragraph 5.15.

#### **5 COUNCIL SPECIFIC POLICIES**

- 5.1 The Council has specific duties to meet local housing needs and to meet the needs of the homeless. This section sets out the Council's policies in this respect and how they operate alongside the Devon Home Choice Policy.

##### **Homeless Households**

- 5.1 If the Council accepts a statutory duty to re-house a homeless household they will be placed in the High Housing Needs Band (Band B) in accordance with the Devon Home Choice Policy.

- 5.2 Homeless households will be offered the same degree of choice as other applicants for a period of 6 weeks after being accepted as homeless.
- 5.3 If bids have not been made for suitable accommodation within the 6 week period (and suitable vacancies have been advertised) then the Council will bid on behalf of the homeless household, for all suitable vacancies that arise, until the household is offered a property.
- 5.4 If no suitable vacancies occur within the first 6 weeks, the period of choice will be extended by a further period of up to 6 weeks.
- 5.5 Refusals of accommodation by homeless households will be considered in accordance with the Homelessness Code of Guidance.

### **Assisting Vulnerable Households**

- 5.7 To ensure vulnerable households, who do not have any support network, are able to access Devon Home Choice and bid for properties the Council will activate the automatic bidding process, this will be done with the applicants consent.
- 5.8 Regular checks will be made on “non-bidding” households to identify households who may need our support. When a household has been identified, and with their approval, bids will be made by Council staff on their behalf.
- 5.9 A copy of the Automatic Bidding Procedure is detailed in the Devon Home Choice Policy.

### **Local Housing Needs**

- 5.10 Whilst choice will be extended as widely as possible, certain housing schemes may only be let to applicants with a local housing need
- 5.11 In very rural villages with general needs rented housing stock owned by a Registered Provider of less than 100 properties, preference will be given to local households, provided they have an existing housing need i.e. bands A - D. For the purposes of clarity this is everywhere in South Hams apart from:
  - Dartmouth
  - Ivybridge
  - Kingsbridge
  - Totnes
  - South Brent
  - Areas where specific lettings plans apply – Salcombe, Kingston, Stoke Fleming

- 5.12 Schemes delivered in the Dartmoor National Park and exception sites within South Hams will be controlled by very specific criteria relating to needs in a particular parish. These criteria will be set out within the S106 Agreement relating to the specific site.
- 5.13 Other larger sites enabled through the planning process within South Hams will allow 50% of all new rented affordable housing to be allocated to those in bands A – D with a local connection to the town. For the avoidance of doubt this will be schemes in Dartmouth, Ivybridge, Kingsbridge and Totnes.
- 5.14 For the purposes of clarity a household has a connection with the Parish/Town in any of the following circumstances:-
- (i) The person has lived in the parish/town for 3 out of the 5 years preceding the allocation.
  - (ii) The person has immediately prior to the allocation lived in the parish/town for 6 out of 12 months preceding the allocation
  - (iii) Immediate family have lived in the parish/town themselves for 5 years preceding the allocation. For avoidance of doubt The Local Government Association guidelines define immediate family as parents, siblings and non-dependent children.
  - (iv) The person has permanent employment in the parish/town with a minimum contract of 16 hours per week which has continued for the 6 months preceding the allocation without a break in employment of more than 3 months such employment to include self-employment. This should not include employment of a casual nature
  - (v) Any periods of (ordinary) residence of the person in the Parish/Town \* (definition see appendix 1)

## **ARMED FORCES PERSONNEL**

- 5.15 Further guidance issued in August 2012 in relation to the armed forces stated that where housing authorities utilise local connection policies they must not apply them to the following persons:
- a) those who are currently serving in the regular forces or who were serving in the regular forces at any time in the five years preceding their application for an allocation of social housing
  - b) bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation

- following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service
- c) current or former members of the reserve forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness, or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service

## **TENANTS INCENTIVE SCHEME**

- 5.15 One of the priorities in the Homes Strategy is to maximise the use of existing social housing stock including maximising family sized accommodation by offering a financial incentive where appropriate. The Council can offer payments to households to move to a more appropriate property in terms of size. This policy is a separate document and can be read in conjunction with the allocations policy.

## **6 EXCEPTIONS TO DEVON HOME CHOICE**

### **Supported Housing Schemes**

- 6.1 It is inappropriate to advertise vacancies in certain supported housing schemes as they have been developed to meet very specific needs.
- 6.2 The allocation process for such schemes will be agreed outside this allocation policy between Housing, Social Services and the RP and will be developed to meet the very specific needs of the client and sensitively manage the lettings of the scheme.
- 6.3 List of supported housing and Extra Care schemes exempt from Devon Home Choice within South Hams:-

Westville, Kingsbridge  
St Barnabas Project, Dartmouth  
Highland Villa, Ivybridge  
Belmont Villa, Ivybridge  
Redworth Terrace, Totnes  
Douro Court, Ivybridge  
Bishops Court, Newton Ferrers  
Quayside, Totnes

See Separate Lettings Policies for the above.

## **Meeting the needs of the physically disabled**

- 6.4 Properties that have been adapted for the disabled will be labelled to ensure the property is let to an applicant with the need for this type of accommodation *e.g. preference will be given to an applicant with the need for a level access shower.*
- 6.5 However, there are occasions when the needs of a disabled household cannot be met within the general housing stock and a specific property needs to be built.
- 6.6 In such circumstances close liaison will take place between the Council, Social Services and the Registered Provider to ensure the property is built to meet the specific needs identified. In this case the property will not be advertised through the Devon Home Choice Scheme but will be allocated through Devon Home Choice as a direct match.

## **7 GENERAL**

### **Publicity**

- 7.1 This policy is a formal Council document and is not intended to be used as a publicity document.
- 7.2 Full details of the Devon Home Choice Scheme and the Council's policies will be produced in leaflet format and on the Council's website in a user-friendly format.

### **Diversity and Equal Opportunities**

- 7.3 South Hams District Council is committed to reflecting the full diversity of the community it serves and to promoting equality of opportunity for everyone.
- 7.4 This policy and all associated documentation and leaflets can be made available in large print, Braille, tape format or in any other languages, on request.

### **Policy Review**

- 7.5 The Devon Home Choice scheme and Policy are regularly reviewed and any changes are implemented only after majority agreement amongst all Devon Home Choice partners
- 7.6 The Council's allocation policy will be monitored regularly and reviewed and updated annually and in conjunction with new developments.



## Appendix 1

### \*Definition of Ordinary Residence

The overriding principle in determining a person's ordinary residence status is that people who have an appearance of need for community care services should not be denied assessment or subsequent service provision while that ordinary residence status is being disputed with another authority.

If the Department decides to supply or fund a service while awaiting the outcome of disputed ordinary residence, this decision should be clearly taken without prejudice. Any contractual arrangements entered into should reflect the temporary nature of the decision. This decision must be clear to the other authority, and staff with support of their managers should ensure that at no stage does the Department appear to have assumed responsibility when the situation is just being held until the matter is resolved.

There is no statutory definition of ordinary residence nor any statements about minimum residency periods, owning a house or holding a tenancy in a particular place. Making a judgement about ordinary residence involves questions of fact and degree, takes account of time, intent and continuity and has to be balanced with each individual's circumstances.

Where referral information indicates some doubt about where a person is ordinarily resident, further information will clearly be needed. For example if a person was receiving services or was living in a residential home before arriving in the county or still has a house in another county, this should alert the referral taker to a potential ordinary residence issue.

If someone has been funded in residential care by another LA, that LA retains responsibility unless or until there is a break in funding. This would usually be because the service user has moved into independent accommodation or has become self-funding.

If someone has been funded in residential care by another LA and there is a change in the care provided or the facility closes, the funding authority is responsible for a review of the service user's needs and also for continued funding, except where as in 5 above, the service user has moved into independent accommodation or has become self-funding.

At this stage staff must offer no commitment and assume no responsibility on behalf of the Department; decisions about a person's ordinary residence status should be made by the team manager following investigation.



## **Bioenergy industry-MDDC proposal for Devon wide Inquiry**

*(Paper prepared by Cllr G Barnell, Member of Scrutiny Committee, Mid Devon District Council)*

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **How does this industry work?**

Bioenergy is a rapidly expanding industry in both Devon and the South West as a whole. At its hub are a network of large AD (Anaerobic Digester) plants located in rural settings.

Anaerobic Digestion is a natural process in which micro-organisms break down the organic matter found in biomass waste (such as sewage sludge, animal manure, slurry, and waste food) and energy crop feedstocks (such as maize, miscanthus and straw) in the absence of oxygen, to produce biogas (a mixture of methane and carbon dioxide) and digestate (a nitrogen rich fertiliser).

The biogas can be burned directly in a gas boiler to produce heat or burnt in a combined heat and power unit to produce heat and electricity. Alternatively, the biogas can be cleaned to remove the carbon dioxide and other substances, to produce biomethane. This can be injected into the national gas grid to be used in the same way as natural gas, or used as a vehicle fuel. AD plants are fed by a complex interconnected supply chain of biomass product that is often transported regionally using HGV and large tractor/trailer combinations.

As well as energy the AD plants produce an important subsidiary digestate by-product that requires a network of large storage lagoons and a distribution chain involving farms willing to buy the product for spreading on the land. All this again requires a large geographic distribution network involving routine transportation either by large tanker lorries or tractor/trailer combinations. The network of different companies involved in the developments of AD plants and digestate storage lagoons gives the initial impression of a diverse and competitive industry based on local farming businesses.

However in Devon the set up costs of this industry appear to be supported and funded primarily by a single London based venture capital company. The activities and interests of this company are extended via the creation of a number of localised Joint Investment Companies that either bring in additional investment from landowners and farmers and/or are responsible for the day to day operation of the plants.

This is all qualitatively and quantitatively different to small scale AD plants based on local farm activity and product.

### **Isn't the bioenergy industry green?**

The Biofuel business is a rapidly growing regional and national industry based on government "green subsidies" (e.g. energy tariff subsidies, subsidies for monocultural fuel crops like maize). Both Bio-Gas and the feedstock required for its production are both heavily subsidised by the taxpayer as so called "green" energy.

The industry requires the transportation of large volumes of bio-fuel from a widespread network of growers to energy generating AD plants. The distribution of large quantities of waste "digestate" is then sent to a network of storage lagoons across Devon. From there it is distributed to a wider network of local farms for use on the land. All this involves thousands of, often lengthy, journeys involving large HGV's and tractor/trailer combinations, all powered by large diesel engines.

The claim that this Industry is "green" is therefore, at best, unproven. Planning applications for new bioenergy installations and the industry's claims for taxpayers subsidies are routinely based on assertions that the industry is environmentally friendly. It is therefore, vital that these claims are independently checked and evidenced.

### **Isn't this industry regulated?**

There is no national policy or set of policies on the regulation and development of the bioenergy industry. There is a plethora of complex and sometimes overlapping planning and regulatory responsibilities that fall between the various local planning authorities, the Environment Agency and OFGEM. There is a history of confusion, lack of joined up action and the passing on of responsibility between these agencies. To date it has not been possible to establish and implement consistent regulatory policies across Devon. Neil Parish MP has had discussions with the Chief Executive of the Environment Agency (EA) and asked for legislation to give more powers to the EA.

### **How have Planning Authorities responded?**

It is alleged that the bio energy industry actively exploits the widespread confusion that exists between its activities and those of local farmers running small scale AD plants and digestate distribution based on local farms. The latter

are clearly a legitimate and largely beneficial approach to recycling bio-mass and producing green energy. It is said that the bioenergy industry uses this confusion to convince Planning Authorities and local authority members into believing that their industry is eco-friendly diversification on local farms.

In the experience of many elected members the initial planning applications submitted by the biofuel industry are on the basis that the given enterprise will be limited in scope, be a natural extension of local agricultural activity, and, therefore, be based on one local farm or a small number of neighbouring farms. The argument is that the enterprise, is “stand alone” and is about improving the efficiency and productivity of the local farm or farms.

In our experience the initial planning consents are then quickly followed by subsequent applications seeking to significantly increase the volumes of bio feedstock, energy production and the tonnage of digestate to be stored and distributed.

In considering the individual planning applications relating to the bioenergy industry Local Planning Authorities have often tended to accept, uncritically, the industry’s own narrative about the green credentials of the business and its roots in local agriculture and farming. Planning authorities have usually allowed the definition of this activity as “agricultural” within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

This interpretation of the NPPF supports a piecemeal approach to the expansion of an interconnected and well organised industry that is being superimposed on the countryside. It obviates the need for collaboration between neighbouring Planning Authorities and usually prevents the application of the Environmental Impact Regulations (2017) that should apply to Industrial concerns like Bio Energy Generation. In turn this results in the impacts of the industry, especially the impact of heavy goods traffic on local communities, either being ignored or downplayed as “agricultural”.

This situation has been made worse because neither DCC Highways nor Local Planning Authorities see it as their job to assess or understand the impact of large increases in heavy goods road traffic on the lives and wellbeing of local communities. There appears to be little recognition or understanding that the harm caused by this traffic is not limited to the physical suitability of, and/or damage to, the roads nor even the risk of accidents. Important impacts are

therefore not recognised or assessed as part of the planning process and Planning Policies referring to such harm are not applied or implemented.

As the industry has grown so has the impact of this industry on local communities and the road network, particularly in rural areas. Planning Authorities have sometimes attempted to limit the impact of this industry by setting planning conditions that attempt to determine the volume of product, transport routes and type of vehicle used to transport bio-fuel crops and the waste digestate from AD plants and from lagoons to farms. In practice enforcement of these conditions has usually proved either very difficult or impossible, partly because of the remote locations of the AD plants and lagoons and partly because Local Authorities lack the resources and the practical ways of monitoring activity.

Speaking in February 2021 at a Scrutiny Committee meeting of Mid Devon District Council, Neil Parish MP recognised the impacts on local communities, in particular the transportation of feedstuffs going into the industrial-scale AD plants and the liquid digestate coming out as a by-product.

We understand he said, "ADs are getting bigger and bigger and getting out of all proportion. While they were a good thing in using them for waste to produce gas or electricity, what you have now is a huge amount of crop being used in them and they are becoming vast. In becoming so big they are moving stuff around all of the time. There are problems all over the place. I am trying to collate all the problems across the country to get the Government to take some action."

## **THE PROPOSED INQUIRY- WHAT NEXT?**

### **The Scrutiny Committee of MDDC are proposing:-**

1. An inter-authority inquiry into the bioenergy industry in Devon led jointly by the Scrutiny Committees of as many of the Devon LPAs as wish to participate.
2. This inquiry to be jointly commissioned by the Scrutiny Committees of those Devon Planning Authorities that are willing to take part. This work is not something that can be done effectively by a single authority.
3. The Inquiry examine the business structure, funding, history and impacts of the bioenergy industry in Devon including the history of planning applications.

4. The Inquiry examine the adequacy of the national and local framework of regulation and policies and make recommendations for changes to that may be required including:-

- local and national planning arrangements and policies, including the possibility of joint planning approval and enforcement.
- regulation of environmental and health impacts.
- highways management policies.
- energy tariff arrangements.

5. The work of commissioning and overseeing this Inquiry is led by a committee of elected members chosen from each of the participating authorities.

### **Why this proposal?**

The proposal for a Devon wide, Scrutiny led, Inquiry is an attempt to achieve a credible and unquestionably independent investigation into the bioenergy industry that will be difficult to ignore or marginalise. It is envisaged that this Inquiry will lead to an objective and evidence based evaluation of the industry's benefits and its impacts both on the environment and on local communities. We also need an informed appraisal of the policies and practices of the Devon planning and regulatory agencies to the development and growth of the Industry.

In turn it is hoped that this Inquiry will make recommendations that will inform the policies and behaviour of Devon planning authorities both in the way they work together and in the way they deal with planning applications and enforcement arising from the Industry's activities.

It is anticipated that a joint view of several authorities will carry more weight than one or two in influencing the behaviour of other regulatory bodies like the EA and Ofgem.

This proposal is borne of discussions with various members from different political groups within MDDC. It has cross party support.

It is envisaged that this Inquiry will need to be carried out by an independent agency with credibility and expertise in this area. To be successful this work will require not only the support of the various Scrutiny committees but also the approval and financial backing of the Authorities involved.

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME PROPOSALS**

Date of Meeting	Report	Lead Exec Member/Officer
17 March 2022	Task and Finish Group Updates ( <i>Housing</i> )	
	Fusion (Leisure) Annual Report	Cllr Hawkins/Jon Parkinson
	Standards Performance Report	Cllr Hopwood / David Fairbairn
	Council Delivery against Corporate Theme: Communities	Cllrs Pearce & Bastone / Drew Powell
	O+S Annual Work Programme ( <i>to include preparation for next meeting</i> )	
22 April 2022	Task and Finish Group Updates ( <i>Housing</i> )	
	Council Delivery Against Key Performance Indicators – future actions update – minute O&S.24/21 refers	Cllr Nicky Hopwood/Jim Davis
	Council Delivery against Corporate Theme: Homes	Cllrs Pearce & Bastone
	LiveWest (Housing Provider)	
	O+S Annual Work Programme ( <i>to include preparation for next meeting</i> )	
June 2022	Council Delivery against Corporate Theme: Council Services and KPI Performance	
<i>To be considered for scheduling:</i>	Devon Health and Wellbeing Board	
	Connecting Devon and Somerset	

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