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## WEST DEVON RESOURCES COMMITTEE - TUESDAY, 3RD FEBRUARY, 2015

Agenda, Reports and Minutes for the meeting

### **Agenda No    Item**

1.    **Agenda Letter** (Pages 1 - 4)

2.    **Reports**

Reports to Resources:

a)    Item 5 - Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals for 2015/16 to 2018/19 (Pages 5 - 28)

b)    Item 6 - Revenue Budget Monitoring 2014/15 - Quarter 3 - 31st December 2014 (Pages 29 - 38)

c)    Item 7 - Our Plan - Annual Delivery Plan 2015-16 (Pages 39 - 60)

d)    Item 8 - Neighbourhood Plan Area Approval Process (Pages 61 - 66)

3.    **Minutes** (Pages 67 - 70)

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# Agenda Item 1

## A G E N D A – RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 3<sup>rd</sup> FEBRUARY 2015

### PART ONE – OPEN COMMITTEE

1. **Apologies for absence**

2. **Declarations of Interest**

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

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

3. **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

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

4. **Confirmation of Minutes**

Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014 (previously circulated)

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5. <b>Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals for 2015/16 to 2018/19</b> Report of the Finance Community of Practice Lead	1
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8. <b>Neighbourhood Plan Area Approval Process</b> Report of the Strategic Planning Manager	50

### **PART TWO ITEMS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ON THE GROUNDS THAT EXEMPT INFORMATION IS LIKELY TO BE DISCLOSED (if any).**

If any, the Committee is recommended to pass the following resolution:

“**RESOLVED** that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the Meeting on the grounds that exempt information may be disclosed as defined in the paragraphs given in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act.”

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## **STRATEGIC RISK ASSESSMENT**

### **Reports to Members**

Members will be aware of the requirement to take account of strategic risk in decision making. This note is designed to support Members consider strategic risks as part of the assessment of reports from officers.

There are an increasing number of issues that we have a statutory requirement to take into account which affect all aspects of the Council's policies and service delivery (e.g. Human Rights Act). There are also discretionary issues we choose to highlight in our reports (e.g. Financial Implications, and Impact on Council Priorities and Targets). Common Law duty requires Local Authorities to take into account all things they need to take into account! The Courts hearing Judicial Review applications make this their starting point in deciding whether any decision is reasonable.

Officers have a responsibility to assess the implications of recommendations to Members. Members should ensure that before making a decision they have undertaken a similar consideration relating to the risks associated with the report.

Examples of risk to be considered:-

### **Statutory Requirement :**

- Equalities and Discrimination, particularly Race Equality. (Consider the impact on each of the following equality areas: Race, Religion and Belief, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Disability, Age)
- Human Rights
- Crime and Disorder
- Health and Safety
- Employment Legislation
- Data Protection
- Freedom of Information
- Corporate activity with an impact on Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, National Parks, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and biodiversity

### **Corporate Requirement :**

- Impact on Council's Reputation
- Impact on Priorities, Cross-Cutting themes, Targets and / or Commitments
- Impact on Standing Orders / Financial Regulations
- Impact on Council's Assets
- Financial Risks
- Compliance with National Policies and Guidance
- Impact on Sustainability

Members' attention is drawn to the Risk Assessment section within each report. Members are encouraged to consider whether the report has satisfactorily identified all likely negative impacts and mitigating action that will be taken. Members also need to consider the opportunities presented by actions, noting that any change entails an element of risk. The challenge is to effectively manage that risk.

## RISK SCORING MATRIX

Impact/Severity		Target impact	Stakeholder impact	Finance impact
1	Insignificant	Low impact on outcome & target achievement & service delivery	Low stakeholder concern	Low financial risk
2	Minor	Minor impact on outcome & target achievement & service delivery	Minor stakeholder concern	Minor financial risk
3	Moderate	Moderate outcome & target achievement & service delivery	Moderate stakeholder concern	Moderate financial risk
4	Serious	High impact on outcome & target achievement & service delivery	High stakeholder concern	High financial risk
5	Very serious	Very high impact on outcome & target achievement & service delivery	Very high stakeholder concern	Very high financial risk
Likelihood/Probability		Risk	Opportunity	
1	Very low	Negligible chance of occurrence; has not occurred	Possible opportunity yet to be investigated with low likelihood of success	
2	Low	Low chance of occurrence; has occurred infrequently but within internal control	Opportunity being investigated with low likelihood of success	
3	Medium	Equal chance of occurrence or non occurrence; could occur more than once and be difficult to control due to external influences	Opportunity may be achievable with careful management	
4	High	More likely to occur than not occur; has occurred more than once and difficult to control due to external influences	Good opportunity which may be realised	
5	Very high	Very high chance of occurrence but not a certainty; has occurred recently	Clear reliable opportunity with reasonable certainty of achievement	

**Risk score = Impact/Severity x Likelihood/Probability**

<b>Likelihood</b>	5	5	10	15	20	25
	4	4	8	12	16	20
	3	3	6	9	12	15
	2	2	4	6	8	10
	1	1	2	3	4	5
	0	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Impact</b>						

## WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

<b>NAME OF COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>3 February 2015</b>
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals for 2015/16 to 2018/19</b>
<b>Report of</b>	<b>Finance Community of Practice Lead</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED</b>	<b>All</b>

**Summary of report:** To update Members on the revenue budget position for the year 2015/16 and a forecast for the four years to 2018/2019. The forecast is intended to provide a framework within which decisions can be made regarding the future service provision and council tax levels whilst building an approach that guarantees West Devon Borough Council's longer term viability.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The estimated budget gaps are as follows: (As per Appendix B1)

2015/16	£ 552,710
2016/17	£ (1,134,408)
2017/18	£ 336,505
2018/19	£ 252,289

This gives a cumulative 4 year budget gap of £7,096.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Members are requested to recommend to Council:

- (i) That in order to set a balanced budget for 2015-16:

EITHER\*

- an increase in Council Tax of 1.9% is agreed (which equates to a Band D council tax of £208.39 for 2015/16, an increase of £3.89 per year or 7 pence per week). This option equates to a Council Tax requirement of £4,054,644 (as shown in Appendix B1)

OR

- A Nil increase in Council Tax is agreed (the Band D Council Tax for West Devon Borough Council will remain at £204.50 for 2015/16) and the Council will accept the one-off Council Tax Freeze Grant being offered by the Government of £42,237. This option equates to a Council Tax requirement of £3,978,957 (as shown in Appendix B2)

- (ii) That the financial pressures in Appendix A of £469,400 are accepted
- (iii) That the proposed savings of £148,700 set out in Appendix A are adopted
- (iv) The Collection Fund surplus of £60,589 be agreed
- (v) That an additional £552,710 (if council tax is increased by 1.9% as per Appendix B1) or £586,160 (if council tax is frozen as per Appendix B2) of New Homes Bonus Grant is used to balance the 2015-16 Budget. (This is in addition to the £657,059 of New Homes Bonus already built into the budget assumptions to be used for 2015-16).
- (vi) The Total Net Expenditure of the Council for 2015/16 is £8,119,325 (Appendix B1 and B2)
- (vi) To approve the 2015/16 Capital Programme projects totalling £451,000 as per 8.1
- (vii) To finance the 2015/16 Capital Programme of £451,000 by using £212,000 of New Homes Bonus funding and £239,000 of Government grant (as per 8.1).
- (viii) That the Council transfers £2,610 of its allocation of New Homes Bonus for 2015/16 to an Earmarked Reserve called 'Community Investment Fund – Dartmoor National Park', to be applied for and drawn down by Dartmoor National Park as required. This amount is a one-off payment and the position will be considered annually by the Council as part of the budget process. The condition is that this is for use within the boundaries of the Borough Council only.
- (ix) That the Council Tax Support Grant of £87,285 be passed onto Town and Parish Councils. (This is a reduction of 15% from 2014/15) as per Appendix E.
- (x) That the minimum level of the Unearmarked Revenue Reserves be maintained to at least £750,000 as per Section 7.
- (xi) That the level of reserves as set out within this report and the assessment of their adequacy and the robustness of budget estimates be noted. This is a requirement of Part 2 of the Local Government Act 2003

**Officer contact:**

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## 1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The purpose of this report is to offer a way forward to address the 2015/16 budget gap of **£552,710** and to build an approach that guarantees West Devon Borough Council's longer term viability.

1.2 On 7 October 2014 the Resources Committee considered a report on the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Minute RC12 from the meeting is below:-

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED** to consider the following 'minded to' views in order to guide the 2015/16 budget process:

(i) The level of council tax increase should not be above 1.9%;  
The use of New Homes Bonus to support the revenue budget be agreed (final amount to be agreed as part of the budget process);

The amount of Council Tax Support Grant to be passed on to Parish and Town Councils should be reduced by the same amount that the Borough Council's Government Grant is reduced by;

and other budget savings and income generation to be looked for and considered;

(ii) The Council's policy should remain as recommending a minimum level of unearmarked revenue reserves of £750,000.

1.3 Since that meeting, a number of events and announcements have taken place which impact upon the financial position of the authority and the budget gap going forward. These are summarised below:

- The Chancellor's Autumn Statement of 3 December 2014 and the Local Government Finance Settlement announced on 18 December 2014.
- The receipt of monitoring information from the "Localisation of Business Rates" initiative introduced by the Government on 1 April 2013. Members will be aware that the yield from business rates now forms an integral part of the new Government Grant system.
- Council approval of the revised business case for the Transformation Programme on 9th December 2014 (T18) – (Minute CM 62)

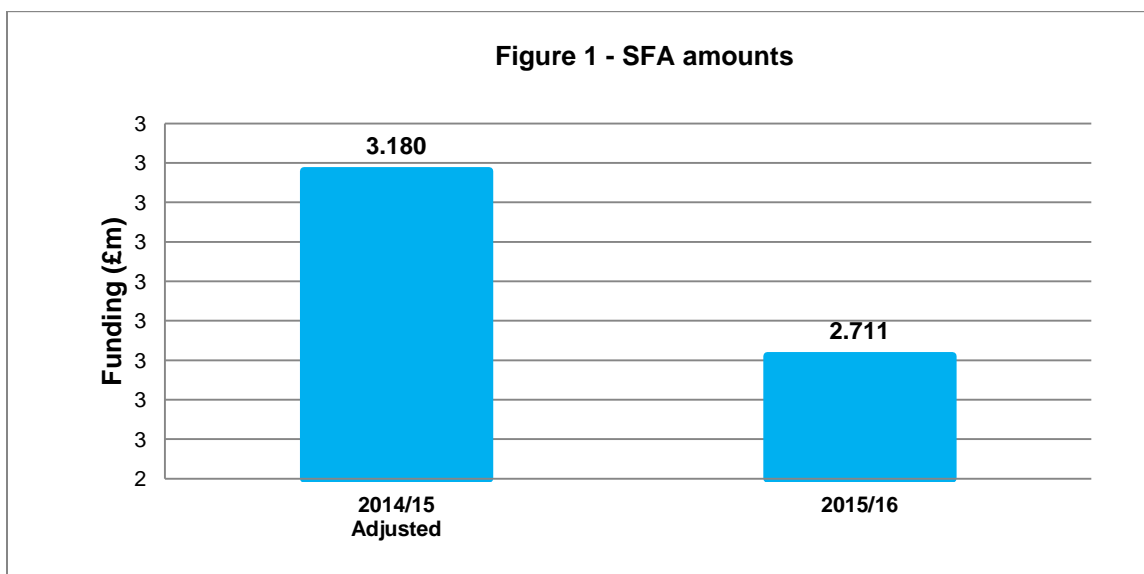
1.3 Accordingly, the assumptions for financial modelling purposes have been reviewed and the budget gap revised. For 2015/16 the gap is £552,710 (Appendix B1).

## 2 ASSUMPTIONS FOR FINANCIAL MODELLING PURPOSE

- 2.1 A two year pay award, covering the financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16 has recently been agreed. The main part of what is a complex settlement comes into effect on 1 January 2015. The initial indications are that it will add around 2.2% to our pay bill.
- 2.2 Inflation will run at 2% over the period.
- 2.3 The interest return for our investments will average 0.6 % for 2015/16 rising to 2.25% in 2018/19.
- 2.4 Two scenarios have been modelled for council tax purposes. The financial modelling in Appendix B1 assumes a Band D council tax increase of 1.9% to £208.39 (the current Band D council tax for 2014/15 is £204.50). The financial modelling in Appendix B2 assumes that council tax is frozen for 2015/16.

## 3. GOVERNMENT FUNDING

- 3.1 Our Settlement Funding Assessment in 2014/15 was £3.18 million and this has been reduced to £2.71 million which is a reduction of £470,000 (14.7%). This was in line with what we expected. This is a one year settlement for 2015/16 only and the figures announced are provisional. A Council's SFA is equal to the Revenue Support Grant plus the Council's baseline funding level for Business Rates.



- 3.2 West Devon had a reduction in funding of 14.7%. The average for Shire District Councils was 15.3%. The cut announced in this settlement brings the total reduction in core government funding to Councils since 2010 to 40 per cent. Over this period councils will have made £20 billion worth of savings.

- 3.3 The Council provided evidence to a study, commissioned by the Government, into the cost of providing services in rural areas. Our work on this has paid dividends as the Government has increased to £15.5m (previously £11.5m).

### **Business Rates**

- 3.4 We budget for our share of the Business Rates separately using statistical data. The Council will receive a separate grant to compensate for the measures announced in the 2014 Autumn Statement, namely:

- The RPI increase on business rates will be reduced to 2% for 2015/16 (multiplier will therefore be 49.3 pence, with the small business multiplier being 48.0 pence).
- A £1,000 discount for all retail, pubs, cafes (excluding banks and betting offices) with rateable values below £50,000 will be increased to £1,500 for 2015/16.

- 3.5 Alongside the finance settlement, we have received notification that a new Business Rates Pool will be established for 2015/16 of all Devon Authorities, excluding South Hams.

### **Council Tax Referendum Limit**

- 3.6 The Government has announced that council tax increases of 2 per cent or over will be subject to a council tax referendum. The Government is consulting on whether similar council tax referendum principles should apply to the highest spending parishes and towns.

### **Council Tax Freeze Grant**

- 3.7 The 1% Council Tax Freeze Grant offer for 2015/16 was re-affirmed. The indicative Council Tax Freeze Grant for 2015/16 is £42,237. Ministers have agreed that the funding for the 2015-16 freeze grant should be built into the spending review baseline. This gives as much certainty as possible at this stage that the extra funding for freezing council tax will remain available.

### **New Homes Bonus**

- 3.8 We have received notification that our NHB allocation will be £1.5 million for 2015/16, which is over £40,000 more than the estimate of £1.46 million shown in the Budget report presented to the Resources Committee on 2 December 2014. New Homes Bonus is discussed in detail in Section 6.

## **4. CHANGES FROM THE LAST BUDGET REPORT**

- 4.1 The Financial Strategy for 2015/16 to 2018/19 was presented to the Resources Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014. Since that report, there have been several changes affecting the Budget gap for 2015/16 as detailed below.

- 4.2 Detailed modelling has been undertaken on the Council's income from Business Rates under the new Localised scheme. Latest predictions have decreased the income predicted from business rates for 2015/16 by £17,000. By contrast, the Finance Settlement confirmed that the Council will receive an extra £42,600 in Revenue Support Grant than was estimated.
- 4.3 The Taxbase calculation for 2015/16 has been confirmed at 19,457 Band D Equivalent properties. The Taxbase calculates how many Band D equivalent properties council tax can be charged to.
- 4.4 **Recycling of garden and leaf collections** - Officers have negotiated with Devon County colleagues on the risk highlighted in our risk register around the withdrawal from the payment of recycling credits in respect of above materials. The cost pressure has been reduced to £27,200 in 2015/16 and £44,200 in 2016/17.
- 4.5 **New Glass Recycling Banks** – A one off cost pressure of £8,000 has been added to purchase three new glass recycling banks.
- 4.6 **Housing Benefit Administration subsidy grant** – We have received notification that our Housing Benefit Administration subsidy will reduce from £280,000 in 2014/15 to £246,000 in 2015/16 – a reduction of £34,000.
- 4.7 **Elections** – An estimate of £50,000 has been provided for in the modelling for the cost of Elections in 2015/16. This is a one-off cost and has been built into the modelling as a one off cost pressure in view of the complexity of the elections in May 2015, involving Parliamentary, Borough, and town/parish polls, in tandem with implementing changes to ward boundaries arising from the Boundary Committee's decisions. The Council's funding will be supported by a grant from government for the national elections but the final sum has not yet been confirmed.
- 4.8 **New Governance Arrangements** – A cost pressure of up to £28,000 has been built into the financial modelling to reflect the need for an extensive review to be carried out into the Scheme of Members Allowances. This review will be undertaken by a newly appointed Independent Remuneration Panel and in light of the decision of Council on 9 December to revise the Council's governance arrangements (Minute CM 65 refers). This amount has been built in as a precautionary estimate, since a revised Scheme may well include provision for additional roles to be able to claim a Special Responsibility Allowance (e.g. those lead Members on the new Hub Committee).
- 4.9 At the Resources Committee meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014, it was **RESOLVED** to request that a report be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee setting out details of the TAP Fund process and how it was monitored. A report will be taken to the March 2015 meeting. Payments are made retrospectively on completion of a claim form with details of how funds have been spent and the production of evidence of spend. Details of grants allocated are published on the

website. Interim or upfront payments are only made in exceptional circumstances and on production of evidence requiring payment.

- 4.10 Council approved the revised business case for the Transformation Programme on 9th December 2014 (T18) – (Minute CM 62). The revised business case has increased the savings available in 2016/17 by just under £400,000.

**5. OVERALL POSITION – BUDGET GAP**

- 5.1 Appendices B1 and B2 illustrate the overall financial forecast for the forthcoming four years. Although the Council’s Net Budget is in the region of £8.1 million, the Gross Expenditure of the Council is around £26 million.

- 5.2 A Summary forecast is shown below of the potential budget situation if all of the budget pressures and the savings and income generation in Appendix A were approved. It also shows the different situation if the Council Tax is increased by 1.9% (shown in Appendix B1) and if the Council Tax Freeze Grant is taken and Council Tax is frozen (shown in Appendix B2). A 1% increase in Council Tax generates an extra £39,800 in extra income per annum.

- 5.3 The report sets out an anticipated budget gap for 2015-2016 of **£552,710** if Council Tax is increased by 1.9% as per Appendix B1. The budget gap increases to **£586,160** as per Appendix B2, if the Council Tax freeze grant is taken instead and Council Tax is frozen for 2015/16.

<b><i>Budget Gap if Council Tax is increased by 1.9% for 15/16</i></b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>
Net Base Budget for 2015/2016	8,119,325
Total projected income	(7,566,615)
<b>CURRENT BUDGET GAP (Appendix B1)</b>	<b>552,710</b>

<b><i>Budget Gap if Council Tax is frozen for 15/16</i></b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>
Net Base Budget for 2015/16	8,119,325
Total projected income	(7,533,165)
<b>CURRENT BUDGET GAP (Appendix B2)</b>	<b>586,160</b>

- 5.4 The savings from T18 in 2015/16 are not available to put towards the budget gap in 2015/16, as the savings are needed to pay for the investment costs in 2015/16.

5.5 The table of New Homes Bonus in 6.2 shows that there is currently £626,100 of New Homes Bonus funding available to fund the Budget Gap for 2015/16. This is the amount after a share of NHB is agreed for the Dartmoor National Park.

5.6 **Income Generation** – Over the past few months the Council has explored ways to generate new income for the Council. The Income Generation Working Group has met on a number of occasions to look at ways of generating additional income. A report was presented to Council on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2014 regarding the creation of a local authority trading company, which provides more detail (Minute CM 47).

## 6. NEW HOMES BONUS (NHB)

6.1 The table below shows an estimate of New Homes Bonus for the next five years. The Chancellor has confirmed in December that no top-slice will now apply from 2015/16 onwards, following responses to the Government consultation.

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
2011/12	323,920	323,920	323,920	323,920		
2012/13	568,622	568,622	568,622	568,622	568,622	
2013/14	133,255	133,255	133,255	133,255	133,255	133,255
2014/15		222,997	222,997	222,997	222,997	222,997
2015/16			248,975	248,975	248,975	248,975
2016/17 – estimated 200 properties				251,680	251,680	251,680
2017/18 – estimated 200 properties					251,680	251,680
2018/19 – estimated 200 properties						251,680
New Homes Bonus returned	12,203					
<b>Forecast NHB</b>	<b>1,038,000</b>	<b>1,248,794</b>	<b>1,497,769</b>	<b>1,749,449</b>	<b>1,677,209</b>	<b>1,360,267</b>

## 6.2 NEW HOME BONUS (NHB) – PROPOSED USE OF NHB

The table below shows the proposed use of New Homes Bonus:

	2013/2014 £	2014/2015 £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £
Amount receivable	1,038,000	1,248,794	1,497,769	1,749,449	1,677,209	1,360,267
Less: T18 allocation (Council 4 <sup>th</sup> Nov)	(600,000)					
To fund current Revenue Budget *	(353,076)	(657,059)	(657,059)	(657,059)	(657,059)	(657,059)
To fund the Capital Programme (as per 8.1)		(555,000)	(212,000)	(412,000)	(412,000)	(412,000)
Dartmoor National Park contribution – See Note below	(12,912)	(5,776)	(2,610)	(20,362)	(28,146)	(111,227)
<b>Balance remaining (not committed)</b>	<b>72,012 Plus 27,292 from 2012/13</b>	<b>30,959</b>	<b>626,100</b>	<b>660,028</b>	<b>580,004</b>	<b>179,981</b>

\*Currently assumes use of NHB to support the revenue budget at the 14/15 level

Note - **Dartmoor National Park (DNP)** – DNP have requested a share of the New Homes Bonus to reflect new homes delivered within the park. DNP would like NHB money to be used to support a local community fund and, for example, joint work through the rural housing enabler. The New Homes Bonus legislation says that Councils are expected to negotiate with National Park Authorities to recognise their role as the sole local planning authority for their area in granting planning permissions and that the Councils should reach an agreement and split the funding from NHB at a locally determined rate.

Members considered this as part of the Budget process for 2014/15 and the following system is in place:-

- A one off payment is to be agreed on an annual basis based on actual completions.
- The allocation received by DNP are to be spent only within those parishes falling within the boundaries of the Borough Council.
- The agreed sum is transferred to an Earmarked Reserve called 'Community Investment Fund – Dartmoor National Park' and the DNP make an annual application to draw down funds as required in line with the process agreed for that fund.

## 7. EARMARKED AND UNEARMARKED RESERVES

7.1 The Council's policy is to retain Unearmarked Revenue Reserves of £750,000.

The Unearmarked General Fund Revenue Reserve balance at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 was £953,000 and the Earmarked Reserves balance was £1,827,000. This gave total Revenue Reserves of £2,780,000. The predicted earmarked and unearmarked reserves for 2014/15 is shown below:-

7.2

	<b>£'000</b>
General Reserves balance as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2014	953
Earmarked Reserves	1,827
Predicted movement in Earmarked Reserves (Appendix C)	(1,329)
<b>Total Predicted Reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015</b>	<b>1,451</b>
(Unearmarked Reserves of £953,000 and Earmarked Reserves of £498,000 as shown in Appendix C)	

7.3 **Specific Earmarked Reserves** - The level and commitments for each reserve are kept under review each year to make sure the uncommitted balance is adequate for its purpose. The Earmarked Reserves were reviewed as part of the year end close down and £13,000 was transferred in the general reserve of the Council. A schedule of predicted Earmarked Reserves for 14/15 is shown in Appendix C. Earmarked Reserves are predicted to be £498,000 at the end of March 2015.

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## 8. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2015/16 to 2018/19

8.1 The table below shows the proposed Capital Programme for 2015/16 and projected figures to 2018/19:

	2015/2016	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Tenants Incentive Scheme (TIS)	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Village Halls and Community Projects	36,000	36,000	36,000	36,000
Affordable Housing (see Note 1)	-	200,000	200,000	200,000
Disabled Facilities Grants (see Note 2)	400,000	400,000	400,000	400,000
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME</b>	<b>451,000</b>	<b>651,000</b>	<b>651,000</b>	<b>651,000</b>
<b>Suggested method of funding the Capital Programme:</b>				
Government Grant funding towards Disabled Facilities Grants (see Note 2)	(239,000)	(239,000)	(239,000)	(239,000)
<b>Potential funding from New Homes Bonus (Required to fund the Capital Programme)</b>	<b>212,000</b>	<b>412,000</b>	<b>412,000</b>	<b>412,000</b>

**Note 1** - The current level of capital funding allocated to the delivery of affordable housing is an annual contribution of £200,000. There is already a budget of £550,000 approved in the Capital Programme for affordable housing. National policies and funding strategies designed to deliver affordable housing have significantly changed in recent years with much greater reliance on the provision of affordable housing without public subsidy, primarily through the planning process. In the circumstances it is proposed not to allocate additional capital funding to this budget in the next financial year 2015/16.

**Note 2** – From 2015/16, the funding for Disabled Facilities Grants will be from the Better Care Fund held by Devon County Council and funding will be passported to District Councils. Provisional allocations for 15/16 show an increase in contributions to £239,000. Following the Informal Council meeting in 2014, a briefing note on the Better Care Fund was circulated to all Members.

8.2 The Capital Programme is set by the Council and may be funded by sale proceeds from the disposal of assets (capital receipts), external grants and contributions, directly from revenue or from borrowing.

## 9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 In accordance with the Council's Delegation Scheme, the Resources Committee is responsible for recommending to Council the budgetary framework. The Council is required to adopt the revenue budget.

## 10. RISK MANAGEMENT

10.1 The Risk Management implications are shown at the end of this report in the Strategic Risks Template.

## 11. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

<b>Corporate priorities engaged:</b>	A balanced budget underpins the Council's capacity to deliver its corporate priorities.
<b>Statutory powers:</b>	Local Government Act 1972, Section 151
<b>Considerations of equality and human rights:</b>	A 360 degree assessment of the equality implications has been carried out and is available on request.
<b>Biodiversity considerations:</b>	None directly related to this report.
<b>Sustainability considerations:</b>	None directly related to this report.
<b>Crime and disorder implications:</b>	None directly related to this report.
<b>Background papers:</b>	Council February 2014 – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014/15 to 2017/18 Resources Committee 2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2014 – Revenue and Capital Budget Proposals for 2015/16 to 2018/19
<b>Appendices attached:</b>	Appendix A – Modelling of the Financial Strategy Appendix B1 – Budget Pressures and Savings (increase council tax by 1.9%) Appendix B2 – Budget Pressures and Savings (freeze council tax) Appendix C – Schedule of Reserves Appendix D – Revenue Budget Analysis Appendix E - Council Tax Support Grant to Town and Parish Councils for 2015/16.

## STRATEGIC RISKS TEMPLATE

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status				Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	Robustness of medium term financial strategy and service blue-prints	Not achieving financial savings as anticipated	5+	3	15	↔	Corporate engagement in the development of the medium term financial strategy.	S151 Officer
		External change to the national economic environment which may impact on our funding expectations. Implications of changes to the funding of local government through locally collected business rates and revenue support grant. Effect of the localisation of council tax.  Achieving anticipated income targets in the current financial climate.					Service commitment to business planning processes.  Robust horizon scanning to monitor changes in Government policy.  The Council will carry out regular monitoring during the financial year to ascertain the effect of the new scheme on the Council's finances. (see Risk No. 2 below) Monitoring of corporate income streams and revenue budgets.	Executive Director  Executive Director  S151 Officer
2	Income from Business Rates	The figures for income from Business Rates are best estimates at this date (the NNDR1 return forecasts Business Rates for the forthcoming year). Predictions could vary by £50,000.	5	3	15	↔	The position will be monitored by the S151 Officer.  The quarterly Revenue Budget Monitoring reports will monitor Business Rates income against projections. Any variances will be highlighted to Members at an early stage.	S151 Officer

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status				Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
		The figures are subject to volatility both from business rating appeals and the economic climate.					The Council is part of a Devonwide Pooling arrangement for business rates.	
3	Setting a lawful budget	Failure of the Council to set a lawful budget	5	1	5	↔	The Budget is compiled in accordance with best practice guidelines issued by CIPFA and the Government. The final budget report includes an assessment from the Section 151 Officer on the adequacy of the Council's reserves and the robustness of the estimates made. The budget process is laid down in the Council's Constitution. Resources Committee and Council meetings are timetabled to meet the Statutory deadlines for setting the Council Tax.	S151 Officer
4	Corporate Priorities	Failure to target budgets to service priorities	5	3	15	↔	Service priorities will be reviewed. Budget reductions include a section on their impact on council priorities and a risk assessment. Adequate levels of appropriately trained staff. Thorough planning and monthly monitoring of performance to management, quarterly to the Resources Committee.	S151 Officer

**BUDGET PRESSURES AND SAVINGS**

**APPENDIX A**

**WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

	<b>BASE</b>	<b>Yr1</b>	<b>Yr2</b>	<b>Yr3</b>	<b>Yr4</b>
	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>BUDGET PRESSURES</b>					
Triennial Pension revaluation	0	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Inflation on the waste collection, recycling and cleansing contract (estimate)	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000	80,000
Inflation on the street cleaning and public conveniences	20,000	0	0	0	0
Recycling of garden and leaf collections (see 4.4 of the report)	0	27,200	44,200	0	0
New glass recycling banks x 3 (see 4.5 of the report)	0	8,000	(8,000)	0	0
Parish contribution to Public Conveniences	25,000	0	0	0	0
Inflation on the swimming pool contract (profiled fee)	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Investment Income	5,000	0	0	0	0
Inflation on goods and services	15,000	15,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
Reduction in Housing Benefit administration subsidy (see 4.6 of the report)	40,000	34,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
Civil Parking Enforcement	30,000	0	0	0	0
Increase in salaries - increments and pay and grading	75,000	0	0	0	0
Increase in salaries - pay increase at 1%	50,000	58,800	50,000	50,000	50,000
Elections (see 4.7 of report)	0	50,000	(50,000)	0	0
New Governance Arrangements (see 4.8 of the report)	0	28,000	0	0	0
Tamar Valley Legacy Plan (see 7.7 and Appendix F of October Resources Committee agenda)	0	28,000	3,000	0	0
Rural Development Programme for England (see October Resources Committee agenda item 8)	0	10,400	0	0	0
Tavistock Townscape (Council March 14 CM74)	0	10,000	0	0	0
Reduction in TIC Savings	0	15,000	0	0	0
Workstation rental costs - payment to South Hams - this is offset by savings as shown below (T18 Council Minute CM49 - November 2013)	0	90,000	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL IDENTIFIED BUDGET PRESSURES</b>	<b>350,000</b>	<b>484,400</b>	<b>249,200</b>	<b>260,000</b>	<b>260,000</b>

BUDGET PRESSURES AND SAVINGS

APPENDIX A

WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

	BASE 2014/15 £	Yr1 2015/16 £	Yr2 2016/17 £	Yr3 2017/18 £	Yr4 2018/19 £
<b>SAVINGS AND INCOME GENERATION IDENTIFIED</b>					
Reduction on Members Allowances (Council 13 May 2014) * (see note below)	0	4,200	0	0	0
Reduction in the economy service	20,000	0	0	0	0
Grounds Maintenance saving	15,000	0	0	0	0
Savings on TIC	50,000	0	0	0	0
Actuarial revaluation savings	30,000	0	0	0	0
Savings on audit fees	0	12,000	0	0	0
New income generation from Street Name and Numbering	0	7,500	0	0	0
Savings on Ring and Ride Scheme	3,000	0	0	0	0
Reduction in provision for Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project Legacy Plan	6,000	0	0	0	0
Discretionary Rate Relief	54,910	0	0	0	0
Business Rates pooling gain	0	30,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Budget Scouring Savings	199,643	0	0	0	0
Bank Charges Reduction	0	5,000	0	0	0
Other savings identified	3,000	0	0	0	0
Reduced running costs at Kilworthy Park and additional leasing income	0	90,000	100,000	15,000	15,000
Transformation Programme savings from 2016/2017 (Council 9th December 2014)	0	0	1,467,000	2,000	55,000
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS AND INCOME GENERATION</b>	<b>381,553</b>	<b>148,700</b>	<b>1,577,000</b>	<b>27,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>

\* Note - At Council on 13 May 2014, Members agreed the recommendation from the Independent Panel to apply a minimum size threshold to a Group (at least 8 Members) to enable a Group Leader the ability to claim a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA).  
Members are considering changes to the Council's governance arrangements which may impact on Members' Allowances in the future.

Line No.	<b>Example B1 - Council Tax is increased by 1.9% in 2015/16</b> Modelling for the financial years 2015/16 to 2018/19	<b>Base</b> 2014/15 £	<b>Yr1</b> 2015/16 £	<b>Yr2</b> 2016/17 £	<b>Yr3</b> 2017/18 £	<b>Yr4</b> 2018/19 £
1	Base budget brought forward (line 11)	7,830,178	7,798,625	7,566,615	7,373,222	7,269,716
2	Budget pressures (as per Appendix A)	350,000	484,400	249,200	260,000	260,000
3	Savings already identified (as per Appendix A)	(381,553)	(148,700)	(1,577,000)	(27,000)	(80,000)
	Further Savings Identified					
<b>4</b>	<b>Projected Net Expenditure:</b>	<b>7,798,625</b>	<b>8,134,325</b>	<b>6,238,815</b>	<b>7,606,222</b>	<b>7,449,716</b>
5	Localised Business Rates	1,517,673	1,579,000	1,590,000	1,635,000	1,687,000
6	<b>Council Tax income</b> - Modelling a 1.9% in council tax each year (Taxbase 15/16 = 19,457)	3,923,435	4,054,644	4,174,164	4,296,658	4,422,368
7	Collection Fund Surplus	0	60,589	60,000	60,000	60,000
8	Revenue Support Grant	1,700,458	1,215,323	892,000	621,000	371,000
9	Funding from New Homes Bonus	657,059	657,059	657,059	657,059	657,059
<b>10</b>	<b>Total Projected Income</b>	<b>7,798,625</b>	<b>7,566,615</b>	<b>7,373,223</b>	<b>7,269,717</b>	<b>7,197,427</b>
	<b>Budget gap per year</b>					
<b>11</b>	<b>(Projected Expenditure line 4 - Projected Income line 10)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>567,710</b>	<b>-1,134,408</b>	<b>336,505</b>	<b>252,289</b>

Cumulative Budget Gap (if savings are made as predicted in the Transformation Programme)	0	567,710	-566,698	-230,193	22,096
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An assumption of an additional 200 Band D equivalent properties per year has been included in the TaxBase and modelling above for 2016/17 onwards

**Memorandum Note - NHB remaining to fund the Revenue Budget, after funding the Capital Programme**

This line shows the amount of New Homes Bonus (NHB) available to fund the Revenue Budget, after the funding for the Capital Programme has been deducted.	0	1,290,682	1,337,449	1,265,209	948,267
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**FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

Line No.	Example B2 - Council Tax is frozen in 2015/16 Modelling for the financial years 2015/16 to 2018/19	Base 2014/15 £	Yr1 2015/16 £	Yr2 2016/17 £	Yr3 2017/18 £	Yr4 2018/19 £
1	Base budget brought forward (line 11)	7,830,178	7,798,625	7,533,165	7,261,152	7,076,052
2	Budget pressures (as per Appendix A)	350,000	484,400	249,200	260,000	260,000
3	Savings already identified (as per Appendix A) Further Savings Identified	(381,553)	(148,700)	(1,577,000)	(27,000)	(80,000)
<b>4</b>	<b>Projected Net Expenditure:</b>	<b>7,798,625</b>	<b>8,134,325</b>	<b>6,205,365</b>	<b>7,494,152</b>	<b>7,256,052</b>
5	Localised Business Rates	1,517,673	1,579,000	1,590,000	1,635,000	1,687,000
6	<b>Council Tax income</b> - Assumes Council Tax is frozen in 2015/16 and thereafter (Taxbase 15/16 = 19,457)	3,923,435	3,978,957	4,019,857	4,060,757	4,101,657
7	Council Tax Freeze modelled for 15/16 - (built into the baseline thereafter)		42,237	42,237	42,237	42,237
8	Collection Fund Surplus	0	60,589	60,000	60,000	60,000
9	Revenue Support Grant	1,700,458	1,215,323	892,000	621,000	371,000
10	Funding from New Homes Bonus	657,059	657,059	657,059	657,059	657,059
<b>11</b>	<b>Total Projected Income</b>	<b>7,798,625</b>	<b>7,533,165</b>	<b>7,261,153</b>	<b>7,076,053</b>	<b>6,918,953</b>
	<b>Budget gap per year</b>					
<b>12</b>	<b>(Projected Expenditure line 4 - Projected Income line 11)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>601,160</b>	<b>-1,055,788</b>	<b>418,099</b>	<b>337,099</b>

Cumulative Budget Gap (if savings are made as predicted in the	0	601,160	-454,628	-36,529	300,570
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An assumption of an additional 200 Band D equivalent properties per year has been included in the TaxBase and modelling above for 16/17 onwards

**Memorandum Note - NHB remaining to fund the Revenue Budget, after funding the Capital Programme**

This line shows the amount of New Homes Bonus (NHB) available to fund the Revenue Budget, after the funding for the Capital Programme has been deducted.	0	1,290,682	1,337,449	1,265,209	948,267
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<b>RESERVES - PROJECTED BALANCES</b>				
	<b>Opening balance</b>	<b>Predicted spend</b>	<b>Projected balance</b>	
	<b>1 April 2014 £000</b>	<b>to 31.3.2015 £000</b>	<b>31.3.2015 £000</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>EARMARKED RESERVES</b>				
<b>Specific Reserves - General Fund</b>				
Car Parking Repairs & Maintenance	(112)		(112)	
Waste Containers	(40)		(40)	
Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI)	(43)	43	0	
PDG (ICT) Earmarked Reserve	(11)	11	0	
Habitats Earmarked Reserve	(42)	9	(33)	Planned future use over 5 years
Landscape Maintenance	(20)		(20)	
Personal Search Fee S31 Grant	(34)		(34)	Ringfenced for Gov. Legislation
County Election	(24)	24	0	
RIEP - Localism Projects	(10)	10	0	
Fifth Wave Neighbourhood Front Runners	(20)	20	0	
Cannons Meadow	(24)	3	(21)	Written down to revenue annually
Millwood Homes	(15)	2	(13)	Written down to revenue annually
Young Persons Prevention officer	(10)	10	0	
DCLG Business Support Scheme	(20)	7	(13)	
DCC Public Health	(20)	20	0	
Rural Services Grant (RSG)	(82)		(82)	£56,969 RSG and £25,000 unused contingency budget from 13/14 See Appendix C of T18 Council report of 9th December 2014
T18 Investment Reserve	(800)	800	0	
Business Rates Retention Scheme	(321)	321	(0)	This reserve will be used to offset the balance on the Collection Fund. This relates to a timing issue on the accounting adjustments required for the localisation of business rates.
New Homes Bonus 12/13 and 13/14 and 14/15	(154)	19	(135)	This is the uncommitted balance for 13/14 and 14/15
Aggregate of other small reserves below £10K	(30)	30	0	
<b>TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES</b>	<b>(1,832)</b>	<b>1,329</b>	<b>(503)</b>	
<b>TOTAL UNEARMARKED RESERVES</b>	<b>(953)</b>		<b>(953)</b>	As per Final Accounts 2013/14
<b>TOTAL REVENUE RESERVES (EARMARKED AND UNEARMARKED RESERVES)</b>	<b>(2,785)</b>	<b>1,329</b>	<b>(1,456)</b>	

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## Town and Parish - Council Tax Support Grant allocation

Parish/Town	<u>Council Tax Support Grant allocation for 2014/15</u>	<u>15.37% Percentage reduction</u>	<u>Council Tax Support Grant allocation for 2015/16</u>
Okehampton Town Council	24,017	3691	20,326
Hatherleigh Town Council	2,262	348	1,914
Bere Ferrers Parish Council	6,400	984	5,417
Lifton Parish Council	1,059	163	897
Dartmoor Forest Parish Council	1,657	255	1,402
Inwardleigh Parish Council	260	40	220
Tavistock Town Council	46,479	7144	39,335
Bridestowe Parish Council	519	80	439
North Tawton Town Council	6,207	954	5,253
South Tawton Parish Council	937	144	793
Horrabridge Parish Council	2,204	339	1,865
Sampford Courtenay Parish Council	436	67	369
Mary Tavy Parish Council	1,084	167	917
Sourton Parish Council	329	51	278
Lamerton Parish Council	364	56	308
Drewsteignton Parish Council	933	143	790
Northlew Parish Council	528	81	447
Kelly Parish Meeting	30	5	26
Spreyton Parish Council	117	18	99
Chagford Parish Council	2,032	312	1,719
Gulworthy Parish Council	231	35	195
Sticklepath Parish Council	198	30	167
Broadwoodkelly Parish Council	136	21	115
Milton Abbot Parish Council	218	33	184
Beaworthy Parish Council	62	10	53
Exbourne & Jacobstowe Grouped Parish Council	256	39	216
Meeth Parish Council	63	10	53
Highampton Parish Council	167	26	142
Bratton Clovelly Parish Council	216	33	183
Iddesleigh Parish Council	79	12	66
Sydenham Damerel Parish Council	21	3	18
Burrator Parish Council	186	29	158
Plasterdown Grouped Parish Council	111	17	94
Stowford Parish Council	80	12	68
Bondleigh Parish Council	9	1	8
Okehampton Hamlets Parish Council	385	59	326
Buckland Monachorum Parish Council	1,667	256	1,411
Monkokehampton Parish Council	67	10	57
Lydford Parish Council	241	37	204
Throwleigh Parish Council	117	18	99
Peter Tavy Parish Council	249	38	210
Belstone Parish Council	58	9	49
Lewdown Grouped Parish Council	137	21	116
Germansweek Parish Council	46	7	39
Brentor Parish Council	284	44	240
Gidleigh Parish Council	0	0	0
	<b>103,137</b>	<b>15,852</b>	<b>87,285</b>

An illustrative example was sent to all Parish Clerks in December with the updated taxbase for 2015-16. This enabled Town and Parish Councils to model the effect of the grant reduction on their Precept calculation.

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<b>NAME OF COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> February 2015</b>
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>Revenue Budget Monitoring 2014/15 – Quarter 3 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2014</b>
<b>Report of</b>	<b>Finance Business Partner</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED</b>	<b>All</b>

**Summary of report:**

To give Members an indication of the potential year end financial position of West Devon Borough Council for the revenue budgets for 2014/15 and to bring to Members' attention any significant variance from the revenue budgets set. This report enables Members to monitor income and expenditure variations against the approved budgets for 2014/15.

**Financial implications:**

This report details the latest financial position of the Council's revenue budgets for 2014/15, as at the end of December 2014.

Currently the Council is predicted to be underspent by £15,000 at the year end. This is comparing the predicted revenue outturn of £7,784,000 against the net budget set of £7,799,000.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. Members are asked to note the forecast income and expenditure variations for the 2014/15 financial year for the revenue budget.

Officer contact: Alex Walker, Finance Business Partner

[Alexandra.Walker@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:Alexandra.Walker@swdevon.gov.uk)

**1. REVENUE BUDGET OVERVIEW**

- 1.1 The gross service expenditure budget for 2014/15 was set at £26 million (£7.79 million net).

**Actual revenue expenditure and income is expected to be underspent by £15,000 when compared against the total budget set for 2014/15.**

Table 1 below provides an analysis of the projected variances against budget.

**TABLE 1: 2014/15 BUDGET FORECAST**

	Budget 2014/15	Budget variations increase/ (decrease)		Note
	£000	£000	£000	
<b>APPROVED BUDGET</b>			<b>7,799</b>	
<b>Reduced expenditure/additional income</b>				
Asset Management	40	(10)		<b>A</b>
Additional Car Parking Income	860	(10)		<b>B</b>
Additional Estates Income	240	(10)		<b>C</b>
Business Rates	1,500	(25)		<b>D</b>
Additional Planning income	389	(30)		<b>E</b>
Other small underspends		(14)		<b>F</b>
<i>Sub total</i>			<b>(99)</b>	
<b>Increased expenditure/reduced income</b>				
Reduced Land Charges Income	110	15		<b>G</b>
Reserve Bids - Planning Officer	n/a	30		<b>H</b>
Reserve Bid T18 CIVICA Financial implementation	n/a	9		<b>I</b>
Reduced Investment income	40	15		<b>J</b>
Reduction in TIC savings	50	15		<b>K</b>
<i>Sub total</i>			<b>84</b>	
<b>PROJECTED OUTTURN</b>			<b>(7,784)</b>	
<b>PROJECTED UNDERSPEND</b>			<b>15</b>	

**Notes**

- A. **Asset Management** – It is anticipated that a small under spend will occur on the Asset Management budget of £10,000.
- B. **Car Parking** – The actual car parking income to 31 December is £697,000 against a budget of £645,000. It is anticipated that there will be an additional £10,000 in car parking income at the end of the year.
- C. **Estates** – £215,000 has been received in estates income against a budget of £180,000. It is anticipated that there will be an additional £10,000 in estates income at the end of the year.



- D. **Business Rates** – The Government introduced the Business Rates Retention Scheme on 1 April 2013. This system enables the retention of a proportion of the business rates revenue generated in a local area by the relevant local authorities. Business rates now form a major element of the local government finance funding. Current indications are that the income from business rates may exceed the Government “baseline” grant figure. Although the system carries with it significant risk of volatility, it is considered appropriate to include an additional £25,000 in the forecast. These figures are constantly changing and regular monitoring of the position is undertaken.
- E. **Planning** – The actual income for planning applications to 31 December is £338,000 against a budget of £291,000. It is anticipated that there will be an additional £30,000 in planning income at the end of the year.
- F. **Small Underspends** – Through thorough budget monitoring at the end of December, it is anticipated that small under spends will occur on a few cost centres resulting in a £14,000 underspend.
- G. **Land Charges** – As at the end of December, £68,000 has been received in land charges income against a budget of £83,000. At the end of the year it is estimated that there may be a shortfall in land charges income of £15,000, although the market is picking up and spring is anticipated to be a busy time.
- H. **Reserve Bids in the year** – A bid to reserves in the year totals approximately £30,000. This is for work in Planning with respect to an additional planning officer. The actual income for planning applications to 31 December is £338,000 against a budget of £291,000. Therefore actual planning income is currently higher than budgeted at the nine month position.
- I. **Reserve Bids in the year** - The second reserve bid is for £9,000 and relates to the T18 CIVICA Financial implementation. This is for integration of the financial system onto one platform.
- J. **Investment Income** – As with last year due to the low interest rates, investment income is expected to be under target. However the return on the investments is 0.45%, still higher than the benchmark of 0.36%.
- K. **TIC Savings** – The Council has not yet benefited from the full savings as the Council is not able to surrender its lease with the Town Council. The TIC is forming part of ongoing discussions with Tavistock Town Council with regards to the Strategic Asset Review which the Assets team are leading on.
1. Savings expected to be achieved to balance the budget for the financial year 2014/2015 totalled £381,553, (Report to Council February 2014). **Appendix B** shows if these will all be achieved by the end of the year.

## 2. INCOME AND RESERVES

2.1 Income monitoring is an integral part of financial management. Current income forecasts are as follows:

<b>Service</b>	<b>Budgeted Income for 9 months of 2014/2015 to Dec 2014 £'000</b>	<b>Actual Income for 9 months of 2014/2015 to Dec 2014 £'000</b>	<b>Budgeted Income for 2014/15 £'000</b>	<b>Projected income for 2014/15 £'000</b>
Car Parks	645	697	860	870
Employment Estates	180	215	240	250
Land Charges	83	68	110	95
Planning	291	338	389	419
Investment Income – see note J in Table 1 above	30	20	40	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,229</b>	<b>1,338</b>	<b>1,639</b>	<b>1,659</b>

The decision on the level of balances and reserves is taken during the formulation of the annual budget and the medium term financial strategy. As a matter of prudence the Council has set aside various amounts in reserves to cover future liabilities and items of expenditure and these are attached as **Appendix A**.

## 4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## 5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 The Risk Management implications are shown at the end of this report in the Strategic Risks Template.

## 6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

<b>Corporate engaged:</b>	<b>priorities</b>	Sound financial management underpins all of the Council's corporate priorities.
<b>Statutory powers:</b>		Local Government Act 1972, Section 151 Local Government Act 2003, Section 28
<b>Considerations of equality and human rights:</b>		There are no implications arising from this report.
<b>Biodiversity considerations:</b>		There are no implications arising from this report.
<b>Sustainability considerations:</b>		There are no implications arising from this report.

<b>Crime and disorder implications:</b>	There are no implications arising from this report.
<b>Background papers:</b>	Resources Committee 7 <sup>th</sup> October 2014 Resources Committee 2 <sup>nd</sup> December 2014
<b>Appendices attached:</b>	Appendix A - Schedule of Reserves Appendix B – Expected Savings for 2014/15

## STRATEGIC RISKS TEMPLATE

Page 34

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status				Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	Budget Variances	The financial standing of the Council is put at risk through variations in income and expenditure that are not detected at an early stage.	4	2	8	↔	Continual budget monitoring at all levels within the Council ensures early identification of variances.  Reporting to the Resources Committee provides an opportunity for Members to identify and instigate remedial action where appropriate.	SMT
2	Resource Planning	The Council must demonstrate that it sets budgets in line with corporate priorities and provides value for money.	4	2	8	↔	Consideration of revenue budget variances provides a mechanism for the identification of cost pressures and income opportunities that can be reflected in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.	S151 Officer

Direction of travel symbols ↓ ↑ ↔

<b>RESERVES - PROJECTED BALANCES</b>				
	<b>Opening balance</b>	<b>Predicted spend</b>	<b>Projected balance</b>	
	<b>1 April 2014 £000</b>	<b>to 31.3.2015 £000</b>	<b>31.3.2015 £000</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>EARMARKED RESERVES</b>				
<b>Specific Reserves - General Fund</b>				
Car Parking Repairs & Maintenance	(112)		(112)	
Waste Containers	(40)		(40)	
Local Authority Business Growth Incentive (LABGI)	(43)	43	0	
PDG (ICT) Earmarked Reserve	(11)	11	0	
Habitats Earmarked Reserve	(42)	9	(33)	Planned future use over 5 years
Landscape Maintenance	(20)		(20)	
Personal Search Fee S31 Grant	(34)		(34)	Ringfenced for Gov. Legislation
County Election	(24)	24	0	
RIEP - Localism Projects	(10)	10	0	
Fifth Wave Neighbourhood Front Runners	(20)	20	0	
Cannons Meadow	(24)	3	(21)	Written down to revenue annually
Millwood Homes	(15)	2	(13)	Written down to revenue annually
Young Persons Prevention officer	(10)	10	0	
DCLG Business Support Scheme	(20)	7	(13)	
DCC Public Health	(20)	20	0	
Rural Services Grant (RSG)	(82)		(82)	£56,969 RSG and £25,000 unused contingency budget from 13/14 See Appendix C of T18 Council report of 9th December 2014
T18 Investment Reserve	(800)	800	0	
Business Rates Retention Scheme	(321)	321	(0)	This reserve will be used to offset the balance on the Collection Fund. This relates to a timing issue on the accounting adjustments required for the localisation of business rates.
New Homes Bonus 12/13 and 13/14 and 14/15	(154)	19	(135)	This is the uncommitted balance for 13/14 and 14/15
Aggregate of other small reserves below £10K	(30)	30	0	
<b>TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES</b>	<b>(1,832)</b>	<b>1,329</b>	<b>(503)</b>	
<b>TOTAL UNEARMARKED RESERVES</b>	<b>(953)</b>		<b>(953)</b>	As per Final Accounts 2013/14
<b>TOTAL REVENUE RESERVES (EARMARKED AND UNEARMARKED RESERVES)</b>	<b>(2,785)</b>	<b>1,329</b>	<b>(1,456)</b>	

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<b>SAVINGS AND INCOME GENERATION IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>Planned savings</b>	<b>Expected Savings</b>
Reduction in the economy service	20,000	20,000
Grounds Maintenance saving	15,000	15,000
Savings on TIC (see Note 1 below)	50,000	35,000
Actuarial revaluation savings	30,000	30,000
Savings on Ring and Ride Scheme	3,000	3,000
Reduction in provision for Tamar Valley Mining Heritage Project Legacy Plan (see Note 2 below)	6,000	0
Discretionary Rate Relief	54,910	54,910
Budget Scouring Savings	199,643	199,643
Other savings identified	3,000	3,000
<b>TOTAL SAVINGS AND INCOME GENERATION</b>	<b>381,553</b>	<b>360,553</b>

Note 1

The Council has not yet benefited from the full saving as the Council is not able to surrender its lease with the Town Council. The TIC is forming part of ongoing discussions with Tavistock Town Council with regards to the Strategic Asset Review which the Assets team are leading on.

Note 2

An Appendix (Appendix F) on the Tamar Valley Legacy Plan was set out in the Budget Proposals report to the Resources Committee on 7 October 2014.

This detailed a cost pressure of £28,000 for 2015/16 and a further £3,000 for 2016/17 has been built into the Financial Strategy. Officers will continue to work to reduce this.

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<b>NAME OF COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>3 February 2015</b>
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>Our Plan – Annual Delivery Plan</b>
<b>Report of</b>	<b>Community Manager</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED</b>	<b>All wards</b>

**Summary of report:**

This report seeks formal approval of the draft Annual Delivery Plan document for 2015-16. The plan is the Council’s corporate plan and part of the “Our Plan” strategic approach to the development of both a Local Plan for the area and the Corporate Planning Framework.

**Financial implications:**

The financial strategy is an integral part of Our Plan ensuring resources and direct financial costs are managed as part of the process.

There are no direct cost implications of this report and the resources required for the actions proposed in the Annual Delivery Plan are included within the financial strategy and T18, the Council’s transformation programme.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that Members:-

1. Recommend to Council the adoption of the draft Annual Delivery Plan as the Council’s corporate plan for 2015-16; and,
2. Approve delegated authority for the Community Manager to make minor changes to the document in order to finalise it for publication.

Officer contact: Debbie Bird, Community Manager, [debbie.bird@swdevon.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.bird@swdevon.gov.uk) 01822 813515

**1. BACKGROUND**

1.1 Historically the Council had two strategic plans; the Development Plan and the Connect Strategy. Given the need to work more efficiently in the new operating model and the new duty for us to produce a Local Plan with a much wider remit that goes beyond traditional planning policy Members approved the production of Our Plan as the Council’s one over-arching, strategic planning document, in April 2014.

1.2 The Annual Delivery Plan sits within the Our Plan Strategic Framework and is the Council's corporate plan element of Our Plan. It sets out the Council's priorities and the annual action plan to deliver these. The T18 transformation programme, the financial strategy and service improvement plans also form part of the Annual Delivery Plan and are referenced within the document.

1.3 Officers have been working with Members through Single Topic Discussions to develop the plan producing a draft document which is now ready for formal approval.

## **2. ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN**

2.1 The draft Annual Delivery Plan document is attached at Appendix "A". It explains the context of the plan and how it fits within the strategic Our Plan framework, sets out the Council's vision and priorities and key areas for action for 2015-16 and how these interlink with the financial strategy and transformation and service improvement plans.

2.2 Member Single Topic Discussions have taken place where Members have helped shape and provide guidance to officers in taking forward the priorities and key actions for inclusion in the plan.

2.3 The revised strategic planning framework ensures our corporate planning cycle is fit for purpose as we move into the new operating model and supports the commissioning cycle. In preparing the Annual Delivery Plan T18 as the Council's transformation programme, the Council's financial strategy and the work the Council does both statutory and non-statutory have all been considered.

2.4 The importance of normal day to day activities undertaken by the Council is set out in the plan; and we have also identified some specific added value actions to prioritise for 2015-16, many of these are things that we are already working on and mindful of the challenges and changes taking place in the coming year it was felt important to ensure that focus was maintained on these.

2.5 Members are asked to approve delegated authority for minor amendments to the plan in advance of publication. These will be classed as:

- amendments to wording to either make a grammatical correction or expand/clarify a point already made
- agreeing the design and format of the document to make it suitable for publication
- addition of information, text or evidence that supports an action or approach already approved by Members in the attached document

2.6 For the avoidance of doubt any amendments that alter an action, the approach to any particular issue or anything else that materially changes the plan will be brought back to Members for formal approval. The Monitoring Officer's advice will be sought as appropriate to ensure correct procedures are followed.

### 3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Full Council is required to approve the Council's priorities and corporate planning framework. The Annual Delivery Plan is the Council's corporate plan.
- 3.2 The Local Government Act 2000 gave the Council the power to promote the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area.
- 3.3 Localism Act 2011 – General Power of Competence, a local authority has power to do anything that individuals of full legal capacity may do giving authorities the power to take reasonable action they need 'for the benefit of the authority, its area or persons resident or present in its area'.

### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS




- 4.1 The financial strategy is an integral part of the Our Plan strategic framework, which includes the Annual Delivery Plan, ensuring resources and direct financial costs are managed as part of the process. The Annual Delivery Plan also directly links into the new commissioning cycle enabling more effective commissioning decisions.
- 4.2 There are no direct cost implications of this report and the resources required for the actions proposed in the Annual Delivery Plan are included within the financial strategy and the T18 programme.

### 5. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 The Risk Management implications are shown at the end of this report in the Strategic Risks Template.

<b>Corporate priorities engaged:</b>	Homes, Economy, Environment and Community Life
<b>Statutory powers:</b>	Local Government Act 2000 Localism Act 2011 – General Power of Competence
<b>Considerations of equality and human rights:</b>	There are no direct implications relating to this report on equality and human rights. However, these issues will be considered as part of the actions as they develop
<b>Biodiversity considerations:</b>	Biodiversity issues will be addressed in relevant plan actions
<b>Sustainability considerations:</b>	Sustainability considerations are central to the plan
<b>Crime and disorder implications:</b>	None
<b>Background papers:</b>	
<b>Appendices attached:</b>	<i>Appendix "A" – Draft Annual Delivery Plan 2015-16</i>

## STRATEGIC RISKS TEMPLATE

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status			Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership	
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	Strategic Direction	Provide strategic direction for the future of the borough and organisation	High - Plans and priorities that don't meet local needs	Low	8	 Our Plan will reduce current risk	One overarching framework bringing together corporate plan, local plan, transformation and improvement plans and financial plan giving clearer strategic direction  Effective engagement and consultation with Members, partners, community and stakeholders  Regular review and updating	SMT
	Economic Conditions and Funding	Difficult economic conditions and reducing funding could impact on delivery	High - Unable to deliver outcomes to meet local needs	Medium	12	 Our Plan will reduce current risk	Financial strategy integral part of "Our Plan" with resources identified during development stages  Commissioning cycle used to identify most efficient methods of delivery  Regular monitoring and updating to identify and address emerging issues	SMT Community Manager
3	New Government Policy	Actions need to be in conformity with Government legislation	Medium - Actions don't deliver outcomes in line with Government policy	Low	6		Maintaining understanding of Government legislation  Working closely with stakeholders, partners and community to develop action plans that reflect Government policy and meet local need	Community Manager

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status				Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
4	T18	T18 recruitment process and ensuring expertise is in place to take Our Plan forward	Medium- T18 recruitment process could result in a loss of resource	Medium	9	↔	Ensure the resources and expertise required to take the plan and agreed actions forward are factored into the new high level design	SMT
5	2015 Elections	Both at national and local level could affect future policy and decision-making	Medium – work could need revisiting incurring delay	Medium	9	<b>New Risk</b>	Update new Members on the plan, priorities and actions  Ensure resources in place to respond to any changes in Government policy	SMT Community Manager

Direction of travel symbols ↓ ↑ ↔

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# WEST DEVON – A LEADING RURAL COUNCIL

## INTRODUCTION

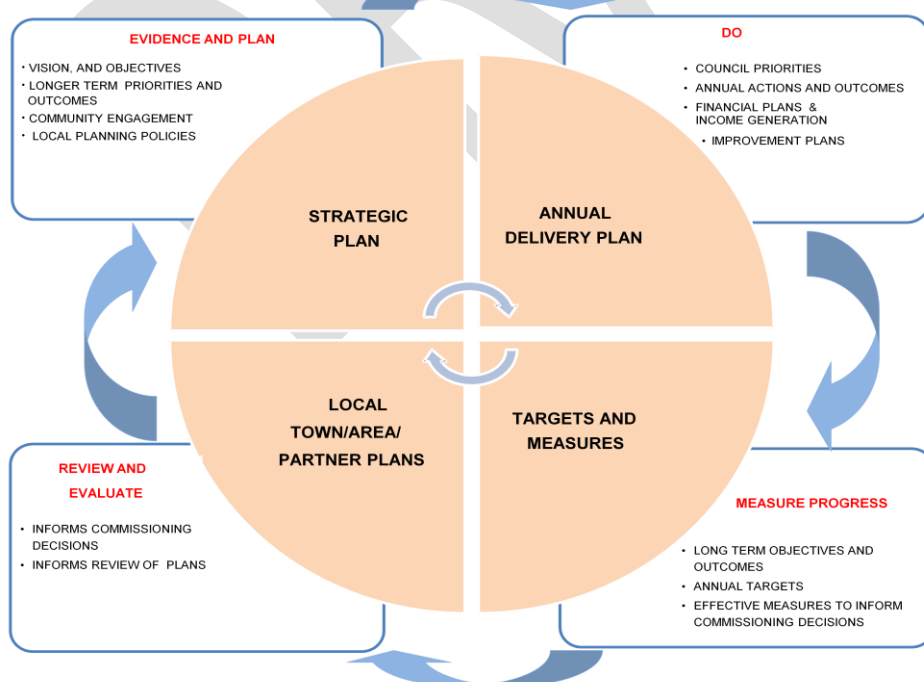
### Introducing “Our Plan”

“Our” Plan is one overarching strategic plan for the Borough of West Devon which brings together the long term strategic plans for the area into one framework.

This document is the Annual Delivery Plan for West Devon Borough Council and sits below the high level strategic plan that sets out a vision for West Devon and the longer term aims and objectives for the Borough as an area. Central to the strategic plan are a future development strategy for homes and jobs and formal planning policies. The development strategy and planning policies cover the area of West Devon outside Dartmoor National Park, whilst other aspects of the plan, including the Annual Delivery Plan, apply to the whole of the Borough.

The strategic plan is informed by evidence of local needs and the plans of partners, towns and neighbourhoods and has been prepared following extensive engagement and consultation with communities, businesses, stakeholders and partners.

The Annual Delivery Plan is the Council’s corporate plan. It is directly informed by the strategic plan and incorporates financial plans and improvement plans, enabling clearer, consistent and robust commissioning decisions serving our communities and businesses more effectively in the future.



## What does “Our Plan” cover?

In order to determine which subjects the high level strategic plan should cover we considered legislative requirements, evidence of local needs, carried out a statutory consultation and engaged both formally and informally with local communities, businesses, stakeholders and partners. From all of this we developed a framework for the plan covering the following topics:



Once we were clear as to the subject areas for the plan we further engaged with communities, businesses, stakeholders and partners on understanding how we could develop effective and flexible policies that meet local community needs and aspirations. We also commissioned additional evidence to ensure proposed policies would be sustainable, viable and appropriate now and in the future.



## **Our Plan Vision and Objectives**

### **VISION FOR WEST DEVON:**

## *Thriving Towns and Villages*

## **Enhancing the quality of life for individuals and communities**

***Through Our Plan we are striving to achieve communities that have access to housing, employment, services and facilities that meet their needs, communities that are resilient, safe and able to make choices about their future. Our communities are places where businesses can develop and grow.***

***We want to ensure the plan makes a positive contribution to the equality, fairness and spiritual wellbeing of our communities.***

How we will achieve Our Vision is defined in each policy area of the strategic plan and through the actions set out in our Annual Delivery Plan. We will measure the progress we are making by how well we are meeting our objectives, actions and targets and the impact all this is having on the people and place of West Devon.

The objectives of “Our Plan” are set out below and more detail can be found in the strategic plan document ([LINK TO DRAFT OUR PLAN DOCUMENT/OUR PLAN WEBPAGE](#)).

### **Our Wellbeing**

- To deliver positive health and wellbeing outcomes for communities
- To reduce health inequalities and social isolation
- To ensure local people have access to housing, employment, services, facilities and activities that improve health outcomes and promote healthy lifestyles

### **Our Communities**

- To facilitate growth in a sustainable way that meets the needs of local communities
- To support innovative and flexible solutions for all types of development that meet local needs and which enables communities and individuals to develop resilience and adapt to changing life circumstances
- To enable communities have a safe, secure and healthy environment where homes are supported by employment, infrastructure and facilities which contribute to thriving communities
- To empower communities to make their own choices about services and future growth options and the delivery of services
- To plan for the long term development needs of our communities in a way which preserves West Devon as a special place to live, work and visit

### **Our Homes**

- To enable the delivery of an appropriate level and range of housing to meet differing needs
- To ensure that the current housing stock is healthy, safe and secure supporting independent living and reducing fuel poverty

### **Our Economy**

- To facilitate a supportive economic environment for employment and productivity growth that is sustainable in the long term
- To develop a deep understanding of local business needs to inform strategic working and maximise funding opportunities
- To support and promote the role of town centres by encouraging development which ensures they remain attractive and vibrant destinations

**Our Infrastructure**

- To provide appropriate infrastructure alongside development so that communities are supported by access to key services and facilities
- To improve access to high speed internet services and mobile communications
- To improve provision and access to transport services
- To improve access and provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities

**Our Environment**

- To protect and enhance the special high quality landscapes of West Devon
- To conserve and enhance internationally, nationally and locally designated areas
- To protect and improve the biodiversity, wildlife and habitats of West Devon
- To place development in areas of low flood risk
- To reduce the risks from pollution by finding ways to address and mitigate against any known impacts

**Our Heritage**

- To protect, enhance and promote the heritage assets within West Devon

**Our Resources**

- To make a contribution to a low carbon future
- To maximise the best use of energy efficiency and design of new buildings
- To contribute to the national drive to increase renewable energy generation
- To respond to fuel poverty
- To work with communities to help develop community energy projects

**What is the “Annual Delivery Plan”?**

The Annual Delivery Plan is the Council’s corporate plan and is made up of three parts:



**Council Services**

The Council carries out a wide range of day to day activities ensuring services are delivered to residents, businesses, communities and visitors. Some of these services are statutory, meaning that we are required to deliver them by law as set out in the legislation at a minimum, and some services are discretionary, meaning we are not required to deliver them but do so because local people tell us they are important to them and there is strong evidence to support this. In an era of reduced funding we always need to review what we do to ensure that it delivers value to local communities and outcomes that meet an identified local need, so sometimes it may be necessary to stop doing something where there is little support or evidence that it is making a contribution to the local quality of life. We also don't

have to deliver the services directly ourselves and may work with partners or commission others to undertake the work, where this is the best option in terms of value and outcomes. We always aim to consult with local people if a significant change is planned.

**SOME OF THE DAY TO DAY WORK THE COUNCIL DOES:** (Design Team to format as diagram)

PLANNING	RECYCLING	WASTE	CAR PARKING
HOUSING ADVICE	HOUSING REGISTER	HOMELESSNESS	AFFORDABLE HOUSING
PEST CONTROL	ELECTIONS	NOISE POLLUTION	BUILDING CONTROL
FUTURE PLANNING	STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING	LAND CHARGES	DOG FOULING
FLY TIPPING	LITTER	BUSINESS RATES	COUNCIL TAX
HOUSING CONDITIONS	DISBALED FACILITIES GRANTS	ABANDONED VEHICLES	AIR POLLUTION
CONTAMINATED LAND	DRAINAGE	LEISURE FACILITIES	FOOD SAFETY
CONNECT OUTREACH	INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT THE LOCAL ECONOMY	TAXI/ ANIMAL/ GAMBLING/ ALCOHOL ENTERTAINMENT AND OTHER LICENCES	LETTING AND MANAGING INDUSTRIAL UNITS
COMMUNITY GRANT FUNDING	WORK CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	PUBLIC TOILETS	HOUSING BENEFITS
AND MORE.....			

The Priority Action Plan element of the Annual Delivery Plan sets added value actions that will help the Council deliver its day to day services in a better way and supports the vision, objectives and priorities of the Council and the area. It is supported by the financial strategy and the Council’s transformation and service Improvement Plans, in particular the Council’s current transformation programme, T18.

**Transforming the Council: T18**

The Council is moving to a model whereby the needs of the customer are at the centre of delivery, rather than traditional models of local government working based round services. The effective use of technology and working in a more agile and flexible way within our communities are key to future delivery. The programme themes of “Customer”, “Continuous Improvement” and “Commercial Development” will run through everything we do as an organisation. T18 will enable the continued delivery of front line service in the most cost-effective and customer focused way.

**What are West Devon Borough Council’s Priorities for Delivery?**

Information and evidence from the strategic plan was used to determine the Council’s own corporate priorities for delivery as part of the Annual Delivery Plan, the current priorities are:

**HOMES** – The Council is seeking to enable the delivery of a range of housing to meet differing needs, we also want to ensure that our current housing stock is healthy, safe and secure supporting independent living and reducing fuel poverty. We are responding to Welfare Reform by working with partners to improve financial capability and resilience for those individuals who are vulnerable and most at risk of losing their homes.

***JOB*** – We are working to facilitate a supportive economic environment for employment and productivity growth that is sustainable in the long term. We also are developing a deep understanding of local business needs to inform strategic working and maximise funding opportunities.

***NATURAL ENVIRONMENT*** – We want to reconnect people and nature through the effective management and delivery of open space, play, outdoor activities and recreation. We will be reviewing our environmental partnerships and funding to produce better outcomes and benefits that protect and improve our natural environment.

***EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICES*** – As a local authority the delivery of our day to day services is most important to our customers. We are seeking to deliver high quality services in ways that meet customer needs most effectively and offers the best value for money. We are undertaking a number of strategic reviews of key services such as Leisure, Waste, Car Parking and Street Scene to ensure they are delivering the right service for local people in the most cost effective way, as well as making the most of our Asset Base for the benefit of our communities and ourselves and working with our partners to improve health outcomes for local people.

A number of high level activities with supporting actions have been identified as important to focus on in 2015-16. These are areas that will add additional value to and complement the important day to day work the Council carries out.

### ***Activity Areas & Annual Delivery Plan Actions for 2015-16***

The following have been identified as key activity areas for the Council to focus on:

#### **HOMES**

##### **ACTIVITY AREAS:**

- ***Local Homes for Local People***
- ***Healthy, Safe and Secure housing***
- ***Responding to Welfare Reform***

#### **JOB**

##### **ACTIVITY AREAS:**

- ***Sustainable Economic Growth***
- ***Business Engagement***

#### **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

##### **ACTIVITY AREAS:**

- ***Reconnecting People and Nature***
- ***Protecting and Improving our Natural Environment***

#### **EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICES**

##### **ACTIVITY AREAS:**

- ***Strategic Leisure Review***
- ***Strategic Assets Review***
- ***Strategic Waste Review***
- ***Car Parking Strategy***
- ***Street Scene***
- ***Health and Wellbeing***

Each activity area is supported by actions to be undertaken or progressed during the year. Some of the actions will not be completed within a one-year timeframe but are important areas of focus for the Council and we wish to ensure that progress is made towards achieving them in a timely manner. The actions are set out in an action plan at the end of this document.

***How will we measure and review the Annual Delivery Plan?***

We need to understand the impact our policies, activities and actions have on our local communities and the natural environment of West Devon. We also need to be flexible to meet new challenges, changing priorities and differing economic drivers and conditions.

In order to assess the impact of our plans, policies, activities and actions we will developing a robust assessment framework in the coming months to enable us to review how we are delivering on our objectives and priorities, how the activities and actions we take are meeting the needs of our communities and to inform more robust, evidence based commissioning decisions. We will use this information to review the plan on an annual basis to update the Council's priorities and set activities and actions for the next year.

DRAFT

# Annual Delivery Plan Priority Action Plan 2015/16

## HOMES

### ACTIVITY AREAS:

- *Local Homes for Local People*
- *Healthy, Safe and Secure housing*
- *Responding to Welfare Reform*

Action (What)	Evidence (Why)	Method (How)	Monitor Impact (How/ Frequency)
<p><b>Develop and adopt a range of initiatives to support wider housing need across the Borough</b></p>	<p><i>Emerging recognition of the need for the Council to look at enabling a wider range of housing solutions that can meet diverse needs.</i></p> <p><i>Smarter intelligence is required to understand the different requirements across the Borough.</i></p>	<p><i>Undertake a short form review and sense check of existing intelligence on housing need and commission any additional intelligence required to review present and future priorities and develop policies that are focussed on wider housing need across the Borough.</i></p>	<p><i>Quarterly monitoring of current intelligence.</i></p> <p><i>Contracts for commissioned intelligence monitored and delivered.</i></p> <p><i>Quarterly monitoring of housing delivery and assessment of how needs being met.</i></p>
<p><b>Develop and Introduce an Empty Homes Strategy for West Devon and explore options to link to a wider Direct Lets Property Management Scheme</b></p>	<p><i>Whilst there are relatively low levels of empty homes, returning these to use maximises existing stock, reduces blight and attracts New Homes Bonus.</i></p> <p><i>Direct Let scheme is an alternative housing option to reduce homelessness and maximise stock usage.</i></p>	<p><i>Use South Hams existing Empty Homes Strategy and Direct Lets Scheme as the Framework to develop an approach that meets West Devon's needs.</i></p>	<p><i>Targets set for return of empty homes to use with an assessment of how these have met local needs.</i></p> <p><i>Targets set for Direct Lets: number of properties, operating costs being met through rents and fees and additional income generated, homeless preventions.</i></p>

<p><b>Review and revise the Bond Guarantee and rent in advance schemes</b></p>	<p><i>Scope for improvement, and changing circumstances and demand support the need for a review of service provision.</i></p> <p><i>If Direct Lets Scheme developed opportunity to link together.</i></p>	<p><i>Undertake a short form review and sense check of existing policies to ensure homeless and associated duties are being delivered in an efficient and cost effective manner.</i></p> <p><i>Revise and update existing policies to better meet identified needs.</i></p>	<p><i>Annually through the delivery plan process.</i></p> <p><i>Monitor homelessness and preventions, case studies.</i></p>
<p><b>Develop a strategic approach for reducing fuel poverty</b></p>	<p><i>Increasing Fuel Poverty levels adversely affecting health and wellbeing of residents. Market lead delivery of Government initiatives not benefitting rural communities.</i></p>	<p><i>Consolidate existing local (Council and Community) policy initiatives and identify, and fill where feasible, any gaps in support or activity.</i></p>	<p><i>Develop measures to assess outcomes using emerging monitoring framework.</i></p> <p><i>Set targets for interventions and review how measures are making inroads into reducing fuel poverty.</i></p>
<p><b>If Local Discretionary Welfare Funding funding remains available - Procure a money advice service to enable vulnerable clients to sustain tenancies and manage finances to meet priority financial commitments effectively</b></p> <p><b>Work with partners to understand the impact of welfare reform changes on local people and develop a comprehensive list of agencies offering assistance and signposting routes</b></p>	<p><i>Welfare changes will require those on low incomes and/or benefits to better manage their own finances to ensure they are able to meet bills and priority commitments.</i></p> <p><i>With the reduction or removal of the Local Discretionary Welfare Support funded by Government there will be less access to emergency funds so better signposting and money management will crucial to financial sustainability.</i></p>	<p><i>If procuring money advice - review current provision, develop revised product and tender to market.</i></p> <p><i>Bring together key public sector and voluntary and community sector partners to map current advice and provision and develop a robust referral framework and monitoring process.</i></p>	<p><i>Money Advice contract – quarterly measures and annual reporting on interventions, financial gains, debts managed and case studies.</i></p> <p><i>Use emerging monitoring framework to assess impact of referrals using similar measures to Money Advice contract.</i></p>

## JOBS

### ACTIVITY AREAS:

- *Sustainable Economic Growth*
- *Business Engagement*

<b>Action (What)</b>	<b>Evidence (Why)</b>	<b>Method (How)</b>	<b>Monitor Impact (How/ Frequency)</b>
<b>Business Engagement and Support</b>	<i>To signpost businesses to funding opportunities, best practice, training, changing legislation, apprenticeships, etc.</i>	<i>Hold two Business Voice events a year, plus quarterly e-newsletters and business database development. Members to distribute business voice sign up cards. Provision of a Business Support service delivering information guidance and advice to local businesses.</i>	<i>Quarterly monitoring of Business Support contract against pre-agreed targets.</i>
<b>Research and intelligence</b>	<i>To fully understand business needs and to inform future funding streams.</i>	<i>Delivery of a borough wide biennial Business Survey. Delivery of annual Town Benchmarking in Tavistock and Okehampton.</i>	<i>Develop measures to assess outcomes using emerging monitoring framework.</i>
<b>Maximising funding opportunities</b>	<i>To ensure Council resources are used to their full potential and deliver added value.</i>	<i>Preparation of bids for LEADER, EUSIF, Growth Deal funding streams. Delivery of ongoing funded projects to mitigate clawback.</i>	<i>Develop measures to assess outcomes using emerging monitoring framework.</i>
<b>Strategic Working</b>	<i>To benefit from economies of scale and lobbying clout.</i>	<i>Participation in City Deal and LEP initiatives to influence employment land, road, rail and broadband developments. Negotiation of S106 contributions.</i>	<i>Develop measures to assess outcomes using emerging monitoring framework.</i>



## NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

### ACTIVITY AREAS:

- *Reconnecting People and Nature*
- *Protecting and Improving our Natural Environment*

Action (What)	Evidence (Why)	Method (How)	Monitor Impact (How/ Frequency)
<p>Support the development and delivery of Open Space, Sport and Recreation facilities in towns and villages - Adopt Open Space, Sport and Recreation Strategy as part of Our Plan. Introduce Implementation plan utilising s.106 and other funding</p>	<p><i>New development generates need for new facilities or upgrade of existing. Communities require evidence to support refurbishment and grant applications. Healthy lifestyle contributes significantly to health outcomes.</i></p>	<p><i>Conclude and adopt strategy. Establish implementation plan. Provide officer support to delivery.</i></p>	<p><i>6 monthly to appropriate Committee.</i></p> <p><i>Develop measures to assess outcomes using emerging monitoring framework.</i></p>
<p>Support countryside management and access projects - Adopt Green Infrastructure Strategy as part of Our Plan. Introduce Implementation plan utilising s.106 and other funding</p>	<p><i>New development generates need for new facilities or upgrade of existing. Strategic access routes support communities and tourism. Healthy lifestyle contributes significantly to health outcomes.</i></p>	<p><i>Conclude and adopt strategy. Establish implementation plan. Provide officer support to delivery.</i></p>	<p><i>6 monthly to appropriate Committee.</i></p> <p><i>Develop measures to assess outcomes using emerging monitoring framework.</i></p>
<p>Support management of Local Space for Local People - Support communities in taking enhanced responsibility for open space, sport and recreation facilities in their communities in order to improve management and local accountability</p>	<p><i>Known pressures on existing management of public space – and opportunities for locally based management. Catalyst of Neighbourhood Plans and Parish Plans.</i></p>	<p><i>Provide advice service to include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Management structures</i></li> <li>• <i>Funding and Grant applications</i></li> <li>• <i>Management plans</i></li> <li>• <i>Maintenance</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>6 monthly to appropriate Committee.</i></p> <p><i>Develop measures to assess outcomes using emerging monitoring framework.</i></p>

<b>Time limited review of environmental partnership arrangements to establish purpose and effectiveness</b>	<i>Council is member of a number of partnerships. There is a need to review effectiveness of spend and outcomes to focus on key issues.</i>	<i>Task and Finish Group</i>	<i>Report to Community Services Committee.</i>
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## **EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICES**

### **ACTIVITY AREAS:**

- ***Strategic Leisure Review***
- ***Strategic Assets Review***
- ***Strategic Waste Review***
- ***Car Parking Strategy***
- ***Street Scene***
- ***Health and Wellbeing***

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<b>Action (What)</b>	<b>Evidence (Why)</b>	<b>Method (How)</b>	<b>Monitor Impact (How/ Frequency)</b>
<b>Undertake systematic review of Leisure provision and related health and wellbeing activities</b>	<i>Council operate leisure centres and current contracts terminate in 2016. Council needs to consider, agree and implement a future approach.</i>	<i>Councillor consideration and contract procurement exercise.</i>	<i>Member Officer working group or panel.  Develop measures to assess outcomes using emerging monitoring framework.</i>
<b>Undertake a systematic review of the Councils assets</b>	<i>Council needs to maximise income generation opportunities to balance budget and maintain services. Community and partner requirements, sharing and co-locating to save money, community needs through neighbourhood and parish plans.</i>	<i>Implement a framework and process to assess Council assets to maximise income generation and sharing opportunities with partners and enhance community benefit.</i>	<i>Develop measures to assess outcomes using emerging monitoring framework.</i>

<p><b>Maximise opportunities for income generation from delivered waste services where legislation allows.</b></p>	<p><i>Acute and on-going budget pressure.</i></p>	<p><i>Continue to introduce and monitor business and Schedule 2 waste. Review charges for bulky waste collections. Prepare outline briefing notes on charged garden collections.</i></p>	<p><i>Briefing notes to be completed.</i></p> <p><i>New proposals to be developed and considered by Members.</i></p> <p><i>Develop measures to assess outcomes using emerging monitoring framework.</i></p>
<p><b>Maximise opportunities for efficiency savings from waste services.</b></p>	<p><i>Acute and on-going budget pressure.</i></p> <p><i>West Devon contract ends on 31 March 2017 and re-letting in similar format is likely to increase costs significantly.</i></p>	<p><i>Consider all appropriate forms of delivery options.</i></p> <p><i>Continue Executive Waste Board working as aims include reaping financial efficiencies and more 'customer-friendly services from joint working across the county.</i></p> <p><i>Consider benefits of closer shared service work between West Devon &amp; South Hams. Shared working group.</i></p> <p><i>Direct comparison information on SH/WD services to include costs/ recycle rates and credits/ items recycled to help inform debate on future provision.</i></p>	<p><i>New proposals to be developed and considered by Members.</i></p> <p><i>Introduce Contractor obligation for periodic waste analysis for any new contract.</i></p> <p><i>Develop measures to assess outcomes using emerging monitoring framework.</i></p>

<p><b>Develop a strategic approach to waste education.</b></p>	<p><i>Recognition of need to move towards circular economy which will require need for greater understanding of waste issues to reduce landfill and increase re-use and recycling leading to environmental and financial benefits.</i></p>	<p><i>Consider rephrasing terminology e.g. waste – resource.</i></p> <p><i>Make consideration of waste hierarchy in all decision-making more implicit/accountable.</i></p> <p><i>Look at feasibility to build into the waste contract and incentivise the contractor.</i></p>	<p><i>Set date for completion of review. Benchmark against Councils that do/don't have a waste education programme.</i></p> <p><i>New proposals to be developed and considered by Members.</i></p> <p><i>Develop measures to assess outcomes using emerging monitoring framework.</i></p>
<p><b>Car Parking Strategy – develop a shared car parking framework, allowing both South Hams and West Devon to include individual strategic elements</b></p>	<p><i>To maximise usage and maintain current income levels.</i></p> <p><i>To meet customer need (community led tariff reviews).</i></p> <p><i>To build on previous innovations which have gained national acclaim.</i></p>	<p><i>Joint framework to be agreed in both authorities. Individual strategies in each Council to reflect the differing environments.</i></p>	<p><i>Framework to be produced in 2015, with Members to consider individual strategic elements.</i></p> <p><i>Develop measures to assess outcomes using emerging monitoring framework.</i></p>
<p><b>Review Street Scene enforcement work to place greater emphasis on a pro-active and educational approach</b></p>	<p><i>Although enforcement is developing successfully in West Devon, we should consider an educational approach in order to be pro-active rather than reactive.</i></p>	<p><i>Street Scene officers to join the Connect officers and Recycling Education officer at roadshows, presentations and other events and talks in schools alongside student litter picks.</i></p> <p><i>Work with communities to encourage them to take responsibility for their own areas.</i></p>	<p><i>Members to consider this proposal and for officers to trial the approach during 2015.</i></p> <p><i>Develop measures to assess outcomes using emerging monitoring framework.</i></p>

<p><b>Review and update the Public Health Locality Action Plan and use this to develop a policy/strategy for Health and Wellbeing.</b></p>	<p><i>Public health is a statutory responsibility of the County Council but as a Borough we also deliver services that impact on health: Leisure, development, housing conditions, homelessness, fuel poverty, air quality, food safety, open space management, targeted families, community safety.</i></p> <p><i>Plan uses health indicators to identify issues and areas of concern where actions need to be developed to reduce health inequalities and improve health outcomes.</i></p>	<p><i>Review and update Locality Public Health Action Plan using this and Our Plan as the basis for a health and wellbeing strategy for the Borough.</i></p>	<p><i>Develop targets to monitor impact of actions within the plan at a local level using emerging monitoring framework.</i></p> <p><i>Use annually published health indicators to assess impact.</i></p>
<p><b>Review and develop partnerships with health and social care sector and voluntary and community sector to deliver health and wellbeing outcomes for communities</b></p>	<p><i>Health responsibilities have changed and currently lack of co-ordination and integration across providers.</i></p> <p><i>Voluntary sector currently delivers many supporting services across health and social care.</i></p> <p><i>Deficit at CCG and other funding challenges require sectors to look at different models of delivery and greater focus on prevention in a co-ordinated way.</i></p>	<p><i>Develop a Health and Social Care Group with partners across DNPA, health, social care and voluntary sector that seeks opportunities to work together to deliver health outcomes, Identifying priority communities and groups and developing joint initiatives to be delivered into local communities.</i></p>	<p><i>Develop measures to monitor effectiveness of group through project targets and outcomes.</i></p>

DRAFT

## WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

<b>NAME OF COMMITTEE</b>	<b>Resources</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>3 February 2015</b>
<b>REPORT TITLE</b>	<b>Neighbourhood Plan area approval process</b>
<b>REPORT OF</b>	<b>Strategic Planning Officer</b>
<b>WARDS AFFECTED</b>	<b>All</b>

**Summary of report:**

Early in the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) preparation process the first formal stage is reached – designation of the plan area.

Following consultation on the proposed area for a six week period the decision whether to approve the area is the responsibility of the local planning authority. As set out in the Council’s Neighbourhood Planning Protocol, this decision is referred to Resources Committee. As this step is purely procedural and has in each case to-date been non-contentious, it is proposed that this decision be delegated.

**Financial implications:**

The financial implications of the duty to support the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan will be neutral, due to the Council being able to claim back associated costs as detailed in paragraph 4.2. Where applications for plan areas are successful, the Council can bid for central government funding up to £5,000 per plan to help cover the associated costs of preparation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It is recommended that Members:

1. Agree that the authority to approve the designation of Neighbourhood Plan areas be delegated to the Group Manager (Universal Customer Services) (GM UCS) in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the appropriate ward member(s).
2. Subject to approval of recommendation 1 above, agree that the appropriate changes be made to the Council’s Neighbourhood Planning Protocol (as set out in the Appendix to this report) to reflect this change.
3. Agree that the authority to amend the Neighbourhood Planning Protocol to reflect any future changes to the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations be delegated to the GM UCS in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

**Officer contact:**

Jo Perry Strategic Planning Manager: 01822 813558

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Localism Act and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) both came into effect in 2012. These encourage and support communities to prepare plans for their area.
- 1.2 The Council has adopted a Neighbourhood Planning Protocol which provides clear information on the procedures that will guide the Neighbourhood Planning process.
- 1.3 The first formal step in the process is to designate a plan area. This requires communities to make an application to the Council. Such applications are then subject to a six week period during which those who live, work or carry out business in the area are invited to comment on whether the proposed area is appropriate. There are other opportunities during the Neighbourhood Planning process to put forward ideas about what the plan should contain.
- 1.4 This report considers the internal Council process for approving the designation of Neighbourhood Planning areas. The expectation is that such areas will normally be based on parish boundaries. Area designation applications are reviewed by Resources Committee and the decision whether or not to designate the plan area is assessed against the following five criteria, as set out in the Neighbourhood Planning Protocol:
  - (i) The applicant is an appropriate body with responsibility for leading the plan process (i.e. a town or parish council);
  - (ii) Terms of Reference for the group have been prepared and signed by all members of the group;
  - (iii) The proposed area is suitable and reasons have been adequately demonstrated if it does not follow the boundaries of existing parishes;
  - (iv) The plan area does not overlap any other designated Neighbourhood Plan area; and,
  - (v) The plan area does not prejudice other Neighbourhood Plan areas coming forward in the future.

## **2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 2.1 Each time a new Neighbourhood Plan area designation has been proposed and has completed a six week consultation period a report has been taken to Resources Committee. So far within the West Devon five neighbourhood planning areas have been approved. In all cases the proposed plan areas have not been contentious and have been approved as recommended. Given the procedural nature of this approval process this report recommends that the approval decision be delegated to the GM UCS in conjunction with the leader of the Council and the appropriate ward member(s).
- 2.2 The Council's Neighbourhood Planning Protocol provides information on how the Council will support communities preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and how it will assess applications to designate Neighbourhood Plan areas. If the change to the approval process as set out in recommendation 1 in this report is agreed, it will be necessary to make minor changes to the wording of the Neighbourhood



Planning Protocol to reflect this. The current and proposed wording is set out in the Appendix to this report.

- 2.3 It is anticipated that there will be occasional future changes to the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations which set out the process for producing neighbourhood plans. The Council’s Neighbourhood Planning Protocol may need to be amended to reflect such changes which are likely to be procedural and relatively minor in terms of their implications. Accordingly, it is recommended that the authority to make such changes to the protocol be delegated to the GM UCS in consultation with the leader of the Council.

**3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The Localism Act and National Planning Policy Framework make provision for communities to prepare plans that influence planning and development in their area.
- 3.2 The assessment and approval of applications to designate Neighbourhood Plan areas are made in accordance with the Council’s adopted Neighbourhood Planning Protocol.
- 3.3 The Town and Country Planning, England, Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 set out the procedures which govern the processes of Neighbourhood Planning.

**4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications of this proposed change of process for approving Neighbourhood Plan areas.
- 4.2 When applications for plan areas are approved, the Council can bid for central government funding of up to £5,000 per area to support the communities in the preparation of their plans. If the bids are successful, the money will be held by the Council to cover any costs incurred as a result of supporting the communities with the progression of their plans.

**5. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 5.1 The risk management implications are shown at the end of this report in the Strategic Risks Template.

**6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

Corporate priorities engaged:	All
Statutory powers:	National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012 Localism Act 2011 Town and Country Planning, England Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

Considerations of equality and human rights:	This report seeks to improve the Council's internal decision-taking process relating to the designation of Neighbourhood Plan areas and to improve the responsiveness to local communities.
Biodiversity considerations:	There are no direct biodiversity implications arising from the report.
Sustainability considerations:	There are no direct sustainability implications arising from the report.
Crime and disorder implications:	There are no proposals contained within this report that have direct crime and disorder implications to consider.
Background papers:	Neighbourhood Planning Protocol

## STRATEGIC RISKS TEMPLATE

No	Risk Title	Risk/Opportunity Description	Inherent risk status				Mitigating & Management actions	Ownership
			Impact of negative outcome	Chance of negative outcome	Risk score and direction of travel			
1	Speed and efficiency of decision-taking process	The change to the approval process will represent a more efficient process and will enable the Council to respond more quickly to applications to designate Neighbourhood Plan areas.	2	2	4	↑	Approve the recommended change to the Neighbourhood Plan area designation approval process and make the appropriate amendments to the Neighbourhood Planning Protocol and the Council's Scheme of Delegation.	Strategic Planning

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Direction of travel symbols ↓ ↑ ⇄

## **Appendix**

### **Current wording in the Neighbourhood Planning Protocol relating to the approval of NP areas**

Following this six week notice period, applications will be reviewed by the Community Services Committee. Any issues raised regarding the designation of a plan area will be debated in this forum. The Community Services Committee will take account of any comments made during the six week notice period and will use the criteria in the following table to decide whether or not to designate the plan area.

### **Proposed wording to replace the paragraph above**

Following this six week notice period, applications will be reviewed by the Council. Any issues raised regarding the designation of a neighbourhood plan area will be taken into account. The decision whether or not to approve the proposed plan area has been delegated to the Group Manager (Universal Customer Services) in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the appropriate local ward member(s). In coming to this decision the proposed area will be assessed against the criteria in the following table.

# Agenda Item 3

At a Meeting of the **RESOURCES COMMITTEE** held at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Kilworthy Park, Drake Road, **TAVISTOCK** on **TUESDAY** the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of **FEBRUARY 2015** at **2.00pm**

**Present:**

Cllr P R Sanders – Chairman	
Cllr R E Baldwin – Vice-Chairman	
Cllr S C Bailey	Cllr W G Cann OBE
Cllr T J Hill	Cllr A F Leech
Cllr C R Musgrave	Cllr T G Pearce
Cllr P J Ridgers	

**Substitute:** Cllr J Sheldon for Cllr J R McInnes

**In attendance:** Executive Director (Communities)  
Finance Community of Practice Lead (COP)  
Finance Business Partner  
Member Services Manager

**\*RC 23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr J R McInnes for whom Cllr J Sheldon substituted and Cllr E H Sherrell.

**\*RC 24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**\*RC 25 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Resources Committee Meeting held on 2 December 2014 were confirmed as a correct record.

**RC 26 REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2015/16 TO 2018/19**

The Chairman introduced a report that updated Members on the revenue budget position for the year 2015/16 and a forecast for the four years to 2018/2019. The forecast was intended to provide a framework within which decisions could be made regarding the future service provision and council tax levels whilst building an approach that guaranteed West Devon Borough Council's longer term viability.

The Finance Community of Practice (COP) Lead responded to queries raised throughout the report in respect of predicted inflation rates and business rate relief for charity shops. One Member noted the Members' Allowance figure and the Chairman explained that this was a prudent measure that related to the new governance structure but did not allow for the net effect of the reductions that the new structure would entail. Regardless, Members could only estimate figures as they would not be set until the Independent Remuneration Panel had met and made its recommendations to the Council.

During discussion, the majority of Members reluctantly agreed that the council had no option but to recommend a council tax increase of 1.9%. If the council accepted the council tax freeze grant, there was no guarantee that this amount would be built into the base budget and therefore the authority could be worse off in future years. Another Member stated that proposing a 1.9% increase was the most sensible way forward as it prevented more of the New Homes Bonus being used to support the revenue budget which would allow it to be available to help support the provision of much needed affordable homes in West Devon. It was then **PROPOSED, SECONDED** and on being put to the vote unanimously declared **CARRIED** that Members would recommend a 1.9% increase in council tax.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED**:

- (i) That in order to set a balanced budget for 2015-16 an increase in Council Tax of 1.9% is agreed (which equates to a Band D council tax of £208.39 for 2015/16, an increase of £3.89 per year or 7 pence per week). This option equates to a Council Tax requirement of £4,054,644 (as shown in Appendix B1)
- (ii) That the financial pressures in Appendix A of £484,400 are accepted
- (iii) That the proposed savings of £148,700 set out in Appendix A are adopted
- (iv) That the Collection Fund surplus of £60,589 be agreed
- (v) That an additional £567,710 (if council tax is increased by 1.9% as per Appendix B1) or £601,160 (if council tax is frozen as per Appendix B2) of New Homes Bonus Grant is used to balance the 2015-16 Budget. (This is in addition to the £657,059 of New Homes Bonus already built into the budget assumptions to be used for 2015-16).
- (vi) That the Total Net Expenditure of the Council for 2015/16 is £8,134,325 (Appendix B1 and B2 of the presented agenda report refers)
- (vii) To approve the 2015/16 Capital Programme projects totalling £451,000 as per 8.1 of the presented agenda report.
- (viii) To finance the 2015/16 Capital Programme of £451,000 by using £212,000 of New Homes Bonus funding and £239,000 of Government grant (as per 8.1 of the presented agenda report).

- (ix) That the Council transfers £2,610 of its allocation of New Homes Bonus for 2015/16 to an Earmarked Reserve called 'Community Investment Fund – Dartmoor National Park', to be applied for and drawn down by Dartmoor National Park as required.  
This amount is a one-off payment and the position will be considered annually by the Council as part of the budget process. The condition is that this is for use within the boundaries of the Borough Council only.
- (x) That the Council Tax Support Grant of £87,285 be passed onto Town and Parish Councils. (This is a reduction of 15% from 2014/15) as per Appendix D.
- (xi) That the minimum level of the Unearmarked Revenue Reserves be maintained at £750,000 as per Section 7.
- (xii) That the level of reserves as set out within the presented agenda report and the assessment of their adequacy and the robustness of budget estimates be noted. This is a requirement of Part 2 of the Local Government Act 2003

**\*RC 27 REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2014-15 QUARTER 3 TO 31 DECEMBER 2014**

The Chairman presented a report of the Finance Business Partner that gave Members an indication of the potential year-end financial position of West Devon Borough Council for the revenue budgets for 2014/15 and to bring to Members' attention any significant variance from the revenue budgets set. The report enabled Members to monitor income and expenditure variations against the approved budgets for 2014/15.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the forecast income and expenditure variations for the 2014/15 financial year for the revenue budget be noted.

**RC 28 OUR PLAN – ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN**

The Chairman presented a report of the Community Manager that sought formal approval of the draft Annual Delivery Plan document for 2015-16. The plan was the Council's corporate plan and part of the 'Our Plan' strategic approach to the development of both a Local Plan for the area and the Corporate Planning Framework.

During discussion, Members sought clarity on the authority being delegated to the Community Manager and were advised that it related to design of the document and correction of any typographical errors. Any changes to the actions would require Committee approval. Members also highlighted the importance of the paragraph within the presented appendix that stated how the Annual Delivery Plan would be measured and reviewed.

It was then **RESOLVED** that Council be **RECOMMENDED**:

- To adopt the draft Annual Delivery Plan as the Council's corporate plan for 2015/16; and
- To delegate authority to the Community Manager to make minor changes to the document in order to finalise it for publication.

**\*RC 29**

### **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA APPROVAL PROCESS**

The Chairman presented a report of the Strategic Planning Officer that sought authority to change the current process so that the approval of an area as a Neighbourhood Plan Area be delegated to the Group Manager (Universal Customer Services) (GM UCS). He advised that the current process was cumbersome and this proposal would replace it and be less bureaucratic.

The Community Manager responded to questions related to the funding of the process and confirmed that once an area had been designated that Neighbourhood Plan Group could apply for and receive £5,000. Further funding streams were available if a referendum was necessary. All of the funding would be available for as long as central government provided it.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) Authority to approve the designation of Neighbourhood Plan areas be delegated to the GM UCS in consultation with the Leader of Council and the appropriate local ward Member(s);
- (ii) The appropriate changes to the Council's Neighbourhood Planning Protocol (as set out in the presented appendix to the report) to reflect this change be agreed; and
- (ii) Authority to amend the Neighbourhood Planning Protocol to reflect any future changes to the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations be delegated to the GM UCS in consultation with the Leader of Council.

(The Meeting terminated at 2.30 pm)

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**Chairman**