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West Devon
Borough
Council

Please reply to: Darryl White
Service: Strategy & Commissioning
Direct Dial: (01803) 861247
E-mail address: Darryl.White@swdevon.gov.uk
Date:

Dear Councillor

WEST DEVON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - TUESDAY, 29TH OCTOBER, 2013

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

Agenda No Item

1. **Agenda Letter (Pages 1 - 6)**

2. **Reports**

Reports to O&S:

- a) Item 6 - Monitoring of West Devon Community and Voluntary Services and Citizens Advice Bureau Service Level Agreements 2012/13 (Pages 7 - 46)
- b) Item 7 - Impact of Welfare Reforms (Pages 47 - 54)
- c) Item 8 - Ombudsman Update and Annual Letter (Pages 55 - 62)
- d) Item 9 - Performance Indicators (Q4 2012/13 and Q1 2013/14) (Pages 63 - 82)
- e) Item 10 - Update on Agency Staff (Pages 83 - 88)
- f) Item 11 - Conclusion of the work of the Focus Review Working Group (Pages 89 - 92)

3. **Minutes (Pages 93 - 100)**

Yours sincerely

Darryl White
Senior Specialist – Democratic Services
Encs

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Agenda Item 1

AGENDA – OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 29th OCTOBER 2013

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.

4. Confirmation of Minutes

Meeting held on 4th June 2013 (previously circulated)

Page

5. Update on Transformation Programme

Oral Report of Corporate Director

6. Monitoring of West Devon Community and Voluntary Services and Citizens Advice Bureau Service Level Agreements 2012/13

Report of Community Projects & Policy Officer

6

7. Impact of Welfare Reforms

Report of the Head of ICT and Customer Services

45

8. Ombudsman Update and Annual Letter

Report of Monitoring Officer and Ombudsman Liaison Officer

53

9. Performance Indicators (Q4 2012/13 and Q1 2013/14)

Report of the Head of ICT and Customer Services

60

10. Update on Agency Staff

Report of the Personnel Manager

75

11. Conclusion of the work of the Focus Review Working Group

Report of the Focus Review Working Group

81

12. Draft Work Programme 2013/14

84

13. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000:

Report on Inspection and Authorisation

Members to note that there have been no requests to use the powers under RIPA during the last quarter

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 for the under-mentioned item of business on the grounds that exempt information may be disclosed as defined in the paragraph given in brackets below from Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act”.

This document can be made available in large print, Braille, tape format, other languages or alternative format upon request. Please contact the Committee section on 01822 813662 or email arose@westdevon.gov.uk

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

Likelihood	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
Impact						

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NAME OF COMMITTEE	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
DATE	29 October 2013
REPORT TITLE	Monitoring of West Devon Community and Voluntary Services and Citizens Advice Bureau Service Level Agreements for 2012/13
Report of	Sarah Brown, Community Projects & Policy Officer Planning, Economy & Community
WARDS AFFECTED	All

Summary of report:

To review the operation in 2012/13 of the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with West Devon Community and Voluntary Services (WDCVS), including West Devon Volunteer Centre (WDVC), and West Devon Citizens Advice Bureau (WDCAB).

Financial implications:

The existing SLA annual financial support of:

- £8,500 to WDCVS;
- £32,900 to WDCAB.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that Members review the performance of WDCVS, including WDVC, and WDCAB against the outcomes agreed in the SLAs and advise officers as to whether any further action is required.

Officer contact:

Sarah Brown - Community Projects & Policy Officer – slbrown@westdevon.gov.uk – 01822 813624

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Until April 2012 there was a partnership SLA in place for West Devon CVS with ourselves, Devon County Council (DCC) and the NHS, and a partnership SLA for West Devon CAB with ourselves and DCC. Due to changes in the health service there is now a separate agreement between public health and the CVS; in addition the County also decided that they no longer wished to contract separately with each CVS and CAB and now have one SLA with the CVS across Devon and one with CAB, via an umbrella organisation for each, and pay one

CVS office and one CAB office who are responsible for distributing agreed funding to the other local offices.

- 1.2 From 1st April 2013 WDBC entered into revised SLAs with the local CVS and CAB. These agreements were for an initial period of one year with the ability to extend for a further two years, to reflect the Council's budget position. The funding supplied under the new agreements is to be used for the delivery of specific outcomes for the residents and communities of West Devon. On-going budget planning and discussions throughout the year indicate that the current funding and agreements will continue in 2014/15, subject to approval of the final budget later in the year.
- 1.3 As well as reporting to members annually on outcomes delivered, officers meet with the chief officers for both organisations on a 6 monthly basis to review the SLA outcomes and on other occasions to discuss specific projects or initiatives
- 1.4 The CVS supports and represents hundreds of voluntary and community sector organisations in West Devon.
- 1.5 The CAB provides a range of quality advice and support services to individuals, who are often vulnerable or isolated.
- 1.6 In both cases it is likely that without the provision of this advice and assistance the Council would find itself in the position of having to, at least partly, take on some of this role which, although difficult to quantify, would likely incur additional costs over and above that of the funding contribution provided to these organisations.
- 1.7 WDCAB has reviewed the way it operates this year to ensure it can continue to deliver a locally based sustainable service. As a result from June 2013 it amalgamated with a neighbouring CAB to cut administrative costs. This merger was approved by the Charities Commission and the merged CAB is now known as Torridge, North, Mid and West Devon CAB. The Council has stipulated that all funding provided through the SLA must be used for the benefit of the residents of West Devon to deliver the agreed outcomes.

2. Monitoring of Service Level Agreements 2012/13

- 2.1 This is the last monitoring report under the previous SLAs, future reports will differ slightly to reflect the revised targets & outcomes
- 2.2 WDCVS has produced an annual monitoring report for 2012/13 which includes the information required by the SLA and provides an overview of its work (see Appendix A). WDCVS annual monitoring key statistics are provided below, but should be read in conjunction with Appendix A.
- 2.3 The statistics below show that in nearly all instances there was an increase in outputs in 2012/13, especially with regards to the amount of grant funding the WDCVS has helped bring into West Devon; bearing in mind there has been no increase in funding contribution this demonstrates a positive trend.

WDCVS Annual Monitoring Key Statistics	11/12	12/13
Organisations in touch with WDCVS either based in WD or providing services in WD	430	410
Value of successful grant funding applications supported by WDCVS	£75,000	£120,000
Organisations sent Quarterly 'Funding Extra'	400	400
Member organisations sent the monthly e-mail funding bulletin	100	100
Number of newsletters published	4	4
Total distribution list	600	600
Number of Voluntary Sector Forums held	3	5
Number of organisations represented	57	58
Number of groups helped to develop in areas including bid writing, collaboration, governance and policy issues	63	93
Number of new groups established in West Devon with help from the WDCVS	5	4
Number of groups updated with relevant news, good practice, events & training opportunities	400	600
Number of groups who made use of the equipment to use and hire from WDCVS i.e. digital projector and screen etc	54	36
Number of potential volunteers interviewed or advised	307	366
Number of new volunteering opportunities promoted	65	88

- 2.4 WDCAB has produced an annual monitoring report for 2012/13 which includes the information required by the SLA and provides an overview of its work (see Appendix B). WDCAB annual monitoring key statistics are provided below, but should be read in conjunction with Appendix B.
- 2.5 The statistics below show that in nearly all instances there was an increase in outputs in 2012/13, especially with regards to the amount of extra benefit the WDCAB has helped West Devon residents claim and the amount of debt work dealt with by the Bureau, this is in line with national trends and reflective of the changes to welfare and challenging economic conditions.

WDCAB Annual Monitoring Key Statistics	11/12	12/13
Number of client contacts	5,874	7660
Total number of issues handled	6,559	8209
Number of issues categorised by subject:		
Benefits	3,163	4081
Consumer	103	187
Debt	1,278	1312
Education	33	40
Employment	499	659
Finance (other than debt)	96	128
Health	69	102
Housing	353	567
Immigration	31	49
Legal issues	255	306
Relationship and family matters	372	451
Tax	121	92
Travel	36	53
Utilities	100	117
Signposting	5	5
Other	45	60
Amount of benefit generated for clients	£624,460	£1,504,217
Amount of debt work dealt with by the bureau	£1,462,403	£2,497,873

2.6 Representatives from WDCAB & WDCVS attended this committee in January & June 2013 respectively to provide an overview of the service they deliver, giving members the opportunity to further their understanding of the value the Council receives from its contributions.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The Council has powers under the Localism Act 2011 to support voluntary services in the community.

3.2 The Council's requirements and commitments are secured in the SLAs for WDCVS and WDCAB.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Current annual contributions are:

- £8,500 to WDCVS;
- £32,900 to WDCAB.

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:	Community Life; Economy; Homes
Statutory powers:	Localism Act 2011 (Section 1 – Powers of General Competence)
Considerations of equality and human rights:	The services provided by WDCVS and WDCAB promote equal opportunities and help prevent discrimination in our communities.
Biodiversity considerations:	None
Sustainability considerations:	The SLAs with WDCVS and WDCAB promote sustainability by supporting the VCS and promoting community-led actions and local decision making.
Crime and disorder implications:	The work of WDCVS and WDCAB provides advice and volunteering opportunities which reduce the potential for anti-social behaviour.
Background papers:	WDCVS / WDBC / DCC / NHS Devon SLA 2010 - 2013 WDCAB / WDBC / DCC SLA 2010 – 2013 WDCVS/WDBC SLA 2013/2014 WDCAB/WDBC SLA 2013/2014
Appendices attached:	Appendix A – WDCVS SLA Monitoring Report 2012/13 Appendix B – WDCAB SLA Monitoring Report 2012/13

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	Delivery of Outcomes and Value for Money	Failure to deliver outcomes to the community and provide value for money for the Council's contributions	3	2	6	↔	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual monitoring report 2. Regular meetings with chief officers of funded organisations 3. Contributions reviewed at annual budget setting 4. SLAs reviewed on a regular basis 5. Organisations are nationally recognised with set standards and reporting mechanisms 	Community Manager

Direction of travel symbols ↓ ↑ ↔



**West Devon Community and Voluntary Services
(West Devon CVS)**

**Supporting local voluntary and community action in West
Devon
2012-2013**

**Service Level Agreement
Monitoring Report**

**For
West Devon Borough Council**

Preface

This report relates to the Service Level Agreement with West Devon Borough Council & Devon County Council and compliments the Annual Review of our activity for 2013/13 which outlines the support we delivered and impact we made to our local organisations and the communities they support in further detail. Please contact us for copies of our Annual Review.

We are in touch with over 410 voluntary and community organisations (VCOs) either based in or providing services to West Devon and the thousands of local residents who rely on the services and support they provide.

Local voluntary and community organisations face many challenges — keeping up to date with information and legislation, finding funding, meeting the needs of their communities, getting their voice heard, rural isolation and more. Many West Devon VCOs have no paid staff, and rely on the time and enthusiasm of their volunteers. Changes in local and national policy can be confusing, and keeping up to date and involved is a challenge for many in the sector. Some voluntary and community organisations struggle to make their voices heard in local debates about the way services should be run in the future. Funding for voluntary and community organisations is more and more scarce, and competition for the remaining resources is fierce. West Devon CVS helps by:

- Developing the skills and knowledge of volunteers, staff and management committees
- Providing information on key issues affecting local voluntary and community organisations
- Helping voluntary and community organisations to influence local policy and service development
- Supporting voluntary sector involvement in public service delivery
- Offering one-to-one support and advice for voluntary and community organisations
- Supporting individuals and voluntary and community organisations and promoting volunteering through the Volunteer Centre.

The following pages give a report of core West Devon CVS activities, based on the agreed desired outcomes and indicators, from 1 April 2012 - 31 March 2013

Development: The needs of the local community are identified and improvements in service provision are facilitated to meet those needs

Examples of issues being raised with the funders or the LSP which influence policy, strategic plans and / or service delivery.

Examples include:

- West Devon CVS have successful working relationships with a wide range of strategic partners enabling an enhanced dialogue and understanding of the sector. Partners have been able to approach us for specialised local knowledge of the sector to shape their services
- Through our seat on the Connect Partnership, West Devon CVS is involved with the Community Strategy providing the linking bridge with partners and the voluntary and community sector, as well as taking an active role in working groups and activities.
- WDCVS manages the Voluntary Voice process and this year established mandated voluntary sector representatives for the Community Strategy delivery areas for both South Hams and West Devon and supports the reps through this process.
- West Devon CVS has enabled partners to distribute consultations through our information services, newsletters, members e-bulletins and through Voluntary Sector forums so that they can be informed about voluntary and community sector needs and services, and are influenced by that knowledge, in particular the forums, run jointly with WDBC as Voluntary Voice.
- West Devon CVS was partner in the Connect outreach service attending planning meetings, community days and outreach sessions across the district
- Provision of voluntary sector representation and support to representatives on the DCC/NHS Devon Complex Care Teams across the district is being successfully achieved, through West Devon CVS. Unmet social needs are being identified by the representatives and voluntary & community sector organisations supported to help meet these needs and work in partnership with other agencies
- Additionally we participated in the staying warm and well initiative facilitating use of the voluntary sector to support individuals through this scheme and identifying areas where services could be improved.

West Devon CVS helps voluntary and community organisations identify potential funders, write funding applications, draw up fundraising strategies and provides references. The following West Devon CVS activities support this:

- Access to Funding databases
- Quarterly 'Funding extra' sent to over 400 organisations
- Monthly e-mail funding bulletin sent to over 100 member organisations
- Information sheets on funding issues
- Targeted information packs of funding sources
- One to one advice on funding issues from our groups development officer
- Workshops & training sessions
- Resource library with fundraising resources

During 2012/2013:

- West Devon CVS worked with 26 organisations based in, or delivering services in West Devon, to apply for funding totaling over over £120,000 pounds.

Support: - VCOs are supported to function more effectively and to deliver quality services

West Devon CVS information services and resources offer dedicated support to voluntary groups through newsletters, fact-sheets, e-mail bulletins, website and library. Our ability to inform and enable voluntary activity with the right information to help groups in their work has continued to grow and develop. Our experienced team of staff is always on hand to provide information and support. This year we continued to provide this support Monday to Friday 9.30am – 3.00pm through office, telephone and email access.

Number and circulation of newsletters and / or e-bulletins produced

- Four issues of our newsletter were published during the year. They were distributed to over 600 recipients, including local and voluntary groups, parish councils and libraries and included sectors covering local news, sector news, training, resources and legal issues.
- Monthly issues of our e-bulletin provided more frequent Funding and Training information.
- A series of information sheets are available from our website in downloadable form. The series is designed as a complete guide to the basics for small and new groups.
- The West Devon CVS website has continued to be updated

Examples of effective support given to local organisations to enhance capacity and sustainability.

- 93 groups were helped to develop in areas including bid writing, collaboration, governance and policy issues
- 4 new groups were established in the West Devon with our help
- WDCVS helped 18 local organisations apply for more than £120,000 of grant funding
- Groups attended 5 CVS learning workshops and forums over the year, resulting in increased skills and knowledge for the people running them
- West Devon CVS's information and advice service answered queries and kept over 600 groups up dated with relevant news, good practice, events & training opportunities

Office Services:

- 36 groups continued to make good use of our range of equipment to use and hire (including the digital projector and screen, lap top, display boards and photocopying/printing services).

Record of plaudits and complaints

Some examples of comments we have received this year:

“The help and support we have received in has been invaluable.”

“The expertise of CVS staff and their willingness to support our ideas has 'kept us going' especially when funding was required.”

“The regular information has been a constant source of good ideas.”

Liaison: Communication, networking and collaboration amongst local VCOs is facilitated

West Devon CVS holds voluntary sector forums throughout the Borough. The meetings bring together representatives from all types of groups and organisations across West Devon and are open to any VCOs based or working in the area. The forums offer a chance for groups to share ideas, discuss issues and gather information. They also offer the opportunity to exert influence on decisions taken by local strategic partnerships and their component members and to demonstrate the value of the voluntary sector.

The organisations attending range from small, local groups working with a few volunteers to representatives from much larger organisations.

5 Voluntary Sector Forums were held around the West Devon during the year including

- the second ‘West Devon Voluntary Voice’ forum together with the Borough council around the topic of localism focusing on community planning and the right to bid.
 - two meetings of the West Devon Volunteer Organisers Forum.
 - Health update forums in conjunction with South Hams & Teignbridge CVS
- 58 local voluntary and community organisations have been represented at the West Devon voluntary sector forums.

Exchanging information and networking, during the open forum session and over coffee is often cited as one of the most valuable parts of the forums.

Representation: The diverse views of the voluntary and community sector are enabled to be represented; structures are supported which promote cross-sector partnership working

Examples of consultation activity facilitated

Consultation has been enabled through:

- West Devon Voluntary Sector Forums helping the Borough council to engage with organisations within the voluntary sector.
- Direct communication and discussion with relevant local organisations on specific national issues such as the changes within Health and local government

Examples of consultation / involvement activity with hard to reach groups

- We aim to reach all areas of our sector especially enabling the involvement of traditionally hard to reach groups by ensuring that our mechanisms for engagement are relevant.
- West Devon CVS provides the resource for 'Southern Devon' (South Hams, Teignbridge and West Devon) for a key Devon wide project 'Voluntary Voice' aiming to involve the local voice to be heard and involved up to a county level.
- We continue to work in partnership with other county infrastructure organisations to enable consultations to take place.
- Snippets e bulletins informed members of consultations and consultation events
- Through our membership with NAVCA, NCVO and Volunteering England we worked to influence regional and national policy.

Evidence of the CVS advocacy with statutory partners on behalf of the voluntary and community sector generally or of individual organizations

- When issues arise over potential changes in services or provision, West Devon CVS has taken the concerns from local organisations and communities and liaised with partners
- West Devon CVS influenced policy and advocated for the voluntary sector through membership of cross-agency strategic boards, including the Local Strategic Partnership,
- Through our e-bulletins and forums we connected a number of agencies with voluntary and community groups across the West Devon especially in the area of Health with the advent of clinical commissioning groups.
- Member organisations and others were signposted to other organisations in order to work collaboratively with them or share good practice, information and services both within West Devon and, in one case, with similar organisations from other districts.
- Information was provided to MPs and Councillors and the CVS facilitated visits from the MP to local groups in the Okehampton area.
- Community Contacts were supported to act as the links between parishes and West Devon CVS
- Opportunities for becoming trustees for a number of West Devon charities were advertised across the West Devon area.
- West Devon CVS helped in running the Staying Warm & Well in Devon Scheme
- CVS input into the Complex Care Teams (CCT) this year remained good, with voluntary sector representatives sitting in core meetings in Okehampton and Tavistock. The representatives are well respected by the professionals and referrals continued to be made to the voluntary sector in the course of the year. The West

Devon CVS CCT co-ordinator has continued to provide support for the CCT teams and health organisations through:

- Informing VSRs and key organisations working in health of the changes through meetings and email updates
- Supporting the development of new initiatives to help fill identified gaps in services – this year successfully negotiating for additional funding to be made available to a Tavistock group to enable support to individuals who do not have medical complex care needs.
- Supporting partnership working between local voluntary organisations and the statutory services
- Informing member organisations of the changes in health and social care and supporting them to make use of new opportunities – particularly in the areas of clinical commissioning groups.

The CVS is engaged with statutory partners from the learning community and health and social services in the targeted families programme. Our role is to ensure that Voluntary Sector organisations are engaged in delivering services to families within this programme

Strategic Partnership work: The third sector plays an integral role in local planning and policy making

West Devon CVS works with a number of local strategic bodies to promote partnership working between the statutory and voluntary sector, and to ensure the interests of service-users are taken into account in commissioning and procurement. West Devon CVS is also active in many county and regional partnership working activities to enable the sector to develop further, such as the Devon Association of CVS (DACVS), The Devon Excellence Partnership (delivering outcomes from the national transforming local infrastructure programme). West Devon CVS has also led on the proposals, agreed in February to fund two projects to enable to voluntary sector to support the Health prevention agenda in Devon

Examples of voluntary and community sector involvement in strategic and partnership activity

- West Devon CVS represented the interests of the local voluntary sector with attendance and input at the following meetings and forums:
 - Devon Association of CVS (DACVS)
 - Volunteers Centres Devon (VCD)
 - South Devon & Dartmoor Crime Reduction Partnership
 - West Devon Childrens & Young Peoples Partnership
 - West Devon Connect
 - West Devon Voluntary Sector Forums
 - West Devon Children & Young Peoples Partnership

- As well as representing the Devon CVS on the following partnerships:-
 - Joint Strategic needs Assessment Task and Finish Group
 - Social Value Task and Finish Group
- We use our comprehensive database of local organisations to target specific groups or localities so that they can have a voice at the right time with community planning
- Our well established communication networks enable us to pass on relevant information, resulting in meaningful consultation and communications taking place on a wide range of issues and developments.
- Information sharing and facilitation and brokering of relationships between key people in the statutory sector and local organisations
- Organising and supporting the West Devon Voluntary Sector Forum helps ensure that the voluntary sector plays an active part in local planning and policy development.

Volunteering: more people are enabled to volunteer, have good quality opportunities to do so and their volunteering experience is a positive one

Volunteer Centre West Devon continues to be highly successful and provides an essential service for local organisations and local individuals encouraging residents of the West Devon to take part in community activity.

Throughout the year, opportunities were taken to promote good practice in volunteer care and support among organisations large and small in West Devon. Ranging from verbal tips to specialist referral within the CVS, the aim is effective deployment and retention of volunteers. Outcomes are found in community health and vitality.

This year we have hosted successful events in Okehampton and Tavistock to support national volunteering campaigns in Volunteers Week and Make a Difference Day

Volunteer guidance was disseminated through our newsletters and at our Volunteer Organisers forums.

Our Volunteer Centre retained its' Volunteering England Accreditation this year and continues to deliver on all six core functions:

- brokerage,
- marketing,
- good practice,
- developing opportunities,
- policy response,
- strategic development.

Number of potential volunteers interviewed or advised (phone or face to face or email)

- 366 additional volunteers were registered and actively looking for voluntary activity
- potential volunteers were interviewed or advised, at least 30% were known to have resulted in volunteers being placed in an opportunity
- There has been a good steady stream of new volunteers registering with us, and the numbers of volunteers considering volunteering as a way forward from unemployment remained constant. Additionally we have seen an increase in the numbers of young people seeking to use volunteering experiences to enhance their employment chances.
- 88 new volunteering opportunities were promoted

Evidence of promotion of volunteering e.g. through newsletters, talks, participation in public events.

- Newsworthy developments throughout the year were released to print and radio media.
- In June 2012, during Volunteers Week we worked with voluntary and community organisations in Okehampton and Tavistock to promote volunteering and encourage more West Devon residents to get involved in their community.
- West Devon Connect – we joined events across the borough
- Organisations which we worked with to promote our services included: Job Centre Plus, West Devon Connect.
- All editions of our newsletter contained a section called ‘Volunteering Matters’
- We produce an opportunities booklet localized to both Okehampton and Tavistock.
- We provided talks to groups on six occasions.

Performance Indicators

	Performance indicator	WD CVS Targets 2012/13	Q1 & 2 Apr- Sept	Q3 Oct-Dec	Q4 Jan- Mar	Total
1.1	No. new groups supported	4	2	1	1	4
1.1	No. of groups supported to expand or offer enhanced services	12	14	16	15	45
1.1 & 1.4	District events – thematic where needs can be identified/discussed	4	1	1	2	4
1.2	No. editions of newsletter	4	2	1	1	4
1.2	No. e-bulletins	24	12	6	12	30
1.2	No. groups supported with governance advice	22	16	17	13	46
1.2	No. learning opportunities offered	12	4	4	4	12
1.7	No. volunteering enquiries	400	247	157	225	629
1.7	Increased Nos of registered volunteers	250	125	113	128	316
1.7	No. of opportunities registered with VC	60	42	13	33	88
1.7	No. structured learning opportunities on volunteering	2	2	0	0	2

Appendix B – West Devon Citizens Advice Bureau SLA Report
April 2012 – March 2013

<p><u>Extract from SLA</u></p>	
<p>2.3 CORE SERVICES FUNDED UNDER THIS AGREEMENT</p>	
<p>The Bureau will take a co-ordinated approach to service delivery, which will ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Demand can be managed effectively; ▪ Clients in greatest need receive the most appropriate service; ▪ The maximum number of clients can be dealt with. <p>Gateway Assessment (GA) Please see Appendix for GA data.</p>	<p>In order to be of benefit to all, our service is provided free of charge through face-to-face consultations or by telephone through our sites Okehampton and Tavistock. Sessions are operated by volunteers who are supported and supervised at all times by a paid Advice Session Supervisor.</p> <p>Gateway Assessment methods recognise that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are some people who are able to resolve their own problems provided that key elements of information are identified and /or highlighted (assisted information); • There are some people who are able to resolve their own problems following detailed advice or a brief intervention on their behalf (generalist advice); • There are some people, those in greatest need, who, at a particular point in their lives require a skilled adviser to act on their behalf (referral). <p>During the year 681 clients went through the WDCAB Gateway process. In total we saw 1840 clients, 1240 of whom were new to CAB. 6,935 contacts were made to deal with the 6,219 issues raised. The interdependence of the corner stones of living were represented; 7% concerned employment, 6% concerned housing and 5% relationships. Demonstrating its overriding influence of the need to be financially stable were debt enquiries at 16% and 53% concerned the need to for Welfare Benefits advice.</p>

<p>Adviceline: a single telephone number for the people of Devon</p>	<p>Adviceline is the single telephone number which WDCAB has been piloting, and which was adopted by all Devon CABx in December 2012. Throughout 2012/13 at WDCAB the Advice Services Fund enabled employment of a paid Adviceline operative for 22 hours of Gateway Assessment, the doorway into the full advice service, thus preserving our extended opening hours. Having a paid Gateway Assessor available to answer the Adviceline has resulted in WDCAB being able to deal with 81% of the calls it receives, thus proving many fold the worth of the project. Additionally, it provided the opportunity for the Development Officer to use dedicated hours to work toward securing the Bureau's financial future into 2013/14 and beyond, something key in a year of financial uncertainty. A grant from Okehampton United Charities towards costs of Okehampton service was gratefully received. Applications to Devon County Councillors and Citizens Advice Bureau Grants were successful will allow the continuation and extension of the paid Adviceline post into 2013/14.</p>
<p>Working with HMP Dartmoor</p>	<p>We continued to work with the Resettlement and Reducing Offending staff at HMP Dartmoor to deliver advice to 45 prisoners. After a Health & Safety inspection the procedures for delivering this service will be amended from September 2013.</p>
<p>Information kiosk</p>	<p>An information kiosk linked to the internet and including access to Adviceline, the CAB self-help website, is available in partnership with West Devon Borough Council at their One-Stop-Shop office in Okehampton between office hours of 9.00 – 5.00 weekdays. This facility enables people to research and address their enquiries with an inherent CAB presence.</p>
<p>Legal and employment specific advice</p>	<p>Appointments with an Honorary Legal Adviser have continued for another year. We thank Jason Libby, of Drake Legal, Brentor and Sean McHugh of Queens Street Chambers, Exeter for providing this service pro bono. Appointments were also available with our volunteer employment specialist adviser who has usefully progressed cases to Employment Tribunal level.</p>

<p>Young people</p>	<p>These services are available fortnightly and are accessible by full advice interview.</p> <p>Young people are another hard to reach group and we have made an attempt to attract the ‘missing’ client age group of 17-24 age group, whom Welfare Reform is likely to affect. This age group is particularly hard to attract to CAB as it is an IT savvy group with its own network. Nonetheless WDCAB has had a project with Room 13 in Okehampton since February 2012; although it is proving slow starting it has been of use to the few young people who have sought advice</p> <p>With IT in mind we have begun to use Twitter and Facebook reach a wider audience. We posted about such things as the House of Commons report on ATOS, Welfare Benefits reform and what the changes mean and feeding in from a team meeting speaker from the Illegal Money Lending Team warned about loan sharks.</p>
<p>Services additional to the core SLA service</p>	
<p>Specialist debt and welfare benefits</p> <p>Financial capability</p>	<p>The specialist debt and welfare benefits advice surgery provided on our premises in partnership with North Devon, Mid Devon, Torrridge, Bideford and Bude Citizens Advice Bureaux as part of their Legal Services Contract continued to assist WDCAB clients but will cease on 1st April 2013 when the LSC contract ends.</p> <p>An opportunity to provide a more proactive way of dealing with money issues was begun with a financial capability project funded by the Santander Foundation. This helped to increase our capacity to deliver high quality training to people in greatest need of understanding and managing their money. Designed for individuals, groups, and the frontline workers who support them the Devon</p>

	<p>wide CAB targets were achieved but take up was poor in West Devon. A sparse population and personal reticence were probably factors in this but the skills learned will be carried into the future and we are planning to integrate Financial Capability into the generalist advice process...</p>
<p>Barnardos' Children's Centres</p>	<p>Our work with Barnardo's continued at Okehampton, Tavistock and Hatherleigh Children's Centres. The paid CAB adviser works in the midst of her potential client base by being present during sessions such as ante natal or 'play & stay'. 132 clients have used this opportunity, 75% for the first time. An initial Gateway Assessment here will lead to a fuller interview in the Bureau. Enquires are often complex within this group of families all of whom have at least one child under 5, and are often multi layered. A significant number were affected by the changes to entitlement to child tax credit leading and significant delays in the processing of benefit claims has put some families into significant financial difficulty</p>
<p>Big Lottery Fund, Rural Outreach Project Incorporating Home visiting service, outreach sessions and West Devon Connect</p>	<p>This was the fourth year of the Rural Partners Reaching Rural People project, funded by Big Lottery Fund under the Advice Plus funding stream. The project addresses rural isolation and disadvantage brought about by health, circumstances and social exclusion in West Devon. It provides through a home visiting and outreach service, for those unable to get to our Bureau premises. A second purpose is build strength into the community in which it operates through partnership and enablement and this has been achieved with the 33 partners through our West Devon Connect Partnership, who saw 2886 people in 2012/13. RPRRP assisted 276 of these; 13 were helped with debt management, and 770 financial outcomes were recorded at an average of £5800. Confirmed figures to date are of gains of £896,459 to help overcome disadvantage, but correlates up to an estimated £1,487,432. Our client satisfaction survey reveals an enhanced quality of life for project clients. 56% of those who responded felt in better health because of the advice they had received.</p>
<p>CABx working together in Devon; CABDevon</p>	<p>CAB Devon is a company limited by guarantee and a consortium of six Devon</p>

<p>Additional funding to improve access.</p>	<p>CABx and Devon Welfare Rights Unit, a Citizens Advice department. It was officially launched following the Citizens Advice AGM in September 2012 at Exeter University.</p> <p>The Board have taken an active and contributory part in the building of the CABDevon consortium with a view to the additional security the enterprise will lend to WDCAB's future. Noel Cartwright represents WDCAB at all CABD Board meetings and the Bureau Manager attends when required to. CABD has been part of several small but valuable campaigns such as Staying Warm Keeping Well, a scheme to promote insulation and Surviving Winter, where some of the governments £250 Winter Fuel grants were offered back by those who felt they did not need it, so they could be redistributed to those who did. Calculated on a % basis all 5 of the £125 grants allocated to WDCAB were paid out to residents in fuel poverty.</p> <p>A successful application to the Big Lottery Fund Awards for All has covered the cost of a new telephone system for both offices, a paid member of staff retired, and the photocopier contract was changed.</p>
<p>In accordance with the Citizens Advice membership agreement the subjects covered will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Money and debt advice Welfare benefits Employment Housing Family and personal matters Taxes Immigration and nationality Health Education Consumer issues 	<p>Statistics shown are for period 1.4.13 and 31.3.13.</p> <p>Please see Appendices for full details.</p>

<p>2.4 MEANS OF ACCESSING THE SERVICE</p> <p>The core service shall be available at the locations and times specified in Appendix 1 of the SLA:</p> <p>by letter and fax; to personal callers on a drop-in basis; by face-to-face appointments for general help; By telephone.</p> <p>All these services shall be clearly advertised through appropriate local media.</p>	<p>Advice is available by all required methods and is advertised widely and clearly in local press articles, publications and events, including West Devon Connect events.</p> <p>2011 saw the launch of WDCAB website www.westdevoncab.org.uk. From this one access point the public can learn about what, when and where WDCAB does, and volunteer to join us or read about our current social policy campaign issues. Our partners can make referrals for clients needing our services, and the direct links to the Citizens Advice Adviceguide self-help webpage gives access to anyone wishing to research a problem at any time or place convenient to them. WDCAB, and all Devon CABx, websites are also available by link from the www.cabdevon.org.uk and www.askdan.me websites.</p>
<p>2.5 QUALITY ASSURANCE</p> <p>The bureau complies with Citizens Advice Quality Assurance Standards Membership Agreement, which is fully convergent with the Community Legal Service Quality Mark at General Help level but contains additional requirements. The quality areas covered are:</p> <p>Quality of advice; Quality of social policy work; Governance; Operational management; Financial management; Planning and managing resources; Volunteers and paid staff; Training and people development; Networking and partnership; Complaints and suggestions; Client-centred service;</p>	<p>Following a successful Citizens Advice audit in 2010 of both quality of advice and operational standards, Citizens Advice service membership has continued bringing with it accreditation to Community Legal Service Quality Mark at General Help level. Citizens Advice membership is audited for every three years and in April a Quality of Advice Assessor awarded WDCAB a mark of 80%, placing it once again in the top 17% of CABx nationally. This is true validation of the service we offer at WDCAB. The operational aspect of the CitA audit was carried out remotely, as it coincided with the final moves towards merger of WDCAB and its neighbouring Bureau Torridge, North Devon & Mid Devon CAB, which is also to be audited in 2013. Nothing untoward at WDCAB was reported by the CitA auditor</p> <p>Careful husbandry of Bureau funds is a material responsibility for the Board. The charity is only too well aware of the financial pressures experienced by its major funders, and in view of this has taken active measures to seek additional sources of funding for its services. During 2012.13 various smaller funds have been successfully found to support the services provided by the team of</p>

<p>Case management.</p> <p>A copy of the scheme is available on request.</p>	<p>volunteers and to continue the sound base for the client based service.</p> <p>Maintaining the service and securing it into the future is an obvious part of our Business and Development plan. Exploratory talks with neighbouring CABx developed into discussions of the potential for an amalgamation with Torridge, North Devon & Mid Devon CAB and a working party was set up. This is of particular importance with regard to the fact that the BLF A+ project whose successes and activities are outlined elsewhere in this report, ends on 31st March 2014, but will also allow an expansion of revenue sources and development of effective partnerships for the future.</p> <p>Kingdon House Association, the CAB landlord s in Tavistock has long been aware of the restrictions of their old building and able to commission a local architect to look at a complete redesign and refurbishment. Of course, space for WDCAB is included in this and we were pleased to be asked to contribute to the architects ideas. The new plans aim to provide complete disabled access both into and within the building.</p> <p>The Board are also employers of the paid staff and recognise and accept the responsibilities this brings. The team of 10 paid staff and 45 volunteers are provided with opportunities to learn and develop; retention is high thus giving stability to the service. 11 volunteers joined as Gateway Assessors, 2 as Advisers, as Financial Capability workers and 2 as trustees. Two volunteers left to take employment, one to move into further education and two retired.</p> <p>Future plans for the Board</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued involvement with the CABDevon consortium, thereby gaining the opportunity to provide services that it could not support alone. • Participation in the national project, Healthwatch through partnership with the Community Council of Devon. Our Healthwatch Champion
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	<p>who will work at client level, dealing with the realities and actual experiences of those with health and social care needs and playing an invaluable part in shaping services for the future. It provides the opportunity to simultaneously use CAB advice skills and to fulfil our social policy aims.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of the new Citizens Advice electronic case recording system, Petra. Petra brings increased levels of Information Assurance (data protection) and has been piloted for over 18 months. • The Governments Welfare Reform programme seeks to address the fact that the working-age welfare budget has risen by 40 per cent in real terms during the last decade, a decade of economic growth, and to reduce spending by £18bn before 2015 and the Chancellors 2012 budget contained measures for a further £10bn reduction. The base line of these cuts is encouraging people into work and away from Welfare Benefit support, regardless of their circumstances. It will do this by changing both qualification for and administration of Welfare Benefits and the people affected by WR are already coming to CABx for advice but more will do so as the introduction timetable becomes a reality. • Having appointed a Business Consultant to examine the probity of a merger, the working party accepted her conclusion that “A merged Bureau would be stronger, not only financially, but also operationally with the opportunity to share and implement best practice by both parties. There is therefore a good business case for merger”. Due Diligence was carried out, including close examination of finances, consideration of the new governance, consultation with interested parties, gaining permissions, and of generally progressing toward the final act of merger. The merger was ratified at an EGM’s on 19th June in Okehampton for WDCAB and 25th June in Bideford for TNMDMCAB and Torridge, North, Mid & West Devon CAB came into being Now begins the real work of restructuring, developing and implementation.
The bureau will inform the Council(s) of the results of	At its Annual Liaison Visit with Citizens Advice, where various scenarios and

any audit or quality assurance review which indicates less than fully satisfactory performance.	risks are explored, West Devon CAB was awarded “medium risk bureau” status. This reflected the uncertainty of funding following the ending of various restricted fund income flows and the potential effect that might have on the future Bureau service delivery.
<p>The bureau will provide to the Council the annual information that it provides to Citizens Advice such as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opening hours and locations from which the service is provided; 2. Number of client contacts; 3. Number and nature of issues dealt with; 4. Number of issues categorised by their complexity; 5. Percentage of people using the bureau by telephone; 6. Number and nature of any formal complaints about the bureau which are upheld. 	<p>1 –5; Please see appendices for this information. Please see section 1 of this report for full explanation of available services.</p> <p>Two complaints were made about difficulty in getting through on Adviceline, one of which also complained about the cost when using a mobile phone. A cheaper 0300 number has been introduced for mobile phone users. There was also a complaint about sparse advice and information, which proved to be the case as the client had already progressed her enquiry to its resolution before coming to CAB.</p>
<p>Amount of benefit generated for clients during each 12 month period. Analysis of amount of debt dealt with. Information about where clients reside by town or ward. Any other information of value that the bureau can readily supply, making appropriate use of CASE</p>	<p>During 2012/13 WDCAB helped clients to gain Welfare Benefits of £1,504,217</p> <p>Please see Appendices</p>

software.	
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Appendices **Statistics shown are for period 01/04/12 – 31/03/13 unless otherwise indicated.**

1. Key WDCAB Annual Monitoring Statistics key WDCAB Outcomes 2012.13
2. Key West Devon outcomes
3. Gateway Assessment; contact methods and next steps
4. Advice services times, venues and purposes and client profiles
5. Contact types
6. WDCAB enquiries by type and breakdown of benefits enquiries and comparison Q1 2012/13 & 2013/14
7. Complexity of issues dealt with
8. Adviceline enquiries
9. Debt enquiries
10. Where do our clients reside?
11. Client satisfaction survey

Appendix 1; key WDCAB Annual Monitoring Statistics

WDCAB Annual Monitoring Key Statistics	11/12	12.13 face to face	12.13 Advice Line	12.13 total
Number of client contacts	5,874	6033	1627	7660
Total number of issues handled	6,559	6219	1990	8209
Number of issues categorised by subject:				
Benefits	3,163	3296	785	4081
Consumer	103	103	84	187
Debt	1,278	1013	299	1312
Education	33	26	14	40
Employment	499	463	196	659
Finance (other than debt)	96	85	43	128
Health	69	77	25	102
Housing	353	371	196	567
Immigration	31	28	21	49
Legal issues	255	210	96	306
Relationship and family matters	372	299	152	451
Tax	121	74	18	92
Travel	36	34	19	53
Utilities	100	97	20	117
Signposting	5	5	0	5
Other	45	38	22	60
Amount of benefit generated for clients	£624,460	£1,504,217		
Amount of debt work dealt with by the bureau	£1,462,403	£2,497,873		

**Appendix 2: key West Devon
Outcomes 2012/2013**

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL	Target	Difference
Issues	2035	2063	1884	1705	7687	4875	2812
Contacts	1910	1948	1777	1504	7139	5602	1537
Financial Gains	313,291	65,097	35788.87	97987.17	512164	£706,398	-194234
Estimated Gains	46,975	291,410	209323	220632.4	768340.4		
Presenting Debts	84277	1,121,314	375312	916970.1	2497873	£2,401,756	96117
New Volunteers (1)	4	9		3	16	7	9
eBEFs	16	20	20	25	81	35	46
New Funding	58585	9960	9000	9794	87339		

National SP Reports						4	-4
DSPG Meetings						4	-4
Health & wellbeing impact	5% of WDCAB clients returned a survey				56.00%	25%	31%
Client Satisfaction	5% of WDCAB clients returned a survey				95%	90%	5%
Volunteers Experience						80%	-80%
Devon Wide Campaign						1	-1

Appendix 3: Gateway Assessment**Contact methods from Gateway Assessment**

Outlet	At Bureau	At Outreach	By Email from Client	By Letter/ Fax/Text	By Phone from Client	By Visit to Client	Other Contacts	Total No. of GA Contacts
ADVICE PLUS	46	17	1	0	8	0	0	72
CHILDRENS CENTRE	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
OKEHAMPTON	418	3	0	1	2	0	1	425
TAVISTOCK	648	1	1	1	4	0	6	661
Total:	1115	21	2	2	14	0	7	1161

Next steps from Gateway Assessment

Outlet	Assisted information	Signpost	Specialist appointment	Advice via Bureau Work Queue	Advice call transfer to external partner	Appointment in another bureau	Generalist Advice	Referral to external agency - non-CAB	Signposted to another CAB	Signposted to CitA Consumer Helpline	Signposted to external agency - non-CAB
ADVICE PLUS	22	0	2	1	0	0	42	0	1	0	1
CHILDRENS CENTRE	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OKEHAMPTON	174	0	7	1	1	1	215	5	1	0	9
TAVISTOCK	295	0	27	10	0	1	190	50	1	4	28
Bureau Total:	494	0	36	12	1	2	447	55	3	4	38
Bureau Percentage:	45.2 %		3.3 %	1.1 %	0.1 %	0.2 %	40.9 %	5.0 %	0.3 %	0.4 %	3.5 %

Appendix 4: Advice services times, venues and purposes as at 31/03/13

See section 1 of this report for details

WDCAB, The Ockment Centre, North Street, Okehampton, EX20 1AR. Adviceline: 0844 111 444

Monday: Closed

Tuesday: 10.00 – 14.00

Wednesday: 10.00 – 14.00

Thursday: 10.00 – 14.00

Friday: Closed

Gateway Assessment and advice appointments operate throughout all sessions by telephone and face-to-face.

WDCAB, Kingdon House, North Street, Tavistock, PL19 0AN. Adviceline 08444 111 444

Monday: 10.00 – 14.00

Tuesday: Closed

Wednesday: 10.00 – 14.00

Thursday: Closed

Friday: 10.00 – 14.00

Gateway Assessment and advice appointments operate throughout all sessions by telephone and face-to-face.

Advice is not currently available by email at either office.

Additionally

- Alternate Wednesdays: LSC specialist benefit/money/debt advice at the Okehampton office by appointment.
- 1st and 2nd Wednesdays of the month: within HMP Dartmoor for prisoners.
- Alternate Wednesdays: 2.00 – 4.00 employment advice at the Tavistock office by appointment.
- Each Wednesday 2.00 - 4.00: Legal advice session available to WDCAB clients at the Tavistock office by appointment. For some of the year a parallel service was offered in the Okehampton office.
- A kiosk with access to the Citizens Advice public information site www.adviceguide.org.uk: open hours at the WDBC ‘One Stop Shop’ office in Okehampton. From 01/04/13 a kiosk was also available in the IT suite accessible to the public at The Ockment Centre, Okehampton.

Projects with restricted and time limited funding which allow provision of advice

Big Lottery Fund Advice +: (funded until 31/03/14) Home visiting to provide accessible generalist legal advice, to overcome rural isolation and disadvantage brought about by health, circumstances and financial and social exclusion and to work with partners to increase access points, quality and impact. Two advisers, three days a week each.

Outreaches at Bere Alston surgery and Princetown Village Centre, monthly for two hours by appointment and at Hatherleigh market, fortnightly for three hours, by appointment or as a drop in.

From February 2012 a monthly two hour session at the young people centre in Okehampton, Room 13, by appointment or as a drop in. This is a pilot service which is proving slow to provide.

Barnardo's: An embedded CAB adviser at various Children's Centre sessions throughout the Borough. (Currently funded until 31/03/13).

Client profile - face-to-face service:

During the year, the charity assisted 1,959 clients face-to-face. Data below is for those who gave the information. :

Age bands	Gender	Nationality	Disability	Employment status	Marital status	Housing tenure	Income	Household
80% were of working age. 52% of those were aged between 35 and 64	57% were female	93% were White British	27% were disabled or had a long term health condition	16% employed <30hpw 11% > 30hpw 26% were unemployed 21% were retired	28% single 57% married or partnered	32% private 18% HA/RSL 17% mortgaged 14% owned outright	23% <£400pcm 49% £600-£1,499 pcm	29% single 13% single with dependant children 26% a couple 25% couples with dependant children 3% couples without dependant children

Appendix 5: contact types 2012/13	BLF A+	Children's Centre	Okehampton	Tavistock		%
Initial Info/advice Bureau	27	27	459	772	1,285	18.5
Further - Bureau	30	30	651	648	1,359	19.6
Initial Info/advice Outreach	91	91	3	64	249	3.6
Further - Outreach	60	60	1	29	150	2.2
Initial Info/advice - Phone	51	51	8	9	119	1.7
Further From Client - Phone	131	131	114	28	404	5.8
Initial Letter,fax,text	1	1	3	3	8	11.5
Further Letter,fax,text From Client	17	17	26	3	63	90.8
Initial Visit To Client	25	25	0	0	50	72.1
Further Visit To Client	91	91	0	0	182	262.4
Initial - Email	3	3	0	1	7	0.1
Further From Client - Email	5	5	0	0	10	0.1
Initial Advice/info - Other	1	1	0	7	9	0.1
Further From Client – Other	5	5	5	1	16	0.2
Follow-up To Client-letter,phone,etc.	494	494	573	188	1,749	25.2
Referral To External Agency	10	10	9	1	30	0.4
Referral To Cab Specialist	16	16	31	6	69	1.0
Correspondence With Client - No Advice	17	17	13	25	72	1.0
Third Party - Correspondence	77	77	29	18	201	2.9
Third Party - Telephone	263	263	260	39	825	11.9
Third Party - Other	34	34	7	3	78	1.1
	1,449	1,449	2,192	1,845	6,935	

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	TOTAL
Number of website hits	267	374	207	281	1129
Number of unique website users	226	305	188	228	947
Top 5 pages viewed	150	334	582	535	1601

Appendix 6: WDCAB enquiries by type 2012/13

<u>Category</u>	<u>BLF Advice plus</u>	<u>Children's' Centres</u>	<u>Okehampton</u>	<u>Tavistock</u>	<u>Annual Total</u>	<u>Col %</u>
Benefits	758	200	1197	1141	3296	53.0
Consumer	14	3	42	44	103	1.7
Debt	123	41	393	456	1013	16.3
Education	1	5	11	9	26	0.4
Employment	28	56	220	159	463	7.4
Financial	10	2	41	32	85	1.4
Health	19	0	27	31	77	1.2
Housing	54	26	135	156	371	6.0
Immigration	0	0	14	14	28	0.5
Legal	11	7	63	129	210	3.4
Other	14	1	10	13	38	0.6
Relationship	21	28	112	138	299	4.8
Signposting	0	0	2	3	5	0.1
Tax	15	3	27	29	74	1.2
Travel	11	0	19	4	34	0.5
Utilities	14	6	32	45	97	1.6
Total Issues	1093	378	2345	2403	6219	100.0

Example of further breakdown of State Benefit enquiry area with Q1 2012/13 & Q2 2013/14 comparison of changing face of Benefit enquiries

Category	BLF	Children's' Centres	Okehampton	Tavistock	Annual Total	Col %	WDCAB	
	Advice plus						Q1 2012.13	Q1 2013.14
Discrimination	0	0	0	1	1	0.0	0	0
Working+child Tax Credits	27	40	126	107	300	10.1	48	60
Jobseekers Allowance	24	8	86	103	221	7.4	46	49
National Insurance	0	0	10	3	13	0.4	4	3
State Retirement Pension	4	1	17	10	32	1.1	10	11
Incapacity Benefit	4	0	9	23	36	1.2	8	9
DLA-care Component	88	10	85	99	282	9.5	77	48
DLA-mobility Component	85	4	76	82	247	8.3	68	52
Attendance Allowance	105	1	10	20	136	4.6	42	45
Carers Allowance	32	4	35	12	83	2.8	26	15
Income Support	26	10	54	48	138	4.6	25	27
Pension Credit	42	0	56	61	159	5.3	42	22
Social Fund Loans-budgeting	1	1	3	7	12	0.4	9	0
Housing Benefit	40	14	115	137	306	10.3	60	72
Council tax benefit	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	59	-
Child Benefit	2	6	24	16	48	1.6	12	9
Employment Support Allowance	112	8	193	160	473	15.9	107	116
community care grants							6	-
Other Benefits Issues	117	73	162	143	495	16.6	102	157
Universal Credit	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0	2
Personal Independence Payment	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0	10
Localised Social Welfare	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0	1

Localised Support For Council Tax	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0	25
Benefit Cap	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0	0
Welfare Reform Benefit Loss	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0	6
	709	180	1061	1032	2982	100	751	739

Appendix 7: complexity of issues dealt with

<u>Work Level</u>	Total	Col %	No of Clients
Information	160	7.8	157
Advice	613	29.9	593
Advice and Referral	101	4.9	99
Advice and Limited Action	274	13.4	260
Generalist Casework	219	10.7	206
Specialist Casework	7	0.3	7
Gateway	678	33.0	634
Total	2052	100	1,796

Appendix 8: Adviceline enquiries

Adviceline Enquiries in Devon (i.e. South Hams, Teignbridge and West Devon CABx and from December Torridge, North and Mid Devon. Exeter and East Devon) 6068

West Devon Adviceline

Clients: 1411

Enquiries: 1419

Contacts: 1627

Issues: see table below

Benefits	785	39%
Consumer	84	4%
Debt	299	15%
Education	14	0.7%
Employment	196	10%
Financial	43	2%
Health	25	1%
Housing	196	10%
Immigration/Nationality	21	1.0%
Legal	96	5%
Other	22	1%
Relationship/Family	152	8%
Signposting	0	0%
Taxes	18	1%
Travel/Transport	19	1%
Utilities	20	1%
Total	1,990	

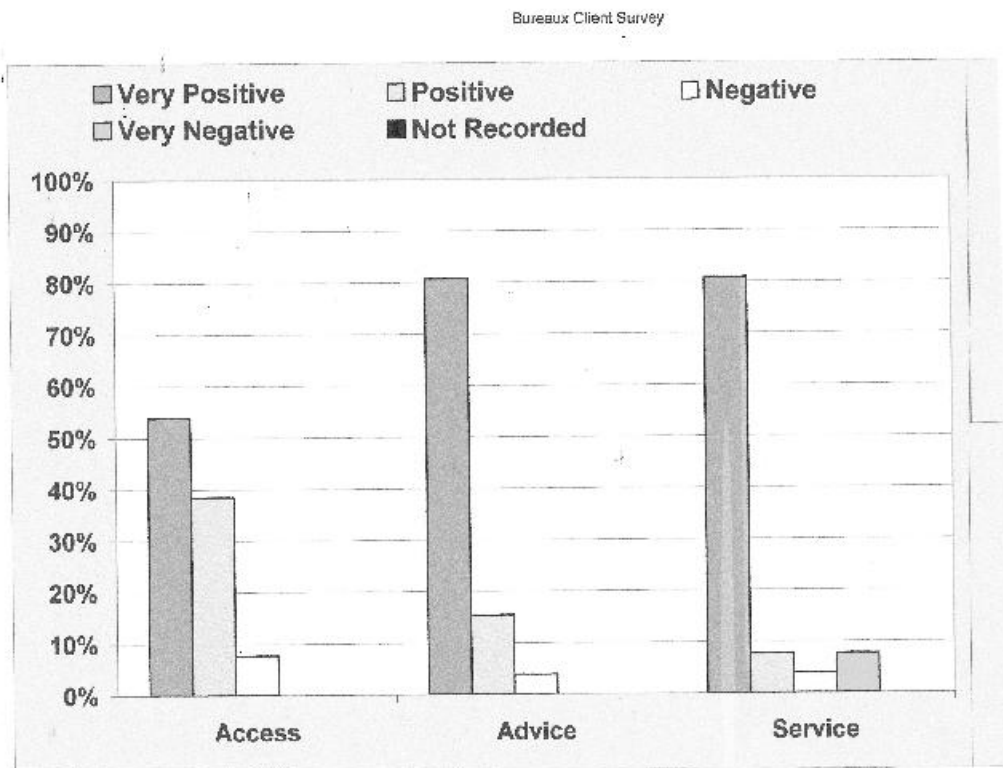
Appendix 9: debt enquiries this is at generalist level only. No debt casework is undertaken.

<u>Breakdown of debts</u>		%
Debts/Arrears	0	0
Discrimination		
Mortgage/Secured Loans	45	4
Hire Purchase	9	0.9
Fuel Debt	60	6
Telephone/Broadband	54	5
Rent Arrears – LA or Almos	2	0.2
Rent Arrears Hsg Assocs	23	2
Rent Arrears – Private Landlord	34	3
Council Tax	81	8
Magistrates Fines/Comp.Order	18	2
Maintenance/Child Support	3	0.3
Bank / Building Society Overdrafts	94	9
Credit/Store/Charge Cards	122	12
Unsecured Personal Loans	111	11
Catalogue/Mail Order	35	4
Water Supply / Sewage	86	9
Parking Penalties	7	0.7
Overpayment of WTC/CTC	24	2
Overpayment of IS/JSA	7	0.7
Overpayment of HB/CTB	17	1.7
Social Fund Debts	3	0.9
3rd Party Debt Collection	2	0.2
Private Bailiffs	23	2
Debt Relief Order	22	2
Bankruptcy	33	3
Other Legal Remedies	1	0.1
Other	91	9

Appendix 10: - Where do our clients reside?

West Devon		Cornwall		Teignbridge		South Hams		Torridge	
Bere Ferrers	97	Altarnun	2	Ambrook	2	Allington and Loddiswell	1	Bideford South	2
Bridestowe	27	Callington	5	Ashburton and Buckfastleigh	2	Avon and Harbourne	1	Broadheath	3
Buckland Monachorum	47	Camborne West	1	Bovey	3	Bickleigh and Shaugh	6	Clinton	3
Burrator	16	Camelford	1	Bradley	2	Cornwood and Sparkwell	1	Coham Bridge	4
Chagford	20	Gunnislake	50	Buckland and Milber	3	Dartington	1	Forest	9
Drewsteignton	27	Kelly Bray	4	Bushell	2	Erme Valley	2	Holsworthy	1
Exbourne	36	Launceston Central	1	Chudleigh	1	Ivybridge Central	3	Shebbear and Langtree	2
Hatherleigh	72	Launceston South	2	College	3	Ivybridge Filham	2	Three Moors	1
Lew Valley	48	Liskeard Central	1	Dawlish Central and North East	7	Kingsbridge East	2	Winkleigh	8
Lydford	117	Mount Charles	1	Kenn Valley	2	Salcombe and Malborough	3		
Mary Tavy	33	Rame	1	Kerswell-with-Combe	1	Skerries	1		
Milton Ford	26	St Columb	1	Kingsteignton East	4	South Brent	1		
North Tawton	49	St Ive	1	Moorland	2	Totnes Bridgetown	3		
Okehampton East	223	Stokeclimsland	3	Teignmouth East	3	Totnes Town	6		
Okehampton West	161			Teignmouth West	2				
South Tawton	32								
Tamarside	24								
Tavistock North	221								
Tavistock South	124								
Tavistock South West	67								
Thrushel	21								
Walkham	71								

Appendix 11; Client satisfaction 2012/13



Page 45

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AGENDA
ITEM

7

WEST DEVON BOROUGH COUNCIL

AGENDA
ITEM

7

NAME OF COMMITTEE	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
DATE	29 October 2013
REPORT TITLE	Impact of Welfare Reform on West Devon
Report of	Head of ICT & Customer Services
WARDS AFFECTED	All

Summary of report:

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee has expressed a view that they should monitor the impact on the Council of the welfare reforms and it was agreed that the Head of ICT and Customer Services be asked to present an update report to its meeting in October 2013.

Financial implications:

There are no financial implications directly related to this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Panel notes this report.

Officer contact: Darren Cole, Head of ICT & Customer Services 01803 861200

Darren.Cole@swdevon.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

The Welfare Reform Act 2012

1.1 The Welfare Reform Act introduced a wide range of reforms which the Government stated will make the benefits and tax credits system fairer and simpler. It received Royal Assent on 8 March 2012. The Act has three key aims:

1. Creating sustainable incentives to encourage more people into work.
2. Protecting the most vulnerable in our society.
3. Delivering fairness to the tax payer and those claiming benefit.

1.2 The Act and accompanying welfare measures intend to create total welfare savings of £20 billion per year by 2014-15

1.3 Main Elements of the Act

Measure	The Government's intention for the measure
Introduction of Universal Credit – a single benefit payment	To improve work incentives
A new approach on fraud	To reduce fraud and error with tougher penalties for the more serious offences
A new claimant commitment	To clearly display what is expected of claimants and give protection to those with the greatest needs
Reform Disability Living Allowance, through the introduction of the Personal Independence Payment	To better meet the needs of disabled people
Introduce a new approach to Housing Benefit	To bring stability to the market and improve incentives to work
Refine the Social Fund System	To give greater power to local authorities so that necessary decisions can be made swiftly
Reform Employment and Support Allowance	To make benefits fairer and go to those with greatest need
Localisation of Council Tax Benefit	To make local authorities responsible for developing local schemes
A new system of Child Support	To put the interest of the child first

2. Impact to date on West Devon Borough Council

2.1 There are many implications of welfare reform on West Devon, some of which have resulted in completely changing a service, for example Council Tax Benefit being abolished and replaced with a local scheme. Other implications are indirect and are the result of a cumulative affect of change. **Appendix 1** captures only those changes where West Devon has changed a process or approach to date.

2.2 There are some longer term considerations for West Devon relating to future housing requirement as a result of welfare reform changes. The Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment will be issued towards the end of 2013 highlighting trends and providing direction to both affordable housing and planning policy.

2.3 To compensate for the increased demand on discretionary assistance residents can apply for, West Devon has seen its Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) pot increase by £79,000 to £149,000, and we are currently reviewing our DHP policy to ensure that these additional funds are made available to those in most need.

Universal Credit

2.4 Universal Credit is aimed at replacing most benefits and tax credits, including Housing Benefit. Universal Credit will be rolled out on a phased basis until fully operational in 2017. The start of the roll out for West Devon was due to take place from October 2013 but this has been deferred and a revised date has yet to be advised.

- 2.5 Universal Credit will be administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Consequently as Housing Benefit is phased out and Universal Credit is phased in, there will be less need for processing staff in Local Authorities. However as part of the Welfare Reform Agenda and in particular the introduction and roll out of Universal Credit, Local Authority staff will be needed as part of the governments Universal Credit Local Support Services Framework.
- 2.6 This framework is designed for Local Authorities and DWP to work in partnership to help customers:
- Who may need help
 - What services they may need and
 - How through locally developed partnerships these services will be provided.
- 2.7 This help will include for example:
- Access to digital services
 - Advice on completing a claim
 - Debt advice
 - Budget management
- 2.8 Therefore, although there may well be a need to reduce staffing in the Housing Benefit processing service there will be a need for staff in the Universal Credit Local Support Services Framework.

Impacts on staff

- 2.9 There is no doubt that the welfare reform changes have increased customer contact and this has impacted the Customer Services, Housing Advice and Benefit teams. Though this increased demand was expected and planned for, it still came at a time when other changes were taking place such as the implementation of new software into the Customer Services and Benefits teams. Performance has been affected by the culmination of these changes mainly due to the backlogs that have formed, which take considerable time to clear.
- 2.10 As mentioned above Universal Credit was due to roll out from October 2013, therefore vacancies have not been filled in anticipation of the Benefits service reducing over time as work is transferred to the DWP. As this has now been deferred, vacancies will be filled and the reliance on agency staff reduced.
- 2.11 It is widely accepted that demands on frontline services will increase as the welfare changes take effect. The T18 Transformation Programme affords the opportunity to look at the way we process work and deal with customer demand in a completely different way to increased capacity on the frontline and make the back office processing considerably more efficient.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no legal implications to this report.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications to this report.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 As this report is for information only, no risk management has been included.

6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate priorities engaged:	All
Statutory powers:	The Welfare Reform Act dictates the statutory duties required by West Devon
Considerations of equality and human rights:	Individual Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken where required as part of welfare changes
Biodiversity considerations:	There are no biodiversity considerations
Sustainability considerations:	There are no sustainability considerations
Crime and disorder implications:	There are no crime and disorder implications
Background papers:	Welfare Reform Act 2012
Appendices attached:	Appendix 1 – Impacts of Welfare Reform on West Devon

Appendix 1 - Impact of Welfare Reform on West Devon

Impact	What we have seen	The Council's response
Localisation of Council Tax Benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Tax Benefit abolished from 1 April 2013 • New scheme implemented for 2013/14 protecting claimants from change • Large increase in customer contact due to confusion over change even though no financial impact • Claimant numbers down by 4.5% to 4036 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protected vulnerable claimants for 1st year of scheme by meeting costs from elsewhere. • Scheme for 2014/15 will be out for consultation in August & September • Council decision required by December 2013
Housing Benefit Claims Increase	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Claims have increased by 2.5% to 3,185 in the last year • Telephone contacts have remained high, with a spike in April/May during the introduction of the bedroom subsidy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extension of Money Advice Service from 1 day a week to 3, funded by Local Discretionary Welfare Support • Increased promotion of the Discretionary Housing Payment
Increased requests for Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) (Available to top up Housing Benefit at the discretion of West Devon)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in applications (see table below) • 43.9% of claims are from tenants affected by the bedroom subsidy (47 of 107) • Larger award and a rural pressures additional award, (total of £149,748) to recognise the lack of suitable, affordable housing and the extended work/travel area residents face 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signposting towards money advice, alternative accommodation and Devon Home Choice • Creative use of the fund to its full capacity

Removal of Bedroom Subsidy (Bedroom Tax)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased demand on Discretionary Housing Payment fund. • Increase in people registering to downsize on Devon Home Choice • Lack of clarity around exempted persons (military personnel, carers children with special needs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landlords & Council wrote to affected tenants. • Additional piece of work has begun in August to renew contact with affected tenants offering support and advice • Encourage people to downsize through mutual exchange or transfer • Additional module on Devon Home Choice system for mutual exchanges • Increased provision for money advice • Working with Strategic housing to identify people needing to downsize to involve them in design of new homes
Increase of the single Room Rate paid by housing benefits historically to under 25's and now to under 35's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased difficulty in getting younger rough sleepers into accommodation • Difficulty in sourcing suitable accommodation for singles with visiting children to ensure children are not put at risk in shared accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging Landlords to let to groups of individuals rather than families for larger accommodation • Working to increase numbers of houses with multiple occupants • Advising Younger people to remain at home.
Local Housing Allowance (LHA) Rate in general	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific problem in Tavistock, which is in the same LHA area as Plymouth, therefore, as rental costs are lower in Plymouth, the amount of LHA awarded is disproportionately lower 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging people to seek cheaper more affordable accommodation outside of the more expensive settlements (wider impact with rural communities and people having to leave)
Benefit Cap	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only came into force on 15 July 2013. No impact as of yet. However up to 4 families in the borough have lost more than £100 a week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The households affected have been contacted to provide help and assistance with the transition.

Registered Providers (RP's) requesting Rent in Advance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RP's are concerned about their rent arrears with introduction of Universal Credit, in some cases requesting 4 weeks rent in advance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Piece of work around where tenants are getting this money from (i.e. is it payday loans) • Council asking wider questions as part of Devon Home Choice review around whether requesting rent in advance is in spirit of partnership? Does it help meet housing need? (are the high banded tenants being overlooked because they can't get the rent in advance together and vacancies go to people in low or no housing need)
Local Discretionary Welfare Support Fund (Introduced to limit impact of abolished Crisis Loans and Community Care Grants)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer calls on the fund than expected. • Resettlement & emergency payments being made for a variety of reasons • Applications dealt with on a case by case basis so impact on staff time (no additional staff resources) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing awareness amongst the voluntary sector and our statutory partners • Information on the website & electronic form • Increased provision for money advice
Rough Sleeping & Responding to No Second Night Out	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in rough sleepers with significant health problems • Increased spending on temporary accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Southern Rough Sleeping Outreach project. • 27 Rough Sleepers (or people at risk of rough sleeping) assisted since March
Homeless Presentations Vs Homeless Preventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council is continuing to offer good early intervention solutions to stave off the use of temporary accommodation and the need to accept the full homeless duty • Although homeless approaches have remained broadly the same. The numbers of approaches due to affordability have increased 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bonds & Rent in Advance • Landlord Negotiation • Arrears Management • Supported accommodation • Mediation

Money Advice Vs Budgeting Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People requesting LDWSF are signposted for advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are budgeting well, but unable to plan for unforeseen emergencies – e.g. a cooker breaking
Increase in Housing register Applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The register has stayed fairly static 	
Sanctions – Jobcentre penalising job seekers for a range of reasons.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased requests for Local Discretionary Welfare Support Fund due to sanctions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Devon wide with the job centre+ to understand these and get them resolved as soon as possible

West Devon Discretionary Housing Payment

Page 54

April to June comparison	2012/13	2013/14	% Increase
No. of Applications	26	51	96%
No. Accepted	18	38	111%
Total Amount Awarded	£4228.52	£12,237.88	189%

April to September comparison	2012/13	2013/14	% Increase
No. of Applications	48	107	123%
No. Accepted	35	78	123%
Total Amount Awarded	£9,438.80	£27,064.44	187%

Annual comparison	2012/13	2013/14 prediction	% Increase
No. of Applications	123	274	123%
No. Accepted	98	218	123%
Total Amount Awarded	£31,997.71	£91,748.96	187%

NAME OF COMMITTEE	Overview & Scrutiny Committee
DATE	29 October 2013
REPORT TITLE	Ombudsman Update and Annual Letter
Report of	Monitoring Officer and Ombudsman Liaison Officer
WARDS AFFECTED	All

Summary of report:

- To advise Members that the Local Government Ombudsman is changing the way in which he reports to Local Authorities.

- To consider the Ombudsman’s Annual Letter 2013 regarding complaints received against the Council for the year 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

Financial implications:

There are no financial implications to this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

To note the Ombudsman’s Annual Letter 2012/13

Officer contact:

Catherine Bowen, Monitoring Officer (cbowen@westdevon.gov.uk)

Anthony Rose, Committee and Ombudsman Liaison Officer (arose@westdevon.gov.uk)

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Ombudsman investigates complaints made by members of the public about public authorities (excluding town or parish councils).

- 1.2 The Ombudsman will investigate a complaint if it relates to maladministration or injustice by the Council. The Ombudsman will not be able to investigate all of the complaints referred to him as some will fall outside of her remit, and she can only investigate a complaint that has already been considered through the Council’s own complaints procedure. The Council must have a chance to answer the complaint first.

- 1.3 A complainant cannot appeal against the Ombudsman’s decision but complaints can be reviewed if new information is presented

2. OMBUDSMAN'S ANNUAL LETTER

- 2.1 Previously, the Ombudsman's Annual Letter provided a summary of information on complaints that the Ombudsman received and/or determined throughout the last financial year in relation to West Devon Borough Council.
- 2.2 For the year 2012/2013 the Ombudsman is only presenting the total number of complaints and not the more detailed information that she has previously included. This is because the Ombudsman Service has changed its business processes during 2012/13 and therefore cannot provide local authorities with a consistent set of data for the entire year.
- 2.3 The Ombudsman is committed to providing information about councils' performances and will be providing more detailed information next year. In order to help the Ombudsman determine the format of future Annual Letters there is a consultation which can be found at www.surveymonkey.com/s/annualletters to which councils are encouraged to respond.

3. COMPLAINTS RECEIVED

- 3.1 The Annual Letter 2012/2013 is attached at Appendix A. In the year to 31 March 2013 the Ombudsman received 6 complaints against West Devon Borough Council. The national annual average for district councils was 10 complaints.
- 3.2 Although comparison is not as straight forward following the change in format, for members' information, the Ombudsman received 8 complaints in 2011/12 and 13 complaints in 2010/11 for West Devon.

4. COMPLAINT OUTCOMES

- 4.1 Although not set out in the Annual Letter for 2012/13, attached for Members reference at Appendix B is a table detailing the 6 complaints received by the Ombudsman in 2012/13.
- 4.2 Appendix B shows the service area to which the complaint related together with the nature of the complaint, and the time taken to reply and the eventual outcome.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Local Government Ombudsman is governed by the Local Government Act 1974.
- 5.2 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee is responsible for an overview of complaints handling within the Council, and for an overview of Ombudsman investigations. The Ombudsman's Annual Letter is an important part of that process and needs to be brought to the Committee's attention.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Where it is necessary to settle a complaint by the payment of compensation to a member of the public, payment is made out of the current year's revenue budget for the service in question. No such payment were made in relation to the 2012/13 Ombudsman complaints.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate priorities engaged:	All
Considerations of equality and human rights:	Poor administrative practice could engage the complainants' human rights and any such implications are consideration in each case
Biodiversity considerations:	Not applicable
Sustainability considerations:	Not applicable
Crime and disorder implications:	Not applicable
Background papers:	None
Appendices attached:	Appendix A – the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Letter 2012/13 Appendix B – table of Ombudsman Complaints 2012/13

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.	Awareness of the number and type of complaints made to the LGO	Reporting to Overview & Scrutiny raises awareness of the number and type of complaint being received by the Ombudsman and enables a consistent overview to be given to such complaints	3	2	6	↔	Whilst there will always be complaints, the Council can learn from the outcomes of the Ombudsman complaints and mitigate the risk of recurrence and deliver service improvements	Head of Service

Direction of travel symbols ↓ ↑ ↔

16 July 2013

By email

Mr Richard Sheard
Chief Executive
West Devon Borough Council

Dear Mr Sheard

Annual Review Letter

I am writing with our annual summary of statistics on the complaints made to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) about your authority for the year ended 31 March 2013. This year we have only presented the total number of complaints received and will not be providing the more detailed information that we have offered in previous years.

The reason for this is that we changed our business processes during the course of 2012/13 and therefore would not be able to provide you with a consistent set of data for the entire year.

In 2012/13 we received 6 complaints about your local authority. This compares to the following average number (recognising considerable population variations between authorities of a similar type):

District/Borough Councils-	10 complaints
Unitary Authorities-	36 complaints
Metropolitan Councils-	49 complaints
County Councils-	54 complaints
London Boroughs-	79 complaints

Future development of annual review letters

We remain committed to sharing information about your council's performance and will be providing more detailed information in next year's letters. We want to ensure that the data we provide is relevant and helps local authorities to continuously improve the way they handle complaints from the public and have today launched a consultation on the future format of our annual letters.

I encourage you to respond and highlight how you think our data can best support local accountability and service improvements. The consultation can be found by going to www.surveymonkey.com/s/annualletters

LGO governance arrangements

As part of the work to prepare LGO for the challenges of the future we have refreshed our governance arrangements and have a new executive team structure made up of Heather Lees, the Commission Operating Officer, and our two Executive Directors Nigel Ellis and Michael King. The Executive team are responsible for the day to day management of LGO.

Since November 2012 Anne Seex, my fellow Local Government Ombudsman, has been on sick leave. We have quickly adapted to working with a single Ombudsman and we have formally taken the view that this is the appropriate structure with which to operate in the future. Our sponsor department is conducting a review to enable us to develop our future governance arrangements. Our delegations have been amended so that investigators are able to make decisions on my behalf on all local authority and adult social care complaints in England.

Publishing decisions

Last year we wrote to explain that we would be publishing the final decision on all complaints on our website. We consider this to be an important step in increasing our transparency and accountability and we are the first public sector ombudsman to do this. Publication will apply to all complaints received after the 1 April 2013 with the first decisions appearing on our website over the coming weeks. I hope that your authority will also find this development to be useful and use the decisions on complaints about all local authorities as a tool to identify potential improvement to your own service.

Assessment Code

Earlier in the year we introduced an assessment code that helps us to determine the circumstances where we will investigate a complaint. We apply this code during our initial assessment of all new complaints. Details of the code can be found at:

www.lgo.org.uk/making-a-complaint/how-we-will-deal-with-your-complaint/assessment-code

Annual Report and Accounts

Today we have also published *Raising the Standards*, our Annual Report and Accounts for 2012/13. It details what we have done over the last 12 months to improve our own performance, to drive up standards in the complaints system and to improve the performance of public services. The report can be found on our website at www.lgo.org.uk

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jane Martin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Dr Jane Martin
Local Government Ombudsman
Chair, Commission for Local Administration in England

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN

COMPLAINTS 1st April 2012 – 31st March 2013

Complaint	Department	LGO's First Letter	WDBC's First Reply	Number of Days (LGO allows 20 days for first reply)	LGO's Final Decision
Refuse Collection Bere Alston	Environmental Services	24th August 2012	13th September 2012	14	Resolved locally
Development in an established estate Yelverton	Planning	7th September 2013	27th September 2013	15	Investigation discontinued
Refuse Collection Heathfield, Tavistock	Environmental Services	10th January 2013	Complaint put through Council's Complaints procedure	-	Not to initiate an investigation
Neighbour extension Yelverton	Planning	29th June 2012	20th July 2012	16	Investigation discontinued
Development of flats – lack of sound proofing	Building Control	30th August 2013	Complaint put through Council's Complaints procedure	-	Not to initiate an investigation complainants could seek redress from Council's insurers through the courts
Noise/Anti-Social Behaviour	Environmental Health	8th November 2012	20th November 2012 (by EH direct to LGO)	9	Investigation discontinued

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NAME OF COMMITTEE	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
DATE	29 October 2013
REPORT TITLE	Performance Report
Report of	Head of ICT & Customer Services
WARDS AFFECTED	All Wards

Summary of report:

To provide Members with information on Key Performance Indicators at the end of quarter 1 for 2013-14. The information is set out with the Balanced Scorecard showing broad performance levels. Further information for those indicators at 'red' status is provided along with a standard information report giving background information and context to workload.

Financial implications:

There are no financial implications directly related to this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that:

1. Members note the Key Performance Indicators for Quarter 1 and consider the action detailed to improve future performance; and,
2. Members consider any appropriate action for Indicators at 'Red' status for two consecutive quarters as detailed in 2.4 of this report.

Officer contact:

Darren Cole, Head of ICT & Customer Services, 01803 861200

Darren.Cole@swdevon.gov.uk

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The current set of indicators came from a review of all performance indicators, which was undertaken by a Task and Finish Group in 2011/12. Since then changes have been made by both Members and Officers to ensure that the indicators are meaningful and useful.

2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

2.1 Appendix A contains the Balanced Scorecard Report to display the high level performance information.

- 2.2 Appendix B relates to data only performance indicators and is the background report that contains the information that sits behind the Balanced Scorecard for context.
- 2.3 The exception report towards the end of appendix B shows all indicators currently 'Red' and also the performance status for the last quarter along with the management response to explain the current level of performance.
- 2.4 There are three indicators that are 10% or more below target with the **first two at red status for two consecutive quarters, therefore requiring a minuted response of the action required:**
- **Average time to process change of circumstances benefit claims**
 - **Average time to process new benefit claims**
 - Number of Major Applications determined within the statutory time frame
- 2.5 To assist Members with actions that may be required to address performance of the above, Appendix C provides a list of suggested responses. This list is not exhaustive and merely provides examples for reference.
- 2.6 As requested by Members, Appendix D shows the Balanced Scorecard for the same period at South Hams.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 Within the Constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Panel oversees performance management at the authority to ensure that poor and deteriorating performance is addressed.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no financial implications directly related to 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 IMPLICATIONS

Corporate priorities engaged:	Community; Economy; Environment; Housing
Statutory powers:	Local Government Act 2000
Considerations of equality and human rights:	There are no equality implications as a result of this report.
Biodiversity considerations:	There are no biodiversity implications as a result of this report.
Sustainability considerations:	There are no sustainability implications as a result of this report
Crime and disorder implications:	There are no crime and disorder implications as a result of this report.
Background	





papers:	
Appendices attached:	Appendix A – Balanced Scorecard Appendix B – Background and Exception Report Appendix C – Actions available to address performance Appendix D – South Hams Balanced Scorecard Appendix E – Balanced Scorecard Q4 2012/13

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			
G11-05	Poor performance leading to poor service delivery and damage to Council's reputation	Failure to adequately monitor and report on Local Performance Indicators. Managers not accepting/paying lip service only to best practice and improvement initiatives or failure to engender an improvement and performance management culture will increase the risk to the Council and it's reputation.	3	2	6	↔	Performance monitored by senior management and actions taken to address poor performance and react to downward trends.	SMT
G11-06	Failure to effectively manage change	There will be a need to ensure that any change within the organisation (whether imposed internally or externally) is effectively managed.	4	2	8	↔	Review of improvements and management actions in response to failing performance should increase the effectiveness of change management within the organization. More visible responsiveness to failing performance should reduce the resistance to change making management easier.	SMT
CX1 1 - 03	Leadership & Management	Ineffective Leadership and management	2	1	2	↔	Emphasis placed on middle managers responding to operational issues and drive performance whilst Heads of Service monitor and take action when needed	CX & SMT

Appendix A - Corporate Balanced Scorecard 2013-14 Q1




West Devon Borough Council

Community/Customer



	ES: Car parking tickets sold (Yearly comparison)
	ES: Car parking season tickets sold (Yearly comparison)
	ES: Overall Recycling rate %
	ES: Overall waste arising

Processes



PEC

			PEC: % of Applications determined within statutory time frame (Major/Minor/Other)
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Environmental Health

	EH: Time taken to process Disabled Facilities Grant (Fast track)
	EH: Avg Time to serve notice or close complaints




ICT & CS

	ICT & CS: Avg End to End time (New Claims)
	ICT & CS: Avg End to End time (Change of circumstances)

Financial

	Assets: Employment estates Income (Cumulative)
	PEC: Total income collected: Pre-Apps, Apps, etc
	ES: Car parking Income (Quarterly target: non-cumulative)
	FA: % invoices paid on time
	ICT & CS: Council Tax Collection

Performance

	EH: % of nuisance complaints resolved at informal stage
	ICT & CS: Preventing Homelessness
	CS: Avg days sickness/FTE

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Appendix B –Scrutiny Report – 2013-14 Q1 WD

Information Report



Non-targeted (data-only) performance measures that will be reported every quarter to provide context and background information – not suitable for the Balanced Scorecard page as no targets applicable or relevant.

PI Code & Short Name	Managed By	2012/13	Apr 2013	May 2013	Jun 2013	Q1 2013/14	2013/14	Comment (If Applicable)
		Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	Value	
<p>EH: Volume of nuisance complaints</p> <p>Number of nuisance complaints. The comments show the breakdown of unjustified and unjustified complaints.</p>	Ian Luscombe	715	Measured for Quarters			128	715	Of the total nuisance complaints closed by the council in Quarter 1, 93 alleged nuisances were under our jurisdiction (EH officers often offer guidance and signposting in the other cases to provide a better customer service). 91 out of the 93 nuisances investigated were dealt with informally, saving time and money.
<p>EH: Average time taken for Disabled Facilities Grants (Fast track) (work days)</p> <p>The total time, from when the application was received until the works are completed. Only a small portion of this is under direct control of the Council.</p>	Drew Powell	-	Measured for Quarters			94	-	The portion of this process under the council's full control is performing well, as is the overall process. Average time for portion under Council's direct control is 6 work days. Further work in reducing the end to end time for the customer will be achieved by working more closely with our suppliers/contractors.



<p>PEC: Active Applications (at end of month) Major/Minor/Other</p> <p>The total number of active applications which gives an overview of the workload for the Planning department.</p>	Justine Gosling	-	142	128	135	-	-	Workload levels remain fairly consistent within the service .
<p>PEC: Compliments & Complaints (Justified/Non-Justified split)</p> <p>Detailing the ratio between justified planning complaints (valid complaints about something we did wrong or omitted to do) and non-justified complaints.</p>	Malcolm Elliott	Compliment Just Non-Just	4 2 0	2 0 0	0 0 0	6 2 0	6 2 0	We are continually trying to improve our customers' experience and the low number of complaints reflects this. The number of compliments should also be noted.
<p>PEC: Justified Complaint Type (Process: Statutory Procedure: Person: Communication)</p> <p>Breakdown of justified complaints – Process (Ps), Statutory Procedure (SP), Person (Pn) & Communication (C).</p>	Malcolm Elliott	Ps S.P. Pn C	0 0 0 2	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 0	0 0 0 2	0 0 0 2	The proactive approach to customer service through better caseload management and service improvements has meant that complaint levels are low. However, the way we communicate can still be improved and we remain focused on seeking improvements in this respect.

<p>PEC: Enforcement (Enforcement Action: Retrospective Planning Application: Remedial Action: No Breach Found)</p> <p>The number of enforcement cases resolved by specific action - enforcement action (EA), retrospective planning application (RPA), remedial action (RA) or no breach found (NBF).</p>	Malcolm Elliott	E.A. R.P.A. R.A. N.B.F.	4 0 0 7	4 0 0 9	4 1 0 11	12 1 2 27	-	<p>The higher number of enforcement cases reported this time is due to better recording systems and the clearance of backlog. It should be noted that the majority of enforcement reports are still found to be "no breach found".</p>
<p>ES: PCN's: issued</p> <p>The number of Penalty Charge Notices issued. View in conjunction with those cancelled.</p>	Cathy Aubertin	1464	106	115	114	335	335	<p>The drop in PCNs issued is due to having a CEO vacancy currently. A new postholder has been appointed and will be starting work on 9th September.</p>
<p>ES: PCN's cancelled</p> <p>The number of Penalty Charge Notices cancelled. View in conjunction with those issued.</p>	Cathy Aubertin	175	10	11	3	24	24	<p>7% of penalty charge notices were cancelled over the quarter. Figures of around 10-15% would be considered normal, so this figure demonstrates the high quality of PCNs issued.</p>
<p>ICT & CS: No. of benefit applications</p> <p>Total number of New Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit Claims calculated.</p>	Paul Eells	2073	101	77	69	247	247	<p>New Claims only.</p>

<p>All: Complaints received</p> <p>Complaints logged against each Service per quarter. Highlights changes over time and the effects of initiatives.</p>	-	261	<p>Assets: 1 Corporate Services: 0 Environment Services: 26 Environmental Health: 1 ICT & CS: 19 Planning, Economy & Community: 0</p>	51	51	
<p>All: Compliments received</p> <p>Compliments logged against each Service per quarter. Highlights changes over time and the effects of initiatives.</p>	-	110	<p>Assets: 0 Corporate Services: 0 Environment Services: 23 Environmental Health: 4 ICT & CS: 3 Planning, Economy & Community: 7</p>	37	37	
<p>CS: Long term sickness (days)</p> <p>Number of days lost due to long term sickness</p>	Andy Wilson	702	Measured for Quarters	124	124	<p>The absence for the first quarter of 2013/14 is closer to historic averages and was caused primarily by three members of staff, two recovering from surgery and one with continuous long term absence. It is pleasing to report that all three have returned to work, two towards the end of the quarter, so we anticipate an improvement in the next quarter.</p>
<p>CS: Short term sickness (days)</p> <p>Number of days lost due to short term sickness</p>	Andy Wilson	469.3	Measured for Quarters	62.42	62.42	<p>The performance has improved to better than previous averages. This improvement was in part predicted as the last quarter was affected by a high number of staff with viral infections and this now seems to have been worked through.</p>
<p>ICT & CS: Top 5 call types</p>	Kate Hamp	-	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Planning enquiry for Duty officer 2) Request a paperless DD 3) Make a Council Tax payment 4) Order replacement recycling receptacles 5) Council Tax balance enquiry 	-	-	

ICT & CS: Top 5 website views/trend	Kate Hamp	-	1. Planning Application Search 2. Search & Track Planning Applications 3. Planning 4. Waste Look Up 5. Contact us			-	-	
ICT & CS: Average call answer time The average time in minutes for a call to be answered. This time shows as an average over each month	Kate Hamp		1.22	1.47	2.48	1.723		Service levels in the contact centre have been adversely affected for a number of reasons. 1. Transfer of Benefits calls to the contact centre to free up Assessors to clear backlog 2. Council Tax post was also in backlog as a result of the change in software at the beginning of the year - this has now been cleared. 3. Loss of a number key staff through retirement and movement to other services. Staff have now been replaced and resource to handle the Benefits calls has been put in place. Training has begun and we are now trying to ensure we have the right skills in place. It is worth noting that full training in all disciplines can take up to 6 months. Improvements are now being seen and we are expecting performance to be on an upward trend.
ICT & CS: % of calls experiencing a long wait Percentage of calls where the wait is in excess of 7 minutes.	Kate Hamp		28%	33%	39%	33%		As above.

Exception Report

Code and Name	Managed by	Prev Status	Last Qtr/2013 year end	Apr 2013	May 2013	Jun2013	Q1 2013/14		Action Response
			Q4	Value	Value	Value	Value	Target	
<p>ICT & CS: Avg End to End time (New Claims) (Days)</p> <p>To measure average processing time taken across all new Housing and Council Tax Benefit (HB/CTB) claims submitted to the Local Authority.</p>	Paul Eells		24.48	29.68	31.51	27.57	29.59	18	<p>There are a significant number of factors have affecting the level of performance of the team. There has been a continued increase in customer contact both by phone and in person with the introduction of the Social Sector Size Criteria (bedroom tax) and Local Discretionary Welfare Support Scheme (replacement for crisis loans and community care grants) at the beginning of the quarter. This has continued with customers requiring signposting to support services and also to apply for Discretionary Housing Payments to alleviate hardship and to address the shortfall in their rents while they take steps to manage this themselves. 2 Vacancies have been filled and additional temporary staff have been recruited to clear the backlog of work. It is anticipated that processing times will be back within target by December 2013.</p>
<p>ICT & CS: Avg End to End time (Change of circumstances) (Days)</p> <p>The average processing time taken for all written notifications to the Local Authority of changes to a claimant's circumstance that require a new decision on behalf of the Authority.</p>	Paul Eells		12.34	10.94	9.48	8.85	9.76	8	As above

<p>PEC: Number of Major Applications determined within the statutory time frame</p> <p>The percentage of Major applications which are determined within the Government's statutory timescale of 13 weeks.</p>	Malcolm Elliott	n/a	42.86%	n/a	50%	n/a	50%	60%	<p>The number of major applications processed each month is very low. Only 2 were determined in May, one within target and one not. Hence the 50% performance reported. The overall, annual performance is more important when determining performance on major applications. Members are reminded that Govt. deem poor performing councils as those determining applications at 30% or less.</p>
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Responses from Scrutiny responding to 2 consecutive quarters at 'Red' status:

	Response	Result	Consequences for response (inc resourcing issues, etc)
1	Agree with Action response	Trust that Middle Managers interpretation of situation and response will rectify falling performance over time	No additional resource above effort proposed by Middle manager
2	Query Action response	Agree with interpretation of situation but express concern over the level of the response	No additional resource above effort proposed by Middle manager.
3	Request further details on the action responses undertaken so far	Assessment of management responses taken so far and their effectiveness.	Middle manager resources required, will pull form operational management time. HoS resources also required. Response at Scrutiny could be sufficient.
4	Request report on ongoing issues	Deeper understanding of the causes of falling performance	Middle manager resources required for explaining actions, additional Business Development Team support for analysing data, where capacity allows.
5	Set up Task & Finish Group	T&F group organised with clear goals and timescales	Large resource requirement from both Cllrs and Officers. Longer lead time for results but useful for reframing goals of service area
6	Request Service Review	Systems review process becomes high priority and scheduled to commence as soon as current review schedule allows	Large resource requirement both in Business Development Team and service area undergoing review. Need for robust understanding of problem to be resolved. Longer lead time for results. Schedule agreed by SMT





Members should note that the additional resource requirements for options 3-6, especially options 5 & 6, will impact on service level and performance themselves so should only be undertaken when a clear need is identified.

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Appendix D - Corporate Balanced Scorecard 2013-14 Q1




South Hams District Council

Community/Customer



	ES: Car parking tickets sold (Yearly comparison)
	ES: Car parking season tickets sold (Yearly comparison)
	ES: Overall Recycling rate %
	ES: Overall waste arising

Processes



PEC

			PEC: % of Applications determined within statutory time frame (Major/Minor/Other)
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Environmental Health

	EH: Time taken to process Disabled Facilities Grant (Fast track)
	EH: Avg Time to serve notice or close complaints





ICT & CS

	ICT & CS: Avg End to End time (New Claims)
	ICT & CS: Avg End to End time (Change of circumstances)

Financial

	Assets: Employment estates Income (Cumulative)
	PEC: Total income collected: Pre-Apps, Apps etc
	ES: Car Parking income (Cumulative)
	ES: Trade Waste: Projected Net Income
	FA: % invoices paid on time
	ICT & CS: Council Tax Collection
	PEC: Income Collected – Land Charges
	AS: Dartmouth Ferry Income Cumulative

Performance





	EH: % of nuisance complaints resolved at informal stage
	ICT & CS: Preventing Homelessness
	Assets: Employment Estate Occupancy Level
	CS: Avg days short term sickness/FTE

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Appendix E - Corporate Balanced Scorecard Q4 2012/13




West Devon Borough Council

Community/Customer



	ES: Car parking tickets sold (Yearly comparison)
	ES: Car parking season tickets sold (Yearly comparison)
	ES: Overall Recycling rate %
	ES: Overall waste arising

Processes



PEC

			PEC: Average time for completion (Major/Minor/Other)
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Environmental Health

	EH: Time taken to process Disabled Facilities Grant (Fast track)
	EH: Avg Time to serve notice or close complaints




ICT & CS

	ICT & CS: Avg End to End time (New Claims)
	ICT & CS: Avg End to End time (Change of circumstances)

Financial

	Assets: Employment estates Income (Cumulative)
	PEC: Total income collected: Pre-Apps, Apps, etc
	ES: Car parking Income (Quarterly target: non-cumulative)
	FA: % invoices paid on time
	ICT & CS: Council Tax Collection

Performance

	EH: % of nuisance complaints resolved at informal stage
	ICT & CS: Preventing Homelessness
	CS: Avg days sickness/FTE

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NAME OF COMMITTEE	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
DATE	29 OCTOBER 2013
REPORT TITLE	THE USE OF AGENCY STAFF
Report of	PERSONNEL MANAGER
WARDS AFFECTED	ALL

Summary of report:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Panel with an overview on the use and costs of engaging agency workers.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That SMT continue to monitor the use and cost of using agency workers.

Officer contact:

Andy Wilson, Personnel Manager
Andy.wilson@swdevon.gov.uk
 01803 861154

Jan Montague
Jan.montague@swdevon.gov.uk

THE USE OF AGENCY WORKERS

1. The managed use of Agency workers remains an important component of the Council's staffing resources and helps to provide the flexibility needed to meet periodic fluctuations in demand for services, to cover for unexpected and short-term staff absences and where the demand for services and/or the availability of funding is uncertain and subject to change.

2. With the implications for jobs arising from measures to address the on-going financial situation, SMT consider very carefully any request to recruit to a vacant post. In some cases, an agency worker is engaged whilst consideration is given to alternative ways of delivering the service without the need for a permanent replacement.
3. The use of agency workers to fill vacancies in the short-term can also reduce the need to make permanent members of staff redundant in the longer term, avoiding both the financial cost of severance payments and helping to secure the longer term employment prospects for existing employees.
4. In August 2013, after an open procurement exercise, a Master Vendor contract was entered into between the Council (and a number of other Devon local authorities) and Acorn Staffing (formerly known as Concept Staffing) for the provision of agency workers for a three-year period.
5. By entering into a Master Vendor contractual arrangement with Acorn the Council is able to secure a competitive and fixed price for the supply of agency workers and to negotiate the waiver of fees normally charged if an agency worker takes up a permanent post with the Council.
6. When compared to the historical use of agency workers, there has been an increase in the past 2 years, although the cost in the current financial year particularly is projected to be lower than in 2012/13. There has been a relatively high use of agency workers in Development Management and Housing.
7. In Development Management, agency workers have played a significant part in helping to reduce backlog, improve performance and provide cover during times of leave, sickness and recruitment. In Housing, agency workers have been used to cover maternity leave and long-term sickness absence and to cover vacant posts whilst a pay and grading review was carried out. In both sections, some permanent replacements will be appointed and the use of agency workers will significantly reduce.
8. The tables below show the distribution of the expenditure during 2011/12, 2012/13 and in the current financial year to 30 September 2013.

2011/12	
Department	Cost (£)
Car parking	85.17
Cleaner at Kilworthy Park	217.20
Post room	98.32
Miscellaneous	8.00
Total	400.77

2012/13	
Department	Cost (£)
Waste Management	4,737.33
Finance	3,188.65
Community Delivery	3,185.63
Homelessness/Aid & Advice/Hostels	84,762.41
Development Management	37,183.08
ICT Infrastructure Unit	4,262.49
Total	137,319.59

April 2013 to September 2013	
Department	Cost (£)
Revenue and Benefits	1,011.58
Homelessness/Aid & Advice/Hostels	17,473.50
Development Management	46,641.85
Kilworthy Park Offices	1,481.98
Total	66,608.91

9. The table below shows the occupation, location, start date and reason for engagement of agency workers at 1 October 2013. The table also identifies the total cost of the agency worker, including the fees payable to the Agency and the total cost of employing a comparable employee, including salary, employer on-costs and employer pension contributions (amounting to 39% of salary).

Post	Service Area	Start date	Reason for Appointment	Hourly Rate (inc. agency fee)	Hourly rate of comparator (inc. on costs)
Housing Officer	ICT & Customer Services	17/09/12	To assist with back log of benefit claims	£18.00	£15.66
Admin Assistant	ICT & Customer Services	09/07/13	To assist with back log of paperwork	£10.39	£10.94

Planning Officer	Planning, Economy & Community	29/07/13	To assist with back log of planning applications	£31.20	£17.25
ICT 1 st Line Support Officer	ICT & Customer Services	12/08/13	To cover vacancy created from recent resignation	£8.63	£9.09
Planning Officer	Planning, Economy & Community	27/08/13	To assist with back log of planning applications	£32.00	£17.25

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10. In October 2011, the Agency Worker Regulations were introduced and provide that an agency worker must broadly receive the same pay and conditions as a comparable directly employed person once they have worked for the Council for 12 weeks. Under normal circumstances the use of an agency worker is short-term and the assignment will not last 12 weeks.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11. In some cases there can be a higher cost associated with using an agency worker rather than a fixed-term employee. However, when managed correctly, the advantages drawn from the flexible nature of using agency workers can offset any increase in cost.

CONCLUSION

12. The appropriate use of agency workers will continue to be managed by the Head of Service in discussion with HR and the associated costs monitored by Finance.

1. RISK MANAGEMENT

1.1. The risk management implications are:

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	Financial control	That the use of agency workers incurs unnecessary additional cost	3	2	6	↔	To consider alternative arrangements, such as fixed-term contracts where appropriate and more cost effective. Regularly monitor use and cost to ensure agency workers are only used where there is good business case.	SMT
2	Impact on service delivery	That insufficient staffing resources will have an adverse impact on service delivery	2	2	4	↔	The appropriate use of agency workers to ensure service delivery is not adversely affected by short-term staff absences, fluctuations in demand or time lost in recruiting suitable candidate	SMT

Page 87

Direction of travel symbols ↓ ↑ ↔

Corporate priorities engaged:	Shared Services and Beyond
Statutory powers:	Local Government Acts 1972 – 2007
Considerations of equality and human rights:	There are no equality or human rights considerations
Biodiversity considerations:	There are no biodiversity considerations
Sustainability considerations:	There are no sustainability considerations
Crime and disorder implications:	There are no crime and disorder considerations
Background papers:	None
Appendices attached:	None

NAME OF COMMITTEE	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
DATE	29 October 2013
REPORT TITLE	Review of the process and decisions that led to the Judicial Review Judgement relating to the former Focus DIY Store, Tavistock Retail Park, Plymouth Road, Tavistock
Report of	Focus Review Working Group
WARDS AFFECTED	Tavistock

Summary of report:

This report advises Members of the conclusion of the work of the Focus Review Working Group.

Financial implications:

There are no direct financial implications from this report which is for information only.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the conclusion of the work of the Focus Review Working Group and the subsequent decisions made by Council at its meeting on 8 October 2013.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On 16 April 2013, Council received a report from the Chief Executive which responded to previous reports in relation to the Focus site, and which recommended a review of the process and decisions that led to the unfavourable High Court Judgement.

- 1.2 The report suggested that a Review Group be formed to investigate the process and decisions that led to the Judgement, and a report taken back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 June 2013, with a final report being taken to Council on 30 July 2013.

2. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 2.1 In accordance with the recommendations within the Chief Executive's report, a Working Group was formed which comprised of: Cllrs Benson, Leech, Morse, Musgrave and Sampson. The Group first met on 7 May 2013 and the Chief Executive and Deputy Monitoring Officer were in attendance.

- 2.2 The Group agreed Terms of Reference which were along the same lines as the scope of the review as originally stated in the Chief Executive's report.
- 2.3 At the initial meeting, the Working Group also discussed the papers that they would like to see, to enable them to understand the processes that had been followed. Further information was also requested in advance of the next meeting of the Working Group, which was scheduled to take place on 20 May 2013.
- 2.4 In considering the papers provided, the Working Group was aware of the tight timescale within which to conduct their work, and felt that an interim report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 4 June 2013 was appropriate, with a final report being taken to Council on 30 July 2013. However, in order that full and proper attention was given to all aspects of the Review, the Group then advised that their final report would be presented to Council on 8 October 2013.
- 2.5 The Working Group met on a number of occasions, and other Members were consulted for their views. A final report was then presented to Council on 8 October 2013, where the recommendations of the Working Group were unanimously agreed.
- 2.6 For ease of reference, the agreed recommendations are shown below:
- A protocol should be put in place to guide working practices between the Legal Department and the Planning Department
 - Bi-monthly meetings with the Head of Planning, Economy and Community and the Link Lawyer, and monthly meetings with the Development Manager and the Link Lawyer, should be recorded/noted
 - In cases where JR or other serious litigation proceedings are contemplated by the Council or brought against the Council there needs to be an initial meeting of senior officers and regular face to face meetings to ensure that matters are dealt with promptly and all issues fully explored.
 - On any occasion where officers feel it necessary to brief Members on a significant issue which has legal, financial or reputational impact, a file note should be made and kept
 - Early consideration should be given by the Head of Planning Economy and Community to the public interest in these cases so that the Ward Members and other key Members are properly informed. Agreement can then be reached on the level of input required of Members
 - Reports to Members should include all options and an explanation of the potential impact and merits of each option.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None over and above the matters considered in the High Court.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None other than the costs involved in bringing this matter to the High Court and the costs awarded to the interested party which fall within the budgeted sum.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 5.1 There are no risk implications as the report is for information only.

Corporate priorities engaged:	Community Life; Economy
Statutory powers:	Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000
Considerations of equality and human rights:	None
Biodiversity considerations:	None
Sustainability considerations:	None
Crime and disorder implications:	None
Background papers:	Planning applications 01575/2011 dated 11 July 2011 and 9215/2006/TAV dated 2 April 2007. Correspondence held by the Development Management team, the Monitoring Officer and the Deputy Monitoring Officer save those items which are protected by legal professional privilege which are not discloseable to the public. Report to Council of the Deputy Monitoring Officer – 17 April 2012 Report to Council of the Head of Planning, Economy and Community – 15 May 2012 R (Peel Land and Property Investments Plc) vs Hyndburn Borough Council and others [2012] EWHC Report to Council of the Chief Executive – 16 April 2013 Report to Council of the Focus Review Working Group – 8 October 2013
Appendices attached:	None

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Agenda Item 3

At a Meeting of the **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Kilworthy Park, Drake Road, **TAVISTOCK** on **TUESDAY** the **29th** day of **OCTOBER 2013** at **2.00 pm**

Present: Cllr M V L Ewings – Chairman

Cllr D M Horn	Cllr J B Moody
Cllr D E Moyse	Cllr D K A Sellis
Cllr J Sheldon	Cllr D Whitcomb

Corporate Director (TW)
Committee and Ombudsman Link Officer
Community Manager
Community Projects and Policy Officer
Customer Services Manager
Head of ICT and Customer Services
Head of Planning, Economy and Community
Member Services Manager
Monitoring Officer

- *O&S 15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Apologies for absence were received from Cllr K A Clish-Green, Cllr C Hall and Cllr L J G Hockridge.
- *O&S 16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
Members and officers were asked to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of this meeting but none were made.
- *O&S 17 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT**
The Chairman advised Members that there was an outstanding item from the previous meeting in relation to Devon Home Choice. A report was not on the agenda for the meeting, however, an update had been provided and this would be attached to the minutes as an appendix.
- *O&S 18 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**
The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2013 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.
- *O&S 19 UPDATE FROM THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR ON TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME**
The Corporate Director (TW) advised that as Members had attended a Transformation Programme meeting earlier the same day that she would focus on the role of Overview and Scrutiny (O&S), assuming the Transformation Programme went ahead.

The O&S role was twofold - firstly to scrutinise the delivery of the programme, for example using the implementation timetable, and secondly a development role on some areas such as the locality model, commissioning and channel shift. This matter would be discussed later on the agenda under Draft Work Programme (Minute O&S 26 refers).

***O&S 20 MONITORING OF WEST DEVON COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SERVICES AND CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS 2012/13**

The Community Manager and Community Projects and Policy Officer presented a report (page 6 to the agenda) that asked Members to review the operation in 2012/13 of the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with West Devon Community and Voluntary Services (WDCVS), including West Devon Volunteer Centre (WDVC), and West Devon Citizens Advice Bureau (WDCAB).

Following an introduction by the Community Projects and Policy Officer, the Community Manager advised Members that during previous discussions on budget cuts, a motion to cut funding to the voluntary sector had fallen so the contribution had not been offered up as a potential saving. Whilst Members could still look at savings in relation to voluntary funding, there was statutory guidance in place and the overall value for money and impact on the Council must be considered. If the Transformation Programme was approved, the Community Manager felt that the voluntary sector would play an important role in terms of commissioning. She also offered to undertake further work to better quantify the benefits received from the organisations.

One Member commented that he had concerns in relation to the CAB as one of its key roles was in debt advice yet there were a number of other organisations that could support people such as Step Change and Money Advice Service. He also felt that there may be a value for money issue and wanted to know how many referrals were made to the CAB from the Council. The Community Manager responded that they did not only receive referrals from the Council but they were a recognised organisation that people could go to for help. The Chairman added that the CAB would not look at a problem in isolation, but would look at a person or family as a whole as this approach could possibly identify other areas where help could be offered.

It was **RESOLVED** that Members had reviewed the performance of WDCVS, including WDVC, and WDCAB against the outcomes agreed in the SLAs. In terms of further action, work would be undertaken by the Community Manager to quantify the benefits from the WDCAB and a report brought back to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

***O&S 21 IMPACT OF WELFARE REFORM ON WEST DEVON**

The Head of ICT and Customer Services presented a report (page 45 to the agenda) in response to views expressed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that they should monitor the impact on the Council of the welfare reforms.

The Head of ICT and Customer Services advised that the expected change to Universal Credit had now been postponed to a likely implementation date of 2015. This had impacted on staff numbers, workload and performance, and a decision had now been taken to employ permanent staff to fill outstanding vacancies. He also gave Members more detail in relation to the Local Discretionary Welfare Support Fund and how it was being used.

Finally, in response to concerns about the customer experience at Reception, it was agreed that a feedback form be compiled and given to customers with the results being presented in a report to the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

***O&S 22 OMBUDSMAN UPDATE AND ANNUAL LETTER**

The Monitoring Officer presented a report (page 53 to the agenda) that advised Members that the Local Government Ombudsman was changing the way in which he reported to Local Authorities and asked Members to consider the Ombudsman's Annual Letter 2013 regarding complaints received against the Council for the year 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013.

The Committee and Ombudsman Link Officer was able to advise Members of the detail of specific complaints.

It was then **RESOLVED** that the Ombudsman's Annual Letter be noted.

***O&S 23 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Head of ICT and Customer Services presented a report (page 60 to the agenda) that provided Members with information on Key Performance Indicators at the end of quarter 1 for 2013/14, and the end of quarter 4 2012/13. The information was set out with the Balanced Scorecard showing broad performance levels. Further information for those indicators at 'red' status was provided along with a standard information report giving background information and context to workload.

The Head of ICT and Customer Services referred to the two performance indicators that had been at 'red' for two successive quarters, and he advised Members that the targets set for the indicators had been set some time ago.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) had now set national performance indicators and he requested that for the next quarter their national performance indicator targets be applied. Following a brief discussion the Committee agreed to this, although it was noted that failure to meet these targets would result in further action.

One Member raised the question of dog fouling and asked if Penalty Charge Notices had been issued for dog fouling, or only for car parking enforcement. A detailed debate followed and as a result the Corporate Director would request that a full response to the points raised be circulated by the Head of Environment Services to the Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The final area of discussion referred to phone calls and answering times. The Customer Services Manager advised that a number of issues had contributed to poor performance over the summer, such as fully trained staff being recruited into other departments. A great deal of work had been undertaken to train new staff and during October over 70% of calls were being answered within 5 seconds. The Head of ICT and Customer Services added that as a result of Welfare Reform, calls to the Council were more complex and were taking on average 18% longer. The Transformation Programme would help customers by routing some of the calls through alternative means to release front line resources.

It was then **RESOLVED** that:

- (i) The Key Performance Indicators for Q1 be noted and actions detailed considered to improve future performance; and
- (ii) Members adopt DWP national Performance Indicators for the next quarter and a report be brought back to the next meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee to assess the impact on the performance of average time to process change of circumstances benefit claims and average time to process new benefit claims.

***O&S 24 THE USE OF AGENCY STAFF**

The Head of Planning, Economy and Community presented a report (page 75 to the agenda) that provided the Committee with an overview on the use and costs of engaging agency workers.

The Head of Planning, Economy and Community advised Members that the use of agency workers was a useful component in managing services and as the Council moved forward with the Transformation Programme it would be important to think how to effectively manage agency staff to be able to keep redundancy costs down. Not all agency staff were more expensive than permanent staff and, in the medium term, agency staff would be used, particularly to manage peaks in workload. However, the long term objective would be to have permanent staff in place.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Senior Management Team continue to monitor the use and cost of using agency workers.

***O&S 25 REVIEW OF THE PROCESS AND DECISIONS THAT LED TO THE JUDICIAL REVIEW JUDGEMENT RELATING TO THE FORMER FOCUS DIY STORE, TAVISTOCK RETAIL PARK, PLYMOUTH ROAD, TAVISTOCK**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report from the Focus Review Working Group that advised Members of the conclusion of the work of the Focus Review Working Group. The Chairman introduced the report and advised the Committee that the recommendations of the Working Group should be monitored and that this should be an item for the future work programme for Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

It was **RESOLVED** that the conclusion of the work of the Focus Review Working Group be noted along with the subsequent decisions made by Council at its meeting on 8 October 2013 which were as follows:

- A protocol should be put in place to guide working practices between the Legal Department and the Planning Department
- Bi-monthly meetings with the Head of Planning, Economy and Community and the Link Lawyer, and monthly meetings with the Development Manager and the Link Lawyer, should be recorded/noted
- In cases where JR or other serious litigation proceedings are contemplated by the Council or brought against the Council there needs to be an initial meeting of senior officers and regular face to face meetings to ensure that matters are dealt with promptly and all issues fully explored.
- On any occasion where officers feel it necessary to brief Members on a significant issue which has legal, financial or reputational impact, a file note should be made and kept
- Early consideration should be given by the Head of Planning Economy and Community to the public interest in these cases so that the Ward Members and other key Members are properly informed. Agreement can then be reached on the level of input required of Members
- Reports to Members should include all options and an explanation of the potential impact and merits of each option.

***O&S 26 DRAFT ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME**

The Corporate Director advised the Committee that there was work that could be undertaken by Members in respect of the Transformation Programme. One area to be developed was Locality and Commissioning. This would develop over the next twelve months and could be different at South Hams and West Devon, depending on what Members required. Members could take a leading role on this and it could be appropriate for the initial work to be undertaken by a Task and Finish Group to research how other authorities had progressed with Locality and Commissioning, to make phone calls to Members from those authorities, and perhaps internet research.

Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that Cllrs Ewings, Moyse and Sheldon would make up the Task and Finish Group, and that the Chairman would invite those who had given apologies for this meeting to be part of the Task and Finish Group if they wished.

***O&S 27 REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000: REPORT ON INSPECTION AND AUTHORISATION**

As a standing item on the agenda, Members noted that there had been no requests to use the powers under RIPA during the last quarter.

(The meeting terminated at 4.05 pm)

Chairman

APPENDIX

- A major Policy Review is scheduled to commence in December. The main driver for this is the recognition that Local Authorities need flexibility within the Devon Home Choice Policy to reflect the wishes of their Members (particularly in light of the Localism Act). Any changes will be implemented from the 1st of April 2014. Opinions will be sought from Members, key partners, stakeholders & applicants
- All other Local Authorities & Registered Providers remain committed to the partnership. However unless we can find solutions and compromises for some partners, they may be forced to leave the partnership or the partnership may dissolve. West Devon need to be prepared for this and have an interim solution to allocate housing in the short-term
- As part of the major policy review a group of officers has been set up to look at the objectives & impacts (and how any negative impacts can be addressed) of the following changes which may be of interest to Members
 - One or more partners no longer registering Band E applications
 - Reviewing the limit on cross border moves
 - Additional Band D Categories for certain groups of applicants who had previously been in Band E (Teignbridge DC have introduced a “Community Contribution” banding)
- We will shortly be consulting with our applicants and Members
- If following the review, the Devon Home Choice Policy no longer meets the requirements to allocate social housing in the Borough we will need to consider a long term alternative. The cost of which would need to be met by the Council and some indicative costs given to the previous panel estimate the costs to be in excess of £90k.
- The new software contract will include a break clause, in which all Councils will be able to serve notice of there intention to leave giving a period of not less than 6 months (this is still to be finalised)

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