



EXECUTIVE

YOU ARE REQUESTED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE TO BE HELD IN THE PRINCIPAL COMMITTEE ROOM, THE DEANE HOUSE, BELVEDERE ROAD, TAUNTON ON WEDNESDAY 7TH APRIL 2004 AT 18:15.

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes
3. Call Forward Items
4. Public Question Time
5. Development of a Greenspaces Strategy for the Borough
Report of Leisure Development Manager (enclosed)
6. Financial Strategy
Report of Head of Resources (enclosed)
7. Wellsprings - Partial Exemption Update
Report of Financial Services Manager (enclosed)
8. Energy Efficiency Review
Report of Energy Efficiency Officer (enclosed)
9. Review of Taunton Deane's Homeless Strategy "Planning Out Homelessness"
Report of Housing Manager (Private Sector and Development)

G P DYKE
Member Services Manager

The Deane House
Belvedere Road
TAUNTON
Somerset

TA1 1HE

30 March 2004

Executive - 10 March 2004

Present: Councillor Williams (Chairman)
Councillors Bishop, Mrs Bradley, Mrs Bryant, Cavill, Garner, Hall and Mrs Lewin-Harris

Officers: Mrs P James (Chief Executive), Mr J J Thornberry (Director of Corporate Resources), Mr P Weaver (Director of Community Services - Acting), Ms S Adam (Head of Finance), Mr J Seabrook (Housing Manager - Property Services) and Mr G P Dyke (Member Services Manager)

Also Present: Councillors Mrs Allgrove, Henley, Mullins, Prior-Sankey, Stuart-Thorn, Wedderkopp and Mrs Wilson.

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm.)

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 11 February 2004 were taken as read and were signed.

2. Public Question Time

- (a) Councillor Mrs Wilson, as a member of the public, expressed concern about incidents of vandalism and litter at Rockwell Green Pavilion and asked what steps were being taken to resolve the problem.

In the absence of Councillor Edwards, the appropriate portfolio holder, Councillor Williams replied that Council Mrs Wilson would receive a written answer.

- (b) Councillor Henley, as a member of the public, referred to the Wellington Skateboard Park. It had been his, and others, understanding that new equipment should have been provided at the site adjoining Wellington Sports Centre as soon as the old equipment had been moved to Wiveliscombe. He was concerned that this had not happened and asked why the equipment had not been replaced.

Councillor Williams replied that the current administration were committed to replacing the equipment and that alternative equipment would be provided in the future.

Councillor Mrs Bradley confirmed that Council were committed to skateboarding in Wellington. She explained the reasons why the equipment could not be replaced until after the landscaping of the ski slope had been completed and why the opportunity to move the equipment to Wiveliscombe, free of charge, had had to be taken quickly.

- (c) Councillor Henley also expressed concern regarding the future of Vivary Park Golf Course. He drew attention to recent unconfirmed press reports which indicated that the future of the Golf Course looked bleak. He also drew attention to the fact that the Golf Pavilion, destroyed by fire, had not yet been replaced. The appropriate portfolio holder had been quoted in the press as saying that it was not yet known if the Pavilion would be replaced or if its replacement was justified. User had also expressed concern and he asked if the position could be clarified. Councillor Henley also stated that he would consider having this issue looked at formally through the Review process.

Councillor Williams replied that the Council were committed to Vivary Park Golf Course. It was a valuable leisure facility. Insufficient funds had been received from the insurance on the Pavilion to enable it to be rebuilt. Negotiations were continuing regarding a replacement facility for the Pavilion.

3. Communications Strategy

Submitted report previously circulated regarding the Communications Strategy 2004-2007. This Strategy which had been developed with staff and Members, and in particular the Review Board, had been developed over the past few months. The Strategy now had five key areas:

- The management of communications
- Marketing
- Public relations
- E-communications
- Internal communications.

The action plans associated with each key area listed new areas of work which were not currently resourced. Some of the staffing issues would be dealt with in the Corporate Restructuring report but it was recognised that there were new resources required to deliver some of the actions. The finance for these actions would have to be found from within existing budgets or as a development bid.

The Strategy was an opportunity to improve how the Council worked and delivered its services. The aim was to enable the delivery of excellent customer focused services which met the corporate priorities and the needs of the local community.

RESOLVED that the Communications Strategy 2004-2007 be adopted and that the delivery of the Strategy be supported.

4. Corporate Debt Management Policy

Submitted report which introduced the draft Corporate Debt Management Policy.

The Policy originated from recommendations contained within the Revenues Best Value Review and the Audit Commission's Local Collection of Taxes and other Revenue report. It set out the Council's general principles for managing debts and incorporated the nationally agreed standards relating to debt collection.

The Policy stressed the need to approach debt management in a corporate way in order to maximise collection rates whilst ensuring that debt collection was carried out in a consistent, fair and transparent manner. It had previously been considered by both the Resources Review Panel and the Housing Review Panel and had been endorsed by both.

RESOLVED that the Corporate Debt Management Policy be agreed.

5. Treasury Management Strategy 2004/2005

Reported that the Council were required to consider an annual Treasury Management Strategy. The key points of the 2004/2005 Strategy were as follows:

- Current portfolio (30/1/04) consists of £20m debt (6.18% average) and £16.5m investments (3.85% average).
- Short term interest rates were forecast to reach 4.5% by March 2005. Long term rates were forecast to peak at 5%.
- Debt redemption was highly unlikely in the short term but rescheduling opportunities would be continually sought.
- Where short term cash flows permitted, advantage would be taken at the higher rates currently available from the market for longer term investments. The Treasury Management Team would constantly revise this Strategy as conditions in the money markets changed.

In the past the Council had considered an annual Treasury Strategy statement under the requirement of the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management. The 2003 Prudential Code for Capital Finance in local authorities had introduced new requirements for the manner in which capital spending plans were to be considered and approved and in conjunction with this, the development of an integrated Treasury Management Strategy.

The Prudential Code required the Council to set a number of Prudential Indicators over the forthcoming three year period. These were considered and approved by Council on 24 February 2004 as part of the budget setting process. In future years a combined strategy encompassing treasury management, investments, borrowing and the prudential indicators would be submitted as part of the annual budget approval process.

RESOLVED that the Treasury Management Strategy, as submitted, be agreed.

6. Introduction of Partnering Arrangements with DLO

Reported that the compulsory competitive tendering legislation which required a local authority to expose its contracts to open competition had now been superseded by the Best Value/Comprehensive Performance Assessment regime. This gave local authorities the opportunity to explore more flexible and effective means of service delivery.

Partnering was a method of working which had recently become popular in both the public and private sectors. Instead of signing up to a rigid contract both parties agreed broad objectives and worked together to achieve them whilst sharing risks and benefits. In this way, a more integrated and flexible approach was taken based on what needed to be done rather than just doing what the contract stipulated. Partnering was based on the four principles of mutuality, commitment, clarity and openness.

There were three areas where increased efficiency and effectiveness could be achieved by entering into a partnering arrangement with the DLO. These were grounds maintenance (including parks and open spaces and housing land), street cleaning and housing responsive repairs. Submitted report which dealt in detail with grounds maintenance and street cleaning and explained the measures which would be put in place to ensure that the Council continued to be reassured over both cost and quality. The report also provided similar information in regard to housing responsive repairs and also made proposals regarding the gas servicing and repair contract which was currently held by a private contractor.

If this proposed partnering option were agreed the financial implications would be as follows:

- A saving of approximately £60k through the dismantling of the client side.
- A reduction in the service budget 2003/04 of £63k was achieved with no loss of quality by rationalising the annual bedding strategy.
- A further reduction in the service budget 2004/05 of £23k.
- Increase in DLO profits.

There would be financial implications to the re-tendering option that would include the cost of contract production and letting and possible reformation of the client side.

The Council's Standing Orders allowed this more modern way of working and the Audit Commission had raised no objection to this course of action provided that the Council continued to monitor quality and cost.

RESOLVED that:

1. the move towards a partnering agreement with the DLO for the provision of the grounds maintenance service and the street cleaning service be agreed;
2. a partnering responsive repair contract with Deane DLO be agreed from 1 April 2004 to 31 March 2008. Such contract to incorporate an annual uplift based on the building cost indices as published by the Building Cost Information Services. The contract to have break clauses built into it in order to address poor performance, the eventual outcome of the Best Value Review and outcomes relating to the Housing Stock Options;
3. the extension of the existing gas servicing and repairs contract with MJT to the 31 March 2005 be agreed. Such contract to incorporate an annual uplift based on the building cost indices as published by the Building Cost Information Services. From 1 April 2005 a new contract would be granted to

a contractor after the completion of a tender exercise adopting a Best Value approach and including the option to adopt a partnering arrangement.

7. Proposed reduction in play area grants awarded to Parish Councils

Submitted report on the outcome of the call-in concerning the proposed alteration to the level of play area grants awarded to Parish Councils which had been considered at a recent meeting of the Review Board.

At a meeting of the Health and Leisure Review Panel in November 2003 a review of various grant schemes administered by the Leisure Development Team had taken place. Two of the recommended changes, namely the priority to be given to funding young people's facilities ahead of children's play equipment and the level of future play area grants awards had not been supported by the Review Panel.

As a result, these matters were referred to the last meeting of the Executive where it was agreed that the proposed changes should be implemented. This would mean that from April 2005 the capital grant for play equipment would be reduced from 85% of the project cost to 33%.

This decision was called-in on the basis that the cut in the level of grants proposed would have a detrimental effect on the rural areas of Taunton Deane. The call-in was considered at the Review Board at its meeting on 26 February 2004, when it was resolved that the Executive be recommended to reduce the capital grant payable to Parish Councils for play equipment from 85% to 66%. Any such reduction would be for a period of two years to enable the implications to be assessed and to determine how accessible other sources of funding were. The Review Board did however accept that priority should be given to older children's/youth facilities. Proposals to increase the playground budget from £21,000 to £31,000 from 2005/2006 were also supported and the Executive were requested to consider the recommendations of the Review Board.

The Executive considered, in detail, the request of the Review Board but saw no reason to change its original decision.

RESOLVED that the decision made by Executive at its meeting on 11 February 2004 (Minute 3/2004) be confirmed.

8. Exclusion of press and public

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the item numbered 10 on the Agenda because of the likelihood that exempt information would otherwise be disclosed relating to Clause 1 of Schedule 12(a) of the Local Government Act 1972.

9. Corporate review and restructure proposals

Submitted detailed report which set out proposals which sought to address the issues within the Council's structure and its ability to ensure focus on the delivery of the Council's priorities.

The proposals reduced the number of Directors from three to two and to focus those remaining posts on strategic issues. It was also intended to complete the layer of Head of Services, to review and recommend changes to the functions deployed at the centre, to transfer certain functions between the Heads and to alter some Heads' responsibilities accordingly. The proposals would strengthen corporate working and provide additional support to overview and scrutiny. It was recognised that further work would be necessary to address the Council's underlying budget position. It was noted that the proposals were effectively cost neutral and would provide longer term savings.

RESOLVED that:

1. the proposals set out in the report be agreed;
2. the new post of Strategic Director - Operations be created and the external advertisement of the post forthwith be agreed;
3. two new Heads of Service posts, Head of Policy and Performance and Head of Development, be created and the internal advertisement for these posts be placed immediately;
4. the Head of Corporate Services post be funded from the savings generated by the proposal and the post be advertised internally forthwith;
5. Council be recommended that the early retirement of the Head of Performance on the terms set out in detail in the report be agreed;
6. Reserves be used to fund the one off costs associated with the redundancy and early retirement of the Head of Performance; and
7. the posts effectively made 'redundant' by these proposals be deleted from the establishment (these posts were all currently vacant).

(The meeting ended at 7.30 pm.)

Executive – 23 March 2004

Present: Councillor Bishop, Mrs Bradley, Edwards and Hall.

Officers: Mrs P James (Chief Executive), Mr R Willoughby-Foster (Forward Plan and Regeneration Manager), Mr I Ayre (Principal Officer – Forward Plan), Mr M Leeman (Senior Policy Officer – Forward Planning), Mr P Bisatt (Senior Planner – Forward Planning), Mr P Anelay (Planning Assistant) and Mr A Melhuish (Review Support Officer).

Also Present: Councillors Hindley and Meikle, County Councillor Wolverson.

(The meeting started at 7.40pm.)

10. Apologies

Councillors Williams, Lewin-Harris, Mrs Bryant, Cavill and Garner.

11. Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Bishop be elected as Chairman of the Executive for the duration of the meeting.

12. Taunton Deane Local Plan – Proposed Modifications

Reported that at its meeting on 23 March 2004, the Strategic Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Review Panel had considered the proposed modifications to the Taunton Deane Local Plan, following the receipt of the Local Plan Inspector's Report.

After careful consideration, the Review Panel had agreed to recommend the Executive to accept the proposed modifications prior to requesting Council approval to place the modifications on deposit for public consultation.

The Executive felt it was important that proposals for the development of land at Longforth Farm, Wellington should be considered as part of the Local Development Framework that would have to be produced by the Council shortly.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the proposed modifications, as agreed by the Strategic Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Review Panel, be supported;
- (2) the intention to consider the allocation of Longforth Farm, Wellington in the preparation of the Local Development Framework be approved; and
- (3) the Council be recommended to approve the proposed modifications to the Taunton Deane Local Plan and that they be placed on deposit for public consultation.

(The meeting ended at 7.47pm.)

CALL-IN REQUEST

To: Greg Dyke

Decision being challenged

By

As to

Detailed reasons for challenge:-

Signed

Dated

As and when two completed requests are received

Then:-

1. The decision will be “frozen”
2. The requests and the reasons given will be first on the next agenda for the Review Board
3. You will be invited to attend that meeting and to further explain your reasons for calling-in the decision
4. The decision will remain “frozen” until:-
 - the Board decides not to support the call-in; or
 - the Board’s proposed alternative has been decided; or
 - the “Council’s referral” mechanism has been triggered by the Board

The right of call-in will expire at 12 noon on the fifth working day after the decision has been made.

Please Note:-

A successful “call-in” means the decision cannot be carried out.

A Councillor can instead request that the decision is reviewed, that is, subsequently revisited without seeking to delay the decision.

TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 7TH APRIL 2004

REPORT OF THE LEISURE DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Mrs Bradley)

This report addresses the corporate priorities of Environment, Economy and Health

DEVELOPMENT OF A GREENSPACES STRATEGY FOR THE BOROUGH

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Greenspaces in the Borough are a valuable asset for the Council in addressing its priorities of Environment, Economy and Health. A strategic approach to their provision and management is vital if this role is to be maximised and this is now actively being encouraged by Government.

2. Purpose of the Report

2.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Members of the Executive, the methodology used for the development of a Greenspaces Strategy for the Borough, the key findings and the draft recommendations arising. There will be a presentation by the Consultant and an opportunity for discussion about the method and outcomes. The full draft strategy is available in the Members' Room.

2.2 The Health and Leisure Panel considered this report and approved the strategy in principle. There was debate at the Panel meeting about the priorities allocated to the recommendations but no consensus. The officers will be developing a draft Action Plan from the recommendations with a time schedule, which will be discussed by the Health and Leisure Panel. The final Action Plan agreed by Panel Members will be recommended to the Executive Councillor for Leisure for approval.

3. Background

3.1 The Council commissioned the Communities First Partnership in late 2002 to assist it with the development of a Greenspaces Strategy.

3.2 The need for this document arose from four sources:

- The publication of "PPG17" the revised planning guidance note on recreational provision;
- the Parks Service Best Value Inspection and resulting Improvement Plan;
- the publication of the Government's Taskforce report "Greenspaces, Better Places";
- the outcome of the assessment of the Parks Service against the ILAM Quality standard.

3.3 The strategy development process was reported to Members on 3rd October 2002 for approval.

4. The Development of the Strategy

4.1 The work has been in considerable depth and has taken over a year. It has involved frontline and policy staff working together. The project has:

- fundamentally assessed the amount, type and quality of greenspaces available to the community,
- ascertained the views of the community on those spaces and on the service provided by the Parks team,
- assessed the current policy position of the Council and the Government about greenspaces,
- ascertained the views and perceptions of Council and DLO officers, and
- included a review of the Parks Service itself.

4.2 The recommendations arising from the work so far are grouped under the broad headings of:

- strategic direction,
- design of the service,
- resource allocation,
- addressing consultation outcomes and
- maintenance issues.

4.3 The following tables set out the draft recommendations for the Parks and Open Space Strategy. These recommendations are grouped by the following headings and listed by proposed priority order:

- Strategic Direction
- Design of the Service
- Resource Allocation
- Addressing Consultation Issues
- Maintenance Issues

Strategic Direction

Recommendation	Details	Lead Service	Partners	Proposed Priority Rating	Resource Implications
R1	The regeneration of existing green space and the creation of new spaces need to be tied in to the findings of this strategy.	Parks Service	Planning Service, Police, Youth Service, Community Safety Unit	High	Additional resources or refocused resources needed
R2	Local plan policies should be reviewed in light of the findings of this strategy.	Planning Service	Parks Service	High	None
R3	The planning authority needs to develop a clear framework and rationale (Supplementary Planning Guidance) for the consideration of on site and off site provision of green space and children's play.	Planning Service	Parks Service	High	None
R4	The parks service needs to review its 2002-04 service plan in the light of this strategy and the findings of the Best Value Review and ILAM Quality Award.	Parks Service		High	None
R5	The findings of this strategy need to be fed in to the Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy and community safety initiatives.	Parks Service	Community Safety Unit	Medium	None

Design of the Service

Recommendation	Details	Lead Service	Partners	Proposed Priority Rating	Resource Implications
R6	The authority needs to carry out a feasibility study for the Tree Town of The South West Concept	Landscape and Heritage Service	Parks Service, Highways, Landscape and Heritage Service	Medium	Additional resources needed
R7	The authority should begin a programme of producing management plans for all its key sites.	Parks Service		Medium	Refocussed resources needed
R8	The authority should consider extending its programme of applications to the Green Flag Award.	Parks Service		Medium	None
R9	The authority should consider repeating the quality audit undertaken as part of the strategy on an annual basis.	Parks Service		Medium	Additional resources or refocused resources needed
R10	The authority needs to improve its work on marketing and promotion	Parks Service		Medium	Refocused resources needed
R11	The authority needs to consider how it can work with town and parish councils to improve their quality of provision	Parks Service	Parish and Town Councils	Medium	Additional resources or refocused resources needed
R12	Undertake a skills and resources audit to identify shortfalls in skills needed to deliver the strategy	Parks Service		Medium	None
R13	Environmental policy should be developed to bring together all aspects of this work across all types of greenspace and the services that manage them.	Parks Service		Low	None
R14	The current or potential nature conservation benefit of greenspace has not been assessed and thought should be given to this.	Parks Service	Landscape and Heritage Service	Low	None

Resource Allocation

Recommendation	Details	Lead Service	Partners	Proposed Priority Rating	Resource Implications
R15	Consider how to increase resources and how to redesign the service to release resources for the priorities identified in the strategy	Parks Service		High	Additional resources needed
R16	The authority needs to consider how it can create a focus for parks management on key sites.	Parks Service		Medium	None

Addressing Consultation Outcomes

Recommendation	Details	Lead Service	Partners	Proposed Priority Rating	Resource Implications
R17	A multi agency approach is needed to address safety and provision for young people in green spaces.	Parks Service	Planning Service, Police, Youth Service, Community Safety Unit	High	Additional resources or refocused resources needed
R18	The authority needs to explore how it will increase staff presence on site.	Parks Service		High	Additional resources or refocused resources needed
R19	The authority needs to address dog fouling in parks and green spaces.	Parks Service	Environmental Health, Community Safety Unit	High	None
R20	Early sites to be targeted for a community led approach to development would be Victoria Park and French Weir.	Parks Service	Police, Youth Service, Community Safety Unit	Medium	Additional resources needed

Maintenance Issues

Recommendation	Details	Lead Service	Partners	Proposed Priority Rating	Resource Implications
R21	Carry out a survey of all newly planted trees and producing a programme of remedial works	Parks Service		Low	None
R22	Develop a regular programme of tree maintenance for all recently planted and young trees	Parks Service		Low	None
R23	Survey shrub beds and undertake a programme weed removal, mulching, formative pruning and, where appropriate, wholesale removal and replanting.	Parks Service		Low	None
R24	Review its operations in terms of the cleansing and upkeep of children's play areas	Parks Service		Low	None

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The Greenspaces Strategy took as its starting premise that all recommendations would be achievable without additional cost to the Council. In practice this will be achieved in a number of ways:
- by refocusing existing resources away from current activities to the new activities R20;
 - by seeking funding from external sources eg R18;
 - by combining the activity with other resourced activities within the Council eg R15.
- 5.2 Should it transpire that additional resources are required for any of the actions in the plan which cannot be resourced by the refocussing of existing budgets then this would be presented as a development bid and the adoption of the strategy would not be seen as an automatic permission to incur additional expenditure.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 It is recommended that Members adopt Strategy for Greenspaces and approve the drafting of an action plan to deliver the recommendations.

Contact Officer: Karen Dyson, Leisure Development Manager
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TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE 7TH APRIL 2004

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF RESOURCES

This Matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Williams (Leader of the Council)

FINANCIAL STRATEGY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The majority of local authorities are struggling to match their spending plans to resources available. This is a national issue and not unique to Taunton Deane Borough Council.

Based on current financial forecasts, this Council is facing a funding gap of around £700k per annum (before considering development items). This clearly is unsustainable and the Council must have a strategy for resolving the underlying budget gap.

This report sets out a Financial Strategy that will allow the Council to break out of the annual cycle of budget savings rounds to produce a clear and sustainable financial plan over the medium term. This will be achieved through a series of Service Reviews (fundamental appraisals of what each service is currently doing). Some difficult choices will need to be made and existing methods and practices fully challenged.

All Members will be involved in the process over the coming months.

1. Background

- 1.1 The current medium term financial planning process has been in place for a number of years now, and is an essential part of the budget setting process. The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (mtfp) provides a financial forecast of the cost of providing the Council's General Fund services, and the resources that are likely to be available, over the medium term period – thereby giving early warning of predicted “budget gaps”.
- 1.2 The financial position of the Council has been difficult over the last few years, with each budget round bringing further service cuts, fee increases and rounds of efficiency savings. The Corporate Planning process has helped focus and redirect resources to priorities, but with increasing pressures and expectations on this Council to deliver more with less, there is a need to step back and look to the medium term financial position of the Council and work out how this can be achieved.
- 1.3 The financial model has recently been updated to reflect “inescapable” budget issues (eg pay award). Managers will be asked to provide detail of

unavoidable service issues over the next few weeks to allow the model to be further refined. The fully updated model, together with details of the assumptions used, will be presented to Members in early summer of 2004.

- 1.4 Meantime, based on the limited information available, it is clear that the underlying budget problem continues – as the summary table below shows.

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
	£'000	£'000	£'000
TDBC Forecast Budget Position	12,292	13,218	14,168
Forecast Govt Grant *	6,598	6,697	6,797
Forecast Council Tax **	4,988	5,272	5,573
Forecast Resources Available	11,586	11,969	12,370
Predicted Budget Gap	706	1,249	1,798

* Assuming a 1.5% increase in central government funding per annum.

** Assuming a council tax increase of 4.55% per annum.

The model (even with limited information) clearly shows a funding gap in future years of around £700k per annum. This is the position prior to considering any development items and clearly must be resolved.

2. The Issue

- 2.1 The Council now needs to adopt a Financial Strategy that, together with a robust medium term financial planning process, will help the Council break out of the current annual cycle of savings exercises, and help produce a clear, robust, sustainable and affordable medium term financial plan.
- 2.2 The Financial Strategy will be a key link between the Corporate Strategy, which sets the aims and ambitions of the Council, and the mtfp, which sets out the cost of what the council is currently providing. It should also link in other corporate plans such as the Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan, and longer term, develop to include HRA services too.
- 2.3 The remainder of this document is focussed on setting out the proposed Financial Strategy of Taunton Deane Borough Council. There are some very difficult issues for this Council to tackle, some of which will take many months (even years) to progress. What is clear though is that to continue providing the current level of services is not an option.
- 2.4 Each service of the Council will be subject to scrutiny – and it is important that ALL Councillors are involved in this process and in shaping the future financial position of the Council. The key message is that this Council is currently spending beyond its means and must reduce its net budget to match the resources available.

3. The Way Forward - Service Reviews

- 3.1 As a Council, Taunton Deane has choices to make over the levels of service provided to the community. The Corporate Strategy has developed to show quite clearly what the priority areas are and resources have been redirected to ensure they are delivered.
- 3.2 However, recognising that “continuing as things are now” is not a viable option, more work is needed to review the fundamentals. Currently, right across the Council, service managers are striving to achieve top quartile performance status for all their services. The basic assumption that this Council can actually afford to deliver this ambitious target must now be challenged.
- 3.3 To move forward on this challenge, Members must be provided with a basket of key information on each of the core service areas (including support services). This should include information on the types of activities carried out (and whether they are discretionary activities or not), the trend re costs and performance indicators, and some information that shows how this Councils performance and service provision compares with other authorities.
- 3.4 This information will give Members a good feel for the standard of service currently being provided at Taunton Deane (in simple terms this could be described as Gold, Silver, or Bronze). The current service standard then must be reviewed – with changes to service levels being assessed re their impact on corporate priorities, customers, partners, and of course costs.
- 3.5 Members will, following the core themes and principles set out below, be asked to review the information provided, and consider whether the service should continue to be provided, and at what level.

4. Review Principles

- 4.1 As mentioned above, the Council will be faced with some difficult choices. In order to meet the objective of having a sustainable financial plan, the reviews outlined above will need to be challenging and investigate areas that traditionally have not been subject to such an appraisal.
- 4.2 The remainder of this strategy outlines some of the key themes and principles that will be followed in achieving this objective.

5. Efficiency Savings

- 5.1 Each service should be reviewed to test whether it is possible to provide the current level of service at less cost, or an improved level of service at the current cost.
- 5.2 As part of this theme, it is proposed that the following issues will be considered over the coming months:-
- Better use of IT. (Promotion of E-Government to encourage access to services.)
 - Vacancy Management.
 - More Use of Multi-Skilling.

- Increasing Productivity.
- Improving Procurement.
- More Use of Strategic Partnerships.
- Introduction Of Quality Systems (getting things right 1st time)
- Ensure We Maximise External Funding.
- Promotion of “Invest to Save” initiatives.

5.3 It may be prudent to build an annual target for efficiency savings into the mtfp, which could be cascaded down to each Directorate Plan, and individual Team Plan. This will be reviewed at the end of the service review process.

6. Alternative Service Delivery

6.1 In very simple terms, this means reviewing what Taunton Deane currently does and challenging the existing method of delivering that service. There are a wide range of options to consider - ranging from staying as they are, to creating a partnership arrangement with another local authority, to the service being entirely provided by a private company.

6.2 To challenge “why things are done they way they are” is often difficult and uncomfortable for everyone involved. However - it is important that this is progressed as it is simply ensuring that we continue to deliver best value to the community on the services we provide to them.

7. Financing of Activities

7.1 Taunton Deane does currently follow best practice by considering and approving its revenue and capital budgets together. However there are some issues that must be considered if the Council is to ensure it has sufficient resources in place to deliver its key priority – The Vision for Taunton.

7.2 The delivery plan for The Vision is being prepared but it will be some time before it is clear on the level of resources required from each partner in the project. It is likely though that the resources required will be capital resources rather than revenue resources.

7.3 It is proposed that, as a principle, over the coming years, new resources (eg underspends) are directed towards the Councils Unallocated Capital Reserve rather than the General Fund Reserve. If agreed, all future financial recommendations in reports will take this into account.

7.4 In addition, there are some other issues that will need to be reviewed over the coming months. There are some strategic choices to be made – particularly in relation to the funding of certain activities (whether they are funded from revenue or capital, or how certain government grants are used). Strategic decisions need to be taken on :-

Implementing Electronic Grant (IEG) funding (clarity needed on use of funds)
 Lease v. Buy Decisions (challenge existing practices)
 IT Development (update on IT Strategy needed)
 Borrowing (new freedoms re Prudential Regime – potential use re “invest to save” type initiatives)

Use of Planning Gain (clarity needed)

Use of External Funding (Is the Council missing opportunities?)

8. Asset Disposals

8.1 As mentioned above, The Vision project is likely to require significant capital resources. Currently, the amount of capital finance available to this Council is fairly limited. One way of boosting this would be to dispose of surplus assets.

8.2 A full review of current land holdings / asset holdings is currently being undertaken. Once complete this should be matched to the aspirations set out in the Corporate Strategy. The Asset Management Plan must be reviewed at a strategic level to ensure all asset holdings are continuing to provide “adequate” return to the Council.

9. Income Generation

9.1 Each year fees and charges are reviewed as part of the budget setting process. The Council now needs to take a longer-term view of where it wishes to be with fees and charges and to have a clear view on the application of subsidies.

9.2 The work currently being done on the pricing policy review will facilitate this debate. Managers should also be encouraged to explore and exploit new business opportunities available to them. Diversification of services should not be ruled out.

9.3 In addition, the Council should consider areas of service provision that do not currently charge their users. The Local Government Act 2003 has given local authorities the opportunity to now charge for discretionary services. Taunton Deane must carry out a review of discretionary services and make strategic decisions regarding the way forward on each. Again, this is a difficult issue for the Council, but must be explored as a way of resolving the underlying budget problem.

9.4 External funding should be maximised. This is a simple statement, but is quite difficult to achieve. How does the Council currently ensure it is taking advantage of all grant-funding regimes? Is Taunton Deane missing opportunities? Could the Council develop the use of sponsorship funding to areas of its activities other than roundabouts? All of these issues will be explored over the coming months.

10. Grants & Subsidies

10.1 Government Grants and Subsidies are received in many different forms (Revenue Support Grant / Planning Delivery Grant / Homelessness / Benefit Subsidy).

10.2 Over the coming months each major central government grant will be reviewed to ensure that this Council is maximising its share of central government funding.

11. Use of Reserves

- 11.1 Traditionally, this Council has created earmarked reserves for many purposes – from the set-aside of funds for major projects, to the earmarking of funds for specific training courses. The list has been reviewed as part of the recent budget setting process and has resulted in a significant reduction in the number of earmarked reserves. The Head of Resources will keep this list under review and regularly return unused funds to the General Fund Reserve.
- 11.2 Unearmarked reserves (better known as the General Fund Reserve) have traditionally been kept above the floor of £1m. For the Council to break out of the annual savings cycle it may be necessary to revisit this floor to allow reserves to be used to promote “invest to save” initiatives.
- 11.3 It is still the view of the Head of Resources that, in normal circumstances, the level of General Fund Reserve for this authority should be no lower than £1m. This is based on an assessment of the risks facing the Council. Issues such as a small fluctuation in the Housing Benefit Subsidy budget can have a major impact on the budget position of the Council, and the unearmarked reserves are there to protect against such eventualities.
- 11.4 In resolving some of the financial issues facing the Council it may be necessary to use some of the General Fund Reserve to fund “invest to save” type initiatives. This may mean, for a temporary period, that the level of General Fund Reserves will dip below the £1m floor.
- 11.5 This principle is accepted by the Council’s Head of Resources provided that:-
- The “invest to save” type initiatives allow the original sum to be paid back to the Reserve over a 3-year period.
 - The General Fund Reserve should not fall below £750,000 during this transition period.
- 11.6 Currently, all supplementary estimates require Full Council approval. This may not be a practical way forward for “invest to save” initiatives. It is proposed that, subject to the principles set out in 11.5 above, that the Executive be delegated the authority from Full Council to approve such supplementary estimates during this review period. This will allow more frequent reports to be presented to Members during the review and will facilitate the swift approval of savings proposals.

12.0 Conclusion

- 12.1 This Strategy sets out the way forward to allow the Council to break out of the existing annual cycle of budget cuts. The task ahead is not easy and the process will require the support and involvement of all Councillors.
- 12.2 This document sets out the strategy for achieving a sustainable financial plan. If significant progress is to be made in time to influence the 2005/06 budget setting regime then the process of Service Reviews must begin shortly. The detail of how this process will actually work, and the timetable it will follow is currently being developed by the Head of Resources and the Head of Policy

and Performance and will be communicated to all Members as soon as possible.

13.0 Impact on Corporate Priorities

13.1 This Financial Strategy will provide a robust mechanism for ensuring the limited resources available to this authority are directed towards the priority areas as identified in the Corporate Strategy.

14.0 Recommendation

14.1 The Executive is requested to approve this Financial Strategy.

Background Papers

General Fund Revenue Estimates 2004/05 – Executive Feb 2004

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TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE 7 APRIL 2004

REPORT OF THE FINANCIAL SERVICES MANAGER

This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Williams (Leader of the Council)

WELLSPRINGS – PARTIAL EXEMPTION UPDATE

Executive Summary

To report that £133,500 of monies previously set aside for the repayment of VAT incurred on the Wellsprings Centre will now not be required, and to approve that these monies are now returned to unallocated capital resources.

1 Introduction

1.1 At the special meeting of the Council held on 22 December 2003 the decision was taken to defer the formation of the Leisure Trust. A consequence of this was that the Council would become liable for the repayment to HM Customs & Excise of £330,000 of irrecoverable VAT. Full Council also approved the supplementary estimate necessary for this payment.

1.2 The breakdown of the expected payment to Customs was as follows:

Year	Revenue £	Capital £	Total £
2002/03	97,000	36,500	133,500
2003/04	82,000	114,500	196,500
Total	179,000	151,000	330,000

2 Progress since December

2.1 Since December, Officers have been looking at a number of ways of trying to reduce the expected payment, this includes changes to the operational aspects relating to Wellsprings and liaison with Customs to confirm whether repayment of this VAT is actually required.

2.2 Potential changes to the operational arrangements for Wellsprings have, in discussions with the Head of Commercial Services, proved to be unworkable and would provide only minor reductions to the expected VAT liability.

2.3 However, discussions with Customs have proved much more fruitful, and it has now been confirmed by Customs that they will not require the expected payment of VAT that related to 2002/03 of £133,500.

2.4 Nationally there is a review of the rules and restrictions applied to local authorities for VAT recovery and although no formal changes to VAT law have been formally made, this concession made to TDBC by not requiring repayment of these monies represents a major change in the stance which they have previously taken with other local authorities.

- 2.5 With regard to the expected repayment of £196,500 relating to 2003/04 Customs have indicated that they will review their treatment of this particular year in September 2004. This, it is hoped, will coincide with the outcome of the national review and may result in further concessions. Although it must be stressed that at this time no guarantees can be made.
- 2.6 Returning to the £133,500 relating to 2002/03, the table above shows that it represented both capital and revenue monies. Executive Councillors have indicated that in order to increase the level of capital resources available to finance future capital schemes it has been requested that the whole of the £133,500 be returned to unallocated capital resources. This will require the approval of a virement of £97,000.
- 2.7 It is proposed that rather than request from Full Council a virement now when the 2003/04 financial year has already finished that approval be sought when the 2003/04 outturn (which will include this item) is reported to the Executive (June 2004). This will enable any other underspends which arise during Q4 to also be transferred to capital resources.
- 3 **Impact on Corporate Priorities**
- 3.1 Changes to capital resources affect all of the Council's services and therefore this report impacts on all Corporate Priorities.
- 4 **Recommendations**
- 4.1 It is recommended that the Executive note that HM Customs and Excise no longer require repayment of £133,500 of VAT and that these monies be returned to unallocated capital resources.

Background Papers:

Executive 22 December 2004 – Establishment of a Leisure Trust.

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TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Housing Review Panel 25 February 2004

Report of the Energy Efficiency Officer

This matter is the responsibility of Councillor Garner

Energy Efficiency Review

1. Executive Summary

1.1. This report is intended to inform members of the work in progress towards the Home Energy Conservation Act (1995) target of a 30% improvement in Energy Efficiency by 2011.

2. Background

2.1. The authority is currently undergoing a Best Value Review and the Energy Efficiency Service is part of this review under the Decent Homes Group.

2.2. In the last two years, Taunton Deane Borough Council has reported to DEFRA an improvement figure of 4.17% in 2001-02 and 2.5% in 2002-03. This is reported in the HECA annual progress report in August.

2.3. In November 2002 the Housing Review Panel approved the Energy Efficiency Strategy.

3. The Current Position

3.1. The activities to improve the Energy Efficiency of Housing in Taunton Deane in 2003-04 will be reported in the Eighth progress report for HECA in August 2004. So far this includes:

3.2. The set up and launch of the Somerset Warm and Well Scheme with Taunton Deane as the lead authority on this partnership.

3.3. A health referral scheme has been successfully launched with referrals from Occupational Therapists of those at risk from fuel poverty and suffering as a result of energy inefficient homes.

3.4. The successful operation of the Deane Warmth scheme in partnership with SWEB who have match funded the scheme. The present value of customer benefit from the scheme is £67,098.

3.5. Monthly Promotional and Publicity plan produced to ensure maximum awareness of the Energy Efficiency Service offered by Taunton Deane Borough Council.

3.6. The Best Value Review currently being conducted includes the energy efficiency service as part of the Decent Homes Group.

3.7. In March and April 2004 a review of the Energy Efficiency Strategy will take place. This will be similar to the review that took place in March 2002. The review is being facilitated by consultation of the residents of Taunton Deane on awareness of the Energy Efficiency Service. This consultation will inform TDBC on the effectiveness

of the publicity and promotions that have taken place during 2003. It is designed to consult users and non users as part of a random sample of residents in the Deane.

3.8. When the consultation is complete it will input into the Best Value review and will be the beginning of the Energy Efficiency Strategy Review. The next step of which will be to consult with stakeholders on innovative marketing, developing schemes, referral mechanisms and partnership working.

3.9. Once completed the consultation of residents and stakeholders will be used to develop the improvement plan and to update the Energy Efficiency Strategy.

4. Recommendations

4.1. Members are requested to either –

- a) accept this review in its entirety, or
- b) Make suggestions to alter or add to the review, which should then be accepted.

The panel should then recommend the acceptance of this report to the Executive.

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TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – 7th APRIL 2004

Report of Housing Manager – Private Sector and Development

(This matter is the responsibility of Councillor G Garner)

REVIEW OF TAUNTON DEANE'S HOMELESS STRATEGY "PLANNING OUT HOMELESSNESS"

The attached report on the Update of the Homeless Strategy was reviewed by the Housing Review Panel on 25 February 2004.

The report is for information on progress of the Update of the Homeless Strategy. This information report is presented to the Housing Review Panel twice yearly.

The Members of the Housing Review Panel have recommended that the report is accepted by the Executive.

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TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Housing Review Panel 25 February 2004

"Report of Housing Manager (Private Sector and Development)

This matter is the responsibility of Councillor Garner

Review of Taunton Deane's Homeless Strategy "Planning out Homelessness"

1. Executive Summary

This report aims to update the Review Panel on the progress and development of the Council's statutory Homeless Strategy, and gives members the opportunity to comment on or alter the proposals.

2. Background

Members will recall that the Homelessness Act, 2002, required every housing authority in England to prepare a Homeless Strategy by July 2003. Taunton Deane's draft was completed in January 2003, and at that time officers promised to report back in a year following our consultation event.

3. The Current Position

On 23 January we held a consultation event with all our partners. We reviewed the progress, delays and alterations. We considered the various elements affecting the prevention of homelessness, the supply of accommodation and the support of those who become homeless.

We agreed a new timetable of priorities to take "Planning Out Homelessness" forward, based on the findings of the consultation day and comments from a consultant who has been involved in our 'Best Value Review'.

On 9 February the Homelessness Steering Group met. We tidied and prioritised all the items raised on 23 January and made decisions on the way forward with Multi-Agency working.

Included with this report are copies of the Executive Summary of the Homeless Strategy from last year and a draft of its progress and this year's proposals.

Further updates will be provided at approximately this time each year.

4. Recommendations

Members are requested to either -

- (a) accept the review in its entirety, or
- (b) Make suggestions to alter or add to the review, which should then be accepted.

The Panel should then recommend the acceptance of this report to the Executive.

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DRAFT UPDATE OF HOMELESS STRATEGY 2004-2005

PREVENTION

Issues in Priority Order	Agreed Action	Action	Costs and How they will be Funded
1. Lack of cohesive Deane-wide homeless network	Agree continuation of Steering Group to ensure multi-agency focus for all 3 headings. Involve other organisations as appropriate (<i>case conferences for most difficult cases</i>). To focus appropriate help from Supporting People funding.	Ongoing	Officer time – initially – independent organiser to be discussed and costed.
2. Need to improve consultation and ensure it continues	Annual consultation and review of the Strategy, progress, failures, etc.	Ongoing	Officer time.
3. Difficult to reach agreement between services	Develop protocols or service level agreements with all relevant institutions and services. To consider appropriate liaison officers with Social Services and Somerset Partnership.	Ongoing	Officer time and as '1'.
4. Reorganise to introduce "spend to save"	Train staff in methods used by Colchester and Harrow Beacon Authorities. Record outcome of this work. Firm direction of Homelessness and Management staff on possession issues. Culture change. Links to ASBOS.	Ongoing	Officer time. Two extra staff – funding in place - £50,000 SP and ODPM.
5. Increase of 16 and 17 year olds requesting social housing	Improve and pay for mediation services (<i>relationship breakdowns, neighbour disputes, etc</i>) - Relate, Outreach, YMCA and Parenting, Mediation Somerset	Started	Mediation Somerset £500 max per case from B & B budget.
6. Lack of available information on services available and who does what	Produce a Directory of Services and adequate signposting	Not started	Printing and staff time £500 from ODPM.
7. Information for staff needs updating	Provide a Working Guide. Update leaflets and lists	Not started	Printing and staff time £500 from ODPM.
8. No help for homeless people in courts	Provide an information desk in all courts manned by Shelter and CAB.	Started	Grant applied for.
9. Council housing advice services limited	Training - Homeless and Advice plus allocation staff	See 4	Staff time and reorganise.

	<i>(improve advice)</i> Develop Housing Options Programme		
10. Lack of information available for those with greatest need	Employ Welfare Rights Officer. Housing Benefits Welfare Officer.	Completed but SP Diffs	SP funding.
11. Services can be difficult to access for certain groups	Improve access to services, for example, outreach, rural issues, "One Stop Shop", Café idea, Women's Aid	Ongoing	Staff time. Costs being investigated. Some ODPM funding.
12. Little information for school and college leavers	Education/Connexions - 13-19 years and provide Youth Homeless Guide	Not started	Staff time only.
13. Felt we were not doing all we could for disabled and there were also 'bed blocking' issues	Consider Home Improvement Agency benefits	Ongoing	Costs agreed. £140,000 bid in progress.
14. Concern over ever rising costs of houses in Private Sector and what would happen if the 'bubble burst'	Form a focus group or lenders <i>(include Credit Union)</i>	Not started	Staff time only.
15. Behaviour problems not being addressed	Support bid by Mental Health Partnership to Department of Health to set up specialist team for Somerset.	Ongoing	Costs known. Bid in.
16. Repeat homelessness difficult to monitor	Improve IT systems.	Ongoing	Staff time only.

SUPPLY

Issues in Priority Order	Agreed Action	Action	Costs and How they will be Met
1. Lack of cohesive Deane-wide homeless network	Agree continuation of Steering Group to provide multi-agency focus for all 3 headings. Involve other organisations as appropriate (<i>case conferences for most difficult cases</i>).	Ongoing as prevention	Officer time and cost of independent organiser.
2. Need to improve consultation and ensure it continues	Annual consultation and review of the Strategy, progress, failures, etc.	Ongoing as prevention	Officer time.
3. Registered Social Landlords not allocating enough re-lets to homeless cases	Improve liaison with Registered Social Landlords to maximise relet opportunities. In line with internal arrangements in Taunton Deane. Be aware during stock options work. Any RSL hard to let flats to be used for singles in B & B.	Started and being monitored	Officer time.
4. Insufficient social housing and move-on accommodation	Follow recommendations of DCA Housing Needs Report. (<i>Target of 131 units pa of which 50% should be flats</i>). One in 10 as move-on (<i>flats only</i>) including some foyer-type units.	Started	Included in capital costs of enabling.
5. No temporary accommodation planning particularly relating to reduction of 'bed and breakfast' value for money issues	Develop a Temporary Accommodation procurement Strategy. Leasing arrangements to be considered	Private sector leasing scheme started	Costs met from B & B budget and enabling.
6. Lack of sufficient grant capital to ensure adequate number of social housing units are completed	Continue to develop S106 Planning Agreements/grants to Registered Social Landlords	Started	Staff time and Enabling Fund.
7. Insufficient hostel accommodation means too much reliance on bed and breakfast establishments	Review need for hostels (<i>houses for families to reduce bed and breakfast - monitor further need at team meetings</i>). Look at night shelter/winter watch issues for rough sleepers – Open Door Project. Four RSL Hostel Units planned in Wellington.	Started	Staff time Enabling Fund/Council's land.

8. Insufficient move-on accommodation for women escaping violence	Provide another Women's Refuge satellite home	Completed	Loss of one 2-bedroom Council flat.
9. Closure of some houses in multiple occupation	Link with Regulatory Reform of Grants Order to stem loss of Houses in Multiple Occupation. Discuss assured shorthold tenancies with the Government Office of the South West TAH taking on more tenancies.	Started	Staff time. Some grant funding. Existing budget.
10. Lack of statistical information for demands of special needs groups	Quantify, develop and provide more supported housing (Special Needs Housing Group and decommission Warden Scheme). Better definition of Special Needs.	Started	Enabling capital Staff time.
11. No 'wet house' for street homeless	Supply Wet House (already in train)	Completed	Staff time financed by Housing Corporation.
12. Knowledge gaps re gypsies' requirements and no sites currently available	Improve liaison with County Gypsy and Traveller's Team	Started	Staff time only.
13. Insufficient private lets	Nominate Liaison Officer to Private Landlords/Property Agents to increase supply	Started	Staff time and reorganisation.
14. Some homeless applicants still unable to access private rented sector. Widen scope of bond and deposit schemes	Widen scope of bond and deposit schemes. Introduce rent in advance and arrangement fees. Better information to Lettings agents.	Started	Staff time and reorganisation.

SUPPORT

Issues in Priority Order	Agreed Action	Action	Costs and How they will be Funded
1. Lack of cohesive Deane-wide homeless network	Agree continuation of Steering Group to ensure multi-agency focus for all 3 headings. Involve other organisations as appropriate (<i>case conferences for most difficult cases</i>).	Ongoing	Officer time and cost of independent organiser.
2. Need to improve consultation and ensure it continues	Annual consultation and review of the Strategy, progress, failures, etc.	Ongoing	Officer time.
3. Insufficient support and services rather fragmented. Better co-ordination required.	a) To develop floating support for all tenures (Supporting People Forum) b) Debt Counselling - Citizens Advice Bureau c) Pre-tenancy support	Started	CAB – investigating staff time.
4. Detoxification services fragmented and not directed	Encourage the co-ordination of detoxification support through multi agency agreement	Research completed	Staff time.
5. Many unsure of support services already available or planned. Supporting People team to note.	Publicise available services including floating support. Now urgent and important.	Not started	Staff time and ODPM funding £500.
6. Concerns over temporary nature of the building occupied by “Open Door” and “The Home Furniture Service”	Ensure viability and continuation of “Open Door” and “Home Furniture Service”	Started	Staff and Enabling Funds.
7. Some homeless people have difficulty in accessing General Practitioners and Dentists	Ensure access to General Practitioners and Dentists through Primary Care Trusts	Not started	Staff time.
8. Some victims of violence want to remain in their own homes, but are unable to do this without support	Support Women’s Refuge in providing outreach workers to enable victims who wish to remain in homes – meeting outside the home.	Started	SP funding – Women’s Aid staff.
9. Homeless cases are often grouped together as a problem by the press. This stops them accessing some accommodation	Improve public relations	Not started	Time from all relevant organisations.
10. Lack of information relating to those homeless	Monitor non-priority homeless cases, intentional	Started	Rural Housing enabling costs. Staff

cases not covered by the legislation or who do not apply for housing	homeless and vulnerable people who do not apply for social housing, Councillors interested in being used for this purpose		time. Open door surveys.
11. Little use of Information Technology and statistical base limited	Improve information technology and statistical base. IT in libraries, Connexions, Job Centres, and all relevant agencies.	Ongoing	Staff time and overtime. Funding for IT ideas to be investigated.
12. Little liaison with prisons	Improve liaison with appropriate prisons. Probation and Prison Service amalgamating.	Not started	Staff time.
13. Little guidance for homeless people.	Investigate a 'Mentor' service.	Not started.	Staff time for all relevant agencies.
14. The problems relating to accommodating and supporting refugees	Form a support group for refugees. (Not yet necessary).	Not started	Staff time.