

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Executive to be held in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 3 March 2010 at 18:15.

Agenda

- 1 Apologies.
- 2 Minutes of the meetings of the Executive held on 2 and 9 February 2010 (attached).
- 3 Public Question Time.
- 4 Declaration of Interests
To receive declarations of personal or prejudicial interests, in accordance with the Code of Conduct. The usual declarations made at meetings of the Executive are set out in the attachment.
- 5 Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership. Report of the Strategy Lead (attached).

Reporting Officer: Martin Daly

- 6 Financial and Performance Monitoring – Quarter 3 2009/2010. Joint Report of the Performance and Client Lead and the Financial Services Manager (attached).

Reporting Officers: Adrian Gladstone-Smith
Paul Fitzgerald

- 7 Executive Forward Plan - details of forthcoming items to be considered by the Executive and the opportunity for Members to suggest further items (attached)

Tonya Meers
Legal and Democratic Services Manager

01 March 2010

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussions.

There is time set aside at the beginning of most meetings to allow the public to ask questions.

Speaking under “Public Question Time” is limited to 4 minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes. The Committee Administrator will keep a close watch on the time and the Chairman will be responsible for ensuring the time permitted does not overrun. The speaker will be allowed to address the Committee once only and will not be allowed to participate further in any debate.

If a member of the public wishes to address the Committee on any matter appearing on the agenda, the Chairman will normally permit this to occur when that item is reached and before the Councillors begin to debate the item.

This is more usual at meetings of the Council’s Planning Committee and details of the “rules” which apply at these meetings can be found in the leaflet “Having Your Say on Planning Applications”. A copy can be obtained free of charge from the Planning Reception Desk at The Deane House or by contacting the telephone number or e-mail address below.

If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

These arrangements do not apply to exempt (confidential) items on the agenda where any members of the press or public present will be asked to leave the Committee Room.

Full Council, Executive, Committees and Task and Finish Review agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk



Lift access to the John Meikle Room and the other Committee Rooms on the first floor of The Deane House, is available from the main ground floor entrance. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are also available off the landing directly outside the Committee Rooms.



An induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter.

For further information about the meeting, please contact Democratic Services on 01823 356382 or email d.durham@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Executive Members:-

Councillor R Henley - Leader of the Council

Councillor R Lees

Councillor A Paul

Councillor T Slattery

Councillor H Prior-Sankey

Councillor F Smith

Councillor A Wedderkopp

Councillor N Wilson

Councillor S Coles

Executive – 2 February 2010

Present: Councillor Henley (Chairman)
Councillors Coles, R. Lees, Paul, Prior-Sankey, Slattery,
A Wedderkopp and Mrs Wilson

Officers: Penny James (Chief Executive), Joy Wishlade (Strategic Director), Kevin Toller (Strategic Director), Tonya Meers (Legal and Democratic Services Manager), Maggie Hammond (Strategic Finance and Section 151 Officer), Ian Jamieson (Deputy Section 151 Officer), Paul Fitzgerald (Financial Services Manager), Paul Carter (Financial Services Manager), John Williams (Chief Housing Officer), Gill Stratford (Corporate Finance Assistant), Mark Leeman (Strategy Lead) and Richard Bryant (Democratic Services Manager).

Also present: Councillors Beaven, Bishop, Brooks, Mrs Court-Stenning, Farbahi, Hall, Horsley, Mrs Lewin-Harris, McMahon, Morrell, Mrs Stock-Williams, Stuart-Thorn, Swaine, Mrs Waymouth, Mrs Whitmarsh and Williams

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm.)

9. Apology

Councillors Mrs Smith.

10. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2010, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and were signed.

11. Public Question Time

(a) Councillor McMahon referred to the proposal to either transfer to the Parish Council the responsibility for looking after the public toilets in Milverton or see their possible closure. As these facilities were well used, their closure would be a further erosion of local services. He understood that the public conveniences in Wiveliscombe had originally also been targeted but that they had now been spared the cuts. He asked on what basis this decision had been made? He also enquired whether it was fair to expect the Parish Council to take on the unexpected costs of cleaning the toilets having now set its precept?

One further observation from Councillor McMahon was in respect of the proposed closure of the toilets in Station Road, Taunton. These were the only conveniences now north of the town centre and their closure ought therefore to be reconsidered.

In response, the Chairman (Councillor Henley) commented that he understood that consultation with the Parish Councils over the transfer/closure

of toilets had taken place in sufficient time for decisions over the level of precepts to be made. He also stated that given the current financial situation, most of the other districts in Somerset had already passed the responsibility for cleaning toilets outside of the main urban areas to their Parish Councils.

As to Councillor McMahon's other points, the Chairman promised to send him a written response in due course.

(b) Councillor Morrell reported that he had been informed that up to the beginning of December 2009, the costs of the Somerset Square works had totalled approximately £798,000. Design costs alone had accounted for £100,000.

He asked whether it was felt this was value for money and, if not, whether the Executive was willing to investigate this level of expenditure.

The Chairman also promised Councillor Morrell a written response.

12. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Henley, Paul and Prior-Sankey declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillor Prior-Sankey also declared personal interests as she rented a garage from the Council and as a Member of the Supporting People Advisory Board. Councillor Coles declared a personal interest as a Director of Southwest One. Councillor Slattery declared personal interests both as a Member of the Somerset Waste Board and as an employee of Sedgemoor District Council.

13. **Draft Corporate Strategy 2010-2013**

Considered report previously circulated concerning the Draft Corporate Strategy for 2010-2013.

As well as providing direction for the Council, the Corporate Strategy contained the Council's Vision, Business Principles and Core Values and described the key outcomes that the Council intended to achieve in the community over the next three years.

Four new Corporate Aims (Priorities) were included in the Strategy to replace the Council's ETCHED (Economy, Transport, Crime, Healthy Living, Environment and Delivery) aims. These new aims were:-

- Tackling Deprivation and Sustainable Community Development;
- Regeneration (economic development and housing growth);
- Affordable Housing; and
- Climate Change.

These aims were all directly related to the growth agenda and, as a result, an amendment had been suggested to the Council's Vision to reflect the importance of the growth agenda and the possibilities that it will provide. The Vision was now intended to read:-

“Taunton Deane will be recognised nationally as a place that is developing in a sustainable way, securing a better life and future for its people, businesses and communities”.

Supporting the Corporate Aims were nine Corporate Objectives and a list of key activities. Noted that the number of Objectives had been reduced from 20 and that there had been a similar proportionate reduction in the number of key activities.

Performance would be monitored against the Corporate Strategy to understand how effective the Council was at delivering the aims and objectives. This would be done in the following ways:-

- Activity monitoring: Managers would be contacted on a quarterly basis for an update against each of the activities; and
- Performance Indicators had been selected that would provide statistical evidence to support an assessment of performance. The chosen National Indicators were within the Local Area Agreement. Data collection for most of the National Indicators was on a yearly basis. Locally defined Indicators would need more work in order to define data sources, baselines and targets.

In preparing the new Strategy, a 'Profile of Services' exercise has been undertaken to determine what Taunton Deane's future priorities should be.

Councillors had considered the community priorities, central Government requirements and what had already been committed to in partnership with the Local Area Agreement, Sustainable Community Strategy and other local agreements.

Councillors then used this context to consider in which of 75 different service areas the Council should increase, decrease or maintain investment.

The headline results for the increase/decrease areas were captured as follows:-

Service Area	Increase Investment	Decrease Investment
Climate Change	Yes	
Tackling Deprivation	Yes	
Growth and Economic regeneration	Yes	
Affordable Housing	Yes	
Tourist Information Centre		Yes
The Town Centre Company		Yes

Golf and Tennis	Yes
Pest Control	Yes
Conservation and Heritage	Yes
Licensing	Yes
Food Control	Yes
Scrutiny	Yes

This profile of services had been fed into the Core Council Review and had helped shape the Council's restructure. This would ensure that the Council was 'fit for purpose' and could effectively deliver against the new priorities from 2010 to 2013.

Reported that delivering the Corporate Aims would be achieved through the development of a 'Strategic Aims Delivery Plan'. This would be the equivalent of a service plan and would outline time-scales, key actions, risks, resource requirements, expected outcomes and key performance indicators.

It was acknowledged that to assist delivery, the Council needed to develop an enthusiastic and flexible workforce that could move between priorities. This would involve the "thematic working" which the Core Council Review had introduced.

The quality of service delivery would be considered and different ways of delivering the same service at less cost would be investigated. Services would be reviewed to identify opportunities for income generation and further streamlining.

A thorough review of assets would be undertaken and would be led by Southwest One aimed at exploring potential new revenue streams.

Public consultation on the Corporate Strategy would take place in Spring 2010. The Equalities Impact Assessment that had been undertaken would be used to inform this consultation. Primarily, the Council wanted to challenge whether the right key activities had been chosen and whether there were any alternative suggestions.

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee had considered the Corporate Strategy on three separate occasions since last October and had contributed widely to its new format.

Resolved that:-

- (1) the Draft Corporate Strategy 2010-2013 be approved; and
- (2) Full Council be recommended to adopt the Corporate Strategy.

14. **General Fund Revenue Estimates 2010/2011**

Considered report previously circulated regarding the Executive's final

2010/2011 budget proposals, prior to submission to Full Council on 16 February 2010 for approval.

Each year the Council set an annual budget which detailed the resources needed to meet operational requirements. The Council's approach followed key objectives of the Budget Strategy which were to:-

- Maintain an affordable and sustainable Council Tax position;
- Run an inclusive, open and transparent budget setting process;
- Ensure budgets were realistic, balanced, sustainable, and supported Corporate Priorities;
- Maintained a strong balance sheet position;
- Managed spending within budgets;
- Delivered year on year cash and non-cash efficiency savings in line with Government targets;
- Continued to improve on Financial Management, Use of Resources and Value for Money assessments;
- Maintained General Fund Reserves at a minimum of £1,250,000 (or £1,000,000 if being replenished via invest to save initiatives); and
- Maintained Housing Revenue Reserves at no less than £150 per dwelling.

The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) was set out within the Financial Strategy Framework, which was a key link between the Corporate Strategy and financial planning and recognised the difficult issues and challenges facing this Council.

The annual budget was also prepared within the context of the MTFP and was essentially focussed on setting the budget for the first year of a 5-year rolling financial plan.

Budget setting this year had been considerably influenced by the overall economic climate and the major changes faced by Taunton Deane such as the Core Council Review. The investment in services and consideration of savings targets and delivery plans aimed to ensure that the Council was directing resources towards its highest priorities.

Reported that there were two main aims of this budget setting process – to ensure the increase in Council Tax was minimised and, at the same time, to try and maintain good front line service provision.

The MTFP had been updated over the summer to reflect the latest estimates

of demographic, legislative and other known changes considered to be unavoidable.

The initial Budget Strategy for 2010/2011 was presented to Corporate Scrutiny on 29 October 2009, which set out to identify options to close the General Fund Budget Gap which at that time stood at close to £1.4m.

The General Fund Revenue Account was the Council's main fund and showed the income and expenditure relating to the provision of services. Although the Council made charges for some of its services which reduced the net cost of providing them, the remaining expenditure was funded by the Government through the Revenue Support Grant and National Non-Domestic Rates and by the Council Tax payer.

In 2009/2010 the Council received a total of £8,536,000 from the Government via the Finance Settlement. The final figure for 2010/2011 was £8,721,220, an increase of 2.17%.

As 2010/2011 was the final year of the current three-year settlement, the Council did not have draft figures from the Government for future years. However, for the purposes of the MTFP a fall in funding during the next three year financial settlement period had been predicted.

Noted that the Government had indicated that they did not expect to see Council Tax increases above 3%.

Reported in detail on the unavoidable increases in costs together with a series of initiatives and savings proposed by the Executive for inclusion in the 2010/2011 budget. These could be summarised as follows:-

	£'000	£'000
Budget Requirement 2009/10 (excluding parishes)		14,216
General Inflationary increases	386	
Unavoidable increases		
Ongoing impact of 2009/10 pressures/savings	271	
Loss of car parking income (impact of P&R / Project Tauntor)	257	
Waste service contract inflation / reduced Recycling Credits	136	
Removal of DLO contribution to general fund (2009/10 only)	112	
Impact of VAT increase from 15% to 17.5%	73	
Loss of income from market site	21	
Repayment of capital borrowing (MRP)	10	
New initiatives / spending on services		
Waste service enhancements and withdrawal of bring banks	84	
Reinstatement of 'frozen' staff posts	133	
Removal of grant income for posts removed in the CCR	100	
Removal of vacancy factor	50	
Software licences for system enhancements (QAS/GIS)	26	
Castle Green maintenance	22	
Youth initiatives (includes £15k one-off)	30	
Statutory BV Place Survey	11	
Tree planting (one-off)	10	
Parish precepts	13	
Other	25	
Revenue Financing of Capital Programme	49	
Savings		
Core Council Review	(450)	
Income generation - fees and charges	(478)	
Savings Delivery Plans	(315)	
HB Administration Subsidy	(71)	
Reduction in Discretionary Rate Relief budget	(49)	
Concessionary travel demand	(40)	
Removal of Deprived Areas Fund	(36)	
Reduced maintenance following cremator enhancements	(44)	
Other Savings	(98)	
Net change in interest costs and investment income	58	
Increase in Net Operating Costs		<u>296</u>
Budget Requirement 2010/11		<u>14,512</u>
Net increase to be met by:		
Government grants and taxation base budget		14,216
Government grant increase	185	
Increase/decrease in Collection Fund surplus / (deficit)	(48)	
Impact of change in Tax Base	(2)	
Parish Precepts and Special expenses	30	
Council tax	<u>131</u>	
		<u>296</u>
		<u>14,512</u>

As part of the Budget Strategy for 2010/2011, savings targets had been issued to managers to identify options for savings within services. These Savings Delivery Plans (SDP's) had been widely reported and debated,

culminating in the latest proposals totalling £352,890 being submitted to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee for comment earlier this month.

Noted that three changes to the proposals presented to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee had been made which reduced the overall savings proposals to £315,140. These were:-

- (a) Grass cutting: The Executive had confirmed its intention not to support the proposals to seek to transfer grass-cutting services back to Somerset County Council. This potential £41,000 saving had therefore been removed from the SDPs;
- (b) Public conveniences: The costing for the savings related to potential transfer to parishes or closure of public conveniences had been finalised, with the saving increased by £13,250, to £20,100 in total; and
- (c) Parking: The option to introduce parking charges in Wiveliscombe had not been recommended by the Executive. Therefore the potential saving of £10,000 through additional income had been removed from the SDPs.

Reported that following much work to identify efficiencies and savings, the Budget Gap reported to the Corporate Scrutiny Board on 21 January 2010 for the draft proposals under consideration was a £23,000 surplus.

However, the budget proposals had been updated further as expenditure and income estimates and budget proposals had been finalised. The changes to the Budget Gap since the report was submitted to Scrutiny in January were shown in the table below. The overall impact of the proposed changes resulted in a nil budget gap.

	£000	£000
Budget Gap Reported to Scrutiny 21 January 2010		-23
Collection Fund Deficit – updated forecast	18	
Grass Cutting – savings option not recommended	41	
Public Conveniences – estimated savings updated	-13	
Concessionary Travel – updated forecast	-150	
DLO – Remove one-off item from Base Budget	112	
Tree Planting – one-off item from GF reserves	10	
Youth Projects – one-off item from GF reserves	15	
Youth Initiatives in unparished area of Taunton	15	
Car parking – Remove proposal to introduce parking fees in Wiveliscombe	10	
One-off transfer from GF Reserves	-20	
Increase Special Expenses for Youth Initiatives	-15	
Net impact of changes		23
Budget Gap		0

In order to balance the budget for 2010/2011, it was recommended that Council Tax was increased by 2.5%.

Noted that the Council Tax calculation and formal tax setting resolution was to be considered separately. The proposed budget for Taunton Deane would result in a Band D Council Tax of £135.19, an increase of £3.30 on 2009/2010. This represented an increase of 6 pence per week. The Band D taxpayer would receive all the services provided by the Council in 2010/2011 at a cost of £2.59 per week.

The following table compared the 2010/2011 proposed budget with the 2009/2010 original budget, based on the information contained in the report:-

	Original Estimate 2009/10	Proposed Budget 2010/11
	£	£
Total Spending on Services	15,280,880	15,500,550
Capital Charges Credit	(1,930,000)	(1,930,000)
Interest payable on Loans	266,090	226,430
Minimum Revenue Provision	332,910	342,500
Interest Income	(167,000)	(69,000)
Contribution from G Fund Balances	0	(20,000)
AUTHORITY EXPENDITURE	13,782,880	14,050,480
Less: Revenue Support Grant	(1,600,772)	(1,105,826)
Less: Contribution from NNDR Pool	(6,935,368)	(7,615,394)
Surplus/Deficit on Collection Fund	81,600	130,210
Expenditure to be financed by District Council Tax	5,328,340	5,459,470
Divided by Council Tax Base	40,399.85	40,384.49
Council Tax @ Band D	£131.89	£135.19
Cost per week per Band D equivalent	£2.54	£2.59

Noted that the General Fund Reserve position showed the predicted balance of £1,418, 876.

This figure included a worst case scenario for the costs of Core Council Review (CCR) implementation in 2009/2010 and the forecast outturn deficit as at Quarter 2 budget monitoring. With regard to the CCR, the actual costs were unlikely to be known with certainty until March 2010, which would be

after the budget had been set. However current cost estimates were very close to the £592,000 worst case.

Whilst the forecast position was currently above the minimum amount in the budget strategy, maintaining a strong general reserves position was prudent in the current economic climate.

Although a review of Earmarked Reserves was to be undertaken shortly, at this point in time there was no reason to suggest these funds were not required for the purposes for which they were originally set aside.

As stated above, the Council prepared its annual budget within the context of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). This provided estimates of the budget requirement and budget gap into future years. The following table provided a summary of the current indicative MTFP and the General Reserves forecast:-

Indicative MTFP Summary

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Expected Budget Requirement	14.513	15.109	16.763	17.268	17.820
<i>Financed By:</i>					
External Government Support	8.721	7.849	7.457	7.457	7.457
Council tax (increase assumed 2.5% each year)	5.922	6.058	6.198	6.342	6.489
Predicted Budget Gap	0	1.289	3.152	3.470	3.875

Note: Negative budget gap figure equals a surplus.

General Reserves Forecast

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Estimated Balance B/F	-1.419	1.703	0.515	2.596	5.991
Planned Transfers to / from Reserves	-0.284	0.101	0.04	0	0
Predicted Budget Gap	0.000	1.289	3.152	3.470	3.875
Estimated Balance C/F	-1.703	-0.515	2.596	6.066	9.941

Note: Negative reserve figures equal amounts in hand.

The above table had been prepared on the assumption of a 2.5% increase in Council Tax each year within the MTFP period.

The MTFP also assumed that Government support would be hit hard in the next 3-year financial settlement, due to the overall state of the economy and pressures on Government spending and debt. The Council was therefore planning on the basis of a 10% reduction in 2011/2012 followed by a further 5% reduction in 2012/2013. A clearer idea of funding prospects was likely in the latter part of 2010.

Further reported that it was proposed to increase expenses chargeable to the non-parished area of Taunton in 2010/2011 to £47,050 - an increase of 50% on the Band D equivalent. This formed part of the total expenditure of the Council. The precept in 2009/2010 was £30,620. The proposed increase incorporated enhanced funding for youth initiatives in the Taunton Unparished Area.

Also reported that detailed budgets for 2010/2011 had been produced for the Deane DLO. Figures for Highways, Grounds Maintenance, Building Maintenance, Cleansing, the Nursery and Transport were reported but these were very much an estimate at this time due to the uncertainty as to their income sources.

The Executive was minded to support a number of further proposals, as follows:-

- **Brewhouse Theatre Grant / Carbon Neutral Projects:** An additional £50,000 one off budget in 2010/2011 for each of these topics (£100,000 in total). Although not included within the proposed Budget, further reports would be submitted after the 2009/2010 accounts, to confirm the need for funding and the availability of Council funds to support this cost.
- **Taunton East and Taunton North:** The Council was in the early stages of developing proposals, subject to the development of 3-year service level agreements (SLAs), to provide support to the Taunton East Development Trust and the North Taunton Partnership. The total funding sought was in the region of £130,000 over the three year period. As well as funding from the Housing Revenue Account and the existing Community Leadership budget, opportunities to obtain contributions for the balance from other partner organisations through the Local Strategic Partnership were being explored. The Executive was also minded to allocate a further £35,000 in total from existing Economic Development budgets to support specific and related projects.

As part of the Prudential Code for Capital Finance there was a requirement for Full Council to approve the indicators as set out in the report. These were important as they detailed the expected borrowing requirement for both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account. They also set the

operational boundaries for both the borrowing/investment levels and interest rate exposures for the Council.

The Council's S151 Officer had a duty to comment, as part of the budget setting process on the robustness of the budget plans. In her response, Maggie Hammond had stated that she believed the Council's reserves to be adequate and the budget estimates used in preparing the 2010/2011 budget to be as robust as possible.

Resolved that Full Council be recommended to agree the budget for General Fund Services for 2010/2011 as outlined in the report and that:-

- (a) the transfer for any potential underspend in 2009/2010 back to General Fund Reserves be agreed;
- (b) the proposed 2010/2011 budget, being Authority expenditure of £14,050,480 and Special Expenses of £47,050 be agreed in accordance with the Local Government Act 1992;
- (c) the predicted General Fund Reserve balance at 31 March 2010 of £1,419,000 be noted;
- (d) the forecast budget position within the Medium Term Financial Plan be noted;
- (e) the Prudential Indicators for 2010/2011 as set out in the report be agreed.

15. Housing Revenue Account, Revenue Estimates and Rent Levels and Deane Helpline for the 2010/2011 Financial Year

Considered report previously circulated, which set out in detail the proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for 2010/2011 which showed a working balance of £2,545,800.

Reported that last year the Council had originally set a rent increase of 6.2%. This was subsequently reduced to 2.95% following a last minute review by the Government of average national rent levels.

For 2010/2011 the Government, through the subsidy mechanism, had requested that average rents should increase by no more than 3.1%. It was therefore recommended that the average weekly rent increase would be £1.93 per week or 3.1%. The average weekly rent (excluding service charges) would increase from £62.10 to £64.03.

All housing fees and charges had already been considered and on average the majority of fees had been increased by 2.5%.

For 2010/2011 the expected Supported People income was estimated at £405,000. However, this had not been finalised as a result of continuing

negotiations with Somerset County Council.

The report gave details of the main expenditure changes relating to the HRA resource accounting. These included:-

- (a) Housing Subsidy;
- (b) Rents;
- (c) Increase in provision for bad debts;
- (d) Revenue Contribution to Capital;
- (e) Surplus/Deficit;
- (f) Working Balance

Further reported on the main expenditure changes relating to HRA Maintenance, Management and Supervisory Expenditure.

The Deane Helpline Trading Account was maintained separately from the HRA as a 'stand alone' enterprise. Details of the account were submitted.

Reported that the forecast surplus for 2009/2010 was £30,490 leaving a projected working balance of £43,154 at the end of the financial year. The forecast position for 2010/2011 was an estimated surplus of £48,640 leaving a working balance of £91,794 at the end of the financial year. These budgets also included a contribution to the General Fund of £30,000 as agreed in previous years.

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee had considered the 2010/2011 draft budget at its meeting on 21 January 2010. The Committee had noted the proposals and also requested that details of the Deane DLO budget were provided. This information had been included in the report concerning the General Fund Revenue Estimates (Minute No.14 above).

Resolved that Full Council be recommended to agree the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2010/2011.

16. **Capital Programme 2010/2011 Onwards**

Considered report previously circulated, together with an addendum report circulated at the meeting, which detailed the proposed General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programmes for the period 2010/2011 to 2014/2015.

All Capital expenditure had to be financed from borrowing, capital receipts, capital grants and contributions or from revenue funds set aside for capital purposes.

The table below provided an overview of the gross estimated resources available for capital investment at the start of 2010/2011, plus an indicative forecast of additional resources made available during the year:-

	Estimated Balance 1 April £'000	Estimated Additional Resources £'000	Estimated Total Resources 2010/11 £'000
GF Capital Reserve (RCCO funding)	238	249	487
Usable Capital Receipts - General	65	0	65
Usable Capital Receipts - Housing	417	100	517
Grants and Contributions	0	742	742
Supported Borrowing - Housing	0	620	620
General Fund Capital Resources	720	1,711	2,431
HRA Capital Reserve (RCCO funding)	108	735	843
Major Repairs Allowance	0	3,785	3,785
Grants and Contribution	40	0	40
HRA Capital Resources	148	4,520	4,668
Overall Total Capital Resources	868	6,231	7,099

Where the overall amount of capital expenditure exceeded the available resources, the Council would be required to undertake prudential borrowing for the difference. The Executive had previously recommended approval to borrow £770,000 related to a proposed General Fund investment in the Crematorium. If the scheme was approved this, plus any further new loan debt required if capital approvals exceeded all other available resources, would only be taken after full consideration of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and the indicators prescribed by the Prudential Code.

General Fund Capital Programme

The Council had approved a Capital Programme for 2009/2010 General Fund schemes totalling £1,954,930, in February 2009. Slippage from the previous year plus supplementary approvals during the current year had increased the estimated programme expenditure in 2009/2010 to £3,088,000.

The draft Capital Programme proposed for 2010/2011 totalled £2,852,000. At this stage, this assumed nil slippage from 2009/2010.

Reported that two schemes had been supported by the Executive at its meeting on 2 December 2009. These schemes which related to the Taunton Deane Crematorium Mercury Abatement Scheme (£1,000,000) and Play and

Youth Projects in Taunton (£93,000) had been included in the Capital Programme for 2010/2011.

Details of a number of one-off schemes which the Executive was not minded to approve were submitted.

Recurring Schemes

The Executive was minded to fund recurring capital schemes through a specific revenue contribution to capital (RCCO), continuing the policy of recent years, and from external grants where these were received.

The specific RCCO-funded schemes proposed for 2010/2011 totalled £165,000 as shown in the following table:-

	General Schemes	Approved Budget 2009/10 £000	Proposed Budget 2010/11 £000
1	Leisure Grants to Clubs	45	45
2	Play Equipment – grants to parishes	20	20
3	Replacement Play Equipment	10	10
4	New Play Equipment	10	10
5	Desktop Hardware Replacement	17	60
6	Replacement Car Parking Pay & Display Machines	5	5
7	Replacement Car parking Hand Held enforcement equipment	5	5
8	Taunton Canal Grant (sustainable transport scheme)	10	10
	Totals	122	165

In addition, recurring funding was proposed for General Fund (Non-HRA) Housing schemes which had previously been funded by a combination of specific Government grants, supported borrowing and use of capital receipts from the sale of housing stock.

Noted that at this stage the Council's grant allocations for 2010/2011 had not yet been confirmed. The proposals included within the programme, for the same amount of capital expenditure as in 2009/2010, were set out as provisional estimates on the assumption that resources available for financing would also continue at the same level as the current year.

	General Fund Housing Schemes	Approved Budget 2009/10 £000	Proposed Budget 2010/11 £000
1	Disabled Facility Grants	450	450
2	Private Sector Renewals Grants	335	335
3	Grants to Residential Social Landlords (RSLs)	809	809
	Totals	1,594	1,594

Future General Fund projects could be undertaken when resources became available. This could be through either borrowing, revenue contributions or through the sale of assets.

Details of the proposed Capital Programme for 2010/2011 to 2014/2015 were reported. Indicative allocations had been included in later years to provide Members with a longer term perspective on potential future capital investment and the implications on estimated available resources.

Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme

Reported that the levels of resources available to finance the proposed Housing Capital Programme for 2010/2011, totalled £4,668,000. This ensured that the HRA would not have to meet any unsupported borrowing costs (that is, debt repayment and interest costs).

The proposed HRA Capital Programme for 2010/2011 totalled £4,560,000. Submitted for the information of Members a breakdown of the proposed programme. This programme would leave resources available to carry forward, to support the future Housing Capital Programmes, of £108,000.

Further reported that for both the GF and HRA, any new schemes which emerged during the lifespan of the programmes would be funded through existing unallocated resources or through new resources, such as capital receipts. Bids for additional schemes to those set out above would be made through the Executive.

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee had considered the draft programme at its meeting on 21 January 2010 and made no formal suggestions for any changes to the programme.

As well as providing details of the proposed Capital Programme for 2010/2011, a revised Capital Programme budget for 2009/2010 had been recommended for approval.

The original budget for the year for the General Fund Capital Programme was £1,954,930. It was now proposed to increase this budget to £3,161,310 to take account of decisions made by the Executive before Christmas relating to the new Building Control IT System (Acolaid) and in respect of proposed investment in new play and youth facilities. The figure also included slippage

on various schemes from 2008/2009.

The following table provided a summary of the proposed changes:-

	£	£
Original Budget for 2009/2010		1,954,930
Slippage from 2008/2009 – Various schemes	546,480	
Play and Youth Facilities Projects	562,240	
New Building Control IT System (Acolaid)	72,900	
Total Changes		1,206,620
Proposed Revised Budget for 2010/2011		3,161,550

Noted that there was no impact on the availability of resources to the position included in the main Capital Programme 2010/2011 or the Revenue Budget Estimates.

Further reported that the HRA Capital Programme's original budget for 2009/2010 totalled £5,555,000. It was proposed to increase this budget to £6,724,000 due entirely to slippage on the various schemes from the previous financial year. This did not affect the overall cumulative expenditure – it was a timing difference between financial years.

Resolved that:-

- (1) Full Council be recommended to agree the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes for 2010/2011;
- (2) The revised 2009/2010 General Fund Capital Programme budget of £3,161,550 be approved; and
- (3) The revised 2009/2010 Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme budget be also approved.

17. **Council Tax Setting 2010/2011**

Submitted report previously circulated, which made recommendations on the level of Council Tax for 2010/2011.

The Council was required to make an annual determination, which set its gross expenditure and gross income (including the Housing Revenue Account and balances brought forward), with the difference as its budget requirement. This determination was set out in the resolution.

Noted that at this stage, the precept figures for the Somerset County Council, the Avon and Somerset Police Authority and the Devon and Somerset Fire Authority were not available. It was likely this element of the total Council Tax determination would have to be advised to Members at the meeting of Full Council on 16 February 2010.

The estimated expenses chargeable to the non-parished area of Taunton in

2010/2011 amounted to £47,047 and this formed part of the total net expenditure of the Council. Details were also submitted of the Parish Precepts levied and the appropriate Council Tax at Band D.

The estimated balance on the Council Tax Collection Fund was a deficit of £1,248,350. Taunton Deane's share of this amounted to £130,210 and this was reflected in the revenue estimates.

The Council's budget requirement was £14,512,850 including draft Parish Precepts and non-parished Special Expenses. This amount was then reduced by the amount notified in respect of Taunton Deane's Revenue Support Grant (RSG) amounting to £1,105,826 and the Non Domestic Rates Distribution (NDR) from the pool, amounting to £7,615,394.

The net amount, having taken the collection fund position into account, of £5,921,840 was used to calculate the Council Tax at Band D, reflecting the Parish Precepts by dividing it by the total of the Council Tax Base as approved by the Executive on 13 January 2010.

The Council Tax for Taunton Deane (excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses for the non-parished area) was £135.19, an increase of £3.20 (2.5%) compared to the 2009/2010 Council Tax. The total Council Tax, including the County Council, Police and Fire Authorities precepts was still subject to confirmation.

Resolved that Full Council be recommended that subject to final determination including the Council Tax for Somerset County Council and the Police and Fire Authorities, which was to be advised:-

That it be noted that at its meeting on 13 January 2010 the Executive calculated the following amounts for the year 2010/2011 in accordance with the regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended):-

- (1) 40,384.49 being the amount calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its Council Tax Base for the year.

(2)

Ash Priors	76.05	Neroche	255.85
Ashbrittle	97.07	North Curry	742.96
Bathealton	84.57	Norton Fitzwarren	826.06
Bishops Hull	1,072.38	Nynehead	156.55
Bishops Lydeard / Cothelstone	1,937.47	Oake	333.46

Bradford on Tone	283.61	Otterford	168.39
Burrowbridge	204.78	Pitminster	459.04
Cheddon Fitzpaine	648.71	Ruishton/ Thornfalcon	615.34
Chipstable	124.72	Sampford Arundel	131.90
Churchstanton	331.27	Staplegrove	714.77
Combe Florey	122.01	Stawley	131.00
Comeytrowe	2,086.27	Stoke St Gregory	387.38
Corfe	134.15	Stoke St Mary	206.72
Creech St Michael	950.07	Taunton	16,087.45
Durston	59.02	Trull	1,025.28
Fitzhead	121.87	Wellington	4,631.59
Halse	144.75	Wellington (Without)	304.46
Hatch Beauchamp	261.29	West Bagborough	163.62
Kingston St Mary	446.32	West Buckland	446.17
Langford Budville	238.40	West Hatch	143.28
Lydeard St Lawrence/ Tolland	200.64	West Monkton	1,115.05
Milverton	600.46	Wiveliscombe	1,112.28

being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items related.

- (3) That the following amounts be calculated by the Council for the year 2010/2011 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:-
- (a) £79,952,444 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimated for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) of the Act.
(Gross Expenditure including amount required for working balance).
- (b) £65,439,594 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimated for the items set out in Section 32(3)(a) to (c) of the Act.

(Gross Income including reserves to be used to meet Gross Expenditure).

(c) £14,512,850 being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeded the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year.

(d) £8,591,010 being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimated would be payable for the year into its General Fund in respect of redistributed Non-Domestic Rates, Revenue Support Grant, additional grant or SSA reduction grant (increased by the amount of the sums which the Council estimated would be transferred in the year from its Collection Fund to its General Fund in accordance with Section 97(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (*Council Tax Surplus*) and increased by the amount of any sum which the Council estimated would be transferred from its Collection Fund to its General Fund pursuant to the Collection Fund (Community Charge) directions under Section 98(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 made on 7 February 1994 (*Community Charge Surplus*).

(e) £146.64 $\frac{(c) - (d)}{9.2.1(1)} = \frac{14,512,850 - 8,591,010}{40,384.49}$

being the amount calculated at (c) above less the amount at (d) above, all divided by the amount at 9.2.1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year. (*Average Council Tax at Band D for Borough including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses*).

(f) £462,370 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act. (*Parish Precepts and Special Expenses*).

(g) £135.19 $\frac{(e) - (f)}{(1) \text{ above}} = \frac{146.64 - 462,370}{40,384.49}$

being the amount at (e) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (f) above by the amount at (1) above,

calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special items related.

(Council Tax at Band D for Borough Excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses).

(h)

Ash Priors	135.19	Neroche	149.07
Ashbrittle	147.55	North Curry	157.40
Bathealton	142.28	Norton Fitzwarren	164.15
Bishops Hull	153.84	Nynehead	157.55
Bishops Lydeard / Cothelstone	152.10	Oake	149.43
Bradford on Tone	154.58	Otterford	135.19
Burrowbridge	158.47	Pitminster	151.57
Cheddon Fitzpaine	144.44	Ruishton/ Thornfalcon	156.32
Chipstable	149.22	Sampford Arundel	168.85
Churchstanton	158.19	Staplegrove	149.18
Combe Florey	148.30	Stawley	153.51
Comeytrove	147.17	Stoke St Gregory	150.68
Corfe	146.37	Stoke St Mary	149.74
Creech St Michael	153.35	Taunton	138.11
Durston	135.19	Trull	148.85
Fitzhead	166.86	Wellington	151.72
Halse	147.28	Wellington (Without)	151.28
Hatch Beauchamp	152.41	West Bagborough	147.41
Kingston St Mary	148.63	West Buckland	153.12
Langford Budville	151.97	West Hatch	150.06

Lydeard St Lawrence / Tolland	151.14	West Monkton	161.90
Milverton	154.34	Wiveliscombe	153.17

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (g) above, the amounts of the special item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at (2) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items related. *(Council Taxes at Band D for Borough, Parish and Special Expenses).*

(i) See overleaf

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (h) above by the number which, in proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which is that proportion applicable to dwellings listed in Valuation Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands. (Council Tax for Individual Parishes and the Borough)

18. Executive Forward Plan

Submitted for information the Forward Plan of the Executive over the next few months.

Resolved that the Forward Plan be noted.

(The meeting ended at 8.50 pm.)

(a)

2010/11 by Parish by Band at 2.5%

Shaded figures represent indicative data only

Valuation Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Ash Priors	90.13	105.15	120.17	135.19	165.23	195.27	225.32	270.38
Ashbrittle	98.37	114.76	131.16	147.55	180.34	213.13	245.92	295.11
Bathealton	94.86	110.67	126.48	142.28	173.90	205.52	237.14	284.57
Bishops Hull	102.56	119.65	136.75	153.84	188.03	222.21	256.40	307.68
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	101.40	118.30	135.20	152.10	185.90	219.69	253.49	304.19
Bradford on Tone	103.06	120.23	137.41	154.58	188.93	223.29	257.64	309.17
Burrowbridge	105.65	123.26	140.87	158.47	193.69	228.91	264.12	316.95
Cheddon Fitzpaine	96.29	112.34	128.39	144.44	176.54	208.63	240.73	288.88
Chipstable	99.48	116.06	132.64	149.22	182.38	215.54	248.70	298.44
Churchstanton	105.46	123.04	140.62	158.19	193.35	228.50	263.65	316.39
Combe Florey	98.87	115.35	131.83	148.30	181.26	214.22	247.17	296.61
Comeytrowe	98.12	114.47	130.82	147.17	179.88	212.58	245.29	294.35
Corfe	97.58	113.84	130.11	146.37	178.90	211.43	243.95	292.74
Creech St Michael	102.23	119.27	136.31	153.35	187.42	221.50	255.58	306.69
Durston	90.13	105.15	120.17	135.19	165.23	195.27	225.32	270.38
Fitzhead	111.24	129.78	148.32	166.86	203.94	241.02	278.10	333.72
Halse	98.19	114.55	130.92	147.28	180.01	212.74	245.47	294.56
Hatch Beauchamp	101.61	118.54	135.48	152.41	186.28	220.15	254.02	304.82
Kingston St Mary	99.09	115.60	132.12	148.63	181.66	214.69	247.72	297.27
Langford Budville	101.31	118.20	135.08	151.97	185.74	219.51	253.28	303.94
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	100.76	117.55	134.35	151.14	184.73	218.31	251.90	302.28
Milverton	102.89	120.04	137.19	154.34	188.64	222.94	257.24	308.68
Neroche	99.38	115.94	132.50	149.07	182.19	215.32	248.44	298.13
North Curry	104.93	122.42	139.91	157.40	192.38	227.35	262.33	314.80
Norton Fitzwarren	109.43	127.67	145.91	164.15	200.63	237.11	273.58	328.30
Nynehead	105.03	122.54	140.04	157.55	192.56	227.57	262.58	315.09
Oake	99.62	116.23	132.83	149.43	182.64	215.85	249.06	298.87
Otterford	90.13	105.15	120.17	135.19	165.23	195.27	225.32	270.38

Executive – 9 February 2010

Present: Councillor Henley (Chairman)
Councillors Coles, R. Lees, Paul, Prior-Sankey, Slattery,
and Mrs Wilson

Officers: Penny James (Chief Executive), Joy Wishlade (Strategic Director), Brendan Cleere (Strategic Director), Tonya Meers (Legal and Democratic Services Manager), Maggie Hammond (Strategic Finance and Section 151 Officer), Tim Burton (Growth and Development Manager), Brian Yates (Building Control Manager), Stephen Boland (Housing Estate Manager), Christine Thompson (Sheltered Housing Manager), Martin Griffin (Retained HR Manager) and Richard Bryant (Democratic Services Manager).

Also present: Councillors Beaven, Cavill, Mrs Court-Stenning, Gaines, Hall, Hayward, Ms Herbert, Horsley, Mrs Lewin-Harris, Morrell, Mrs Stock-Williams, Stuart-Thorn and Williams.

Ian McCulloch and Oliver Foster-Burnell from UNISON.
Chris Vaughn from Turner and Townsend, Consultants
Alan Cottrell, Independent Member of the Standards Committee

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm.)

19. Apology

Councillor A Weddekopp.

20. Declarations of Interest

Councillors Henley, Paul and Prior-Sankey declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillor Coles declared a personal interest as a Director of Southwest One. Councillor Slattery declared personal interests both as a Member of the Somerset Waste Board and as an employee of Sedgemoor District Council.

21. Building Control Scheme of Charges for 2010/2011

Considered report previously circulated, concerning proposals to amend the Building Control charges.

The proposals were for a Scheme of Charges for 2010/2011 to meet the financial requirements of the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 1998, and for further scheme amendments and adaptations to meet the objectives of the Communities and Local Government Implementation Plan "The Future of Building Control" published in September 2009.

The Building Control Service was provided jointly with Sedgemoor District Council and the same fees were applied by both authorities.

The Council was required to set a scheme of charges in connection with its functions under Building Regulations, such that the income from charges was equal to the anticipated costs of providing the service during the relevant period.

Examination and approval of plans of work and inspection of works in progress on site were how the Council met its statutory duty to enforce Building Regulations.

This work was carried out in competition with private sector Approved Inspectors. The Council, therefore, had to set charges for its service to enable recovery of the costs of service provision, whilst remaining competitive.

In the general recession affecting the economy, the construction sector had been hardest hit and would probably be the last to recover.

In January 2009, a scheme of charges and reduction in staffing had been proposed to manage a potential 15% drop in activity and income. However, the downturn was forecast to continue into and probably throughout 2010.

Savings in staff costs had continued to be made. In addition, further savings had been made through sharing a Building Control Surveyor with Sedgemoor District Council.

Proposals from the Communities and Local Government as to "The Future of Building Control" had moved to the 'Implementation Plan' stage. Further consultation was planned for 2010 in respect of these proposals. The establishment of a basis for the assessment of individual fees in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer and the South West Audit Partnership had also been proposed.

Fees for one or two dwellings remained unchanged from 2009/2010. With larger developments (in excess of ten dwellings) it was proposed that the Building Control Manager should have the option of a risk assessed service framework and tailored fee quotation in accordance with principles to be agreed.

This could result in the reduction of charges for repetitive work schemes or repeat house types by major house builders and improve the ability of Building Control to compete for this class of work.

Charges for minor works were unchanged from 2009/2010 and were reduced substantially for domestic garages.

Charges for medium and large extensions and loft conversions would increase by 4% on average, to reflect the greater cost of controlling such works, due to the increasing complexity of the Regulations and the greater reliance of small builders and self-builders on advice and guidance from the Building Control Service.

Fees for work in the lowest cost band (up to £5,000) were unchanged from 2009/2010, in order to improve value for money perceptions.

Middle range works (costing £25,000 to £50,000) would increase from between 2.8% and 6.8%. It was anticipated that income from this schedule would increase by 4% on average.

Works estimated to cost in excess of £100,000 whilst still encompassed by the Charging Scheme would, at the discretion of the Building Control Manager, be subject to the service framework and tailored fee quotation mentioned above. The ability of the Service to compete effectively for major development projects would be enhanced by this.

The fees had been set in conjunction with Sedgemoor District Council and it was hoped that both Local Authorities would operate the same fees with effect from 1 April 2010.

Resolved that:-

- (1) the Scheme of Charges as shown in the Appendix to these minutes be approved; and
- (2) the Building Control Manager, in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer and South West Audit Partnership be authorised to design and implement a framework for the risk-assessment and fee-setting of larger schemes of work.

22. Approval for Capital Spend – Digital Compliance : Deane Helpline

Considered report previously circulated regarding a proposal to allocate sufficient capital investment, using existing revenue resources, for the purchase and installation of new equipment in order to ensure that all Lifeline equipment operated by the Deane Helpline was digitally compliant.

The Council had been taking advice from the IT suppliers Tunstall and the Telecare Services Association for some time on this issue, so that managers had a good idea of the current position.

All sheltered housing schemes were upgraded from analogue to digital approximately 10 years ago, but it was estimated that approximately 173 properties (hard-wire schemes or dispersed alarms) within Taunton Deane required upgrading.

The approximate cost of £35,000 would include the installation of new helplines and the removal of obsolete equipment from hardwire schemes. The Deane Helpline would ensure that the service to customers would not be disrupted when telephone services were converted to digital.

Resolved that:-

- (1) a capital allocation of £35,000 to this project from existing revenue resources be approved; and
- (2) Full Council be recommended to approve this change to the capital programme.

23. Core Council Review : Taunton Tourist Information Centre

Considered report previously circulated, concerning proposals to reduce staffing

levels at the Taunton Tourist Information Centre (TIC) as well as looking again at possible relocation options.

The Core Council Review had included a saving of £50,000 through a review of the Taunton Tourist Information Service.

The TIC was based in accommodation within the Taunton Library in Paul Street and was leased from Somerset County Council. It provided a tourist information service, as well as selling maps, guides and local crafts. It also acted as a ticket agency and sold tickets for many local cultural events.

The net cost of the TIC service in the budget was £63,610, although the actual cost had been considerably higher over the last three years. The major costs were accommodation (£23,000) and staff (£103,000) comprising 3.7 full time equivalent (FTE) posts. The ticket agency was the major source of income.

The TIC had been identified as an area where investment should be reduced and accommodation and staff costs inevitably needed to be addressed if the £50,000 savings target was to be met. It was widely accepted that opportunities for further income generation were very limited.

Current TIC staffing comprised six staff amounting to 3.7FTE. Whilst the most important element of the service was provided for visitors to the area, the greatest income was generated from selling tickets to local residents.

It was therefore concluded that there would be an overall negative impact if the ticket agency function was to cease. However, any substantial reduction in opening hours, or relocation to a more peripheral site, would inevitably result in loss of income.

Whilst there needed to be significant savings from the staff budget if the savings target was to be met, adequate resource had to be retained to maintain reasonable opening times so as to avoid significant loss of income. It was considered that 2FTE was the absolute minimum to retain 5 or 6 day opening. This staff reduction would result in a saving of approximately £47,000.

Further reported that in terms of relocating the TIC, the following locations had been considered:-

Taunton Library – Remaining at the Library would avoid one-off relocation costs, although the space currently rented was larger than needed. Somerset County Council had indicated a willingness to reduce the rent from £23,000 to £12,000 per annum. However, with reduced staffing, issues would need to be resolved in respect of security with a single staffed office as the TIC was accessed separately from the Library;

The Market House – There was an area in the Market House which would be ideal in terms of footfall and prominence. However, as this was already leased, the Council would lose its current rental income meaning that in financial terms there would be no material benefit and sharing resources would not be possible.

An existing town centre retail business – This option had been discounted as not being commercially viable.

County Museum – There would be clear advantages from co-location with one of the town's major tourist attractions. Space would however be limited and the timescales for reopening the museum would prevent relocation until early 2011.

The Deane House Reception – This option would avoid paying any accommodation costs and would involve minimal set up costs. Although it would open up the future option of management of the service as part of the Southwest One contract, The Deane House was poorly located and opening at weekends could prove problematic.

The Brewhouse Theatre and Arts Centre – Sufficient space would be available within the theatre's existing Box Office which, subject to financial assistance being provided, was to be refurbished.

The two uses were complimentary and would enable a shared service to be provided, leading to enhanced footfall at the Box Office potentially improving the viability of the venue. The location was in the town centre and the developments associated with Project Taunton would raise the profile of the area. It was accepted that relocation of the TIC to the Brewhouse would inevitably reduce custom in the short term and the overall savings took account of some loss of income.

A number of letters of representation, including one from the Taunton Chamber of Trade, had been received details of which were reported. All took the view that the TIC should remain in its present location although the Chamber of Trade did say that relocation should be considered when the Firepool and town centre redevelopments had taken place.

Representations had also been received from the Taunton Deane Branch of UNISON. Its view was that relocation combined with a reduction in staff would render the service unviable. The UNISON representative, Ian McCulloch, reiterated the union's points at the meeting.

Further reported that the issue had been considered by the Community Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 26 January 2010 where the following recommendations to the Executive were made:-

- That the TIC should be retained in its current location;
- That a detailed review of possible locations for a TIC in Taunton should be undertaken; and
- That staffing levels should be reduced in line with the Core Council Review.

In order to achieve the target savings, it would be necessary to radically reorganise and reduce the Tourist Information service. The only real options for savings were in staffing and location costs.

The staffing reduction proposed was essential as relocation would currently not achieve accommodation savings higher than the amended rental now to be charged by the Somerset County Council for the TIC at the Library. However, it also had to

be recognised that the proposed staff reduction would have some impact in terms of the level of service to be provided.

Whilst remaining at the Library would avoid relocation costs and possible reduced income from a decrease in footfall, with the proposed staff reduction there continued to be obvious benefits from co-location with a similar function such as The Brewhouse Box Office or Museum Reception in the longer term.

Resolved that:-

- (1) the proposed staff reduction from 3.7FTE to 2FTE be approved; and
- (2) the Tourist Information Centre should remain at its current location in the short-term (at least until after the 2010 Summer season) whilst the preferred longer-term options of relocation to The Brewhouse Theatre or other suitable premises was explored further.

(Councillor Prior-Sankey declared a personal interest during the discussion of the above matter as her son was employed by Berrys Coaches whose tickets were sold from the TIC.)

24. Independent Review of Deane DLO

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the independent review of options for the future of services provided by Deane DLO.

Full Council had approved an alternative approach to completing the Core Council Review in April 2009. The alternative approach included the commissioning of independent external expertise to advise the Council on Theme 3 of the Core Council Review – to develop options for the future of services provided by Deane DLO.

Turner and Townsend PLC had been appointed to carry out the review after a rigorous procurement and selection process, culminating in an interview and presentation to a cross-party panel of elected Members, officers and a UNISON representative.

Turner and Townsend had worked to a brief, details of which were submitted. The review carried out by the company had been completed and its report, which was also submitted for the information of Members, set out the work that had been undertaken to establish the feasibility of six main options:-

- Outsourcing – Where the Council contracted with a private sector company to provide services on the Council's behalf. Under this option, staff would transfer to the private sector provider under their current terms and conditions;
- Joint Venture – Where the Council formed a new organisation with a private sector partner to deliver services. Under this option, staff would also transfer to the private sector provider under their current terms and conditions;

- Shared Service – Where the Council joined with other local authorities or public sector partners to deliver services;
- Lead Authority – Where the Council transferred activities to another Local Authority who delivered services on the Council's behalf. Alternatively, other Local Authorities could transfer services to the Council to provide services on their behalf;
- Internal Transformation – Where the Council invested in services to achieve large scale improvements and efficiency; and
- As Is – Where services continued as now and were subject to continuing financial pressure requiring annual incremental change.

Turner and Townsend had recommended that the Council followed a detailed procurement process with full outsourcing to a private sector supplier as the preferred way forward.

In recommending outsourcing as the preferred option, Turner and Townsend were proposing an implementation process which provided scope to implement potential alternatives of joint venture or internal transformation, if the business case for outsourcing did not meet the Council's requirements. This would be possible because much of the project work required to implement outsourcing could be re-used if necessary to support these potential alternatives.

Turner and Townsend had also made two further service specific recommendations which applied to all options:-

- A clearer separation should be created between the Housing Client and contractor functions. Both of these functions were currently based in Theme 3 at Priory Depot, overseen by the Housing Property Services Manager. The Community Services Manager would be looking into this recommendation further, exploring all options and bringing forward proposals to separate Housing Client functions from their current location; and
- The stores function should cease being operated from the Deane DLO site and a 'just in time' approach should be adopted for buying and supplying in the future. This issue would be looked into further during the Deane DLO transformation process, with a solution ready to begin operating at the inception of whichever model was selected by Members.

Turner and Townsend had carried out extensive consultation with a variety of different groups, including:

- Deane DLO Managers and staff;
- UNISON;
- Corporate Management Team;
- Taunton Deane Tenants' Forum;
- Elected Members;
- Other Local Authorities; and
- Potential private sector partners.

Formal consultation on Turner and Townsend's report had started on 13 January 2010 and ended on 5 February 2010. The Strategic Director, Brendan Cleere, reported that a resume of the responses received to this consultation had already been circulated to Members.

These had included representations from the Taunton Deane Branch of UNISON whose representative, Ian McCulloch, re-iterated the union's points at the meeting.

All options, except 'As Is', had one-off cost implications for implementation, with details provided in the consultant's report. In the case of the recommended outsourcing option, the one-off cost would be up to £200,000, with an implementation timescale of 12 months from a decision by Members. These one-off costs could be found from the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Deane DLO Reserve funds.

Turner and Townsend had advised that one-off costs for implementing alternative options of joint venture and internal transformation would be up to £300,000 and £600,000 respectively. Noted that the reserves position for both the General Fund and Deane DLO were such that the funding required to implement these options would put the reserves below their minimum level.

The potential annual savings arising from the recommended outsourcing were indicated at £278,000, achieved within 24–36 months of decision by Members to pursue the outsource option.

Reported that the above figures and timescales were indicative and were likely to change through a full procurement process and business case. Members would be kept informed and involved as appropriate in any procurement process to select a private sector supplier.

In the event of the Council selecting the recommended option, any savings required of Deane DLO services during the transition to a fully outsourced service would need to be made using the savings plan mechanism that Members were familiar with.

The Section 151 Officer had verified that the financial information and assumptions used up to this stage by Turner and Townsend PLC were sound and that any formal sign up to an outsource arrangement in future would need to be subject to Member approval of the business case emerging from a full procurement process.

Reported that the consultants' report had been discussed in detail by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee at a special meeting on 28 January 2010 and the views expressed at that meeting were submitted.

It had been made clear to the Scrutiny Committee that any decision by Full Council in February 2010 to pursue the recommended outsourcing option would be subject to a due diligence process, including detailed financial analysis of all Deane DLO functions, as well as Member approval of a full business case. The whole process leading up to a final decision by Members would take approximately twelve months.

Further reported that the approach proposed by Turner and Townsend gave scope for Members to select an alternative option if the business case for the recommended outsource option did not meet the Council's requirements.

Resolved that:-

- (i) The outcomes of the consultation process and the views and recommendations of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee be noted;
- (ii) Full Council be recommended to:-
 - (a) adopt the consultants' recommended approach, starting from the position that full outsourcing was the preferred way forward for Deane DLO services;
 - (b) approve the further development of internal transformation as a benchmark comparison option, to be presented to Members alongside results from (a) for further scrutiny and final decision;
 - (c) approve a sum of £225,000 (£113,000 from the Housing Revenue Account Reserve; £84,000 from the General Fund Reserve; and £28,000 from the Deane DLO Reserve) to pursue the approach outlined in (a) and (b) and to recognise the potential requirement for further implementation funds, the amount being dependent on the option ultimately agreed by Members;
- (iii) It be noted that implementation work would be overseen by the Change Programme Members Steering Group, with decisions to be taken at key stages of the project by the Executive and Full Council as appropriate; and
- (iv) further work to implement the consultants' recommendations in respect of Deane DLO stores and Housing Client functions be undertaken.

25. Somerset Waste Board Business Plan 2010-2015

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the Somerset Waste Partnership's (SWP) Draft Business Plan and Action Plan.

The SWP Constitution required the single client unit to prepare a Draft Business Plan with an accompanying Action Plan on an annual basis.

The Somerset Waste Board had approved a draft for consultation, to provide each partner authority with the opportunity to comment on the plan by the end of February 2010.

The Board could, by majority vote, amend the Business Plan in order to accommodate any unforeseen circumstances and to assist the Board to achieve its Aims and Objectives. Any partner Council could request such an amendment at any time.

The Draft Business Plan was submitted for the information of Members and this included:-

- A background to the SWP and a resume of recognition of its work in 2009;
- Principal objectives;
- Analysis of the operating environment;
- Governance Management;
- Principal Functions of the SWB;
- Equalities issues;
- Performance;
- Local Area Agreement;
- Financial Summary and Budget;
- Strategic Risk Register; and
- Key Action Plan.

The plan spanned a five year period but had a particular emphasis on key actions for the next 12 months.

Resolved that the Draft Business Plan be approved.

26. **Taunton Growth Board**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the formation of a Taunton Growth Board.

The growth of Taunton over the next decade needed to be over-seen by a range of relevant agencies, organisations and the private sector. Without the strategic buy-in of partners, either the growth would not happen, or would occur in a way which would be detrimental to the eventual outcome. The support of regional agencies was also required and could be hugely beneficial.

The existing Project Taunton Advisory Board had had its terms of reference extended to include the growth of Taunton and the regeneration of the town centre. A Memorandum of Understanding existed between the three key parties for the delivery of Project Taunton – Somerset County Council, the South West Regional Development Agency and Taunton Deane Borough Council – but this had to be reviewed in March 2010.

It was felt that extending the remit of the Project Taunton Advisory Board would not provide the clarity and status required to deliver the economic and housing growth of Taunton.

In 2005, Taunton had been designated as a Growth Point which meant that the town would take a higher than average growth in housing, a position which the Council had accepted.

However, for a Growth Board to succeed, Taunton Deane, as the key local democratically accountable organisation, needed to give its full support.

It was therefore proposed that the existing Project Taunton Advisory Board should be dissolved with the inauguration of a Taunton Growth Board whose responsibility would encompass both the regeneration of the town centre and the wider economic and housing growth.

The suggested remit of the Taunton Growth Board was as follows:-

- To champion the regeneration of the town centre and the growth and economic development of Taunton;
- To oversee the growth and development of Taunton to ensure that key outcomes were delivered;
- To ensure strategic planning and delivery issues were addressed by relevant partners; and
- To identify and recommend funding priorities and oversee any jointly held partnership budget that the Growth Team might attract.

Details of the suggested Membership of the Growth Board were reported.

It was envisaged that the Taunton Growth Board would meet quarterly. Noted that the current delivery of the Advisory Board was supported by an Executive Group made up of senior officers from key agencies. It was proposed to retain and extend this Executive Group and its remit would be to:-

- Provide liaison between partner organisations;
- Ensure the co-ordination of resources;
- Identify priorities;
- Support the Growth Board;
- Raise the profile at Executive level within their own organisations;
- Take responsibility for managing delivery; and
- Agree expenditure of any partnership funding.

Details of the suggested membership of the Executive Group were also reported.

It was proposed that the Executive Group should meet monthly and that the independent Chairman of the Board should Chair these implementation meetings.

Under the current arrangements, a Co-ordination Group met monthly to update all relevant officers on progress and to ensure that activity was co-ordinated. It was suggested that this particular Group should be retained with its membership changed to that outlined in the report.

The Project Taunton Director would Chair the Co-ordination Group which would also meet on a monthly basis.

Reported that this matter had been discussed by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 21 January 2010. The Committee had formally recommended that a further private sector representative should be added to the Growth Board. However, discussion had also taken place as to whether two Members from each of the two main political Groups should be appointed to the Growth Board instead of the current proposal for just the Leader and Leader of the Opposition.

Resolved that:-

- (1) the proposals for the formation of a Taunton Growth Board be supported; and
- (2) the proposed membership of the Growth Board be increased by the addition of a further representative from the private sector and one further Councillor from each of the two main political Groups of the Council.

27. **Petitions – Response to Consultation**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the requirements of the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

The Act included requirements for every principal Local Authority to respond to petitions. These provisions had yet to be brought into force and the Government was now consulting on the implementation of these provisions. The main statutory requirements were as follows:-

- To have an on-line petition facility which allowed anyone to set up a petition on the Council's system, and allowed anyone to sign the petition on-line;
- To adopt a petition scheme which set out how the Council would acknowledge receipt of petitions and advise the petition organiser how the petition would be dealt with. The Act required that the petition scheme defined three categories of petition and set a minimum number of signatures for each type;
- To come within the scheme, the petition had to relate to a function of the Council or, for all Councils other than non-unitary District Councils, to "an improvement in the economic, social or environmental well-being of the Council's area to which any of the Council's partner authorities could contribute";
- The Authority could delegate to an appropriate officer the power to reject petitions which he/she considered to be vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate; and
- The new petition scheme did not apply to petitions received under other statutory procedures, such as petitions for a Mayoral constitution and the Secretary of State proposed to make provision that petitions in response to some statutory consultations, such as Planning or Licensing applications, should also remain outside the new system.

For 'ordinary petitions', the Authority would be given wider flexibility to set the threshold number of signatures as high or low as it wished and to determine how such petitions would be dealt with.

'Petitions requiring debate' would have to be reported to Full Council and the Council could set a higher number of signatures as the threshold as opposed to ordinary petitions.

'Petitions to hold an officer to account' could name a senior officer and would trigger an open meeting of the appropriate Scrutiny Committee where the officer would be

questioned in relation to his actions on a particular matter. Again the Authority could set a different threshold for signatures.

Where the petition organiser was not satisfied by the actions taken by the Authority in response to a petition, they had to be given the right of appeal.

The draft guidance and Consultation Paper was reported and comments had to be submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government by 24 February 2010.

The Consultation Paper incorporated a draft model petition scheme which authorities could adapt for their own use, and set out 12 questions on which the Government sought a response. The questions and a draft response to each of them was submitted for the information of Members.

The Act set out a general framework for Local Authorities to deal with petitions and a range of possible difficulties that might be encountered were highlighted.

Resolved that the proposed responses to the questions contained within the Government's Consultation Paper on Petitions be submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government.

28. **Executive Forward Plan**

Submitted for information the Forward Plan of the Executive over the next few months.

Resolved that the Forward Plan be noted.

(The meeting ended at 8.26 pm.)

Appendix to the Minutes

(Note: The fees shown as “existing charges” are those approved by Executive for implementation from 1st April 2009. Fees currently being charged are slightly higher because of the change in the rate of VAT.)

Schedule 1 – New Dwellings			
No.	Existing Charge (Inc. VAT at 15%)	Proposed Charge (Inc. VAT at 17.5%)	Variation (Net fee before VAT)
1	£700	£700	(-2.13%)
2	£1050	£1100	2.5%
3	£1250	£1350	5.7%
4	£1450	£1550	4.62%
5	£1650	£1750	3.8%
6	£1850	£1950	3.16%
7	£2050	£2150	2.65%
8	£2250	£2300	0.05%
9	£2400	£2450	(-0.09%)
10	£2550	£2600	(-0.21%)
11 - 29	Add to the above £150 per unit	Add to the above £150 per unit	-
30 +	£5550 Plus £100 per unit above 30.	£5600 Plus £100 per unit above 30	-

Schedule 2 – Domestic Works			
Type of Work	Existing Charge (Inc. VAT at 15%)	Proposed Charge (Inc. VAT at 17.5%)	Variation (Exc. VAT)
Partial glazing	£75	£75	(-2.13%)
Total glazing	£150	£150	(-2.13%)
Electrical installation	£150	£150	(-2.13%)
Small garage or carport	£180	£180	(-2.13%)
Large garage or carport	£320	£300	(-8.24%)
Small extension	£340	£350	0.75%
Medium extension	£500	£540	5.7%
Loft conversion	£500	£540	5.7%
Large extension	£620	£660	4.19%

Schedule 3 – Other Works			
Estimated Cost £	Existing Charge £(VAT at 15%)	Proposed Charge £(VAT at 17.5%)	Variation (Exc.VAT)
Up to 2,000	150	150	(-2.13%)
2,001 – 5,000	225	225	(-2.13%)
5,001 – 10,000	280	300	4.86%
10,001 – 15,000	355	375	3.39%
15,001 – 20,000	430	450	2.42%
20,001 – 25,000	500	525	2.77%
25,001 – 30,000	550	600	6.77%
30,001 – 35,000	600	650	6.03%
35,001 – 40,000	650	700	5.40%
40,001 – 45,000	700	750	4.86%
45,001 – 50,000	750	800	4.40%
50,001 – 55,000	800	850	3.99%
55,001 – 60,000	850	900	3.63%
60,001 – 65,000	900	950	3.31%
65,001 – 70,000	950	1000	3.02%
70,001 – 75,000	1000	1050	2.77%
75,001 – 80,000	1050	1100	2.53%
80,001 – 85,000	1100	1150	2.32%
85,001 – 90,000	1150	1200	2.13%
90,001 – 95,000	1200	1250	1.95%
95,001 – 100,000	1250	1300	1.79%
100,001 – 1 Million	Rate of increase £50 per £10,000	Rate of increase £50 per £10,000	-
1 Million – 3 Million	Rate of increase £25 pr £10,000	Rate of increase £25 per £10,000	-
Over £3 Million	Rate of increase £12.50 per £10,000	Rate of increase £12.50 per £10,000	-

Usual Declarations of Interest by Councillors

Executive

- **Members of Somerset County Council – Councillors Henley, Paul and Prior-Sankey**
- **Employee of Somerset County Council – Councillor Mrs Smith**
- **Director of Southwest One – Councillor Coles**
- **Member of Somerset Waste Board and employee of Sedgemoor District Council – Councillor Slattery**

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Executive – 3 March 2010

Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership

Report of Strategy Lead – Martin Daly

(This matter is the responsibility of Councillor Hazel Prior-Sankey.)

Executive Summary

Proposals for new ways of working and a new structure for the Core Council were approved on 17 February 2009.

Detailed proposals for Theme 4 (Community Services) of the Core Council Review were approved by a Special Council meeting on 9 December 2009. These detailed proposals highlighted that a report would be brought to the members specifically on Taunton Deane joining the Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership (SWPSHP).

This report outlines the range of potential benefits for Taunton Deane becoming a member of this partnership, by increasing capacity, resilience, procurement, performance and management capabilities on private sector housing grants and housing enforcement standards. Within this more robust structure, it will be possible to operate these services more efficiently and reduce costs.

The proposal to join the partnership was discussed by Corporate Scrutiny on 18 February 2010.

Executive approval to join SWPSHP is now requested.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To approve the proposal that Taunton Deane Borough Council should join the Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership (SWPSHP) is an existing Partnership between West Somerset and Sedgemoor Councils, set up in October 2007.
- 2.2 SWPSHP is responsible for delivering the following private sector housing services in Sedgemoor and West Somerset:
 - Grants (principally repair grants and low interest loans).

- Disabled Facilities Grants.
 - Enforcing housing standards.
 - Bringing empty properties back in to use.
 - Energy efficiency.
 - Production of strategies and policies.
- 2.3 Since SWPSHP has been operating, the performance and capacity of both councils to undertake private sector housing functions has improved, at the same time as enabling cost savings to be achieved (see Appendix A for performance improvements and Appendix B for information on cost savings). Overall, between 2007-2008 and 2008-2009, service delivery savings of 30% in Sedgemoor and 56% West Somerset were made, whilst in the same period performance improved by 68% and 87% respectively. Taunton Deane's figures have been added to Appendices A and B.
- 2.4 The successful track record of SWPSHP to both enhance performance and reduce costs should be noted at a time when Taunton Deane is also introducing new structure and new ways of working that will enable the Core Council to:
- Be fit for purpose, delivering our vision, widened roles and ways of working.
 - Delivery substantial efficiency savings.

3. Partnership Working

- 3.1 A recent review* of Taunton Deane partnership arrangements by the South West Audit Partnership provided a useful framework for evaluating future partnerships. This framework considered the operation of partnerships under the following headings:
- Governance.
 - Decision Making.
 - Standards of Conduct.
 - Risk Management.
 - Performance management.
 - Financial arrangements.

- Legal and IT arrangements.
 - Appointment of Partnership staff.
- 3.2 To properly consider the decision that Taunton Deane should join the SWPSHP, an initial evaluation against this framework has been undertaken (see Appendix C), with specific reference to the recommendations in the South West Audit Partnership review.
- 3.3 This initial evaluation suggests that, should authority be given for Taunton Deane to join the SWPSHP:
- The governance arrangements need to be scrutinised by the legal team.
 - Potential conflicts of interest and commercial transactions should be covered in a written code of conduct.
 - Financial monitoring and reporting arrangements will need to be modified.
 - ICT contractual arrangements will need to be clearly specified and set out in an appropriate document.

* Taunton Deane Borough Council Partnership Arrangement. South West Audit Partnership 9 September 2009.

Subject to the actions in 3.3 being completed, the recommendations in the South West Audit Partnership review would have been satisfied.

4. Joining the Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership

- 4.1 Doing nothing is not a option for Taunton Deane. The underlying rational of the Core Council Review is to enable the Council to operate more efficiently and effectively at a time when resources are diminishing and demands on services are increasing. This challenge requires innovation and flexibility.
- 4.2 In Somerset as a whole the Audit Commission has recently 'Red Flagged' strategic housing services under Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA). In their CAA report the Audit Commission made specific reference to:
- Many homes which do not meet minimum standards.
 - Councils could do more to bring empty properties back into use.
 - It is taking too long to provide adaptations to help disabled people live safely in their homes(see later in report for Equalities Impact Assessment of the proposal to join the SWPSHP).

- Some Councils do not have the skills they need to deliver improved housing services.
- 4.3 In Taunton Deane, the Audit Commission also highlighted the need for comparable improvements in private sector housing services as part of their 'critical friend' inspection last year. In particular they commented that there is no overall private sector housing strategy, stock condition information is out of date, there needs to be a written strategy for overseeing the regulation of private rented accommodation, supported by an enforcement policy; more needs to be done to deal with empty homes, a more proactive approach is needed to improving energy efficiency; and further work is required to publicise the assistance that is available to help improve private sector housing standards.
- 4.4 When the Audit Commission returns to Taunton Deane, in the autumn this year for a formal housing inspection, they will expect to see that measures have been implemented to address these 'critical friend' areas of improvement. In particular, the Audit Commission will be assessing our approach to these functions against the framework of strategic housing Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE), which assesses how well we work with other Councils to address housing challenges, and achieve outputs that contribute to sustainable outcomes.
- 4.5 The Audit Commission strategic housing KLOE will also measure Taunton Deane's ability to make efficiencies and deliver improvements by making the best possible use of its own resources, as well as partnership arrangements. Informally the Housing Inspectors who carried out the 'critical friend' inspection in Taunton Deane, and more recently the formal housing inspections in West Somerset and Sedgemoor, have cited the SWPSHP as an example of good practice.
- 4.6 In this context of the need to improve Taunton Deane's approach to private sector housing, reduce our costs, and enhance operational effectiveness in this area generally, it is worth considering the specific achievements of SWPSHP in these critical efficiency areas since it was established in October 2007 (see Appendix D Analysis of SWPSHP Efficiencies).
- 4.7 In a broader context, some consideration has also been given to the county-wide shared services agenda of the single strategic housing project, which covers private sector housing, housing strategy, affordable housing delivery and homelessness functions. At this stage of the single strategic housing project (which Taunton Deane has been involved in), a county-wide approach to private sector housing work is not regarded as realistic aim to deliver quickly, without seriously interrupting services and compromising service outputs and outcomes in each District.

5. Financial Considerations

- 5.1 Apart from the wide-ranging operational and strategic advantages of joining the SWPSHP (contained in section 4 of this report), there are also potential future cost savings to Taunton Deane if the decision is made to join the partnership.
- 5.2 The main area of potential future cost savings is in joint procurement of private sector housing services. Already SWPSHP has achieved procurement efficiencies on the commissioning of a new private sector stock conditions survey for Sedgemoor and West Somerset Councils. Further joint procurement SWPSHP savings that would benefit Taunton Deane that have been identified by the partnership so far, are:
- Re-negotiation of energy efficiency advice, support and data with the Centre for Sustainable Energy.
 - Evidence mapping and updating of private sector stock information.
 - Consolidation of software licences for private sector grants and enforcement systems.
 - Entry into a new private sector housing landlord accreditation scheme. This scheme is designed to both improve private sector housing standards and increase the supply of decent homes to let through the Homefinder Somerset choice based lettings system.
 - Employment of an Empty Homes Officer (utilising government money already available in all three Council areas) to bring more empty properties back into use through close liaison with private sector landlords, agents, enforcement and legal staff.
 - Employment of an Energy Efficiency Officer (utilising Government money already available in all three Council areas) to increase energy efficiency and thus reduce fuel poverty amongst vulnerable households.
 - Best practice development in private sector housing including membership of and participation in 'benchmarking' performance organisations and marketing good practice to other organisations.
- 5.3 At this stage, whilst it is not anticipated that there would be negative financial implications of joining the partnership, it would be prudent to highlight that a financial contingency for dealing appropriately with Human Resources issues (see below) may be required as a consequence of the ongoing consultations with staff.

6. Staffing Considerations

- 6.1 With support from Human Resources staff, detailed discussions have taken place in November and December 2009 with Taunton Deane private sector housing grants and enforcement staff about the staffing implications, should Taunton Deane decide to join the partnership.
- 6.2 In essence, should Taunton Deane become a member of the partnership, the advice that has been given to Taunton Deane staff is:
- All Taunton Deane grants and enforcement staff would remain in their substantive posts, on the same Taunton Deane terms and conditions of service.
 - Any of the Taunton Deane grants and enforcement staff could, if they chose, apply for any new positions or roles in the partnership as they arise.
 - Staff work locations and working patterns will be based on work priorities and the overriding need for operational efficiencies in the partnership, and that key decisions on staff working practices would follow an extensive consultation process with staff.
 - Taunton Deane staff would be managed by the SWPSHP manager, but the Council would still retain an ongoing client arrangement with the partnership, likely to sit in the Strategy Team, to link with wider strategic housing and corporate strategy functions.
 - Taunton Deane staff would continue to receive Employment and Human Resources support under the auspices of Southwest One.
- 6.3 One of the major issues which will impact on the overall success of the partnership will be where staff are located. As stated above the partnership wish to do this after assessing work priorities and to secure operational efficiencies. The current Statement of Particulars of Employment for staff designates their place of work (Deane House) but also goes on to say that this could be 'or in any post appropriate to your scale point at such other place of employment in the Council's service as may be required'.
- 6.4 When the Principal Statement of Particulars of Employment was drafted it would have been unlikely that its intention was to include places of employment outside of Taunton Deane.
- 6.5 However since then the requirements for local authorities to operate in partnership with other authorities, other public sector bodies and even the private sector have developed considerably and to restrict the relocation of staff within Taunton Deane would appear to be restrictive

and damaging to potential success of partnership working. It is therefore recommended that the Statement of Particulars of Employment for Taunton Deane grants and enforcement staff is formally amended to include partnership working places of employment outside of Taunton Deane.

7. Provisional Timetable

7.1 Should authority be given for Taunton Deane to become a member of SWPSHP, for a sign up date of 1 April 2010, this permission would trigger a three month lead in period to Taunton Deane's membership of the partnership. This lead in time would be required to fully integrate Taunton Deane's staff, systems and procedures into the partnership.

7.2 This three month lead in period is needed to:

- Complete the extensive staff consultations (as above in 6.2) on work patterns, locations, priorities and operational efficiencies.
- Incorporate Taunton Deane's ICT systems, procedures and processes into the SWPSHP.
- Establish new performance management and governance arrangements for a wider partnership.
- Address any outstanding recommendations arising from the initial evaluation of Taunton Deane joining the partnership against the framework supplied by the South West Audit Partnership (see paragraph 3.3 and Appendix C of this report).
- Deal properly with any Employment and Human Resources issues that may emerge from the staff consultations (as above).

7.3 Subject to the above (in 7.2) actions being completed satisfactorily, and on time, Taunton Deane's active membership of the SWPSHP would commence on 1 June 2010.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment

8.1 Attached as Appendix E.

9. Union Consultation

9.1 UNISON representatives have been formally consulted about the possibility of Taunton Deane's membership of the partnership.

- 9.2 Whilst UNISON has not formally objected to Taunton Deane becoming a member of SWPSHP, it has requested clarification on staff work locations if this happens, as this is the main concern of Taunton Deane staff.
- 9.3 Taunton Deane staff have been previously advised in staff meetings and in writing that, if approval is given to join the partnership, they would be encouraged to develop their own ideas as to how work priorities and pressures would be best organised in the future.
- 9.4 UNISON has formally been advised, through the UNISON Change Forum, that this consultative approach to staff issues applied when Sedgemoor and West Somerset formed SWPSHP, and that the same approach would apply if Taunton Deane joined.
- 9.5 UNISON were also advised at Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 18 February 2010 that the detailed staff discussions (referred to Section 6) would continue, and that key decisions on staff working practices would follow an extensive consultation process with staff.
- 9.6 At UNISON's request, Taunton Deane's performance and cost information has been added to Appendix A and Appendix B.

10. Stakeholder Accountability

- 10.1 If Taunton Deane joins the SWPSHP governance and decision making will be covered by an appropriate governing instrument to ensure effective accountability to members, senior officers and other stakeholders. As referred to in Appendix C of this report, this governing instrument will cover, amongst other things, delegation and decision-making, monitoring, dispute resolution, complaints and leaving the partnership.
- 10.2 Accountability on SWPSHP performance, costs and services provided will be the primary function of the SWPSHP Board, which consists of the relevant Council Portfolio Holders and Client Officers. It is proposed that, should authority be given for Taunton Deane to join the partnership, the Housing Portfolio Holder should sit on the SWPSHP Board.
- 10.3 In addition, reports on SWPSHP activities, outputs and outcomes will be regularly reported to the appropriate Taunton Deane Member and Officer forums.

11. Scrutiny

- 11.1 The proposal to join SWPSHP was discussed at Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 18 February 2010.
- 11.2 The following resolutions were approved at this meeting.

11.2.1 the proposal for Taunton Deane to join SWPSHP from 1 April 2010.

11.2.2 that, subject to the conclusion of staff consultation, Taunton Deane grants and enforcement staff to work in other areas covered by SWPSHP.

11.2.3 the Housing Portfolio Holder should sit on the SWPSHP Board.

12. Relationship with new Home Improvement Agency and Wessex Reinvestment Trust

12.1 Taunton Deane, irrespective of SWPSHP membership, will need to work very closely with the new provider of Home Improvement Agency (HIA) services in Somerset, to ensure that these services enable people in Taunton Deane to maintain their health, well-being and independence. If anything, Taunton Deane's membership of SWPSHP, which already has an established track record of effective liaison with the existing HIA, will enhance our credibility with the new HIA, and our ability to scrutinise what it does in Taunton Deane.

12.2 Similarly, Taunton Deane will continue to utilise low interest loans for home improvements, through the Wessex Reinvestment Trust, a not for-profit organisation SWPSHP already works with to improve private sector housing conditions.

13. Conclusions/Recommendations

13.1 Taunton Deane's membership of SWPSHP offers a wide range of potential cost, capacity and performance benefits on private sector housing grants and enforcement work that could not be achieved by remaining as we are.

13.2 It is therefore **Recommended** that Executive approves the proposal for Taunton Deane to join the SWPSHP with effect from 1 April 2010.

13.3 It is also requested that the Executive gives consent for Taunton Deane grants and enforcement staff to work in other Council areas covered by SWPSHP, once staff consultation has been concluded.

13.4 It is further **Recommended** that Executive gives authority for the Housing Portfolio Holder to sit on the SWPSHP Board.

**Appendix A
Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership (SWPSHP) Performance**

	Sedgemoor Council		West Somerset Council		Taunton Deane Council	
	2007/08	2008/09	2007/08	2008/09	2007/08	2008/09
Decent Homes Grants	60	90	21	23	32	50
Disabled Facilities Grants	57	66	37	66	78	102
Investigation of formal complaints about private sector housing conditions	16	40	26	62	116	141
Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's)	6	13	6	6	9 (Pre April 2007 53 properties licensed)	2
Inspections of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO's)	10	45	4	0 *All HMOs licensed	75	95
Immigration visits	3	8	1	2	5	8
Provision of generic advice on Private Sector Housing	40	60	1	21	36	24

+/- 07/08 – 08/09 Performance	+68%	+87%	+20%
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Appendix B

Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership (SWPSHP)

Cost Of Delivery

	Cost of Delivery 2007-08			Cost of delivery 2008-09		
	SDC	WSDC	TDBC	SDC	WSDC	TDBC
Decision Making	£30k	£20k	£8k	£20k	£10k	£8k
Grants and Low Interest Loans	£80k	£28k	£38k	£60k	£0k	£39k
Housing Standards and Enforcement	£13k	£20k	£79k	£6k	£20k	£83k
Total	£123k	£68k	£125k	£86k	£30k	£130k

+/- 07/08 – 08/09 Costs	Sedgemoor	- 30%
	West Somerset	- 56%
	Taunton Deane	+ 4%

Appendix C

Initial Evaluation of Taunton Deane Joining Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership (SWPSHP) Against Framework/Recommendations From South West Audit Partnership (SWAP)

SWAP Framework	SWAP Recommendations	Initial SWPSHP Evaluation
Governance	<p>Partnerships are governed by an appropriate instrument to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delegation and decision making. • Monitoring of governance. • Dispute resolution protocols. • Conflict of interests. • Procurement arrangements. • Complaints. • Arrangements for concluding or leaving the partnership. 	<p>There is an existing terms of reference document called an 'Agreement' for the SWPSHP, which covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The function of the partnership. • Management responsibilities. • Reporting arrangements. • Standards of conduct. • Dispute resolution. • Duration and termination. • Variations to the partnership. <p>Should the decision be made for Taunton Deane to join the SWPSHP, the existing SWPSHP 'Agreement' should be thoroughly scrutinised by the legal team to ensure it is an appropriate governing instrument.</p>

SWAP Framework	SWAP Recommendations	Initial SWPSHP Evaluation
Decision Making	Partnerships should take account of the role that stakeholders have and this should be considered when making and communicating decisions about the partnership	There are reasonably clear expectations within SWPSHP about information sharing with stakeholders, who should be kept informed, what is required in respect of staff, and how decisions and activities/actions in SWPSHP are communicated. This is codified in the 'Agreement' (see above)
Standards of Conduct	There should be a written code of conduct for partnerships to include guidance for members and officers on standing orders, financial regulation and reporting, identifying and recording conflicts of interest and a protocol for commercial transactions.	The code of conduct in the 'Agreement' refers to compliance with the respective Councils statutory requirements, codes of conduct, national, local and other guidance, as well as standing orders, schemes of delegation and financial procedures. There does not appear to be any specific guidance in the 'Agreement' on conflicts of interest or commercial transactions.
Risk Management	No specific recommendations from SWAP in review on risk management.	SWPSHP has a detailed and robust risk register (regularly monitored and updated), which assesses operational, financial and reputation risks and agreed mitigating actions. The risk register is reported to the SWPSHP board.

SWAP Framework	SWAP Recommendations	Initial SWPSHP Evaluation
Performance Management	<p>Partnerships must have clear objectives which are supported by clear and measurable targets that can demonstrate that the objectives are being achieved. Partnerships should clearly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report achievements. • Report impacts. • Report issues. • Keep stakeholders informed. • Assess service users' needs. 	<p>The SWPSHP has the clear objective of providing a private sector housing partnership which is resilient and achieves improved outcomes for service users. Underlying these objectives are the supporting aims of increasing efficiencies, lowering costs and enhancing effectiveness. Performance against these aims and objectives for SWPSHP and their impact on private sector housing conditions, are regularly reported to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SWPSHP Board (which consists of a client manager and portfolio holder from each Council). • Government office for the South West (GoSW) in statistical returns and liaison meetings. • Wider stakeholders in both Council areas, through SWPSHP newsletters, and reports to staff and members. • Both Councils formally through year end reporting.

SWAP Framework	SWAP Recommendations	Initial SWPSHP Evaluation
Financial Arrangements	<p>Financial monitoring and reporting arrangements need to be clearly set out and agreed for all partnerships. These should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A calculation of the full costs of the partnership. • An assessment of the direct and indirect inputs of each partner. • A value for money judgment in relation to the overall cost and benefits of the partnership against outcomes for the community. 	<p>The existing financial and reporting arrangements in SWPSHP concentrate on assessments against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency improvements. • Service costs and outcomes for customers. • Value for money against comparators for the service. <p>These arrangements were established to meet the needs of the existing Councils in the SWPSHP, to assess and report their ongoing financial performance against key objectives for the partnership.</p> <p>However, should authority be given for Taunton Deane to join the SWPSHP, these financial monitoring and reporting arrangements will need to be modified, to ensure compliance against the SWAP recommendations (see SWAP financial arrangements recommendations column).</p>

SWAP Framework	SWAP Recommendations	Initial SWPSHP Evaluation
Legal and IT Arrangements	The legal status of a partnership needs to be understood and documented and an appropriate service level agreement, or contract, should be in place at the start of the agreement (which should include clearly specified ICT contractual arrangements).	<p>The existing SWPSHP 'Agreement' sets out the legal status of the partnership (for managing private sector housing partnership services in Sedgemoor and West Somerset Councils, pursuant to their powers and duties as Local Housing Authorities).</p> <p>ICT contractual arrangements will need to be clearly specified and documented, either in a service level agreement or in a contract, if Taunton Deane joins the SWPSHP.</p>
Partnership Staff	Where applicable, partnerships should clearly set out the protocol for appointing staff.	<p>Should Taunton Deane Decide to become a member of SWPSHP, the intended protocols for appointing staff in the SWPSHP are :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing staff can remain in substantive posts and will not have to apply for their positions. • Existing staff can apply for any new posts in an enlarged SWPSHP.

Appendix D
Efficiencies Achieved by Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership (SWPSHP) since October 2007

Service Area	Efficiency Improvement	Evidence
Decision making and Management Capability	<p>When SWPSHP was formed, the inherited management structure (in two Councils areas) was reduced from three managers to one Manager (the SWPSHP Manager). This:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduced the time needed for management decisions. • facilitated more consistent management actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial savings reported to SWPSHP Board and Councils in the partnership (see Appendix B) • Greater outputs per member of SWPSHP staff. • Clearer reporting lines and accountabilities. • Reduction in number management meetings.
Strategies and Policies	<p>Prior to SWPSHP, each Council developed its own private sector housing strategies and policies using its very limited capacity and resources to do so. This caused some practical difficulties in each Council, and gave cause for concern amongst partner organisations, the Audit Commission and GoSW about the robustness of private sector strategies in both areas. Since SWPSHP has been set up, these fears have been allayed.</p>	<p>Development of joint strategies and policies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuel Poverty/Energy Efficiency/Affordable Warmth. • Private Sector Housing Renewal. • Enforcement against Housing Standards. • Houses in Multiple Occupation. • Disabled Adaptations. • Decent Homes.

Service Area	Efficiency Improvement	Evidence
Finance and Performance	<p>Before SWPSHP was established, the profiling, setting and monitoring of private sector housing budgets was not very well co-ordinated and was undertaken by a number of different managers. All of these functions are now overseen and managed by one SWPSHP Manager.</p> <p>Since SWPSHP was set up, performance against key private sector housing indicators is monitored by the SWPSHP Manager, and reported to the SWPSHP Board, using a single performance management tool (Covalent).</p> <p>Performance of individual members of SWPSHP staff against key work functions and measuring of outcomes is also monitored by the SWPSHP Manager regularly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly monitoring of SWPSHP financial performance against budgets by SWPSHP Manager and quarterly reporting of this performance to SWPSHP Board and to the Councils in the partnership. • Use of private sector housing performance management system (Covalent) to produce performance reports for SWPSHP Board and monitoring information for SWPSHP staff. • Measurable reductions in time taken to process housing grants and housing loans payments. • Use of other management tools to monitor staff effectiveness on grants and enforcement work.
Housing Grants and Low Interest Loans	<p>Rationalisation of all application forms and procedures, resulting in one clear set of eligibility criteria and payment conditions applying.</p> <p>Information only has to be input once and this streamlining makes it easier for grant and low interest loan applicants to understand these systems and access payments from them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application processes and packages simplified. • Forms and procedures can be accessed from respective Council websites. • Improved customer satisfaction levels with private sector housing services in both Council areas.

Service Area	Efficiency Improvement	Evidence
<p>Housing Standards and Enforcement</p>	<p>Under SWPSHP, there is greater capacity, through more flexible use of Housing Standards Officers in both Council areas, to improve private sector housing conditions by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertaking an increased number of inspections (and licensing) of Houses in Multiple Occupation. • Providing a higher volume of professional advice to and/or taking enforcement action against private sector landlords on infringements of housing standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of Licensed Houses in Multiple Occupation. • Increased number of Houses in Multiple Occupation inspections completed. • Increased number of formal complaints about private sector housing conditions investigated. • Increased number of general housing conditions complaints investigated.

**Appendix E
Impact Assessment Form and Action Table**

<p>What are you completing this impact assessment for? E.g. policy, service area.</p>	<p>Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership proposal</p>
<p>Section One – Aims and objectives of the proposal</p>	
<p>Aim</p> <p>To improve Private Sector Housing Services by working in partnership with the two other Local Authorities of West Somerset and Sedgemoor.</p> <p>Objective</p> <p>Increase and improve the capacity, resilience, procurement, performance and management efficiency of Private Sector Housing Grants and Enforcement standards.</p>	
<p>Section two – Groups that the proposal is targeted at</p>	
<p>Private Sector Housing Staff Team. Landlords, tenants and owner occupiers.</p>	
<p>Section three – Groups that the service is delivered by</p>	
<p>Private Sector Staff Team and Contractors. The Staff team will initiate actions and the contractors will carry out the work required.</p>	

Section four – Evidence and Data used for assessment

Data collected in the establishment of the proposal are as follows:

- Performance data.
- Cost/budget analysis data.
- Analysis against the South West Audit Partnership recommendations for partnership working.
- Evidence of efficiencies already achieved through the partnership.

Section Five - Conclusions drawn about the impact of service/policy/function on different groups highlighting negative impact or unequal outcomes

Generally

There are limited resources available across the partnership to enable service delivery. We need to be aware that some groups or communities of people may be disadvantaged due to lack of resources. Resource may eventually be allocated according to information gathered from our data mapping exercise. This will give us a area to target resources due to identified need. This process may lead to other disadvantaged areas, or groups being overlooked.

Does the inspection procedure for HMOs look sufficiently at the vulnerability of the individuals living in the property. Are staff sufficiently trained to be able to identify where a person is vulnerable?

We need to ensure that we are continually measuring potential equalities issues through customer satisfaction surveys. These will need to be considered and implemented across the partnership.

Ensure early multi-agency referral systems and communication channels are in place if staff identify a customers with additional needs.

Disability

Investigations will need to be conducted into how accessible and approachable to process for the application facilitation of disabled facilities grants is and identify any improvements needed.

Will need to ensure that staff teams are sufficiently trained in aspects of disability discrimination and what it means to be considered to have a disability. A person may appear physically fine, so we need to ensure staff do not judge.

And Age – ensure carers are considered if they exist. They may be able to make a process easier, or give more detailed information.

Race

It will be important to be culturally sensitive when selecting contractors within a procurement process. The cheapest may not always be the most appropriate. Staff training will need to identify this issues and ensure it is considered within the procurement process.

Our Statutory responsibility to inspect Housing in Multiple Occupation's could inadvertently discriminate against certain ethnic/minority groups. It is important that staff and managers understand how the agreed process could disadvantage groups. It may be necessary to do an EqIA on the current procedure to identify potential problems and identify possible adjustments.

Religion or Belief

We need to be mindful of cultural differences and practices and ensure they are considered within the inspection and others services within Private sector housing.

Gender

Traditionally many of the skills and knowledge needed for private sector housing work would be associated with male orientated professions. We need to be sure that within recruitment of positions for this work judgments on these based this do not come into play. Equally we need to ensure that, through this assumption we are not disregarding other skills which may be useful to the work.

We need to ensure that inspection and enforcement officers are sufficiently trained to be able to deal with any discrimination they may face from customers.

Sexual Orientation

Ensure staff are sufficiently trained around awareness of and issues relating to sexual orientation.

Age

Ensure staff are trained to avoid preconceived ideas about the needs of different age groups.

There is a danger of seeing symptoms as being directly as a result of lifestyle and not housing conditions and help may be rejected. Need to ensure staff are sufficiently trained to avoid this.

Need to ensure that information on for example, disabled facilities grants, is targeted at those groups who could really benefit. For example, young carers

Income/Socio Economic Status

This may also be a gender issue – need to ensure services are accessible regardless of income and work patterns. For example, do we allow for appointments outside of office hours?

Means tested grants are often not available to those just outside the threshold. Need to ensure that staff have information on other sources of funding which may be available to the customer and details on how to apply.

Staff need to have a good understanding of worklessness and what this means. Discrimination needs to be avoided.

Geographical Location

Targeting areas, for example, for installation measures, by data mapping exercises will inevitably discriminate against areas where there has not been an overwhelming need identified, but pockets exist.

Access to information, advice and assistance for people in rural, or isolated areas could be an issue. Will need to ensure this has been considered when looking at accessibility to services.

Section six – Examples of best practise

Generally

This Partnership and the work conducted by the private sector housing team will enable and facilitate people to live more independent lives, as well as enabling them to maintain and protect their health and security.

The data mapping procedure will enable the partnership to clearly evidence targeted priorities. All people are treated equally in this process and the reasons for resource targeting in a particular area is transparent.

Equalities and diversity monitoring and awareness is key to any staff recruitment throughout the partnership.

Disability

The Partnership will improve co-ordination and delivery of Disabled Facilities Grants. It will also highlight and improve performance for access to grants to vulnerable people and/or those living in inadequate housing.

Race

Properties are inspected against Statutory requirements. This and enforcement standards ensure all people are treated equally. Issues may be around the quality of information provided, which is highlighted above.

Gender

Staff and working practices throughout the partnership do not differ from one gender to another, although it has been identified that staff training may be necessary.

Age

Private sector housing staff are able to intervene and facilitate support in private sector standards to reduce factors that can lead to deprivation, or poor educational achievement in children and Young people.

Geographical Location

The partnership will ensure the same service and response wherever a person lives.

Signed:

Person/Manager completed by

Signed:

Group Manager/Director

Impact Assessment Issues and Actions table						
Service area				Date		
Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Groups affected	Actions needed – how will your service or policy be amended	Who is responsible	By when	Is a monitoring system required	Expected outcomes from carrying out actions
Knowing our Communities, engagement and satisfaction						
Ensure staff are trained in equalities issues	All disadvantaged Groups	Commit to and support a 3 yearly training programme for staff	Christian Trevelyan	June 2010	Yes, by the PSH governance board.	Ensure staff are sensitive to and aware of equalities issues and of how their actions could disadvantage individuals or groups.
Targeting information at groups who could really benefit	All disadvantaged Groups	Will need to identify who groups are and where they can be accessed to ensure information is getting through.	Christian Trevelyan	June 2010	Yes, by the PSH governance board.	Improved access to grant facilities for those in most need.
Responsive services and customer care						
Ensure accessibility of Disable PSH Grants	All disadvantaged Groups	EqIA of grants procedure and materials used to give information, as well as application forms.	Christian Trevelyan	April 2010	Yes, by the PSH governance board.	Identify improvements if needed and implement as soon as possible. Advertise improvements.

Ensure inspection procedure for HMO's take account of cultural differences.	Race, religion and belief	EqIA of the service should identify any issues. If possible under the agreed procedure Improvements will need to be made.	Christian Trevelyan	April 2010	Yes, by the PSH governance board.	Identify and implement any improvements identified that are possible within the statutory requirements.
Managers need to have a good understanding of the inspection procedure in order to identify staff training needs.	All disadvantaged Groups	Investigate current procedures	PSH governance board.	April 2010	Yes, by the PSH governance board.	Form an understanding and highlight training needs, if any exist.
Implementation of customer satisfaction surveys	All disadvantaged Groups	Investigate to best process for this and implement across the partnership.	PSH governance board.	April 2010	Yes, by the PSH governance board.	The creation of a meaningful and useful customer satisfaction survey.
Multi-agency referral systems and clear channels of communication need to be in place.	All disadvantaged Groups	Investigate how this already works in other services and agencies and follow best practice.	Christian Trevelyan	June 2010	Yes, by the PSH governance board.	Implementation following information on best practice

Place shaping, leadership and partnerships						
<p>Need to ensure that EqIA's are carried out through the different stages of partnership implementation.</p> <p>Also that every Strategy produced by the partnership is subjected to an assessment.</p>	All disadvantaged Groups	Update the EqIA at appropriate stages in the progression of the partnership and ensure EqIA's are conducted for each Strategy.	PSH governance board.	June 2010	Yes, by the PSH governance board.	The completion of comprehensive impact assessments and evidence that actions associated have been completed.
A modern and diverse workforce						

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Executive – 3 March 2010

Financial and Performance Monitoring – Quarter 3 2009/2010

Joint Report of the Performance and Client Lead and Financial Services Manager

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Nicola Wilson)

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the financial position and the performance of the Council to the end of Quarter 3 of 2009/10 (as at 31 December 2009).
- 1.2 Members should note that monitoring reports have been revised following consultation and a new Performance Scorecard has been produced.
- 1.3 The scorecard provides members with a more holistic view of the Council's performance, and allows for a quicker focus on key problem areas.
- 1.4 A high level summary of successes/improvements include the following:
 - The General Fund Revenue shows a potential overspend of £40,000, a decrease of £180,000 from that reported in Quarter 2
 - 2010/11 Draft Budget balanced
 - General Fund reserves healthy
 - Local Development framework, Core Strategy progress
 - Core Council Review meeting milestones
 - Customer calls answered within 20 seconds and resolved at first point of contact
 - Speed in processing planning applications for minor and other applications.
- 1.5 A high level summary of areas off course include:
 - Additional homes built and affordable homes delivered are both off target due to the recession
 - Household waste recycling
 - Council tax, NNDR and sundry debtors collection
 - Procurement benefits
 - Employee sickness
 - Planning appeals allowed
 - Licensing inspections.

2. Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The monitoring of the Corporate Strategy, service delivery, performance indicators and budgets is an important part of the overall performance management framework. This report analyses data to the end of Quarter 3 (April to December) 2009/10.

3. Performance and Financial Monitoring

3.1 Background

3.1.1 A new framework for performance management was approved by Corporate Scrutiny Committee and the Executive Committee in September 2009.

3.1.2 The key changes to the process, which are being implemented to improve and strengthen how we monitor and manage the performance of all council services, are:

- Performance reports will be produced using the exception principle, namely, only providing full details on those areas of concern
- The introduction of a new Performance 'Scorecard', which is designed to be simple to use and will reduce the size of the report
- Performance reports and the Scorecard will provide a better and more holistic overview of the council's performance
- The performance reporting cycle has been reaffirmed, Reports will be presented in sequence.
 - Firstly to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) where key issues / concerns will be discussed in detail with corrective actions proposed documented.
 - Secondly to the Executive Committee, which should agree actions deemed necessary to address areas of poor or deteriorating performance.
 - Finally, the performance report is presented to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee, whose role in addition to reviewing the full performance report is to scrutinise the actions proposed on any areas of under performance.

3.2 New Performance Scorecard (Ref Appendix A)






3.2.1 The Performance & Client Team have developed a new Performance Scorecard with the assistance and input of Corporate Management Team (CMT), and from Members who attended either a workshop or briefing in January 2010.

3.2.2 The Scorecard is divided into seven sections, which are structured to provide a summary of all the main areas of performance that require reporting. These are:

- **Corporate Strategy Aims**
A high level progress update on planned actions and key performance indicators for the corporate aims & objectives (Economy; Transport; Crime; Healthy Living; Environment; Delivery)
- **Service Delivery**
A summary of the key performance measures and issues of the key council services: Planning; Environmental Health; Customer Contact Centre; Benefits Service; Landlord Services; DLO incl Parks, Street Cleansing' Highways & Transport
- **Managing Finances**
A summary of the key financial measures and issues. Further details for this section will be included in an appendix B.

- **Key Projects**
A summary progress update for the current high priority council projects: Local Development Framework; Housing Improvement; SAP; Core Council Review; Project Taunton
- **Key Partnerships**
A summary of the performance and status of the key partnerships: Local Strategic Partnerships; Southwest One; Tone leisure; Somerset Waste Partnership; South West Audit Partnership
- **People (Human Resources)**
A summary of the key performance measures and objectives of our corporate Human Resource priorities: Investor in People award; staff sickness; PREDs, Training plans; staff turnover; staff satisfaction; Thematic working
- **Corporate Management**
A summary of the high priority corporate management and operational issues: Corporate Governance; Audit & Inspection; Equalities & Diversity; Risk Management; Value for Money; Asset Management; Health & Safety

3.2.3 **Explanation / Key** - each section of the scorecard uses the same template and is structured as follows:

Ref	OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	ALERT	ISSUES (current & future) and IMPACTS
	Strategic & corporate objectives categorised by the 7 sections as listed above	Key performance indicators (& targets where possible) used to measure the objective.	Red, Amber or Green – see below	A brief summary highlighting reasons for and issues surrounding the alert reported (see Green, Amber, Red below). Also any known problems that may jeopardise attainment. Where relevant, CMT/Executive will provide further information in addressing under performance.
			 (green)	Planned actions are on course
			 (amber)	Performance indicators are on target
			 (amber)	Some uncertainty in meeting planned actions
			 (amber)	Some concern that performance indicators may not achieve target
			 (red)	Planned actions are off course

				Performance indicators will not achieve target
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4. Quarter 3 – Financial Performance (April - December Budget monitoring)

4.1 A summary of key financial performance is found in the scorecard (Appendix A), section three – Managing Finances. A more detailed financial performance report can be found in Appendix B.

4.2 Comment from the Strategic Finance Officer (S151 Officer)

Since the Quarter 1 report was submitted in September 2009 much progress has been made in fixing the issues within the SAP system, which were preventing us from undertaking accurate budget monitoring. With the exception of the ongoing problems with the DLO budget monitoring, I am now confident of the accuracy of the figures provided in this report.

5. Effect on Corporate Priorities

5.1 As this report covers all aspects of the Council's performance, all Corporate Priorities are affected

6. Recommendation

6.1 It is recommended that the Executive review the Council's performance and financial position as at the end of Quarter 3, taking corrective action where necessary.

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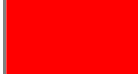
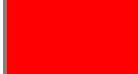
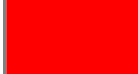


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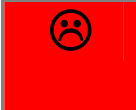
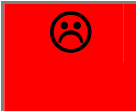



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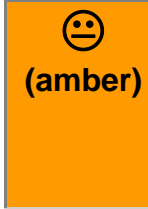
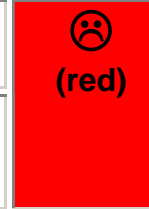
1. CORPORATE STRATEGY AIMS

Ref	OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	ALERT	ISSUES (current & future) and IMPACTS
AIM 1	Economy Regenerating Taunton and strengthening the economy of the Borough	Actions - progress against the key activities		Progress against the various activities within the Economy Aim is mixed. ☺ New Economic Development Strategy produced and awaiting approval ☺ Creation of Enterprise Gateways to promote new work opportunities & skills development is in progress
		PI – Overall employment rate (LAA target: 77.5%)		Most recent figure = 82% (2007/08). Current economic climate affects
Aim 2	Transport Minimising the growth in traffic congestion	Actions - progress against the key activities		☺ Cycling task & finish group formed and producing recommendations ☺ TDBC staff travel survey expected in 2010 ☺ Work on TDBC travel plan has not yet resumed
		PI - No measures available at Quarter 3	N/A	<i>These are annual or ad hoc measures and are not available at this time.</i>
Aim 3	Crime Promoting safer communities and tackling anti-social behaviour	Actions - progress against the key activities		☺ New CCTV cameras installed in Halcon ☺ Licensing inspections backlog due to reduced team (ref SD2)
		PI – Serious acquisitive crime rate (target = decrease from last year)		2008/09 was 9.7 crimes per 1000 population. It is likely that this figure will be below 9 for the end of 2009/10. This will equate to approx 7% reduction on the previous year.
		PI – Serious violent crime rate (target: decrease)		1244 incidents (Yr to date) shows a slight a drop of 1% on same period last year. Year end forecast would appear to be in the region of 1600 incidents which is just under the previous year. Taunton Deane is not performing well in this measure when set against areas of similar size. Action: Plans are in place to review the work within Taunton Night time economy, to address under performance.
Aim 4	Healthy living Promoting healthy &	Actions - progress against the key activities		☺ Swimming Task & Finish group convened ☺ Free swimming initiative successful

	sustainable communities			☺ 5 yr supply of housing sites unavailable Borough-wide (incl Taunton), but is sufficient in rural areas
		PI – Net additional homes provided (target: 1000pa)		Projected 398 dwellings by March 2010. Poor record of delivery is principally due to the recession & lack of developer finance / mortgages Action: Proposed ‘interim release of sites’ will contribute approx 1100 additional dwellings to the existing supply (3000 live planning consents & 1500 capacity for new homes on deliverable sites identified within SHLAA). However, the availability of land will not necessarily result in increased delivery of dwellings.
		PI – Number of affordable homes delivered (target: 233pa)		Projected 87 affordable homes by March 2010. This is entirely due to difficulties caused by the recession and uncertainty with Homes & Community Agency funding (the funding mechanism is changing). Action: Regeneration schemes on council owned land will make a significant difference in the next 2 – 3 years. The Core Council Review has enhanced resources in the area. ‘Affordable Housing’ is agreed as a new corporate priority (Corporate Strategy 2010 – 2013)
		PI – Number of households in temporary accommodation (target: 56 max)		Actual = 47 as at end Quarter 3.
		PI – Leisure visits (target = 4% increase on last year)		Total leisure visits up 5% year to date against last year (NB – includes Free Swimming figures)
Aim 5	Environment Safeguarding and Enhancing the local environment	Actions - progress against the key activities		☺ ‘Sort it Plus’ roll out on schedule (ref P4) ☺ Temporary Climate Change Strategy Officer post filled & will commence March 2010 - action plan will then commence to achieve 10:10 commitment, & reducing use of natural resources in council buildings ☺ Council’s Biodiversity Action Plan and progress reporting is well underway
		PI – Improved street & environmental cleanliness		All areas (litter, detritus, graffiti, fly-posting, fly-tipping) improved on 08/09 (ref SD4)








		PI – Residual household waste (target: 362kg per household)		Predicted outturn = 380 kg/hh. Actual year-to-date at Q3 = 285kg Refer to P4, Somerset Waste Partnership
		PI - % of household waste sent for reuse, recycling & composting (target: 49.2%)		Predicted outturn = 46.6 % Actual year-to-date at Q3 = 46.6% Refer to section 5 (Key Partnerships) P4, Somerset Waste Partnership
Aim 6	Delivery Delivering accessible, value for money services	Actions - progress against the key activities		Refer to Service Delivery (section 2) for a summary of the key performance measures and issues of the key council services: Planning; Environmental Health; Customer Contact Centre; Benefits Service; Landlord Services; DLO incl Parks, Street Cleansing' Highways & Transport In addition, Pioneer Somerset is disbanded although in many areas partnership working already commenced will continue
		PI – Value for money (NI 179 target: 3.5% increase pa)		Forecast performance for cumulative gains to be achieved by March 2010 is £884,000 (as reported at Corporate Governance Committee 10 th Dec 09). Work is being undertaken to establish the actual target.
		PI - % of calls resolved at 1st point of contact (contact centre target: 85%)		Year end forecast = 96%

KEY TO ALERTS

 (green)	Planned actions are on course	 (amber)	Some uncertainty in meeting planned actions	 (red)	Planned actions are off course
	Performance indicators are on target		Some concern that performance indicators may not achieve target		Performance indicators will not achieve target

2. SERVICE DELIVERY

Excellent services - Customer driven - A dynamic organisation - Local focus

Ref	OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	ALERT	ISSUES (current & future) and IMPACTS
SD1	Ensuring development proposals are dealt with positively, with an emphasis on quality outcomes Delivering the aims of the Development Management Service	Planning Applications Speed of Processing Targets (NI 157) a) Major applications 65% b) Minor applications 75% c) Other applications 85%		a) Major applications: 61% b) Minor applications: 78% c) Other applications: 88% The majors is due to the lack of new major proposals coming in so clearing longstanding ones is having a greater impact on figures than normal. Action: Further analysis & research is being undertaken into speed of 'major' applications
		% of appeals allowed against the authority's decision – target max 25%		Actual April – December = 40% (40 appeals lodged / 16 allowed against council's decision). We are still above the target figure of 25% but have made a significant improvement from the previous quarter. Action: On receipt of the Planning Inspector's decision on any Appeal, the information is circulated and discussed and where necessary "lessons learned" noted. Further analysis & research is being undertaken.
SD2	Safeguarding the health, safety & welfare of everyone in the Borough Delivering the aims of the Environmental Health Service	Satisfaction with EH regulatory services (NI 182) County-wide target = 75%		Actual as at end Q3 = 90%
		Food Safety compliance County-wide target = 80%	N/A	<i>Data available at year end</i>
		Health & Safety intervention visits - target 90%		76% of H & S intervention visits that should have been carried out that were carried out. Action: see below
		Licensing inspections – target 100%		As at Q3, 56% of planned inspections of licensed premises were undertaken due to under resourcing issues (recruitment freeze due to CCR). Action: Work being prioritised towards meeting minimum statutory requirements. A return to full staffing levels is expected by April.
SD3	Delivering customer driven services To deliver customer focussed services,	85% of calls resolved at 1 st point of contact (SW1)		Year end forecast = 96%
		80% of calls answered within 20 seconds (SW1)		Year end forecast = 86%

As at: 23/02/2010








TDBC SCORECARD Q3 2009/10 (Appendix A)








	achieving high levels of customer satisfaction.	Complaints measures - 10 day response - Complaint resolution		78/105 complaints responded to within 10 days = 75% (April – Nov 09). Average response time = 8 days. Complaints upheld = 41%. Full complaints analysis is subject to separate reporting (last reported Oct 09). ☺ New Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system and website successfully introduced in December 2009
		Satisfaction with the local area (Place Survey)		2008 result = 88% Top quartile nationally (average national = 81%).
		Benefits Service – speed of processing new claims		Target = 22 days. Actual as at end Quarter 3 = 19 days
		Benefits Service – speed of processing changes of circumstance Target = 8 days		Actual as at end Q3 = 9.4 days Increases to live benefits caseload (+9%), no. of changes of circumstance (+12%), calls to Benefits Advice Team (+6%), help desk visitors (+60%) Action: Various improvements being implemented: pilot re processing at time of visit; process re-engineering; e-claims product launch by May 10 (to capture new claims & changes electronically); & plans for dealing with change of circs by phone
		Landlord Services – satisfaction with repairs Target = 98%		Latest survey results = 98% (April 2009)
SD4	Ensuring the Borough is a clean and attractive place to live, work & visit Delivering Parks, Street Cleansing, Highways & Transport Services that are high quality and cost-effective	Street & environmental cleanliness targets. (% of surveyed land that is assessed as having deposits of litter, detritus, graffiti, & fly-posting)		Litter 1%; Detritus 22%; Graffiti 1%; Flyposting 1% (latest year-to-date figures). We are on course to achieve targets. Comparisons to national standards show us to be similar or better. Fly-tipping - We are on course to receive a grading of 1 ('very effective'). Improvement in investigations has continued with 60% of fly-tipping incidents being investigated (April – Dec 2009)
		Quality Assurance accreditation / Awards		We have three Green Flag Parks: Vivary Park; Victoria Park; & Wellington Park. The awards are judged annually & all three parks have maintained this status for many years. Taunton has won the South West in Bloom competition for the last few years; we compete against Bath & other large towns in our population class




3. MANAGING FINANCES (ref Appendix B for detailed budget monitoring)

Ref	OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	ALERT	ISSUES (current & future) and IMPACTS
MF1	Budgets To achieve a balanced 2009/10 budget by the financial year end	General Revenue within 0.5% = 😊 0.5 – 2% = 😐 over 2% = 😞	😊	Budget monitoring for April to December is showing a potential overspend of £40k (approx 0.3% of budget) for the financial year 2009/10, a decrease of £180k from the reported forecast at quarter 2. (See Appendix B)
		Capital	😊	No budget monitoring variance for either the General Fund or Housing Revenue Account Capital has been identified. (See Appendix B)
		Housing Revenue within 0.5% = 😊 0.5 – 2% = 😐 over 2% = 😞	😊	Budget monitoring for April to December shows a potential underspend of £898k . HRA working balance is forecast to stand at around £2.6m at end of 2009/10. (See Appendix B)
MF2	Reserves To maintain an adequate reserve (based on financial risk analysis)	General Fund reserve >£1.25m = 😊 £1m - £1.25m = 😐 <£1m = 😞	😊	The General Fund reserve is now forecast to stand at around £1.6m at the end of 2009/10. (See Appendix B)
MF3	Next years budget gap	A balanced budget for 2010/11	😊	Proposed use of £20k from General Reserve for one-off expenditure to balance the 2010/11 budget
MF4	Debt collection	Council Tax (target: 98.5%)	😞	Position at end of Q3 91.5%. Project 0.75% (est) below target by year end (= 97.75%). NB. 08/09 actual was 97.9% against a target of 98.2% TDBC relative performance in 08/09 was third quartile within Family Group (first quartile being best). Mainly due to the severe economic downturn, but also due to delays in progressing recovery action at the start of the year due to uncertainty on the receipt of payments through SAP implementation. Actions: New Principal Revenues Officer will be in place by 22nd Feb. Re-structure of Revenues Service pending with introduction of generic Revenues Officers to add resilience to the service. Pending introduction of paperless Direct debit payments.





		NNDR (target: 98.82%)		Position at end of Q3 88.1%. Project 2.5% (est) below target by year end. NB. 08/09 actual was 98.09% against target of 98.81% TDBC relative performance in 08/09 was third quartile within Family Group (first quartile being best). See comments above.
		Housing Rent (target: 98.3%)		97.2% at end Q3. Optimistic that year-end target will be achieved, however some risk exists. SAP payments to the rent account was not working until September 2009. Housing Estates teams are continuing to work hard on reducing our rent arrears as a priority.
		Sundry Debts position (Quantifiable measures are being developed)		No proactive recovery of outstanding debts between April 09 and Feb 10. Not all invoices have been issued (DLO). £60K of unallocated receipts to invoices. Due to issues, Sundry Debtors reports have been considered by Corporate Scrutiny on 26 Nov 09 & 18 Feb 10. Action: Basic processes being implemented such as: recovery action; DLO invoicing; wider usage of system.
MF5	Benefits subsidy	To achieve 100% subsidy by remaining in lower threshold for LA error overpayments		Projection is that 100% subsidy will be achieved. Authority error overpayments are well below the lower threshold.
MF6	Transformation Projects Ensure TDBC realises benefits of the various transformation projects, including the adoption of a new procurement strategy	Procurement benefits Original estimated target at end Mar 10 £653k Revised estimated target £403k		Savings behind target. £315k actual savings delivered. Of the £10m 10 year target, £3m identified over life of contract from extrapolating the £403k. Full update report on the Procurement Transformation to Corporate Scrutiny Committee 18/2/10 Action: Key staff now in post & focussing on delivering savings already identified
		CCR proposed savings target 2009/10 = £342,000 for Theme 1		Final saving will not be known until the end of the financial year, however it is estimated that the target savings for CCR Theme 1 is on course to be realised
MF7	Efficiency Savings Achieve a minimum of 3.5% increase in efficiency saving	NI 179 target 3.5% saving pa (of 2007/08 baseline):		Forecast performance for cumulative gains to be achieved by March 2010 is £884,000 (as reported at Corporate Governance Committee 10 th Dec 09). Work is being undertaken to establish the actual target.



4. KEY PROJECTS

Ref	OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	ALERT	ISSUES (current & future) and IMPACTS
PJ1	Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy To identify sites to accommodate the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) growth requirements to the year 2026	Publish Core Strategy for consultation in Sept/Oct 2010 Adopt the LDF Core Strategy by September 2011		Public Consultation (Reg 25) Core Strategy and Small Site Allocations Document and Sustainability Appraisal prepared. Consultants Urban Initiatives appointed to prepare Urban Extensions SPD (Supplementary Planning Document). Consultants Three Dragons and Roger Tym appointed to prepare Infrastructure Delivery plan and Planning Obligations SPD. Hestercombe House Appropriate Assessment completed. Monthly progress updates provided at LDF Steering Group.
PJ2	Housing Inspection project	Deliver project plan / work programme Achieve min “ <i>performing adequately</i> ” score from formal housing inspection (Autumn 2010)		Project team is now formed & meet regularly. Priorities for improvement are being tackled thematically and timetabled. Required resources have been identified. A Performance Scorecard for Landlord Services has been drafted. Community evidence bases being mapped to inform strategy development, investment decisions and priorities for action.
PJ3	SAP implementation	SAP Back Office Processing (BOP) system implementation		All outstanding issues have been identified and a ‘fix’ plan has been agreed with SW1. A project team is in place to implement the plan. Progress against the plan is reviewed weekly by the project team & fortnightly by CMT and the Members Steering Group. The key areas of the plan are on track but the significance of the issues makes this an area of concern.
		SAP Customer Relationship Management (CRM) & new website implementation		The new CRM system & website went live in late Nov 2009 with no significant problems having been encountered.
PJ4	Core Council Review	Theme 2 – Recruitment to agreed new structure		Recruitment activity under way. Anticipate all vacant posts filled by end May 2010.




		Theme 3 – Implementation of option agreed by Members		Full Council decision on preferred option anticipated February 2010.
		Theme 4 – Recruitment to agreed new structure.		Recruitment activity under way. Anticipate all vacant posts filled by end May 2010.
PJ5	<p>Project Taunton Improving quality of life, boosting business opportunity, building quality developments, improving transport infrastructure, developing sustainable communities and making the most of waterside living and working</p>	<p>Project progress & development milestones achieved</p> <p>NB – full progress report produced by Project Director for Project Board quarterly</p>		<p>Firepool - demolition of the buildings on the livestock market site has commenced. “The Auctioneers building” is going to be refurbished and retained in the medium term as a marketing centre. Work started in January 10.</p> <p>Cricket Club - the Pegasus development and new stand is now complete.</p> <p>Somerset Square is almost complete. There are some outstanding ‘snagging’ and health and safety issues which are subject of discussions with the contractor. An opening ceremony took place on 14th December. The construction of the SCCC Club Hub is complete and work to convert the pavilion to a 600 seat conference facility has started with completion in Spring 2010.</p> <p>Brewhouse Theatre - an architectural scoping study for the incremental extension and conversion of the building is now complete. A structural survey of the premises has also been undertaken.</p> <p>Museum - The main contractor is on site for the refurbishment of the Museum and reopening is planned for April 2011</p> <p>Castle Green - a planning application has been submitted</p> <p>Funding for 10/11 remains unclear as although provisional funding amounts have been received from government there is still no certainty that these will be adhered to.</p>

5. KEY PARTNERSHIPS









Ref	OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	ALERT	ISSUES (current & future) and IMPACTS
P1	Local Strategic Partnerships Support Somerset LSP Support Taunton Deane LSP	LAA PIs (NIS) on target within TDBC scope of influence	N/A	Work has just commenced with Somerset partners to establish which Somerset LAA performance indicators can be disaggregated to District LSPs, and which PIs have targets set at District level.
P2	Southwest One	Efficient delivery of in-scope services (basket of KPIs)		Key Performance Indicators – 89% on target to date. Revenues - projecting 2 KPI failures for year end (Council Tax & NNDR collection – ref MF4) Benefits Service - projecting 2 KPI failures for year end (Speed of Processing Change of Circs – ref SD 3, & no of fraud investigations) Finance has reported 1 KPI failure to date (accuracy & quality of budget monitoring) which is due to impacts of SAP. Service Performance Indicators – 90% on target to date. NB - a separate Southwest One performance reporting framework is planned for the new financial year.
		Enterprise wide transformation		Procurement benefits off target Action: refer to Managing Finances section (MF6)
		Social & economic development	N/A	Measures to be developed
P3	Tone Leisure More people, more active, more often	PI – Target 4% increase in total leisure visits PI – Target 15% increase in swim visits		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total leisure visits up 5% year to date against last year (768,952 total visits YTD) Swimming up 14% year to date against last year (148,806 swims YTD)
		Progress against Tone Leisure key business objectives	N/A	Tone Leisure produces quarterly progress reports on their corporate business plan. Q3 report is due at Community Scrutiny committee 2 nd March 2010.
P4	Somerset Waste Partnership To increase participation in the recycling service through promotion and	TDBC Recycling target = 49.2%		Predicted outturn = 46.6 % Based on the actual results for Qtrs 1 & 2 and the provisional result for Qtr 3, it is expected that the predicted targets set for recycling and residual household waste will not be achieved.


	enforcement			<p>2009/10 has continued at the same reduced levels as the second half of 2008/09.</p> <p>The total arisings have also reduced, but not by the same percentage as the materials sent for reuse, recycling and composting. This will therefore also result in a decrease in 'Residual household waste landfilled', compared to the predicted target.</p> <p>Target = 364 kg/hh. Predicted outturn = 380 kg/hh.</p> <p>This performance reflects the national position and is linked to the recession. SCC has funded SWP to conduct some research and analysis of refuse.</p>
		Corporate objective 16 – delivery of key activities		<p>The implementation of 'SORT IT PLUS' (adding plastic bottles and cardboard to kerbside collections), is on schedule, with Phase 1 rolled out during November 2009 and further phases extending the service Borough-wide by September 2010. The rounds in the trial areas have been rationalized and expanded during November and this has increased the number of properties on the service to 5,300. A further major roll out is planned for April with the rest of the Borough being added in September 2010.</p>
P5	South West Audit Partnership	Target min 90% of 2009/10 Audit plan delivered		<p>On target for March 2010.</p> <p>88% delivery of expected audit plan as at end quarter 3</p>
P6	Other Partnerships		N/A	Measures being developed.

KEY TO ALERTS




 (green)	Planned actions are on course	 (amber)	Some uncertainty in meeting planned actions	 (red)	Planned actions are off course
	Performance indicators are on target		Some concern that performance indicators may not achieve target		Performance indicators will not achieve target

6. PEOPLE (Human Resources)








Ref	OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	ALERT	ISSUES (current & future) and IMPACTS
ST1	Investors in People (IiP) Achieve IiP re-accreditation, by delivering the IiP action Plan	Milestones achieved in IiP Action Plan.		All milestones achieved by the due date As per IiP Action plan April 2009 – March 2010
		IiP accreditation by March 2011		Expected to be achieved but dependent upon the action plan arising from the March 2010 assessment.
ST2	Staff Sickness Reduce sickness absence levels through strong absence management, revised policies & procedures, and training	Target: 10.5 working days lost per FT employee		Projection for end of year = 10.7 days This prediction is based on actual sickness rates to 31 Dec 09 of 8 days per employee. Data has been taken from SAP is to be fully audited by SWAP. Action : Report going to Corporate Scrutiny Committee 18 th March 2010
ST3	PRED / Training Plans Maintain effective performance management of people and establish & deliver development needs	100% completion of PREDs		Approx 60% of PREDs reviews due Oct – Dec 09 have been completed. The remainder are either on target for January or are being followed up
		100% completion of training plans		78% of training plans for 2010/11 received so far.
		100% delivery of 'essential' training activities (ie those included on the corporate training plan)		Corporately, most essential training has been delivered (Approx 80%). At service level this is unknown at this time.
ST4	Staff Turnover	Target 12% (voluntary leavers as % of staff in post)		Voluntary leavers 3.15% In addition, please note: - Early retirements (including redundancy) 3.8% - Ill health retirements 0.2% End of year predictions include redundancies as part of Themes 2 and 4.
ST5	Improve Staff Satisfaction	Results from staff survey		Plans to undertake a survey across all partners within SW1 have altered. Discussions are taking place with SW1 with a view to ensuring that a survey of all Core Council and SW1 TDBC Secondees is completed by 31 March 2010 to inform the Workforce Development Strategy, IiP and



				other developments such as Thematic Working.
ST6	<p>Embed 'thematic working' Develop new ways of working and behaviours that are more flexible, involve project working and less rigid structures.</p>	<p>Results from staff survey. Positive evidence in cross organisational working, effective project teams, greater staff flexibility leading overall to improved organisational performance</p>		<p>Report and action plan agreed by CMT. To be included in wider Organisational Development plan which links key people themes into one strategic direction (Covered by Thematic Working Action Plan and Organisational Development Plan)</p>

KEY TO ALERTS




 (green)	<p>Planned actions are on course</p>	 (amber)	<p>Some uncertainty in meeting planned actions</p>	 (red)	<p>Planned actions are off course</p>
	<p>Performance indicators are on target</p>		<p>Some concern that performance indicators may not achieve target</p>		<p>Performance indicators will not achieve target</p>

7. CORPORATE MANAGEMENT

Ref	OBJECTIVES	MEASURES	ALERT	ISSUES (current & future) and IMPACTS
CM1	Corporate Governance Action Plan Deliver the action plan, focussing on high priority areas	Deliver 95% of High priority Actions, and 80% of Medium priority actions by target dates		74% of High priority actions on target or completed 90% of Medium priority actions on target or completed Based on detailed report considered at Corporate Governance Cttee 10 Dec 2009. ACTION: Quarterly updates requested by CG Cttee and CMT.
CM2	Audit & Inspection (including CAA) Ensure that statutory Audit & Inspection obligations are met, and scores maximised	2009 Use of Resources result (based on 2008/09 financial year) - target score of 3		CAA Organisational Assessment score for TDBC = 2, the same rating as 2/3rds of all English districts & a harder test than previous regime. In Somerset, one authority (S Som) scored a 3, two scored a 2 (TDBC & Sedgmoor), & two scored a 1 (Mendip & W Som). Balanced against the level of change at TDBC, a score of 2 is a realistic assessment and our target for 2009/10 assessment should be to maintain the 2.
		2009/10 Final Accounts unqualified		The interface between the DLO computer system and SAP is still not fully operational, which has the greatest potential to result in our year-end accounts being qualified. This may affect the Use of Resources score for 2009/10 as above.
CM3	Equalities & Diversity Enhance the Council's approach to Equalities & Diversity	Equality Standard: 'Achieving' level by 2011		On target for March 2011
CM4	Risk Management To ensure major risks are managed by embedding Risk Management Strategy	Delivery of RM Strategy Action Plan		82% of RM action plan is complete or on target. Corporate risk register reviewed by CMT 18/1/10. RM action plan updated for 2010 and being monitored. Internal audit Jan 10 found "reasonable assurance" in respect of risk management controls & procedures. Audit recommendations added to RM action plan.
CM5	Value for Money / Benchmarking To ensure that Services provide excellent value	Council Tax charges – in lowest quartile		TDBC 2009/10 precept within lowest 10% nationally
		Target efficiency savings at areas with poor VfM		The Council has significantly reduced its expenditure and re-prioritised services recently in order to balance

	for money			its budget. The Core Council Review has been a key factor in this which aims to ensure the Council is fit for purpose to deliver our vision through widening roles and new ways of working. Also delivering substantial efficiency savings. (See also Ref MF7)
CM6	Asset Management Develop the Council's Asset Management arrangements	Finalise and implement new AMP Apr-10		Good progress is being made to produce the AMP and review the content with key stakeholders. Some delays due to resourcing conflicts, in particular around clarifying budgets to enable condition survey to proceed. Once undertaken the planned maintenance programme can be developed, agreed and implemented. Action: Finance to work with Property & FM to improve budget structure and confirm available funds, prior to programme being developed.
		Target to get 70% of maintenance spend planned	N/A	Not yet able to report % of planned : reactive maintenance spend due to SAP problems
CM7	Health & Safety To take Health & Safety forward	Delivery of H & S Action Plan		Plan 15% completed and further progress will happen once the Core Council Review is in place and managers start to risk assess their responsibilities. Winter Working policy is currently out for consultation and expected to be an agenda item for CCM shortly. Ten harmonised policies will be ready for consultation by end of March 2010. Continuing high levels of corporate support is being provided by the H&S Advisor and these demands are likely to reduce end of February 2010, allowing time to be spent on the H&S policies and procedures and delivery of in-house training

KEY TO ALERTS

 (green)	Planned actions are on course	 (amber)	Some uncertainty in meeting planned actions	 (red)	Planned actions are off course
	Performance indicators are on target		Some concern that performance indicators may not achieve target		Performance indicators will not achieve target

Appendix B

Quarter 3 – Financial Performance

April - December Budget monitoring

Comment from the Strategic Finance Officer (S151 Officer)

Since the Quarter 1 report was submitted in September 2009 much progress has been made in fixing the issues within the SAP system, which were preventing us from undertaking accurate budget monitoring. With the exception of the ongoing problems with the DLO budget monitoring, which are outlined below, I am now confident of the accuracy of the figures provided in this report.

3.1 General Fund

3.1.1 Budget monitoring for the period April to December is showing a potential overspend of £40k for the financial year 2009/10, a decrease of £180k from the reported forecast at quarter 2. The variations from the planned budget are shown in the table below:

Description of Variance		Qtr 1 £'000	Qtr 2 £'000	Qtr 3 £'000	Total £'000
Land Charges	The income situation is improving due to the housing market starting to recover.	40	0	-35	5
Car Parking (off street)	Car parking income has picked up during the second quarter and the expected loss of income due to the redevelopment of Castle Green being delayed. There has been no change in the prediction since quarter 2 though officers are still assessing the situation after the recent weather conditions.	30	-90	0	-60
Planning	The predicted loss of income is due to the slowdown in the Housing market.	250	0	0	250
Concessionary Fares	Based on the information we have received from SCC we are predicting an underspend on Concessionary Travel. This is due to some one off costs not materializing, the increase in percentage use of service being	-100	100	-150	-150

Description of Variance		Qtr 1 £'000	Qtr 2 £'000	Qtr 3 £'000	Total £'000
	slightly under what we anticipated and the work of SCC in negotiating fares.				
Investment Income	There is an expected minor reduction in interest receipts. This is largely due to a reduction in interest rates.	13	0	0	13
Recycling/ Refuse	The information supplied by SWP shows a further increased cost due to reduced tonnages of recycling being collected which in turn reduces the recycling credits received from SCC. These reduced levels of recycling are being experienced nationally and are thought to be linked to the recession	66	59	20	145
Pay Award	The 2009/10 pay award has been confirmed as 1%, whereas 2.5% was included when the budget was set in February.	0	-120	0	-120
Housing Benefit Subsidy	This figure relates to the 2007/08 benefit subsidy return which was scrutinised by the Audit Commission. The DWP made a decision in late June 2009 that we had claimed too much subsidy for overpaid benefit and we need to repay £14k which relates to 0.05% of the total claim.	0	14	0	14
Housing Benefit Admin Subsidy	The DWP has given extra administration subsidy to local authorities as they have recognised the increase in caseload in the current economic climate. Southwest One delivers this function for us at a fixed price. The extra subsidy is therefore retained by TDBC.	0	-42	0	-42
Electoral Registration	The increase in resources required due to recent changes in legislation has not been as great as was expected (for this financial year only).	0	-5	-5	-10
Taunton Market	Rental income is down due to the general downturn in the property market and car park of the site has not yet been turned into a pay and display car park.	0	20	0	20
Crematorium	The numbers of cremations is	0	-25	-7	-32

Description of Variance		Qtr 1 £'000	Qtr 2 £'000	Qtr 3 £'000	Total £'000
	currently 83 higher than last year therefore it is predicted income will be up by £32k.				
Homelessness	Bed and Breakfast income is predicted to be £7k lower than budgeted. Also Private Sector Landlords (PSL) lease costs have increased by £3k due to taking on two additional properties.	0	10	0	10
Discretionary Rate Relief	There have been some changes in the entitlement rules which have resulted in a decrease in expenditure.	0	0	-49	-49
Salaries	The overspend on Performance and Client salaries is due to having to provide support to the website project which the Performance and Client Team do not have the budget for.	0	0	30	30
Legal Services	Loss of income due to not having as many s.106 agreements as anticipated last year due to the economic climate.	0	0	12	12
Env Services	£7k underspend for Licensing regarding the equipment budget. £7k underspend for Pollution Reduction regarding the fees & hired budget	0	0	-14	-14
Leisure (DLO)	Due to re-grading of Parks & Highways Managers Salaries and additional overtime.	0	0	18	18
Net variation		299	-79	-180	40

3.1.2 CMT are working with service managers to identify solutions to alleviate the overspend.

3.1.3 The General Fund reserve is now forecast to stand at around £1.599m at the end of 2009/10, as per the table below.

	2009/10 £000
General Fund Reserves Opening Balance at 1 April	1,574
2009/10 Revenue Budget Movements	
Supplementary estimates	
Core Council Review - One off 2009/10 costs	(148)
2009/10 Projected Outturn	
Budgeted contribution to general fund balance	156
Q3 Budget Monitoring	(40)
Windfall VAT receipt	649
Ring-fenced provision for CCR implementation costs	(592)
	<u>25</u>
Projected Closing Balance 31 March	<u>1,599</u>

3.2 Housing Revenue Account

3.2.1 Budget monitoring for April to December shows a potential underspend of £898k. The variations are shown in the table below:

Description of Variance	Qtr 1 £'000	Qtr 2 £'000	Qtr 3 £'000	Total £'000
Additional admin and printing costs due to the rent restructuring agreed by Full Council 11 th August.	15	0	0	15
Further slippage in asbestos works, following advice from the Audit Commission we have revised and enlarged upon our previous approach and are planning to use some specific professionals to survey and sample properties. It was initially difficult to secure the right personnel, but we have now overcome this and will aim to accelerate our procedure over the next financial year.	-75	-100	-38	-213
Slippage in replacement of smoke detectors.	0	-50	0	-50
The replacement of fascias and soffits which was scheduled to take place in	0	-650	0	-650

Description of Variance	Qtr 1 £'000	Qtr 2 £'000	Qtr 3 £'000	Total £'000
09/10 has now been delayed until 10/11. Therefore the budget of £650k will not be spent this year and will slip into next year.				
Net variation	-60	-800	-38	-898

3.2.2 The Housing Revenue Account working balance is forecast to stand at around £2.585m at the end of 2009/10, as per the table below.

	2009/10 £000
Housing Revenue Account Reserves Opening Balance at	2,757
<i>2009/10 Revenue Budget Movements</i>	
Supplementary estimates	
Core Council Review - One off 2009/10 costs	(13)
Tenant empowerment	(20)
<i>2009/10 Projected Outturn</i>	
Original budget deficit for the year	(1,037)
Q3 Budget Monitoring	898
	<u>(172)</u>
Projected Closing Balance 31 March	<u>2,585</u>

3.3 Capital

3.3.1 No budget monitoring variance for either the General Fund or Housing Revenue Account Capital have been reported.

3.4 DLO

3.4.1 The interface between the DLO computer system and SAP is still not fully operational; therefore the budget position has been identified using a work around. The results of this workaround are only able to give a global predicted year end position for the DLO as a whole. This predicted year end position is still a deficit of approximately £70k, which has not changed from the position reported at quarter 2.

Report	Objectives	Details Of Consultation	Officer	Decision To Be Made By	Date
Quarterly Corporate Performance/Finance Update			Dan Webb		03/03/2010
Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership			Martin Daly		03/03/2010
Review of Essential Users and Car Allowances			Martin Griffin		31/03/2010
Corporate Equality Scheme and Action Plan 2010 - 2013			Lisa Redston		31/03/2010
Economic Development Strategy			Joy Wishlade		31/03/2010
Asset Management Plan			Joy Wishlade		31/03/2010
Treasury Management Strategy Statement			Maggie Hammond		31/03/2010
Carbon Reduction Plan			Kevin Toller		28/04/2010
Proposed extension of Wellington Cemetery			Paul Rayson		28/04/2010
Community Partnerships			Kevin Toller		28/04/2010
Quarterly Corporate Performance/Finance Update (Outturn)			Dan Webb		16/06/2010
Firepool Compulsory Purchase Order			Joy Wishlade		16/06/2010
Halcon Project, Taunton			Joy Wishlade		16/06/2010