

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Council to be held in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 26 February 2013 at 18:30.

Agenda

The meeting will be preceded by a Prayer to be offered by the Mayor's Chaplain.

- 1 To receive the Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 24 January 2013 (attached).
- 2 To report any apologies for absence.
- 3 To receive any communications.
- 4 Declaration of Interests
To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or personal or prejudicial interests, in accordance with the Code of Conduct. The usual declarations made at meetings of Full Council are shown on the attachment.
- 5 To receive questions from Taunton Deane Electors under Standing Order 15.
- 6 To receive any petitions or deputations from Taunton Deane Electors under Standing Orders 16 and 17.
- 7 Part I - To deal with written questions to, and receive the following recommendations from, the Executive:-
 - (i) Councillor John Williams
 - (a) Recommendations relating to the General Fund Revenue Estimates 2013/2014 (attached);
 - (b) Recommendations relating to the Capital Programme Budget Estimates 2013/2014 (attached);
 - (c) Recommendations relating to Council Tax Setting 2013/2014 (attached).
 - (ii) Councillor Mrs Jean Adkins - Recommendations relating to the Housing Revenue Account Estimates 2013/2014 (attached).
- 8 The Liberal Democratic Group's Alternative Budget Proposal (attached).

- 9 The Independent Councillor's Alternative Budget Proposal (attached).
- 10 Part II - To receive reports from the following Members of the Executive:-
 - (a) Councillor John Williams - Leader of the Council;
 - (b) Councillor Jane Warmington - Community Development;
 - (c) Councillor Norman Cavill - Economic Development, Asset Management, Arts and Tourism;
 - (d) Councillor Ken Hayward - Environmental Services and Climate Change;
 - (e) Councillor Catherine Herbert - Sports, Parks and Leisure;
 - (f) Councillor Jean Adkins - Housing Services;
 - (g) Councillor Vivienne Stock-Williams - Corporate Resources;
 - (h) Councillor Mark Edwards - Planning, Transportation and Communications.

Tonya Meers
Legal and Democratic Services Manager

26 June 2013

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 the Corporate Support Unit on 01823 356414 or email r.bryant@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Council Members:-

Councillor L Lisgo, MBE (Deputy Mayor)
Councillor T Hall (Mayor of Taunton Deane)
Councillor J Adkins
Councillor J Allgrove
Councillor J Baker
Councillor A Beaven
Councillor C Bishop
Councillor R Bowrah, BEM
Councillor S Brooks
Councillor N Cavill
Councillor S Coles
Councillor B Denington
Councillor D Durdan
Councillor K Durdan
Councillor M Edwards
Councillor H Farbahi
Councillor M Floyd
Councillor E Gaines
Councillor A Govier
Councillor J Govier
Councillor K Hayward
Councillor R Henley
Councillor C Herbert
Councillor C Hill
Councillor M Hill
Councillor J Horsley
Councillor J Hunt
Councillor L James
Councillor R Lees
Councillor S Lees
Councillor J Meikle, MBE
Councillor N Messenger
Councillor I Morrell
Councillor M Mullins
Councillor B Nottrodt
Councillor U Palmer
Councillor H Prior-Sankey
Councillor D Reed
Councillor J Reed
Councillor S Ross
Councillor T Slattery
Councillor G Slattery
Councillor F Smith
Councillor P Smith
Councillor V Stock-Williams
Councillor P Stone
Councillor B Swaine
Councillor P Tooze
Councillor J Warmington

Councillor P Watson
Councillor E Waymouth
Councillor D Webber
Councillor A Wedderkopp
Councillor D Wedderkopp
Councillor J Williams - Leader of the Council
Councillor G Wren

Taunton Deane Borough Council

At a meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held in the John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 24 January 2013 at 5.30 pm. (Meeting re-arranged from 22 January 2013)

Present The Mayor (Councillor Hall)
Councillors Mrs Adkins, Beaven, Bishop, Bowrah, Brooks, Cavill, Coles, Denington, D Durdan, Farbahi, Mrs Floyd, Gaines, Hayward, Mrs Hill, Horsley, Hunt, R Lees, Meikle, Morrell, Nottrodt, Ms Palmer, D Reed, Mrs Reed, Gill Slattery, T Slattery, Mrs Smith, Mrs Stock-Williams, Stone, Tooze, Mrs Warmington, Watson, Mrs Waymouth, A Wedderkopp, D Wedderkopp, Williams and Wren

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held on 11 December 2012, copies having been sent to each Member, were signed by the Mayor.

2. Apologies

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Ms Lisgo) and Councillors Mrs Allgrove, Edwards, A Govier, Mrs Govier, Henley, Mrs Herbert, Miss James, Mrs Lees, Mullins, Prior-Sankey, Ross and P Smith.

3. Declaration of Interests

Councillors Brooks, Prior-Sankey and Mrs Waymouth declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillors Mrs Hill and Mrs Smith declared personal interests as employees of Somerset County Council. Councillor Wren declared personal interests as an employee of Natural England and as Clerk to Milverton Parish Council. Councillor Hayward declared a personal interest as one of the Council's representatives on the Somerset Waste Board. Councillor Nottrodt declared a personal interest as a Director of Southwest One. Councillor Tooze declared a personal interest as an employee of the UK Hydrographic Office. Councillors D Durdan and Stone declared prejudicial interests as Tone Leisure Board representatives. Councillor Gill Slattery declared personal interests as a member of the Board of Governors at Somerset College and a Patron of the Supporters of Taunton Women's Aid. Councillor Farbahi declared a personal interest as a local owner of land in Taunton Deane.

4. Contract Procedure Rules

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the Contract Standing Orders which had not been updated since 2006 and therefore did not reflect the current partnership with Southwest One.

An audit carried out by the South West Audit Partnership had recommended changes to the Standing Orders to reflect these changes and to ensure that they were up to date.

The Monitoring Officer had therefore reviewed the procedure rules and had proposed a number of changes which had subsequently been approved by both the Constitutional Sub-Committee and the Corporate Governance Committee.

On the motion of Councillor D Reed, it was

Resolved that the Contract Procedure Rules, as set out in the Appendix A to these Minutes, be approved.

5. **Members' Allowances 2013/2014**

Submitted report previously circulated of the Members' Allowances Panel following its annual review of Members' Allowances. A copy of the report and recommendations had been circulated to all Councillors.

Details of the Members' Allowances Scheme that had been recommended by the independent Panel were submitted. The Panel had once again recommended increases to the Special Responsibility Allowance paid to the two Scrutiny Committee Chairmen and had also recommended that the rate paid to carers of Councillor's dependents be increased from £6.08 per hour to £6.19 per hour.

The Panel would be keeping under review the situation relating to the proposal by the coalition Government to scrap Pensions for Councillors and would re-visit whether an allowance should be paid to the Chairman of the new Standards Committee in 12 months time once the extent of the Chairman's responsibilities became clear.

Moved by Councillor Horsley and seconded by Councillor Denington, that the following be agreed:-

Summary of Recommendations

- No increase to the Basic Allowance;
- No increase to Special Responsibility Allowances;
- No increase in the Mayor or Deputy Mayor Allowance;
- To increase the rate paid to carers of Councillor's dependents from £6.08 per hour to £6.19 per hour, to reflect the National Minimum Wage.

The motion was put and was carried.

6. Recommendations to Council from the Executive

(a) Council Tax Base 2013/2014

Consideration had recently been given to the Council Tax Base for the Borough and for each Parish for the 2013/2014 financial year.

The Tax Base had to be calculated for each financial year and was used to determine the Band D Council Tax for the year.

The Council Tax Base was an estimate of the number of Council Tax dwellings in a billing authority's area. The calculation this year also reflected the recently approved changes relating to Class A Exemptions, Class C Exemptions, Long term empty properties premium and removal of Second Homes discount.

In addition, a reduction for the cost of Council Tax Support had been included in the Tax Base as required by the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012.

This reduction had the effect of reducing Council Tax income for Taunton Deane and the major precepting authorities. The Government had announced in mid-December that this reduction in funding for the "cost" of Council Tax Support should also be attributed to Parish Precepts and Special Expenses.

Within the Provisional Finance Settlement for the Council, the Government had included funding for Council Tax Support that included a proportion related to Parishes and Special Expenses. It was therefore proposed to pass on a proportion of this funding to Parishes and Special Expenses to reflect their reduction in funding as a result of Council Tax Support, even though there was no legal requirement to do so.

A relevant share of funding has been calculated based on the Tax Base reduction attributable to Council Tax Support in each parish multiplied by their 2012/2013 Band D Charge. This had produced the following funding requirement:-

	£	£
Total Funding within Provisional Settlement		638,270
Less:		
Allocation to Parish and Town Councils	42,260	
Allocation to Unparished Area Budget	<u>6,500</u>	
Relevant Share for Parishes and Unparished Area		<u>48,760</u>
Amount retained by TDBC to offset Council Tax reduction		<u>589,510</u>

The Parishes had been notified of the expected funding allocation and were setting their precepts taking into account this additional allocation.

The non-collection rate (or provision for losses on collection) had been estimated at 1.75%. This was an increase compared to 2012/2013 (1.0%) and reflected increased risks under the local Council Tax Support system, other welfare reforms and continuing wider economic pressures on household incomes.

The recommended Tax Base for 2013/2014 was 37,280.60 Band D Equivalents. This was lower than the Base for 2012/2013 (41,216.39) mainly reflecting the introduction of Council Tax Support discounts within the calculations (-4,314.03).

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was

Resolved that:-

- (a) The calculation of the 2013/14 Council Tax Base for the whole and parts of the area be approved;
- (b) In accordance with the Local Authority (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 2012, the amount calculated by Taunton Deane Borough Council as its 2013/2014 Tax Base for the whole area for the year shall be **37,280.60** and for the parts of the area listed below shall be:-

Parish Area	Tax Base	Parish Area	Tax Base
Ash Priors	81.46	Neroche	239.15
Ashbrittle	86.74	North Curry	692.23
Bathealton	84.83	Norton Fitzwarren	903.16
Bishops Hull	1,052.00	Nynehead	165.34
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	1,021.90	Oake	317.34
Bradford on Tone	285.01	Otterford	165.11
Burrowbridge	196.21	Pitminster	435.08
Cheddon Fitzpaine	598.80	Ruishton/Thornfalcon	574.63
Chipstable	129.81	Sampford Arundel	121.94
Churchstanton	342.98	Staplegrave	708.57
Combe Florey	116.50	Stawley	132.17
Comeytrowe	1,967.11	Stoke St Gregory	356.14
Corfe	132.02	Stoke St Mary	198.25
Cotford St Luke	752.62	Taunton	14,115.83
Creech St Michael	937.95	Trull	992.02
Durstun	58.64	Wellington	4,290.56
Fitzhead	113.55	Wellington (Without)	293.61
Halse	139.03	West Bagborough	154.78
Hatch Beauchamp	249.16	West Buckland	424.77
Kingston St Mary	424.73	West Hatch	136.11
Langford Budville	225.54	West Monkton	1,077.78
Lydeard St Lawrence/ Tolland	199.03	Wiveliscombe	1,027.90

Parish Area	Tax Base	Parish Area	Tax Base
Milverton	562.51	Grand Total	37,280.60

(c) The policy to pass on the relevant share of funding to Parishes and the Unparished Area on the basis described above as a result of the Tax Base reduction attributable to Council Tax Support be approved; and

(d) The authority to approve the Council Tax Base in future years be delegated to the Executive.

(b) Business Rates Retention and the National Non-Domestic Rates Return 1 for 2013/2014

The Executive had also recently considered a report concerning the National Non-Domestic Rates Return 1 (NNDR1) for 2013/2014.

This return included the Estimated Net Rate Yield for 2013/2014, which was to be used for budget setting purposes, and would determine the budget amount for Business Rates income kept by Taunton Deane Borough Council, Somerset County Council and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority under the new Business Rates Retention system, which was to be introduced in April 2013.

The NNDR1 was essentially the net Business Rates income forecast for 2013/2014. The forecast took into account the Rateable Value of the number of hereditaments (business premises) as at 30 September 2012. This provided the Gross Calculated Rate Yield which was then reduced/offset by the cost of collection and an allowance for bad debts.

A further relevant adjustment related to Renewable Energy Schemes whereby 100% of Business Rates yield – for schemes that commenced on or after 1 April 2013, or the amount of increase in yield for existing schemes on or after 1 April 2013 – could be retained wholly by the Council. However, for budget purposes in 2013/2014 this was assumed to be nil.

These calculations provided the Net Rate Yield before transitional arrangements and rate retention.

The key information needed for Business Rates retention and budget setting was the Net Rate Yield excluding transitional arrangements. This had been estimated at £38,695,316 for 2013/2014.

Under the Business Rates Retention Draft Regulations the Net Rate Yield would be shared as follows:-

	%	£
Share paid to Central Government	50	19,347,658
Share retained by Taunton Deane Borough Council	40	15,478,126
Share passed to Somerset County Council	9	3,482,578

Share passed to Devon and Somerset Fire Authority	1	386,953
Net Rate Yield		38,695,316

In accordance with the Provisional Finance Settlement for 2013/2014, a large proportion of the share retained by Taunton Deane would be paid to the Government in the form of a Tariff, to fund a system of tariffs and top ups.

The final amount to be retained by the Council would be in accordance with the Council's Start-up Funding Assessment for 2013/2014, as issued with the Finance Settlement.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was

Resolved that:-

- (a) The NNDR1 Return, attached to these minutes as Appendix B, with a Net Rate Yield of £38,695,316 for 2013/2014 excluding transitional arrangements be approved;
- (b) The authority to approve the NNDR1 and Net Rate Yield in future years be delegated to the Executive; and
- (c) Authority be delegated to the Section 151 Officer to amend the NNDR1 prior to submission on 31 January 2013, if notice of any further changes to the Regulations by the Government were received that required such amendment.

(c) Corporate Business Plan 2013/2014 to 2015/2016

Consideration of this recommendation was deferred to a future meeting of Full Council.

(d) Introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy in Taunton Deane

Full Council had previously agreed to progress the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in Taunton Deane and had approved a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (PDCS) for consultation.

Consultation on the PDCS, which took place during the summer, had resulted in approximately 20 responses being received, mostly from developers and agents.

The next stage in the process was to publish a Draft Charging Schedule (DCS), taking account of the comments which had been received. There would be a further opportunity for people to make representations prior to the Schedule being submitted for independent Examination. The CIL could then be adopted, providing a mechanism to collect contributions towards the provision of strategic infrastructure.

As a result of the consultation responses, a number of changes had been incorporated into the Charging Schedule prior to its publication as the 'Draft'

that would eventually be submitted for examination.

When this matter was considered by the Executive, the intention of publishing a policy for payment of CIL by installments was noted. However, the wording of this policy was still being refined.

The proposed CIL rates had been derived from viability assessments that allowed for the proportion of affordable housing set out in the adopted Core Strategy (25%). The affordable housing was assumed to be 45% social rent, 15% affordable rent and 40% intermediate. This would provide some reassurance that the introduction of CIL would not put the delivery of affordable housing at risk.

On the motion of Councillor Williams, it was

Resolved that:-

- (a) The Draft Charging Schedule – a copy of which is attached to these minutes as Appendix C – and the proposed Charging Zones be approved for public consultation; and
- (b) Any technical changes to the Installment Policy be signed off by the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder and Shadow Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation, prior to the consultation commencing.

(The meeting ended at 6.14 p.m.)

Appendix A

Contract Procedure Rules

Contract Procedure Rules

Compliance with Contract Procedure Rules

1. Every Contract made by the Authority or officer acting on its behalf shall comply with these Contract Procedure Rules, all relevant Statutory Provisions, with any relevant EU Directives currently in force in the United Kingdom, the Councils Financial Regulations and the Strategic Objectives of the Authority.
2. Where a corporate contract, negotiated by Southwest One Strategic Procurement Service, exists for the supply of specific goods or services (such as for rail tickets, temporary staffing, stationery etc) the corporate supplier must be used, unless that supplier confirms they are unable to fulfil the particular order in question.
3. A Contract is an agreement between the Council and an individual or organisation for the individual or organisation to provide works, goods or services (including the engagement of consultants) for which the Council will provide consideration. Contracts relating solely to disposal or acquisition of land are exempt from these rules.
4. Officers involved in the awarding of a Contract must ensure that the best value for money is obtained. Before commencing procurement, it is essential that the authorised officer leading the procurement has identified the need and fully assessed the options for meeting those needs. The best use of purchasing power shall be sought by aggregating purchases wherever possible.
5. Exceptions from any of the following provisions of these Contract Procedure Rules may be made under the provisions of Contract Procedure Rule 13 or otherwise by direction of the Council, the Executive or the Executive Member where they are satisfied that the exception is justified in special circumstances. No exception shall apply to Contract Procedure Rule 19. Every exception and the reason therefore shall be recorded in the Tenders Register held by the Corporate Support Unit.

Southwest One

6. The Council has entered into a strategic partnering arrangement under which Southwest One (SW1) has contracted to provide a broad range of goods and services, including a number of procurement services. This includes the transformation of the procurement service to embed strategic Category Management as a methodology across the Council's external spend areas and procurement and management of corporate contracts for generic goods and services.

The Theme Manager, or the authorised officer leading the procurement, should always consult with the Chief Procurement Officer (SW1) to ascertain whether any particular services or goods fall within the description of services or goods to be provided by Southwest One and, if that be the case, the procurement of the said services or goods should normally be dealt with under the contractual arrangements with Southwest One.

In some instances, where Southwest One has already undertaken a procurement process in respect of services or goods of the type required, there may be no need for a further formal procurement process to be carried out. However, if that is not the case, the Theme Manager, or his authorised officer, in collaboration with Southwest One, must ensure that the procurement is carried out in accordance with these Contract Procedure Rules and, where the EU procedure applies, with the Regulations.

Notwithstanding the fact that a procurement may fall to be dealt with under this Contract Procedure Rule and subject to any provision in the Council's contractual arrangements with Southwest One having contrary effect, the Theme Manager, or the authorised officer leading the procurement, must still comply with his obligations to confirm that he/she has the appropriate power, authority and finance for the procurement to proceed.

Risk and Project Management

- 7 For procurement where the estimated spend is greater than Threshold 3 the Procurement Risk Management policy must be applied and decisions recorded. Any high risks that exceed the accepted threshold must be reported to Corporate Management Team (CMT). The Corporate Project Management process must be applied.
8. For procurement where the estimated spend is less than Threshold 3 the Service Manager must ensure that all risks are considered and managed, reporting to CMT any consequential risks that may seriously jeopardise the Council.
9. For procurement where the estimated spend is less than Threshold 3 the Corporate Project Management process should be used at the discretion of the Service Unit Manager particularly where the risk of failure would impact on the ability to deliver a service or create a significant consequential risk.

Specifications

10. Enquiries and Invitations to Tender shall be based on a written specification. The specification shall adequately describe the required procurement in sufficient detail to enable effective procurement in accordance with these rules.

Supplier Pre-Qualification

- 11 The Council shall only enter into a contract with a supplier if it is satisfied as to the supplier's eligibility, financial standing and technical capacity to undertake the contract. For contracts over Threshold 3 the Section 151 Officer will

formally vet those companies that have been selected to receive an invitation to tender.

Requirement for Quotation/Tender and Public Advertisement

12. Before entering into a Contract a written quotation/tender for the contract price must be secured. Consideration shall be given to other costs associated with the procurement (Lifetime costings including for example maintenance costs and power consumption). Where these could be significant such as in the final disposal of a product appropriate arrangements shall be put into place to consider these costs against alternative options.
 - a) **Contracts below Threshold 1**
At least one written quotation must be obtained, preferably more where there are opportunities for competitive savings.
 - b) **Contracts between Threshold 1 and Threshold 2**
Written quotations must be sought from not less than three individuals or organisations that could undertake the contract.
 - c) **Contracts between Threshold 2 and Threshold 3**
 - (i) A Public Notice must be made in the relevant section of the Council's website, setting out particulars of the contract and inviting persons interested to apply, within a period not less than 10 days, for permission to tender.
 - (ii) After the expiration of the period specified in the Public Notice invitations to tender shall be sent to not less than four individuals or organisations that could undertake the contract (or, if fewer than four apply, to those that are suitable). If less than four invitations to tender are sent then the reasons need to be noted in the tender register.
 - (iii) Tenders are to be submitted and opened in accordance with Contract Procedure Rule 18.
 - d) **Contracts above Threshold 3**
 - (i) The procurement shall comply with the requirements of the EU Procurement Directives.
 - (ii) A Public Notice must be made in the relevant section of the Council's website.

- (iii) After the expiration of the period specified in the Public Notice invitations to tender shall be sent to not less than four individuals or organisations selected in accordance with the applicable EU Procurement Directives (or, if fewer than four apply, to those that are suitable and the reasons noted in the register as set out in cii above.
 - (iv) Tenders are to be submitted and opened in accordance with Contract Procedure Rule 19.
- 13 Contract Procedure Rules 12a, 12b and 12c shall not apply to the following but, wherever possible, alternative quotations shall be obtained:
 - a) Purchases by auction or at public fairs or markets
 - b) Contracts involving special technical, scientific or artistic knowledge
 - c) Contracts in respect of which there would be no genuine competition (following consultation with the Theme Manager)
 - d) Contracts comprising spare or replacement parts of existing machinery or plant or repairs to such machinery or plant
 - e) The Contract to be entered into is to be dealt with in a prescribed manner under agency arrangements entered into by the Council with another authority
 - f) Urgent situations as agreed with the client Director and Executive Councillor where the authority is put at significant risk or significant costs could be incurred by not taking urgent remedial action.
 - g) Emergency situations (as defined in the Council's Business Continuity Strategy or Emergency Planning procedures)
- 14. Paragraphs 12a, 12b and 12c (up to Threshold 3) of these Contract Procedure Rules shall not apply to the entering into of contracts by the Deane DLO for the supply of goods or the engagement of sub-contractors where such transactions are necessary to enable the carrying out of contracts obtained by the Deane DLO after competitive tendering, provided that full details of all orders and contracts are maintained in such manner as required from time to time by the Section 151 Officer

15. Framework Agreements

A Framework Agreement is an agreement or other arrangement made with one or more suppliers for the provision of goods or materials, services or works under agreed terms and conditions during a specified period under which the Council may enter into specific contracts known as “call-offs”.

The term Framework Agreement must not exceed four years and, while an agreement may be entered into with one provider, where an agreement is concluded with several organisations, there must be at least three in number.

The Theme Manager must consult with the Chief Procurement Officer to ascertain what Framework Agreements are in place from time to time. Where such an Agreement which deals with the subject matter of the proposed contract is in existence, subject to the need to ensure value for money and to comply with EU Treaty principles and to obtaining the advice of the Chief Procurement Officer and, if necessary, the Monitoring Officer, the procurement will be dealt with under the Framework Agreement.

16. Every written contract shall specify
 - a) the work, materials, matters or things to be furnished, had or done;
 - b) the price to be paid, with a statement of discounts or other deductions (if any); and
 - c) the time or times within which the contract is to be performed.
17. Every contract which exceeds Threshold 3 and is either for the execution of work or the supply of goods or materials shall provide for payment of liquidated damages by the contractor in case the terms of the contract are not performed.

Submission of Tenders

18. Submission Procedures for contracts between Threshold 2 and Threshold 3
 - a) Where an invitation to tender is made, each invitation shall state that no tender will be considered unless it is enclosed in a plain sealed envelope. The envelope shall bear the word '**Tender**' - in large emboldened lettering followed by the subject to which it relates and the Tender reference number (if applicable) but no other name or mark indicating the identity of the sender.
 - b) The tenders shall be kept in the custody of the appropriate Director's nominated officer until the time and date specified for their opening.
 - c) Tenders shall be opened in the presence of (at least) two Council Officers. Tenders shall be date-stamped and signed on all pages containing price information.
19. Submission Procedures for contracts above Threshold 3

- a) Where an invitation to tender is made, each invitation shall state that no tender will be considered unless it is enclosed in a plain sealed envelope clearly addressed to the Legal and Democratic Services Manager. The envelope shall bear the word '**Tender**' - in large emboldened lettering followed by the subject to which it relates and the Tender reference number (if applicable) but no other name or mark indicating the identity of the sender.
 - b) The tenders shall be kept in the custody of Democratic Services Manager until the time and date specified for their opening.
 - c) Tenders shall be opened in the presence of (at least) two Council Officers and a Councillor. Tenders shall be date-stamped and signed on all pages containing price information.
 - d) All tenders which were received by the time and date specified shall be recorded in the Tenders Register maintained by the Legal and Democratic Services Manager.
- 20 Tenders received after the time and date specified in the invitation to tender shall be considered only in exceptional circumstances. A tender received late can only be considered with the approval of the Monitoring Officer or in her absence the Section 151 Officer.
- 21 Invitations to Tender may be issued by electronic means provided that evidence that the transmission was successfully completed is obtained and recorded.
- 22 Quotations and tenders may be submitted electronically provided that they are kept in a separate secure folder under the control of the authorised officer which is not opened until the deadline is passed for the receipt of tenders.

Acceptance of Quotations and Tenders

- 23 The tender that is most economically advantageous to the Council shall be accepted. Each tender shall be evaluated for price and quality to ascertain the most economically advantageous tender.
24. For procurements over Threshold 3 the questions and scoring system used to evaluate quality shall be written before tenders are received. The basis of this exercise shall be explained in any invitation to tender documentation
25. The Impact on Corporate Priorities will be considered in every procurement process and, where appropriate, incorporated into these Corporate Procedure Rules, any evaluation model used ultimately into the terms and conditions of contract.

26. Where the Officer considers it in the best interests of the Council he may negotiate with the tenderers whose tenders are being considered for acceptance. No negotiation on contracts whose value is in excess of Threshold 3 can take place without reference to the Theme Manager. Any negotiation which would distort competition is expressly forbidden. Details of the negotiations must be placed on the contract file.
27. Arithmetical errors found in the most economically advantageous tender when checking shall be dealt with as follows:
- a) Where the arithmetical error if corrected would inflate the cost of the contract to the Council the tenderer shall have the error pointed out to them and be offered the opportunity to stand by their tender or withdraw it
 - b) Where the arithmetical error if corrected would reduce the cost of the contract to the Council the tenderer shall have the error pointed out to them and corrected and be offered the opportunity to stand by their error or withdraw their tender.

Signing or Sealing of Contracts

28. Every successful quotation/tender shall be accepted in writing, provided that contracts which exceed Threshold 3 in value or amount and such other contracts as the Solicitor to the Council shall determine shall be set out in a formal contract document.

Authority to Commit the Council

29. Officers are authorised to commit the Council to expenditure on contracts as follows:
- a) Chief Executive £Unlimited
 - b) Directors Up to £1,000,000
 - c) Theme Manager Up to £500,000
 - d) Service Managers Up to Threshold 3
 - e) Other staff As delegated by one of the above named officers low risk items, level not to exceed Threshold 3 and to be notified to Section 151 Officer.

Nominated Sub-Contractors and Suppliers

- 30 Where a sub-contractor or supplier is to be nominated to a main contractor, the procurement of the services of the sub-contractor or supplier shall be subject to these Contract Procedure Rules.

Bribery

31. In every contract a clause shall be inserted to secure that the Council shall be entitled to cancel the contract and to recover from the contractor the amount of any loss resulting from such cancellation if the contractor shall have offered or given or agreed to give to any person any gift or consideration of any kind as an inducement or reward for doing or forbearing to do or for having done or forborne to do any action in relation to the obtaining or execution of the contract or any other contract with the Council, or for showing or forbearing to show favour or disfavour to any person in relation to the contract or any other contract with the Council, or if the like acts shall have been done by any person employed by him or acting on his behalf (whether with or without the knowledge of the contractor), or if, in relation to any contract with the Council, the contractor or any person employed by him or acting on his behalf shall have committed any offence under the Prevention of Corruption Acts, 1889 to 1916, or shall have given any fee or reward the receipt of which is an offence under sub-section (2) of Section 117 of the Local Government Act, 1972.

Contracts Record

32. A record of all contracts in excess of Threshold 2 in value placed by the Council shall be kept on the Council's Intranet site. This register shall specify for each contract the name of the contractor, the works to be executed or the goods or services to be supplied, the contract value and the contract period. This is the responsibility of the officer authorising the contract to ensure that a timely entry is completed.

Contract Management

33. Project management shall be practiced at all times in undertaking procurement. All Threshold 2 and 3 contracts will be monitored on a quarterly basis by members of the Corporate Management Team or any such group set up by them for this purpose.
34. Any third party who is required to supervise a Contract on behalf of the Council shall comply with the requirements of these Contract Procedure Rules.

Contract Extensions of Time

- 35 In exceptional circumstances where it is in the interests of the Council and good value for money contracts may be extended in accordance with Financial Regulations.

36. For contracts where the value is over Threshold 3 or extension will take the contract value over Threshold 3 such an extension shall be with the prior agreement of the relevant Director and the Council's Section 151 Officer. A report on this decision shall be posted in the weekly bulletin. If the extension significantly alters the original contract value or purpose the extension can only be made with the additional agreement of the Executive portfolio councillor, who shall post their decision for possible call in accordingly.

Contract Variations to Scope

37. Any necessary instructions to vary a contract shall be made in writing by the Theme Manager or persons responsible for supervising the contract. Where a variation occurs during the currency of the contract that is material and cannot be met from within the original contract sum an immediate report shall be made to the Council's Section 151 Officer who shall decide what further action is necessary. Where a supplementary estimate is required this shall be made in accordance with the councils Financial Regulations.

Bonds, Guarantees and Insurances

38. For procurement projects where the spend is greater than Threshold 3 consideration must be given as part of the pre-qualification assessment and evaluation process as to whether a performance bond and/or parent company guarantee (if applicable) shall be required from the successful tenderer.
39. Consideration must be given as to the appropriate type (employee liability, public liability, professional indemnity, etc.) and level of insurance requirements for each contract.

Completion Statement

40. As soon as possible after completion of a Threshold 3 works contract the Theme Manager or person responsible for supervising the contract shall ensure the details are included in their service scorecard for future monitoring.

Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Confidentiality

41. There is a presumption that contractual information should be made available for disclosure if requested. However, officers should be aware of the potentially anti-competitive implications of disclosing detailed contractual information in the period around a procurement process taking place. Guidance and advice is available from the Council's Monitoring Officer.

During the period between the opening of proposals and/or tenders and the award of contract, all details of the proposals submitted must remain secret and be treated as confidential. It is the responsibility of those involved in the process to ensure complete confidentiality during this period.

Breaching of Contract Procedure Rules

- 42 Any non-compliance to or breach of these rules should be reported immediately to the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer. Failure to report any known non-compliance or breach may result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee who failed to report the non-compliance or breach.

The Section 151 Officer will undertake an investigation where deemed necessary and they will refer the investigation findings to the Human Resources Manager in order that the appropriate disciplinary action can be taken where a serious or repeated breach of these rules is identified.

Retention of Records

- 43 On completion of the Tender process, all related documentation will be filed and retained for a period appropriate to the contract in the contract file. For further details of retention periods please see the Council's Document Retention Policy on the Intranet.

Review of Contract Procedure Rules

- 44 These rules will be reviewed and updated as required by changes to procurement legislation and regulation or to meet the operational requirements of the Council. The Council's Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer will be responsible for undertaking the review and reporting to the Council for approval.

Appendix 1 – Thresholds

The thresholds below represent the total value of the contract, not just the annual value. For example, a 5 year supply contract with a value of £25,000 per year would have a value of £125,000 for the purposes of these rules.

	Works Contracts	Supplies & Services contracts
Threshold 1 -	£15,000	£ 5,000
Threshold 2 -	£50,000	£50,000
Threshold 3 -	The current EU procurement thresholds for 'Other public sector contracting authorities'	

For current EU thresholds visit <http://www.ojec.com/Thresholds.aspx>

Appendix 2 – Systems and Procedures

Order Controls

- 1.1 Ordering and requisitioning procedures shall conform to those instructions on the Council's procurement intranet page .
- 1.2 All works, goods and services, with the exception of rent, public utility supplies, small petty cash purchases and works and services covered by contract, shall be ordered on an official order through the Council's purchase order system in advance of the provision of those goods and services. An estimate of the cost, or where applicable, the quoted price shall be inserted, together with the relevant expenditure codes.
- 1.3 The Section 151 Officer shall approve officers authorised to place orders or make requisitions on behalf of the Council. This will be done through delegations and role allocations within the purchase order system.
- 1.4 Before authorising an order, the officer shall satisfy himself that the expenditure:
 - a) is covered in approved estimates;
 - b) is necessary providing Best Value; and
 - c) that Contract Procedure Rules in respect of contracts and tenders have been complied with.
- 1.5 The design, amendment, requisition, custody and issue of all forms are contained in the SAP system.
- 1.6 The Control of all orders/requisitions raised or otherwise held is the responsibility of each Manager. All order and requisition stationery shall be securely held by the responsible officer with copies and any cancelled forms accounted for.
- 1.7 Telephone orders are permitted, however they must be immediately followed up by an order marked "Confirmation".
- 1.8 Any orders requiring amendment should be cancelled and a revised order issued.

General Contract Controls

- 2.1 All contracts for the provision of services, the supply of goods and the execution of works, entered into on the Council's behalf shall be made in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.
- 2.2 Officers and/or consultants shall where appropriate maintain adequate records to support all contract payments and valuations made, including all variations, omissions and additions to the contract sum.

- 2.3 Any contracts for works with a final value in excess of Threshold 2 (as defined in Contract Procedure Rules) together with supporting records, shall be subject to Audit and Review before any final payment is made.

Pre-Contract Controls

- 2.4 Each Theme Manager or officer leading the procurement shall prepare as appropriate a suitable project plan to financially control and monitor the subsequent performance of each contract.
- 2.5 Each Theme Manager, or officer leading the procurement, shall ensure that they have received the relevant financial references and these have been checked by Finance for contracts above threshold 3.
- 2.6 Letters of appointment shall specify the terms and conditions of consultants to the Council and the formula for paying fees. Their requirements to conform with the Council's Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules shall be contained therein together with a right of Audit access to their records to validate payments and claims made on or behalf of the Council.

Current Contract Controls

- 2.7 Payments to contractors on account shall be made only on a certificate issued by the officer specified in the contract, or by his deputy or other such officer nominated by him in writing for the purpose.
- 2.8 Subject to the provisions of the contract in each case, every extra or variation shall, unless otherwise evidenced to his satisfaction, be authorised in writing by the officer specified in the contract, or by his deputy or other officer nominated by him in writing for the purpose.
- 2.9 Any such extra or variation, the estimated additional cost of which exceeds £5,000 shall be reported to the Director as soon as possible. The relevant approval for the financing solution should be considered at the same time.

Post Contract Controls

- 2.10 Wherever possible within the terms of the contract the final payment certificate on completion of any works contract shall not be issued until the appropriate officer has produced to Audit and Review, a detailed statement of account and all relevant documents if required.
- 2.11 The Internal Audit Service shall, to the extent that he considers necessary, examine final accounts and he shall be entitled to make such enquiries and receive information and explanations as he may require in order to satisfy themselves as to the accuracy of the accounts.

- 2.12 Claims from works contractors in respect of matters not clearly within the terms of a contract shall be dealt with by the responsible Service Unit Manager who shall consult as appropriate with the budget holding director and Audit and Review Manager before taking any action which might result in claims on the Council.
- 2.13 Where completion of a contract is delayed, it shall be the duty of the Service Unit Manager to inform Audit and Review and to take action in respect of any claim for liquidated damages in accordance with the contract.
- 2.14 In April of each year, the final cost of all projects completed in the preceding 12 months shall be reported to the Executive. Where the final cost of any individual project exceeds the estimated cost after tenders have been accepted by 2% or £25,000, whichever is the lesser, then a report will be presented to the Executive giving the reasons for the difference.
- 2.15 At the conclusion of a contract, an opportunity should be taken to evaluate the performance.



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

**NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES RETURN 1
NNDR1 2013-14**

Please e-mail to : nndr.statistics@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Please enter your details after checking that you have selected the correct authority name.

Please check the figures shown in the cells with a blue border and enter your own figures if you disagree with those suggested.

**A provisional version of the form should be returned to the Department for Communities and Local Government by
Monday 7 January 2013**

The final version of this form, including a signed copy, must also be sent to the Department for Communities and Local Government by
Thursday 31 January 2013

Select your local authority's name from this list:

Tameside
Tamworth
Tandridge
Taunton Deane
Teignbridge
Telford and the Wrekin

Check that this is your authority :

Taunton Deane

Check that this is your E Code :

E3333

Local authority contact name :

--

Telephone number of local authority contact :

--

Fax number for local authority contact :

--

E-mail address of local authority contact :

--

Ver 1.3

1. Number of hereditaments on the rating list on 30 September 2012

3,757

2. Aggregate rateable value on the rating list on 30 September 2012

£
101,419,865

GROSS CALCULATED RATE YIELD

3. Enter line 2 x small business non-domestic rating multiplier (0.462)

£
46,855,977.63

MANDATORY RELIEFS

Small business rate relief

£

4. Additional yield generated to finance the small business rate relief scheme

709,531.95

5. Cost of small business rate relief for properties within billing authority area

2,529,606.78

6. Net cost of the small business rate relief (Line 5 minus Line 4)

1,820,074.83

7. Cost of relief to charities

3,200,213.40

8. Cost of relief to Community Amateur Sports Clubs

46,399.84

9. Cost of relief for rural general stores, post offices, public houses, petrol filling stations and food shops

30,757.62

10. Cost of relief for partly occupied premises

0.00

11. Cost of relief for empty premises

890,938.36

12. Total mandatory reliefs (Sum of lines 6 to 11)

5,988,384.05

DISCRETIONARY RELIEFS

13. Cost of relief to charities

35,187.25

14. Cost of relief to non-profit making bodies

30,760.95

15. Cost of relief to Community Amateur Sports Clubs

0.00

16. Cost of relief for rural general stores, post offices, public houses, petrol filling stations and food shops

7,224.74

17. Cost of relief to other rural businesses

9,451.36

18. Other Section 47 reliefs (Localism Act discounts)

0.00

19. Total discretionary reliefs (Sum of lines 13 to 18)

82,624.30

20. Gross Rate Yield after reliefs (Line 3 minus lines 12 & 19)

40,784,969.28

21. Estimate of 'losses in collection'

239,442.12

22. Allowance for Cost of Collection

163,257.23

23. Special Authority Deductions - City of London Offset

0.00

NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES RETURN 1 2013-14		Taunton Deane
Ver 1.3		
Section 2		
Enterprise Zones		
24. Estimated level of discount to be awarded in 2013-14		£ 0.00
25. Estimated value of non-domestic rates in the Enterprise Zone area in 2013-14	0.00	
26. Enterprise Zone baseline	0.00	
27. Total estimated value of business rates to be retained in 2013-14 (Line 25 minus line 26)		0.00
New Development Deals		
28. Estimated value of non-domestic rates in the New Development Deals area in 2013-14	0.00	
29. New Development Deals baseline	0.00	
30. Total estimated value of business rates to be retained in 2013-14 (Line 28 minus line 29)		0.00
Renewable Energy Schemes		
31. Total estimated value of business rates to be retained in 2013-14		0.00
32. Net Rate Yield excluding transitional arrangements and rate retention (Line 20 minus the sum of lines 21 to 23, 27, 30 & 31)		40,382,269.93
Rate retention adjustments		
33. Estimate of the change in rateable value between 1 October 2012 and 30 September 2013		461,416.47
34. Estimate of the change in receipts as a result in the change in rateable value (line 33 times the multiplier)		213,174.41
This equates to a percentage change of	0.45	
35. Local authority's estimate of adjustment due to appeals		1,900,128.68
36. Net Rate Yield excluding transitional arrangements but after rate retention adjustments (Line 32 plus lines 34 and minus line 35)		38,695,316.00
Section 3		
Transitional arrangements		
37. Addition revenue received because reduction in rates have been deferred	187,786.78	
38. Revenue foregone because increase in rates have been deferred	116,139.50	
39. Net cost of transitional arrangements (Line 38 minus line 37)		-71,647.28
40. Net Rate Yield after transitional arrangements and rate retention (Line 36 minus line 39)		38,766,963.00

NNDR Summary for : Taunton Deane	
These figures show the percentage shares of the NNDR you estimate your authority will collect in 2013-14. They are based on line 36. See the <i>Tier Split</i> tab for full information	
	£
Amount of NNDR to be paid to central government	19,347,658.00
Amount to be retained by Taunton Deane under the rates retention scheme	15,478,126.00
Amount to be passed to Somerset	3,482,578.00
Amount to be passed to Devon and Somerset Fire Authority	386,953.00

Certificate of Chief Financial Officer

I certify that the entries in lines 3, 12, 19, 20, 36, 39 and 40 of this form are the best I can make on the information available to me and that the figures given in lines 1 and 2 used in the calculating the amount shown in lines 36 and 40 are, to the best of my knowledge and belief those shown in the rating list for my authority as at 30 September 2012, subject to any order made before 15 January 2013 under the Local Government Act 1972 implementing boundary changes. I also certify that the authority has made proper arrangements for securing efficiency and effectiveness in relation to the collection of non-domestic rates. I also certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that any amount included as legal costs in line 22 and discretionary relief in line 24 meet the conditions set out in the Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013.

Chief Financial Officer :

Date :

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Community Infrastructure Levy

Draft Charging Schedule

January 2013

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – Draft Charging Schedule

Introduction

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced under the Planning Act 2008 and is defined in the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended 2011). Local authorities in England and Wales can elect to charge CIL on new developments.

CIL takes the form of a charge per square metre of additional floorspace (new build or extensions) and can be charged on most new development. There are exemptions for charitable organisations and affordable housing, together with some size thresholds for non-residential uses. Domestic extensions, together with non-residential development resulting in the creation of less than 100 sq m of net additional floorspace, are not liable for CIL.

The introduction of CIL is seen as necessary in part because, from April 2014, the ability to pool planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), will be restricted. It will therefore become difficult to deliver larger scale items of infrastructure such as schools, swimming pools and transport schemes, where pooling of numerous individual planning contributions is often necessary. Section 106 agreements will continue to be used to deliver some infrastructure (as will Section 278 for highways), but this will largely be restricted to site-specific mitigation and for providing affordable housing.

The money raised through CIL will be used to deliver infrastructure that is needed to support the proposals set out in the Council's Core Strategy and the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan.

Evidence to support the proposed levels of CIL

The evidence to support this Draft Charging Schedule is available on the Council's website at www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/corestrategy/cil. Other links are given at the end of this document. The viability appraisal to support the proposed charges has been prepared on behalf of the Council by Three Dragons and Peter Brett Associates.

The viability appraisal looks at notional and actual housing development sites in Taunton Deane, and also considers non-residential uses. It recommends rates of CIL that can be charged without putting the majority of development proposed at risk. The evidence indicates that for residential development, CIL would not render the majority of development unviable in most of Taunton Deane. For non-residential uses the only type of development which could support CIL and remain viable, at present, is retailing outside the town centres of Taunton and Wellington.

The Proposed Levy

The Draft Charging Schedule attached has been prepared in accordance with Part 11 of the Town and Country Planning Act 2008 and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended). The Council has sought to strike a balance between ensuring appropriate development comes forward and the impact of CIL on development viability. It has also sought to balance costs between aspects of site-specific infrastructure which will continue to be secured through Section 106 planning obligations and those that will be funded through CIL.

The CIL rates proposed are set out in the Draft Charging Schedule. An assessment of the viability of development in different parts of the Borough has been carried out by the Council's consultants to determine what level of CIL could be charged without affecting the viability of most development. The Regulations recognise that the CIL charge may make some development unviable and that CIL should not be set at such a low rate as to ensure that every development remains viable.

Viability evidence suggests that there is no scope to charge CIL on residential development within Taunton town centre and in Wellington (urban area and urban extensions), nor on retail development within Taunton and Wellington town centres. Employment development in the Borough is also not able to support CIL.

Once CIL is adopted, the charging rates proposed will be indexed to account for inflation using a nationally recognised index. The charges will be regularly reviewed to take account of changes in viability, and any proposed changes to the Charging Schedule will be submitted for further examination.

CIL Relief

The CIL Regulations provide for full relief from the CIL charge for any part of a development which is affordable housing (and includes social and affordable rent and shared ownership). Charity landowners will also benefit from relief provided that the development is to be used for charitable purposes. If a development is initially granted CIL relief and then circumstances change, there is a claw-back period of 7 years within which the development will become liable for CIL. Relief can also be given in exceptional circumstances, subject to the Council publishing a policy to this effect. Such exceptional circumstances will only apply where there is a Section 106 planning obligation in place that has costs greater than the chargeable amount and where the addition of CIL would make the development unviable; additionally the amount of relief granted must not be sufficient to qualify as notifiable state aid under EU law.¹ The fact that an application may be unviable is unlikely, in itself, to constitute an exceptional circumstance in terms of the CIL Regulations. However, the Council will give further consideration to what might constitute exceptional circumstances prior to the introduction of CIL and if appropriate will publish a policy covering these.

Payment of CIL

CIL is payable on commencement of development. However, the Council invited views at the Preliminary Draft stage as to whether there should be a policy to allow payment of CIL by instalments. As a result of views received, the Council has now prepared an instalments policy which is being published alongside this Draft Charging Schedule.

¹ The current de minimis threshold is €200,000 (€100,000 for undertakings in the road transport sector) over a rolling three year fiscal period. Community Infrastructure Levy Relief Information document published by CLG.

Relationship between CIL and Section 106 agreements

Provision for Section 106 agreements will remain, but from April 2014, under Regulation 123, the ability to pool contributions from developers via S106 to deliver larger items of infrastructure will be substantially curtailed. The Council's intention is that CIL will be used to deliver larger strategic items with S106 retained only for direct mitigation of site-specific impacts.

Under Regulation 123, the Council will also need to prepare a list setting out the types of infrastructure that it intends to fund through CIL, prior to the adoption of its Charging Schedule. CIL cannot be used as well as Section 106 to deliver the same piece of infrastructure. The Regulation 123 list will be published in advance of the introduction of CIL.

CIL for local communities

It is likely that the Council will be required to pass a proportion of CIL receipts to parish councils for use on infrastructure identified as important by the local community. The Government indicated early in 2013 that this proportion would be set at 25% of the receipts within a community having a neighbourhood plan in place, and a maximum of £100 per household elsewhere.

Next Steps

The CIL Regulations require the Council to carry out two stages of consultation on the proposed CIL Charging Schedule. The Preliminary Draft was the subject of consultation between 29th June and 27th July, 2012.

Taking account of comments received on the Preliminary Draft, the Council is now publishing a Draft Charging Schedule for examination in the summer of 2013. This will be available for people to make representations between 1st February and 15th March. The Draft Charging Schedule, together with the representations received, will then be submitted to the Examiner prior to an examination being held.

Your Views

We would like to receive any comments you may have on the CIL Draft Charging Schedule.

Comments should be put in writing and sent to:

Policy (Planning and Development)
Taunton Deane Borough Council
The Deane House
Belvedere Road
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 1HE

e-mail: talkingtomorrows@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Links

Report to Executive 16th January 2013: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/corestrategy/cil

Report to Executive 20th June 2012: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/corestrategy/cil

CIL Viability Appraisal: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/corestrategy/cil

Taunton Deane Borough Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan:

<http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/irj/go/km/docs/CouncilDocuments/TDBC/Documents/Forward%20Planning/Evidence%20Base/IDP.pdf>

Taunton Deane Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule

This charging schedule has been prepared in accordance with Part 11 of the Town and Country Planning Act 2008 and the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended by the 2011 Regulations). It is supported by local evidence regarding infrastructure requirements and the impact of the levy on the viability of development, as set out in the consultants' reports. These can be found on the Council's website as part of the Core Strategy and CIL Evidence Base (see links on previous page).

Levy Rates

The rates below will be charged against the gross internal floor area of:

- All new dwellings
- All other development exceeding 100 sq m in size

Development Uses	Levy (per sq m)
Residential Development in Taunton, including urban extensions	£70
Residential Development in Taunton town centre	£0
Residential Development in Wellington, including urban extensions	£0
Residential Development outside Taunton and Wellington	£125
Retail Development in Taunton and Wellington town centres	£0
Retail development outside Taunton and Wellington town centres	£140
All other development	£0

How the CIL charge will be calculated

In accordance with the Regulations, where applicable the Council will issue a Liability Notice that states the chargeable amount on grant of planning permission or as soon as possible after the grant of planning permission. The Council will calculate the amount of CIL chargeable using the formulae set out in the Regulations.

Full details of the way in which CIL will be calculated, together with an overview of CIL and the full Regulations, can be found on the CLG website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government>.

Usual Declarations of Interest by Councillors

Full Council

- **Members of Somerset County Council – Councillors Brooks, A Govier, Henley, Prior-Sankey, Mrs Waymouth, D Wedderkopp**
- **Employees of Somerset County Council – Councillors Mrs Hill, Mrs Smith and Stone**
- **Employee of Sedgemoor District Council – Councillor Slattery**
- **Employee of Job Centre Plus – Councillor Henley**
- **Employee of UK Hydrographic Office – Councillor Tooze**
- **Employee of Natural England – Councillor Wren**
- **Somerset Waste Board representatives – Councillor Hayward and Councillor Ross**
- **Director of Southwest One – Councillor Nottrodt**
- **Alternate Director of Southwest One – Councillor Ross**
- **Tone Leisure Board representatives – Councillors D Durdan and Stone**
- **Part-time Swimming Instructor – Councillor Swaine**
- **Employee of EDF Energy – Councillor Mullins**
- **Member of the Board of Governors at Somerset College – Councillor Gill Slattery**
- **Patron of Supporters, Taunton Women’s Aid – Councillor Gill Slattery**
- **Owner of land in Taunton Deane – Councillor Farbahi**

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Council Meeting - 26 February 2013

Part I

To deal with written questions to, and receive recommendations to the Council from, the Executive.

(i) Councillor Williams

(a) General Fund Revenue Estimates 2013/2014

(These recommendations need to be read in conjunction with the report submitted to the Executive on 6 February 2013 which includes all the details of the proposed General Fund Budget to reflect the proposed Council Tax Freeze.)

The Executive has considered its final 2013/2014 budget proposals which recognises the continuing financial challenge faced by the Council beyond the next financial year and the need for the strategic review of services that will be driven forward through the implementation of the new Corporate Business Plan.

The budget contains details on:-

- (i) the General Fund Revenue Budget proposals for 2013/2014, including the proposed Council Tax rate;
- (ii) draft figures on the predicted financial position of the Council for the following four years.

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee considered the draft budget proposals at its meeting on 24 January 2013. One specific amendment in relation to the Unparished Area Fund was requested, where it was suggested that the fund should not be split into specific ring-fenced 'pots' and that all expenditure should be subject to the bidding process through the Unparished Area Panel.

The Council Tax calculation and formal tax setting resolution is to be considered separately. The proposed budget for Taunton Deane contains a proposed Council Tax Freeze for 2013/2014 which will mean that the Band D Council Tax will remain at £135.19. The Band D taxpayer will, therefore, receive all the services provided by the Council in 2013/2014 at a cost of £2.59 per week.

It is a requirement for the Council to prepare not only budgets for the following financial year but to also provide indicative figures into future years. The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) provides an indication of the expected budget gap going forward into 2014/2015 and beyond and a summary of this position is reflected in the following table:-

	2013/14 £k	2014/15 £k	2015/16 £k	2016/17 £k	2017/18 £k
Net Expenditure	11,464	11,994	12,724	13,237	13,594
<i>Financed By:</i>					
Retained Business Rates	(2,264)	(2,337)	(2,396)	(2,457)	(2,519)
Revenue Support Grant	(3,556)	(2,731)	(2,047)	(1,610)	(1,260)
Tax Freeze Grant	(57)	(57)	0	0	0
Council Tax	(5,587)	(5,676)	(5,791)	(5,908)	(6,027)
Predicted Budget Gap	0	1,193	2,490	3,262	3,788

These estimates include the following main assumptions relating to funding:-

- Revenue Support Grant for 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 is as set out in the provisional Finance Settlement. Retained Business Rates for 2013/2014 is based on the NNDR1 for the year. Estimated Business Rates funding in subsequent years is projected to increase in line with inflation. Net funding from the two elements combined is estimated to reduce by in the region of 10% year-on-year for the subsequent three years. In addition it is assumed that the £137,000 Freeze Grant relating to 2011/2012 will be removed in 2015/2016; and
- Council Tax will increase by 0% in 2013/2014, then by 2% per year thereafter.

It is proposed that the minimum acceptable reserves position should be increased to £1,500,000 (from £1,250,000), or £1,250,000 if funds are allocated to 'invest to save' initiatives. The Draft Budget for 2013/2014 will maintain reserves well above this minimum, but the MTFP shows that the Council is expected to face significant financial pressures in the medium term as shown in the following table:-

General Reserves Forecast

	2013/14 £k	2014/15 £k	2015/16 £k	2016/17 £k	2017/18 £k
Estimated Balance B/F	3,079	3,079	1,886	(604)	(3,866)
Predicted Budget Gap	0	(1,193)	(2,490)	(3,262)	(3,788)
Estimated Balance C/F	3,079	1,886	(604)	(3,866)	(7,654)

The estimated expenses chargeable to the non-parished area of Taunton in 2013/2014 amounts to £41,220, which represents a 0% increase in the special expenses per Band D equivalent of £2.92 per property per year in the Unparished Area.

The amount of funding has reduced from the previous year as a result of the Council Tax Support scheme and the related reduction in the tax base. At its recent meeting, Full Council approved an allocation of £6,500 from the Council Tax Support Grant Funding to the Unparished Area which increased the budget for the new financial year to £47,720.

Before the start of each financial year, the Council is required to determine the basis

on which it will make provision from revenue for the repayment of borrowing undertaken for the purpose of financing capital expenditure. This annual provision, known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), is designed to ensure that authorities make prudent provision to cover the ongoing costs of their borrowing.

The proposed Policy for 2013/2014 is for the calculation of MRP to be the same as the current year.

The Council's Section 151 Officer has a duty to comment, as part of the budget setting process on the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of reserves. In her response, Shirlene Adam has stated that she believes the Council's reserves to be adequate and the budget estimates used in preparing the 2013/2014 budget to be as robust as possible.

Equalities Impact Assessments have again been undertaken on proposed budget savings items in line with the Council's statutory obligations. Members are recommended to take account of these assessments as part of the budget decision process.

It is therefore **recommended** that the budget for General Fund services for 2013/2014 as outlined in the report to the Executive be agreed and that:-

- (a) The Section 151 Officer's Statement of Robustness, which applies to the whole budget including General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Budget proposals be noted and that the recommended increase to minimum acceptable level of reserves to £1,500,000, or £1,250,000 if funds were allocated to invest to save initiatives, be approved;
- (b) The Draft General Fund Revenue Budget 2013/2014, including a Basic Council Tax Requirement budget of £5,039,960 and Special Expenses of £41,220 be approved;
- (c) The transfer of any under/overspend in the 2012/2013 General Revenue Account Outturn to/from the General Fund Reserves be approved;
- (d) The Service Options set out in the report be approved and the Equalities Impact Assessments provided in the report and appendices be considered as part of the budget decision process;
- (e) The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy with MRP calculated as follows be approved:-
 - for supported borrowing, 4% on outstanding debt; and
 - for unsupported borrowing, the debt associated with the asset divided by the estimated useful life of the asset; and
 - for capital grants and contributions to third parties, 4% (or 1/25th) per year on a straight line basis; and
- (f) The General Reserves position and Medium Term Financial Plan projections, and the continuing financial challenge to address the Budget Gap for future years be noted.

(b) Capital Programme Budget Estimates 2013/2014

(These recommendations need to be read in conjunction with the report submitted to the Executive on 6 February 2013 which includes all the details of the proposed Capital Programme.)

The Executive has also considered the proposed General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programmes for the period 2013/2014 to 2017/2018.

Full Council approved a Capital Programme for 2012/2013 General Fund schemes last February. In December 2012 the Government provided a further allocation of £95,850 Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) funding to the Council for the current financial year. It is recommended that this sum be allocated as a Supplementary Estimate, increasing the approved 2012/2013 Capital Budget for DFGs to £792,730.

The Draft General Fund Capital Programme totals £3,393,000 within an indicative five year programme totalling £7,337,000. It is proposed that £3,553,000 is budgeted to be spent in 2013/2014 with the remainder in the following three years.

In future years the funding of General Fund capital priorities will rely upon a variety of sources including Capital Receipts, Grant Funding, Capital Contributions, Revenue Budgets or Reserves and through Borrowing.

The Council approved the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme for 2012/2013 totalling £5,500,000, in February 2012. There are no changes to the approved budget so far this year.

The HRA Capital Programme totals £19,572,000 within a five year programme totalling £50,168,200 which reflects the priorities set out in the updated 30-Year HRA Business Plan. It is proposed that £14,805,000 is budgeted to be spent in 2013/2014 with the remainder in the following two years.

The continuing capital maintenance and improvement will be fully funded from the Major Repairs Reserve and the Social Housing Development Programme Capital Budget will be funded through a combination of:-

- Revenue Contributions – from the Social Housing Development Fund;
- Capital Receipts – from Right to Buy and other HRA asset sales; and
- Borrowing.

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee has considered the draft programme and made no formal suggestions for any changes to the programme. The Tenants Services Management Board has also considered the draft Housing Capital Programme.

Equality Impact Assessments have been undertaken on the proposed Housing Services Capital Budget. Members are asked to take these assessments into account in confirming the recommended budget proposals for 2013/2014.

It is therefore **recommended** that:-

- (a) A Supplementary Estimate of £95,850 in the 2012/2013 Capital Programme for Disabled Facilities Grants, to be funded by additional Government grant received in December 2012 be approved;
- (b) The General Fund Capital Programme Budget of £3,930,000 be approved. Of this amount, £3,553,000 be budgeted to be spent in 2013/2014 with the remainder in the following three years; and
- (c) The Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme of £19,572,000 be also approved. Of this amount, £14,805,000 be budgeted to be spent in 2013/2014 with the remainder in the following two years.

(c) Council Tax Setting 2013/2014

The Localism Act 2011 has made significant changes to the Local Government Finance Act 1992, and now requires the billing authority to calculate a Council Tax requirement for the year, not its Budget Requirement, as previously.

The Town and Parish Council Precepts for 2013/2014 total £520,441. The increase in the average Band D Council Tax for Town and Parish Councils, including Special Expenses for the Unparished Area, is 8.6% and results in an average Band D Council Tax figure of £13.96 for 2013/2014.

Under the new governance arrangements for the Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner announced before Christmas the intention to freeze Council Tax for 2013/2014. This has recently been confirmed.

The confirmed precept is £6,264,441 which resulted in a Band D Council Tax of £168.03. The precept will be adjusted by a Collection Fund contribution of £25,600.

The Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority approved its tax requirement on 18 February 2013. The amount of precept includes a 1.99% increase and has been set at £2,810,584, which results in a Band D Council Tax of £75.39. The Precept will be adjusted by a Collection Fund contribution of £11,260.

The Somerset County Council approved its tax requirement on 20 February 2013. The amount of precept includes a 0% increase and has been set at £38,298,366.34, which results in a Band D Council Tax of £1,027.30. The Precept will be adjusted by a Collection Fund contribution of £156,520.

The estimated balance on the Council Tax Collection Fund is forecast on 15 January each year. Any surplus or deficit was shared between the County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Fire Authority and Taunton Deane, in shares relative to our precept levels.

This year the estimated balance is a surplus of £215,940. Taunton Deane's share of this amounts to £22,560, and this has been reflected in the General Fund Revenue Estimates.

It is **recommended** that:-

(a) The following formal Council Tax Resolution for 2013/2014 be approved:-

- (1) That it be noted that on 24 January 2013 the Council calculated the Council Tax Base for 2013/2014:-
 - (i) for the whole Council area as 37,280.60 - Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act"); and,
 - (ii) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept related as in the attached Appendix B to these Minutes;
- (2) That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2013/2014 (excluding Parish precepts) be calculated as £5,039,960;
- (3) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2013/2014 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:-
 - (i) £86,043,671 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils. (*Gross Expenditure including amount required for working balance*)
 - (ii) £80,483,270 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act. (*Gross Income including reserves to be used to meet Gross Expenditure*)
 - (iii) £5,560,401 being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act). (*Total Demand on Collection Fund.*)
 - (iv) £149.15 being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts). (*Council Tax at Band D for Borough Including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses*)
 - (v) £520,441 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Appendix B). (*Parish Precepts and Special Expenses*).

(vi) £135.19 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (1(a) 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 Parish precept relates. (*Council Tax at Band D for Borough Excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses*);

(4) To note that Somerset County Council, Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner and Devon and Somerset Fire Authority would issue precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area;

(5) That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate provisional amounts shown in the table in Appendix A to these Minutes as the amounts of Council Tax for 2013/2014 for each part of its area and for each categories of dwellings;

(6) Determine that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2013/2014 was not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992; and

(b) Note that if the above formal Council Tax Resolution was approved the total Band D Council Tax would be as follows:-

	2012/13	2013/14	Increase
	£	£	%
Taunton Deane Borough Council	135.19	135.19	0.00%
Somerset County Council	1,027.30	1,027.30	0.00%
Avon and Somerset Police Authority / Police and Crime Commissioner	168.03	168.03	0.00%
Devon and Somerset Fire Authority	73.92	75.39	1.99%
Sub-Total	1,404.44	1,405.91	0.10%
Town and Parish Council (average)	12.85	13.96	8.64%
Total	1,417.29	1419.87	0.18%

APPENDIX A

Valuation Bands

Council Tax Schedule 2013/14	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
Taunton Deane Borough Council*	90.13	105.15	120.17	135.19	165.23	195.27	225.32	270.38
Somerset County Council *	684.87	799.01	913.16	1,027.30	1,255.59	1,483.88	1,712.17	2,054.60
Police & Crime Commissioner *	112.02	130.69	149.36	168.03	205.37	242.71	280.05	336.06
Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority *	49.28	57.49	65.71	73.92	90.35	106.77	123.20	147.84
Parish / Town only (a) *	9.31	10.86	12.41	13.96	17.06	20.16	23.27	27.92
Parish / Town & District (b) *	99.43	116.01	132.58	149.15	182.29	215.44	248.58	298.30
Total (c)	945.60	1,103.20	1,260.81	1,418.40	1,733.60	2,048.80	2,364.00	2,836.80

Parish:

Ash Priors	936.30	1,092.34	1,248.40	1,404.44	1,716.54	2,028.63	2,340.74	2,808.88
Ashbrittle	951.67	1,110.28	1,268.90	1,427.50	1,744.72	2,061.94	2,379.17	2,855.00
Bathealton	940.23	1,096.92	1,253.64	1,410.33	1,723.74	2,037.14	2,350.56	2,820.66
Bishops Hull	949.45	1,107.68	1,265.93	1,424.16	1,740.64	2,057.11	2,373.61	2,848.32
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	954.89	1,114.02	1,273.18	1,432.32	1,750.62	2,068.90	2,387.21	2,864.64
Bradford on Tone	949.17	1,107.35	1,265.56	1,423.74	1,740.13	2,056.51	2,372.91	2,847.48
Burrowbridge	952.27	1,110.97	1,269.69	1,428.39	1,745.81	2,063.22	2,380.66	2,856.78
Cheddon Fitzpaine	947.26	1,105.13	1,263.01	1,420.88	1,736.63	2,052.38	2,368.14	2,841.76
Chipstable	947.34	1,105.22	1,263.12	1,421.00	1,736.78	2,052.55	2,368.34	2,842.00
Churchstanton	952.09	1,110.77	1,269.46	1,428.13	1,745.49	2,062.85	2,380.22	2,856.26
Combe Florey	949.17	1,107.36	1,265.56	1,423.75	1,740.14	2,056.52	2,372.92	2,847.50
Comeytrowe	944.19	1,101.55	1,258.92	1,416.28	1,731.01	2,045.73	2,360.47	2,832.56
Corfe	943.87	1,101.18	1,258.50	1,415.80	1,730.42	2,045.04	2,359.67	2,831.60
Cotford St Luke	949.85	1,108.15	1,266.47	1,424.77	1,741.39	2,058.00	2,374.62	2,849.54
Creech St Michael	955.17	1,114.35	1,273.56	1,432.74	1,751.13	2,069.51	2,387.91	2,865.48
Durstun	943.21	1,100.40	1,257.61	1,414.80	1,729.20	2,043.59	2,358.01	2,829.60
Fitzhead	952.93	1,111.74	1,270.57	1,429.38	1,747.02	2,064.65	2,382.31	2,858.76

Halse	944.93	1,102.41	1,259.91	1,417.39	1,732.37	2,047.34	2,362.32	2,834.78
Hatch Beauchamp	947.00	1,104.82	1,262.67	1,420.49	1,736.16	2,051.81	2,367.49	2,840.98
Kingston St Mary	944.93	1,102.40	1,259.90	1,417.38	1,732.36	2,047.32	2,362.31	2,834.76
Langford Budville	949.60	1,107.86	1,266.13	1,424.39	1,740.92	2,057.45	2,373.99	2,848.78
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	949.16	1,107.34	1,265.55	1,423.73	1,740.12	2,056.49	2,372.89	2,847.46
Milverton	951.29	1,109.83	1,268.39	1,426.93	1,744.03	2,061.12	2,378.22	2,853.86
Neroche	948.69	1,106.80	1,264.92	1,423.03	1,739.26	2,055.48	2,371.72	2,846.06
North Curry	951.10	1,109.61	1,268.13	1,426.64	1,743.67	2,060.70	2,377.74	2,853.28
Norton Fitzwarren	955.39	1,114.62	1,273.86	1,433.08	1,751.54	2,070.00	2,388.47	2,866.16
Nynehead	953.43	1,112.33	1,271.24	1,430.14	1,747.95	2,065.75	2,383.57	2,860.28
Oake	946.81	1,104.60	1,262.41	1,420.20	1,735.80	2,051.39	2,367.01	2,840.40
Otterford	936.30	1,092.34	1,248.40	1,404.44	1,716.54	2,028.63	2,340.74	2,808.88
Pitminster	949.91	1,108.22	1,266.55	1,424.86	1,741.50	2,058.13	2,374.77	2,849.72
Ruishton/Thornfalcon	952.54	1,111.29	1,270.05	1,428.80	1,746.31	2,063.82	2,381.34	2,857.60
Sampfurd Arundel	962.54	1,122.95	1,283.39	1,443.80	1,764.65	2,085.48	2,406.34	2,887.60
Staplegrove	945.71	1,103.31	1,260.94	1,418.55	1,733.79	2,049.01	2,364.26	2,837.10
Stawley	948.71	1,106.81	1,264.94	1,423.05	1,739.29	2,055.51	2,371.76	2,846.10
Stoke St Gregory	955.02	1,114.18	1,273.36	1,432.52	1,750.86	2,069.19	2,387.54	2,865.04
Stoke St Mary	946.41	1,104.14	1,261.88	1,419.61	1,735.08	2,050.54	2,366.02	2,839.22
Taunton *	938.25	1,094.61	1,251.00	1,407.36	1,720.11	2,032.85	2,345.61	2,814.72
Trull	948.39	1,106.45	1,264.52	1,422.58	1,738.71	2,054.83	2,370.97	2,845.16
Wellington	951.43	1,110.00	1,268.58	1,427.14	1,744.28	2,061.42	2,378.57	2,854.28
Wellington Without	948.79	1,106.91	1,265.05	1,423.17	1,739.44	2,055.68	2,371.96	2,846.34
West Bagborough	947.07	1,104.90	1,262.76	1,420.59	1,736.28	2,051.96	2,367.66	2,841.18
West Buckland	948.19	1,106.22	1,264.26	1,422.28	1,738.34	2,054.40	2,370.47	2,844.56
West Hatch	947.71	1,105.65	1,263.62	1,421.56	1,737.46	2,053.36	2,369.27	2,843.12
West Monkton	953.41	1,112.31	1,271.22	1,430.11	1,747.91	2,065.71	2,383.52	2,860.22
Wiveliscombe	951.54	1,110.12	1,268.72	1,427.30	1,744.48	2,061.65	2,378.84	2,854.60

(* provisional figures)

APPENDIX B

TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPTS

Parish/Town Council	2012/13			2013/14			Council Tax Increase
	Tax Base	Precept Levied	Council Tax Band D	Tax Base	Precept Levied	Council Tax Band D	
		£	(£)		£	(£)	
Ash Priors	84.83	-	-	81.46	-	-	0.00%
Ashbrittle	95.72	1,800	18.80	86.74	2,000	23.06	22.62%
Bathealton	89.28	500	5.60	84.83	500	5.89	5.25%
Bishops Hull	1,114.92	22,000	19.73	1,052.00	20,750	19.72	-0.04%
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	1,120.81	25,185	22.47	1,021.90	28,489	27.88	24.07%
Bradford on Tone	293.94	5,500	18.71	285.01	5,500	19.30	3.13%
Burrowbridge	205.99	4,200	20.39	196.21	4,700	23.95	17.48%
Cheddon Fitzpaine	643.53	10,203	15.85	598.80	9,843	16.44	3.68%
Chipstable	133.31	1,950	14.63	129.81	2,150	16.56	13.23%
Churchstanton	337.87	7,299	21.60	342.98	8,126	23.69	9.67%
Combe Florey	122.05	2,250	18.44	116.50	2,250	19.31	4.76%
Comeytrove	2,111.95	25,000	11.84	1,967.11	23,290	11.84	0.02%
Corfe	133.48	2,500	18.73	132.02	1,500	11.36	-39.34%
Cotford St Luke	821.67	16,000	19.47	752.62	15,300	20.33	4.40%
Creech St Michael	999.23	28,275	28.30	937.95	26,543.99	28.30	0.01%
Durstun	59.10	600	10.15	58.64	607.37	10.36	2.02%
Fitzhead	122.29	2,995	24.49	113.55	2,832	24.94	1.83%
Halse	142.58	1,800	12.62	139.03	1,800	12.95	2.55%
Hatch Beauchamp	268.82	4,500	16.74	249.16	4,000	16.05	-4.10%
Kingston St Mary	463.52	6,000	12.94	424.73	5,496	12.94	-0.03%
Langford Budville	238.94	5,000	20.93	225.54	4,500	19.95	-4.65%

Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	208.84	3,582	17.15	199.03	3,839.23	19.29	12.47%
Milverton	624.11	12,650	20.27	562.51	12,650	22.49	10.95%
Neroche	255.27	4,500	17.63	239.15	4,446	18.59	5.46%
North Curry	741.43	16,500	22.25	692.23	15,366	22.20	-0.25%
Norton Fitzwarren	931.94	25,060	26.89	903.16	25,871	28.64	6.53%
Nynehead	164.15	4,250	25.89	165.34	4,250	25.70	-0.72%
Oake	333.34	5,000	15.00	317.34	5,000	15.76	5.04%
Otterford	174.06	-	-	165.11	-	-	0.00%
Pitminster	464.42	9,500	20.46	435.08	8,885	20.42	-0.17%
Ruishton/Thornfalcon	624.94	12,000	19.20	574.63	14,000	24.36	26.88%
Sampford Arundel	127.60	4,600	36.05	121.94	4,800	39.36	9.19%
Staplegrove	748.42	10,710	14.31	708.57	10,000	14.11	-1.38%
Stawley	128.82	2,400	18.63	132.17	2,460	18.61	-0.10%
Stoke St Gregory	384.63	7,000	18.20	356.14	10,000	28.08	54.28%
Stoke St Mary	210.86	3,008	14.27	198.25	3,008	15.17	6.36%
Taunton	16,226.62	47,382	2.92	14,115.83	41,218	2.92	0.00%
Trull	1,032.39	14,000	13.56	992.02	18,000	18.14	33.80%
Wellington	4,852.37	104,798	21.60	4,290.56	97,396	22.70	5.11%
Wellington Without	304.54	5,200	17.08	293.61	5,500	18.73	9.70%
West Bagborough	169.77	2,500	14.73	154.78	2,500	16.15	9.68%
West Buckland	448.31	8,000	17.84	424.77	7,580	17.84	0.00%
West Hatch	143.00	2,330	16.29	136.11	2,330	17.12	5.06%
West Monkton	1,184.22	27,664	23.36	1,077.78	27,664	25.67	9.88%
Wiveliscombe	1,128.51	23,500	20.82	1,027.90	23,500	22.86	9.79%

Totals

41,216.39

529,689

12.85

37,280.60

520,441

13.96

8.64%

(iv) Councillor Mrs Adkins

Housing Revenue Account Estimates 2013/2014

(These recommendations need to be read in conjunction with the report submitted to the Executive on 6 February 2013 which includes all the details of the proposed Housing Revenue Account Budget.)

The Executive has given consideration to the proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) estimates for the 2013/2014 Financial Year. It also includes details of the proposed increase in Average Weekly Rent for the year where a 4.9% increase has been recommended.

2013/14 would be the second year of operating the HRA under self-financing arrangements. The Council remains on course to repay the settlement debt of £85,200,000 by 2030. The lower cost of borrowing this sum is reflected in the Budget and has enabled the Council to fund the updated proposals in the HRA Business Plan and increase funding for housing development.

The Proposed Budget is based on assumptions and estimates on expenditure requirements and income projections, in order to deliver the updated Business Plan that was approved by Full Council in December 2012.

Dwelling rents for approximately 6,000 properties provides annual income of over £23,000,000 for the HRA.

Local authorities have both the power and duty to set their own rent. However, the Government had previously set out a policy for social rents in England to be fair, affordable and less confusing for tenants. Local Authorities and Housing Associations have therefore been requested to bring rents into line over several years, using a national formula to set a target rent (also called 'formula rent') based on property values and average manual earnings in each area.

The previous 'negative subsidy' system required Local Authorities to raise their 'average weekly rent' to meet the 'target' or 'formula' rent by the convergence date of 2015/2016, with a 'guideline rent' being the amount the Department for Communities and Local Government assumed should be charged. The Council continues to work towards the convergence date of 2015/2016 and has taken this into account in the draft rent calculations.

It is therefore proposed that the average weekly rent for dwellings for 2013/2014 should be set at the guideline rent of £77.21. This is an increase of 4.9% or £3.61 per week.

The Dwelling Rents form the major element of income for the HRA. Each ½% rent increase is equivalent to approximately £114,600. If the average rent is set lower than the current proposal, the loss of income will have to be met by reducing expenditure.

The budget for non-dwelling rents and charges for services and facilities is based on a 2.6% increase.

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee considered the 2013/2014 draft budget at its meeting on 24 January 2013 where no formal recommendations to change the HRA budget were made.

The Tenants Services Management Board has also considered the report.

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the proposed rent increase. Members are asked to take this assessment into account in confirming the recommended budget proposals for 2013/2014.

It is therefore **recommended** that:-

- (1) The Average Weekly Rent increase of 4.9% be approved; and
- (2) The Housing Revenue Account budget for 2013/2014 be agreed.

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Council Meeting - 26 February 2013

Alternative Budget Proposal – Liberal Democratic Group

Introduction

This budget proposal offers an alternative to the Executive's draft budget as discussed and amended at the meeting on 6 February 2013.

We recognise the tough times our community is facing and we fully support the Executives proposal to freeze council tax for next year. We have however three areas that we would like Councillors to consider:-

Open Spaces

We believe that the time has come to fundamentally review the existing policy on our hanging baskets and levels of maintenance on our open spaces. To this end:-

- We simply cannot support a further cut of £4,000 to the Hanging Baskets budget. This visual enhancement to the town should be protected. It is a penny pinching proposal and leads to an even greater sense of urban decay that we are experiencing through shop voids etc if we hang the baskets for a shorter period per annum. Our town centres need a sense of pride to be maintained.
- This same sense of pride underlies the proposal to spend £25,000 to identify a policy/strategy to introduce an organised grass cutting programme in 2014/2015 which gets the balance between competing demands of cost reductions, the perception of "tidiness" and the desire to encourage wildflowers and associated wildlife. A temporary (1 year) researcher would be employed at the DLO to identify suitable open spaces adjacent to our housing lands, open spaces associated with footpaths near highways and co-ordinate with Somerset County Council on how to establish the programme. It would be the intention to use the same sum in 2014/2015 to implement the actual cutting programme itself.

Tree Planting

We propose to invest an additional £10,000 towards achieving this.

Each year the Council has to fell a number of unsafe, diseased or dangerous trees in its parks, open spaces and roadsides. In order to ensure that the tree population of Taunton Deane is not depleted it is essential that new trees are planted to replace those which are lost and plant new ones in suitable locations.

An increasing number of tree species have become susceptible to tree diseases and we are losing many fine Horse Chestnuts, Cherries and Larch as well as the many Elms which have already gone. Ash disease will also soon be with us which is likely to kill hundreds of millions of this common tree across the country.

A recent ground breaking study in Torquay estimated the value of the tree cover in this relatively small Authority at £180million. This was carefully calculated using sound statistical analysis from examples around the world. The benefits which added to this overall value were the roles which trees play in reducing flooding by taking up water, reducing pollution from cars, absorbing carbon dioxide and producing oxygen, shelter and shade as well of course as providing the amenity value which so many people value and find inspirational.

The £10,000 will enable the Council to replant good sized trees itself and provide funds for volunteers to get involved as well.

Arts Development Grants

We believe that we should restore the £7,515 we withdrew from the below mentioned organisations last year. Taunton Deane needs to be identified with support for voluntary organisations that encourage participation in culture, particularly the creative arts at a time of deep recession and hard times falling on the community at large.

2012/13 Payments

Take Art	5,750.00
Action Track	1,955.00
SPAEDA	500.00
Somerset Art Works	1,380.00
Somerset Film	2,415.00
Total	12,000.00

These grants totalled £19,515 in 2011/12 and it is the intention to restore this. The sum included £4,000 to the Somerset Rural Music School.

The sums whilst appearing small, with the restoration of the original savings will make a large difference to the health of the organisations and send a strong signal that the Council is conscious of the importance of arts to the community

Funding

We believe that this should be comfortably funded from the General Fund Reserves

The financial summary of our Alternative Budget is as follows:-

	£	£
Reinstate Savings Plan – Hanging Baskets	4,000	
New Investment – Open Spaces	25,000	
Art Development Grants	7,515	
New Investment – Tree Planting	10,000	
	<u>46,515</u>	

Funded By:

General Fund Reserves	<u>46,515</u>	
		<u>46,515</u>

Conclusion

We present for your consideration an alternative budget to that presented by the Executive.

The statutory statement from the Councils Section 151 Officer on the robustness of this proposal is set out in **Appendix 1**.

The amended recommendations that support this alternative budget (for budget setting and determination calculations) are set out in **Appendix 2**.

Councillor Jefferson Horsley
Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

February 2013

Appendix 1

Alternative Budget Proposal – Statement by Section 151 Officer

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This appendix reviews the amendments set out in the Alternative Budget proposal and reports on the robustness of that proposal and the adequacy of reserves.

2. Robustness of Budget Estimates

2.1 The proposed alternative budget makes some amendments to spending priorities for 2013/14, but maintains the 0% tax rise position set out by the Executive in their final budget position shared on 6th February 2013.

2.2 I am happy that the figures used in the alternative budget proposal are robust and that the level of reserves remain adequate. There are no new financial risks associated with the new investment.

3. General Comments

3.1 All other general comments as set out in my report on the Executive's budget proposal stand.

4. Adequacy of Reserves

The Alternative Budget proposal does not make any significant changes to the level of General Fund Reserves. The use of £46,515 of reserves to balance the 13/14 budget is not significant, and should the new investment areas be for one or two years only, then there are no concerns to flag.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Based on the above review, and the comments in my report on the Executive's proposal, I am pleased to report that I believe the Council's reserves to be adequate and the 2013/14 Alternative Budget proposal is robust.

Shirlene Adam
Strategic Director

February 2013

Appendix 2

Recommendations – General Fund Budget Setting

Full Council is requested to consider this alternative budget proposal and, if supported, to approve the detailed recommendations on the General Fund Budget as set out in the Executives proposal with the following amendments:-

- a/ Note the s151 Officer Statement of Robustness in Appendix A of the Executives proposal and the further information in Appendix 1 of the Alternative Budget proposal.
- b/ No changes needed
- c/ No changes needed
- d/ Approve the Service Options in Appendix D of the Executive proposal, with the deletion of the proposal to save £4k on hanging baskets.
- e/ No changes needed
- f/ Note the expected General Reserves position of £3,032k (reduced by a further £46,515) and the medium term financial plan projection and the ongoing financial challenge to address the budget gap for future years.

Recommendations - Council Tax Setting

The Alternative Budget will make minor changes to the determination position which impacts on the recommendations in the tax setting report.

Full Council is requested to approve the detailed recommendations on the Council Tax Setting as set out in the Executive proposal with the following amendments:-

10.1 Appendix A to be approved with the following amendments:-

- 3. (a) £86,090,186 (*Gross expenditure including amount required for working balance*)
- 3. (b) £80,529,785 (*Gross income including reserves to be used to meet gross expenditure*)

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Full Council - 26 February 2013

Alternative Budget Proposal – Independent Councillors

Introduction

This budget proposal is presented by the Taunton Deane Independent Councillors. As an alternative to the Executive's draft budget it has two immediate aims:-

1. Ensuring that the cross party emphasis on **service delivery** and **quality of place** in the emerging Corporate Business Plan is delivered promptly.
2. Ensuring that the Council is better prepared to meet its statutory duties, the needs and then the aspirations of residents in the face of Central Government policies detrimental to an urban/rural area like Taunton Deane.

Failure to achieve these aims will undermine Taunton Deane's status as the home of our County Town and irreversibly fix the Council on the path to an already well documented financial abyss in three to four years time (an abyss confirmed by our own Chief Executive Officer, S151 Officer and the LGA peer review).

Rather than following in the footsteps of West Somerset District Council this budget offers leadership towards resilience and resurgence.

The strategy underlying this budget rejects leaving Council Tax frozen for another year. This requires a demonstration of leadership and strength by this Council. Any freeze of Council Tax must be seen as a dangerous and disingenuous device to garner votes and grab headlines before the County Council elections while blatantly ignoring the real financial challenges that this Council faces.

Members of this Council are specifically asked to remember that their primary duty is to Taunton Deane. As such we must respond to challenges being forced on the Council by the Coalition strategy of reducing Local Government services by forcing District Councils to effectively go bust - by cutting funding, transferring greater burdens to the people of the Districts and incentivising (with increasingly smaller incentives) the freezing of Council Tax.

As West Somerset District Council glides powerlessly towards their financial abyss after two years of frozen Council Tax and is forced by Government to seek help from the Local Government family, our own Council must get a grip. Taunton Deane cannot afford another budget set by those hooked on the ecstasy of Coalition or those who are prepared to accept taking reducing Government freeze grants when they know it will harm those around them.

This budget says no to a quick fix and palliative measures. It provides a new foundation for Taunton Deane and prepares a stronger position for the unprecedented onslaught of a Central Government that remains committed to

localism to reduce cost while ignoring people who live and strive to work locally. This budget rejects appeasement in favour of immediate prioritisation towards sustainable local services; services that discharge the statutory duties of the Council, then meet the wider needs of the people of Taunton Deane and wherever possible the aspirations of our community.

Council Tax

Someone assessed for Council Tax on a Band D property pays £135.19 per year for our services. Taunton Deane costs each Band D Council Tax payer £2.59 per week or £11 per month.

We propose to increase Council Tax by only 9p per week.

This amounts to a 3.5% change. It would change the Band D tax for Taunton Deane by £4.73 per annum (equivalent to 39p per month) and in doing so puts the Council on a much stronger footing for future years.

The Council would not receive the Government's Council Tax Freeze Grant. The freeze grant encourages false economy. It offers no real benefit to our community and postpones tackling the realities of future budget gaps. It harms Taunton Deane by doing so. The total value of freeze grant available to this council in 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 is at this stage likely to be £57,000 each year or £114,000 over the two years.

The proposed change to Council Tax in this Budget would bring net additional income of £119,340 to the Council in 2013/2014.

Importantly it increases the Council's base tax position so as to reduce future budget gaps by £119,000 on an ongoing and annual basis.

Even if Council Tax is frozen again in the following year, raising the base position now provides immediate funds to respond to the burdens imposed on our community by the Coalition and strengthens us in the face of increased burdens tomorrow.

A similar increase is to be applied to the Unparished Area of Taunton. This would raise £1,410 which would be earmarked to be spent to the benefit of residents of the Unparished Area in 2013/2014.

These measures would put the tax position on a stronger footing for the challenges ahead.

This proposal is within the referendum levels set by the Government.

New Homes Bonus

The Executive has set this aside wholly for "growth and regeneration" purposes, something this administration and its predecessors have pursued for years, with little to show for their effort.

We propose to split the fund into two to achieve quality of place and service delivery. These real priorities have emerged from cross party discussions in the strategic planning work led by our officers. These are the foundations on which Taunton Deane will thrive and they will create the environment that will attract people to make their homes and build their businesses in Taunton Deane.

Firstly, we suggest that £2million should be allocated to a 'Sustainability Fund' for Taunton Deane. This would allow us to recognise what our community is and how we are viewed, to build on our local strengths and engage with stakeholders, including our own officers, for a year to get things right. We cannot just hope for magical 'growth'. We need to rebuild relationships with our community and businesses where they have been let down by the unintended consequences of ill-conceived penny pinching; for example where the new centre piece of Taunton is being used as a free car park and licensed events are impossible because of the Executive's failure to invest in CCTV to allow previous cuts.

The aims of the 'Sustainability Fund' will be to ensure that Taunton Deane is a liveable and likeable place, a home and a destination and a place of enterprise, learning and leisure.

To achieve these aims our actions as a Council and a community must not degrade our natural and built environment, rather they must enhance it to sustain people, place and the products of our efforts, from business creation to cultural enterprise.

We would propose calling on the representatives of local business and our wider community to help us focus on a consensus on how that money should be spent efficiently and well.

But first we must put right what has gone wrong so secondly, we suggest that £375,000 should be immediately allocated to both "re-presenting" and 'representing' Taunton Deane.

Re-presenting Taunton Deane is our 'Spring Clean'. If we can get the first impression or shop window right quickly ourselves – by sorting out weeds and protecting nature reserves to achieve quality of place and sort out parking on Castle Green as an example of our service delivery then this would be a great start from which to go forward.

Representing Taunton Deane is setting out our stall afresh – holding our heads up high and celebrating our ambience, culture and history, the people and the place. This will include money to be allocated to rethinking Christmas in Taunton. Last year's debacle around the festive lights brought the town and the Council into disrepute and it should never happen again. Christmas is not an unexpected event and thousands turn out in mid-November each year. Irrespective of commercial or other positions the situation last year should never have been allowed to reach the position it did.

Real leadership from the Executive would have come from not letting the problem develop rather than suggesting they had saved the day. Taunton is the County

Town of Somerset and as the District Council with responsibility for it, this Council must offer leadership all year round.

In future years surpluses from DLO's transformational success must be channelled to sustaining our civic appearance and preparing our civil defences from keeping the weeds down to responding to severe weather for example by stockpiling sandbags or grit.

Savings Plans

We accept the proposals being presented by officers in the Executive's budget that are simple budget adjustments but reject other savings plans that will impact on our communities. We challenge those ones that have been chosen arbitrarily over others that had previously been selected.

We therefore propose to reinstate the following budget savings:-

- Hanging Baskets £4,000;
- Christmas Lighting £10,000;
- Nature Reserves £2,000.

To fund this additional £16,000 we reject the flawed Executive plan to set up a new reserve for Extreme Weather. There are two clear reasons for this.

First, this Council has significant reserves in place already. There is no need to create yet another earmarked reserve.

Second, this Extreme Weather proposal should be thrown out by this Council as it is an insult to those in Taunton Deane who have already suffered from the impacts of the severe weather as it attempts to grab a headline founded on their recent suffering. Worse still, this is being done at the expense of our community presentation and cohesion.

Extreme weather is not unexpected and should always be planned for by this Council. How we respond to critical situations using our reserves is a measure of our qualities as a community. That said, things that people value, that reflect our community values and bring us all together in good times should never be undervalued. These things are the foundation of our ability to respond in crisis, forming the bonds that hold us together. We should take pride in our contribution to creating these bonds as a Council, whether it is recognised or not.

The proposed Christmas Lighting cut reflects this. The Executive considered that the Council gets limited recognition or credit for our contribution in Wellington and Wiveliscombe.

The Executive and leader should not be there for vain credit, asking the people of Taunton Deane's two other urban town centres to recognise 'whatever did the Executive do for us?'

It should demonstrate wisdom and recognise that lighting our towns for Christmas brings people together, out at night in early December and acts as a catalyst for the start of our Christmas season, from getting people into late night shopping or setting the tone for the behaviour we expect on our streets over Christmas. In the smaller towns the lighting ceremony is marshalled by Rotarians who arrange for Santa to attend and use the occasion to raise funds that are later distributed to our community. We should facilitate and support such occasions not cut them. And if we seek recognition for our contribution to these events, let the recognition be for our officers and employees, the strength behind everything we achieve.

The impact of previous cuts on Christmas lights in Taunton will be felt for years to come. They will be viewed negatively by young and old. We should not make the same mistake twice. We should support Christmas lighting in Wellington and Wiveliscombe, and aim to take responsibility for lighting Taunton at Christmas again in the future.

Our hanging baskets and nature reserves are equally well valued and to choose to cut contributions to these while maintaining other areas of civic pride that attract less consensus or serve small interest groups is wrong, especially when this civic pride that attract less consensus or serve small interest groups is wrong, especially when this cut is being made to simply increase reserves and pay for Extreme Weather.

Financial Summary

This financial summary demonstrates the removal of the two aspects of the Executives Budget that harm Taunton Deane by their futility, the Council Tax Freeze Grant and the New Extreme Weather Contingency. It is on one hand positive that the Executive wish to maintain an election promise they knew they would never be able to keep. It is not realistic, reasonable or safe to maintain this stance. To do so at a time where that promise has been undermined by the mantra of imposed austerity from Central Government's equivalent to fiddling while Taunton burns.

The financial summary of our Alternative Budget is as follows:-

	£	£
Increase Council Tax by 3.5%	(176,340)	
Remove Council Tax Freeze Grant	57,000	
Reinstate Saving – Hanging Baskets	4,000	
Reinstate Savings – Christmas Lights	10,000	
Reinstate Savings – Nature Reserves	2,000	
Remove New Fund For Extreme Weather	(16,000)	
		<u>(119,340)</u>
NET ADDITIONAL FUNDS GENERATED		<u>(119,340)</u>

Additional Spending

We would like the additional money generated by our budget proposal to be used both innovatively and prudently.

Maximising community asset use while reducing management cost – 100 community fruit and vegetable gardens

Much of our asset base is open spaces, maintained by Deane DLO. Additionally there are our grass verges. As part of our climate change agenda towards carbon reduction, our attractiveness of place and aim of securing the well-being of our population we propose a seed fund being made available to community groups who wish to plant and grow fruit and vegetables in areas of public open space, for members of our community to work together and share the fruits of their labour.

To achieve immediate growth this budget proposes allocating £10,000 for the one off cost of seed materials to be purchased and planted by groups, so as to kick start a system of community gardening as has proved successful in other areas. DLO nurseries will help with procurement by being the provider of the seed packs. Each group would be eligible for £100 from the 'seed fund' to spend with DLO in an attempt to establish 100 community fruit and vegetable gardens in our open spaces before this year's Taunton Flower Show.

Combining the spirit of Taunton Deane's horticultural societies, the ethos of Dig for Victory with environmental learning and the need for food security/ resilience of Transition and other movements, global and local (for example the Mayor of London's programmes) this green works programme intends to:-

- increase the amount of public open space maintained and used by the community;
- improve health and well-being;
- reduce areas requiring maintenance by Deane DLO, thus reducing our future cost and environmental impact;
- allow retention of public assets;
- helps us catch up from being 10 years behind places like London, Totnes and Todmorden; and
- then positions Taunton Deane as a leader in showing how going green works for communities across the United Kingdom.

Additionally the grants will be available to community organisations with their own land who agree to turn that land over to community gardening.

Council owned open spaces are a discretionary service provided by the Council and the opportunity to encourage different shared community uses should be tested.

In doing so we are actually investing Council Tax Payers money back into the community and Deane DLO for future years use.

Greening the Deane - Quality of place depends on the quality of our environment and our service quality directly contributes to the quality of our environment.

The first proposal will demonstrate that Green Works but we need to do more. Promoting our services and good practice is vital first step in this and we miss opportunities to combine this with education and behaviour changing activity locally.

Greening the Deane initially aims to use Deane DLO vehicles as public information and advertising source celebrating our best practice or success in our efforts to improve our environment as well as offering simple tips as to how people might get involved.

Using the prominent and well known white Deane DLO vehicles we aim to brand vehicles with information about what 'WE DO' from the 13 hybrid commercial vehicles purchased in 2012 to the solar panels on the swimming pool roof and other information.

We would allocate £5,000 for temporary vehicle livery. To ensure that the vehicles showcase Taunton Deane talent, vehicles would display original art work promoting the work of young designers from Schools and sixth form colleges in Taunton Deane.

A 'Greening the Deane Conference' will be held to get anyone who will work with us on this and who is prepared to bring their expertise and enthusiasm for free in one place at one time. £4,320 is allocated for this. The purpose of that conference will be to plan a one off 'catch up' programme to allocate £50,000 of the New Homes Bonus Re-presentation fund and to seed the green shoots of growth for Taunton using £100,000 of the 'Sustainability Fund'.

Supporting an Innovative Culture - the officers of Taunton Deane represent the best traditions of public service. We suggest their innovation and ideas is often stifled by the climate that is created by elected officials or the austerity messages of Central Government.

We wish to support the natural innovation of our officers by inviting them to identify new ideas, better ways of doing things or different ways of looking at what we do and how we do it to improve service quality in pursuit of our Corporate Objectives.

In a six monthly competition we will ask work force teams to do more than give us their ideas for Improving Taunton Deane. We will ask for their worked solutions to problems they identify or for developing new ideas. As an incentive every six months the team with the idea voted for by other participating teams as the 'stand out idea' will be able to allocate funding of £2,000 to a voluntary organisation (or organisations) of its choice that operates from Taunton Deane.

We propose allocating £5,000 to develop this idea, split into £4,000 for prizes in 2013/2014 and £1,000 to produce electronic resources to guide and support their work based on the internationally successful practice of Honda and their New Ideas Circles and the savings achieved and value created by them.

The potential for future benefit and value from this exercise is considerable as are the opportunities to benefit and directly create positive relationships between Council employees and local charitable organisations.

Celebrating Taunton Deane - public facing – pictures of councillors – not our work or our people – are the first things visitors to The Deane House see. There is no clear presentation of exactly what our 'must do' or 'discretionary' roles or of 'who' is

doing this work for us. We would allocate £5,000 to a campaign clearly celebrating how much we do in our area in our premises around Taunton Deane, modelled on best practice already achieved in leading NHS Trusts.

Distinguishing Taunton Deane – As a collector of Council Tax, Taunton Deane is associated with the full extent of the Council Tax bill each year despite being a proportionately small net receiver. This distorts people's view of us and the debate on Council Tax each year. The £140 annual average payment for the services of Taunton Deane and value for money people receives needs to be emphasised. The extent to which Taunton Deane maximise the benefit and add extra value to each Council Tax payer's contribution is not made clear.

An important first step in this is to change our Council Tax bill presentation to reflect this as currently as the collector and messenger, Taunton Deane is perceived to be the full recipient of the tax not simply the distributor of it, despite our bills setting out the apportionment. We would allocate £2,000 to changing the template to clearly distinguish where Council Tax is going and who is spending what. This money would also be used to investigate the extent to which we are receiving proper compensation from our partner organisations for our collection of Council Tax on their behalf.

The Deane Helpline

This is a vital service to vulnerable members of our community and with demographic changes is likely to be called upon by increasing numbers of vulnerable members of our community. As people wish to remain in their homes and communities longer we need to review how this service operates now and plan for its future. It currently operates at a loss, though we stress we do not envisage it as a profit making operation, rather see it for what it is, an essential public service.

We would expect the Deane Helpline to operate as a model for Councils across the country and as part of a wider contribution to sustaining quality of life in Somerset generally. While we have no clear answers as to what this service will look like in the future we wish to allocate funds to investigating this now and considering whether:-

- We are able or would we benefit from establishing the Deane Helpline as a charitable body in order to extend the service area;
- The options to work with other lifeline centres to provide Somerset Lifeline, using a similar model to the Waste Board, operated, funded and controlled by the Districts on the basis of pooling current expertise and resources to offer an even more comprehensive service; and
- Recognising on principle that we need to preserve all of the current expertise and professionalism that the Deane Helpline offers. This is not about 'savings' or 'efficiency', instead this means working with the staff to maintain and develop service delivery and ensure that every person who strives to live independently in Somerset has our full support.

To support any plans that emerge from the staff of the Deane Helpline and their colleagues in Somerset we would ring fence £20,000 to facilitate the discussions

necessary and set up costs of any other method of working or organisation the staff would consider workable, and will invite other authorities to consider similar allocation in the financial year 2014/2015 in response to our lead.

It is a disgrace that the Executive of Taunton Deane have only budgeted to recognise the losses of this essential and excellent service and allocated reserves to it, without immediate efforts to do something about those losses. More is required in the budget to plan and invest in this service, knowing its value to some of the most vulnerable in our community. Failure by the Executive to plan for this should alert Councillors to a possible future strategy of 'the Executive cannot support the Deane Helpline any longer'.

Protecting Our Community

Extreme weather and weeds are not a new experience for our community and we should be able to deal with these. What is unprecedented however is the extent to which it is being threatened directly by the Coalition Government's agenda, be that welfare reform or reducing public services to make government smaller.

We recognise that public services and those who provide them are a something to be proud of and that our community is being directly threatened by the Government.

We must protect our service and community from these threats.

We note that the Executive proposes to provide a budget of £91,000 to fund a range of measures to support citizens through welfare reform. This will be funded from £66,000 New Burdens Grant plus £25,000 of the Council's own revenue resources.

It is proposed to use this one-off funding to provide a temporary additional Revenues and Benefits Officer post for one year to enable working with "first time" Council Tax payers to educate and inform them on prompt payment and provide additional support to vulnerable people through home visits. We recognise that this money is being targeted correctly. We question whether the proposed post is an effective use of this resource but would be advised by expert officers on this.

We see significant strength and value in the focus on the funding to the CAB towards the cost of a debt supervisor and debt caseworker, to help citizens with money advice and debt management. The welfare reforms will channel more people into debt and enforcement and the consequence and cost of this must be recognised. We recognise the need for funding used by the Council to support a further range of initiatives and costs in response to welfare reform.

We will allocate a further £18,000 to be ring fenced to meet the challenges our local organisations will face once the welfare reforms bite. If for example we find that we have increased the number of people we must direct to Citizens Advice we will allocate these funds to extending the face to face services offered. Alternatively the money will be used to provide grants for charitable service organisations whose work load is increased by the Government's agenda.

However this Council should not be prepared to accept carrying the cost of the hardship created by Central Government, be it to West Somerset District Council or local people, while our funding is being cut. This only serves to move the cost to the same tax payer in a different way, while not actually reducing public spending.

Consequently, this Council must clearly articulate the adverse impacts of the change agenda while demonstrating leadership in finding true efficiency and sustainable public benefit. To do this we must be able to explain the hidden cost of cuts to us and our community and officer funding will be allowed to identify the knock on and hidden costs to our community. The planning for sharing services with West Somerset District Council must be recognised as an opportunity we would explore anyway, and at the same time, as an immediate cost being forced on this Council by Central Government.

For the Executive to plan for this but not budget for it, though they have created in principle the situation where money will need to be spent is unacceptable (reports have gone to scrutiny and will go to Full Council in March 2013 asking for over £50,000 of additional one off funding from reserves). Shared services are something that should have been considered before and should be planned for proactively as part of our strategy, not as a knee jerk response to Central Government ultimatums.

Working with West Somerset is a direct cost to us. This cost must be paid for. While it is hoped that benefits will be derived from the exercise we cannot be expected to reduce emergency reserves or front line services to solve an avoidable problem that has been caused by Government and not avoided by the current administration at West Somerset District Council.

Therefore, while we would wish to invest money to investigate how to deliver better quality services in the future in our own time we must set out clearly to our community now that the consequence of public funding cuts is a significant knock on cost to them at their District level. The cost should not be hidden by being drawn from reserves. No longer can the Executive present to the people of Taunton Deane that the West Somerset situation will not cost the tax payer of Taunton Deane a single penny. Nor can their partners in Coalition pretend that it is acceptable to continue to leave the Government's Plan A unchallenged.

We would prefer to allocate the remainder of the sums raised to protecting the community in Taunton Deane but are prevented from doing so.

In the interests of prudent budgeting and offering clarity to the people of Taunton Deane we are forced into allocating £50,000 of Taunton Deane Council Taxpayer's money to solve a problem caused by Central Government as we investigate sharing services with West Somerset.

We must have extra money to do this, if we are not to do it within our own timescales. Our reserves are for emergencies not avoidable problems, forced on us by others.

Financial Summary of New Spending

	£	£
Community Fruit & Vegetable Gardens	10,000	
Greening the Deane – Vehicle Livery	5,000	
Greening the Deane - Conference	4,340	
Supporting An Innovative Culture	5,000	
Celebrating the Deane	5,000	
Distinguishing the Deane	2,000	
Deane Helpline	20,000	
Protecting our Community	18,000	
Shared Services	50,000	
		<hr/>
		119,340

CONCLUSION

We ask Councillors to adopt the budget proposals set out below to discharge their responsibility to the people of Taunton Deane.

This budget is a real alternative and is the budget that:-

- a. should have been put before the Council by those who have the privilege of holding the future of Taunton Deane in their hands; and
- b. would have been put before them had the Executive been acting in a fiscally responsible way and in the interests of the residents of Taunton Deane now and in the future.

Councillors cannot ignore the Section 151 Officer's comments that:-

- we have a serious financial challenge ahead;
- that the difficult economic conditions are forcing more of our community into circumstances where they require more support;
- that we simply do not have the resources to do provide support anymore; and
- that the Medium Term Financial Plan shows we have a fiscal gap of around £1million for 2014/2015 if we do nothing and this continues to grow thereafter.

Nor should we ignore her conclusion in considering the Executive's proposed Budget that **'the Council must now focus on dealing with the longer term challenges of dealing with the underlying financial position'**. If we accept there is still a very long way to go and that Members must now focus on the big challenge of tackling the budget deficit over the medium term we cannot wait to achieve the clarity of what the Council can and cannot afford to do in future years.

Given the priority of dealing with our problems we cannot afford another year of putting off until tomorrow what **must** be done today. In supporting a Coalition agenda this Council risks misfeasance. Coalition supporting Councillors avoiding reality will CONDEMN Taunton Deane to a future of choices between services that could be avoided by taking action now and commits the area to inevitable social,

economic, cultural and environmental decline with diminishing options and harsher choices each year.

As Taunton was famously the site of the Taunton Stop Line during the Second World War we trust facing this reality will be the start of our community and this Council's leadership demanding Central Government to STOP now.

This budget clearly faces the reality that the financial pressures on our community at difficult economic times are manufactured by Central Government, notes the position of the financial abyss faced by the Council (made worse by two years of frozen Council Tax) and offers a new direction to avoid the abyss. This budget challenges the unnecessary burdens being imposed by Central Government.

The analogy of financial abyss or financial cliff has been used a lot this year. Our question to fellow Councillors is if there is a financial cliff why are we being steered towards it by those on the bridge with the majority of the passengers cheering them on?

Quite simply it is like being on the Titanic knowing the Captain knows the iceberg is ahead and refusing to change course and burning the lifeboats.

A different course is necessary now and is suggested in this alternative budget. By protecting our community now, reducing future budget gaps now and standing up for our community now this budget sets the foundations for a resilient and resurgent Taunton Deane, for today and tomorrow.

The statutory statement from the Council's Section 151 Officer on the robustness of this proposal is set out in **Appendix 1**. The amended recommendations that support this alternative budget (for budget setting and determination calculations) are set out in **Appendix 2**.

Councillor Steve Ross
Independent Councillor

Councillor Eddie Gaines
Independent Councillors

February 2013

Appendix 1

Alternative Budget Proposal – Statement by Section 151 Officer

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This appendix reviews the amendments set out in the Independent Councillors Alternative Budget proposal and reports on the robustness of that proposal and the adequacy of reserves.

2. ROBUSTNESS OF BUDGET ESTIMATES

- 2.1 The proposed alternative budget makes some policy amendments to spending priorities for 2013/14, and increases the council tax by 3.5%. This increases the Councils base tax position and will reduce future years budget gaps by £119k per annum.
- 2.2 The additional spending plans are based on estimates and will need to be firmed up as plans progress. The spending plans are largely on one-off issues and do not therefore commit the Council to ongoing financial liabilities. There are no new financial risks associated with the new investment.

3. General Comments

- 3.1 All other general comments as set out in my report on the Executive's budget proposal stand.

4. Adequacy of Reserves

The Alternative Budget proposal does not make any changes to the level of General Fund Reserves.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 Based on the above review, and the comments in my report on the Executive's proposal, I am pleased to report that I believe the Council's reserves to be adequate and the 2013/14 Alternative Budget proposal is robust.

Shirlene Adam
Strategic Director

February 2013

APPENDIX 2

Recommendations – General Fund Budget Setting

Full Council is requested to consider this alternative budget proposal and, if supported, to approve the detailed recommendations on the General Fund Budget as set out in the Executives proposal with the following amendments:-

- a/ Note the s151 Officer Statement of Robustness in Appendix A of the Executives proposal and the further information in Appendix 1 of the Alternative Budget proposal.
- b/ Note the Draft General Fund Revenue Budget 2013/14 as summarised in the Executive report Appendix B with the above amendments, including a Basic Council Tax Requirement budget of £5,216,300 and Special Expenses of £42,630 (noting formal resolution of Council Tax Requirement is included in a separate report).
- c/ No changes needed
- d/ Approve the Service Options in Appendix D of the Executive proposal, with the deletion of the proposals to save £4k on hanging baskets, £10k on Christmas Lights, and £2k on Nature Reserves.
- e/ No changes needed
- f/ Note the General Reserves position and MTFP position in the Executive report (which will now show reduced gap of £119k per annum for future years).

Recommendations - Council Tax Setting

The Alternative Budget will make significant changes to the determination and tax setting position. A full set of updated recommendations supporting the above Alternative Budget will be available at Full Council.

Full Council Meeting – 26 February 2013

Report of Councillor John Williams – Leader of the Council

1. Budget Setting

- 1.1 The Executive's budget proposals for 2013/2014 was presented to Members earlier tonight and I hope by now it has been accepted. An enormous amount of work has gone into making the necessary savings, but as far as possible the vital front line services valued by so many in our community have been maintained.
- 1.2 I put on record my thanks to fellow Members for all their input over months of preparation and particularly to our officers for their unfailing patience and commitment to deliver the best result in these very difficult times in the face of seemingly ever changing directives from Government!
- 1.3 Notwithstanding the severe cuts in Government funding of Local Authorities I am proud to say this is a balanced budget that carefully manages our General Fund Revenue Account which should have little impact on front line services. It earmarks substantial sums from our General Fund accounts for that all important planning and investment for the future in support of our ambitious regeneration and development plans.
- 1.4 The budget concludes with our Housing Revenue Account and Capital Account, the amount we propose to invest in new build, major repairs and extensions is truly historic and ground breaking. I say an historic event because in our Housing Capital Budget we have included the huge sum of £11.7 million for new Council Housing and there is a further £4 million available through Knightstone Housing making it potentially a total of 128 new affordable houses being provided across Taunton Deane.
- 1.5 We are also investing in essential repairs to important assets like the multi-storey car park, refurbishment of Station Road Swimming Pool and actively progressing the urgently required replacement facilities for the aging St James Street Pool, so truly planning and investing for the future.

2. Flood Alleviation Scheme

- 2.1 This remains as work in progress at present and I still hope to bring a draft scheme to Members shortly. However, the in depth feasibility

and design studies being carried out to ensure it is both deliverable and affordable are taking longer than first thought. I can assure Members that this is not through any lack of urgency as it is recognised that delivery of a suitable scheme is as vital to existing homes and businesses as it is for some of the large developments planned for the future.

- 2.2 Getting the detail right is important but I am not aware of any major problems that should ultimately prevent a sensible scheme being deliverable and I hope that draft proposals will be brought before Members in March 2013. It is worth noting that we are getting tremendous support from the Environment Agency giving us confidence that any scheme finalized will be deliverable with their help.
- 2.3 The consultants are also working on guidance which will help in assessing the impact of and allowing development in the town centre to come forward in advance of the strategic solution being provided. This work is also expected to be completed in draft form by March. There is no suggestion that key sites such as Firepool will be delayed in their delivery as a result of flood issues.
- 2.4. I could not pass over flooding issues without recognising the desperate situation that is occurring on the Levels and Moors below Taunton. The sheer length of time that land, buildings and roads have been inundated has caused terrible hardship, much more than in previous years when floods have occurred but not to the extent and depth of the latest unprecedented flooding.
- 2.5 This makes the flood alleviation scheme all the more important if it can hold up vast quantities of water and delay arrival down river but I have no illusions for the quantities witnessed there is no easy solution. With all new development upstream we need to ensure Sustainable Urban Drainage designs (SUDs) are adhered to and is there a valid argument for extensive dredging of the waterways? If so we do need to actively press for this as I suspect no one action can prevent flooding but cumulatively it must make a difference.

3. Northern Inner Distributor Road (NIDR)

- 3.1 The good news is that the Minister has signed off the Compulsory Purchase Order and County Council are just waiting for final confirmation that Government funding is now in place. The scheme was approved some time ago and it now requires the Minister's final sign off to release funds. I understand a tentative start date for the Contractor on site has been agreed for 8 April 2013.
- 3.2 Confirmation that this important project can proceed will provide a tremendous and much needed boost to the marketing of the old livestock market site. The NIDR will provide access to the site and

open up extremely prominent sites for new development with great frontage to the new road and railway station.

4. A303 /A358/A30 Somerset County Council Initiative

- 4.1 The economic case is being finalised for presentation to the Government and hopefully they will find it sufficiently compelling to justify much needed investment in our infrastructure locally. This is very much a County initiative and I welcome it as it has enormous implications for our own future development as it will be the catalyst for so much else.
- 4.2 The immediate benefits for us will be an upgraded Junction 25 which in turn will enable the Henlade bypass and all the concurrent benefits that will flow from it.
- 4.3 We are also working with the County Council on the submission of a £3million bid for funding to improve the Creech Castle junction and reduce the congestion which occurs at that location.

5. Infrastructure Costs and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 5.1 We await an updated schedule of total costs but as queries were raised at the recent Full Council meeting with figures I did not recognise, I thought it worth revisiting the early Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) report of June 2011. This was our original assessment of projected infrastructure costs and likely developers contributions.
- 5.2 Table 7.1 is the relevant summary showing £348million total cost and £219million projected developer contributions leaving a £129million shortfall but a substantial amount of this is made up from the health sector and not our responsibility. However, it does clearly indicate the scale of the challenge we face and we will have to be creative and committed to securing substantial external funding. In this respect the Government are quite clear in that Councils that embrace growth will be rewarded.
- 5.3 It is important to note that a revised version of the IDP is currently being prepared to take account of the various amendments as a result of responses to the formal consultation that were considered by Full Council recently. I cannot imagine these will have a positive effect on the reduction of the margin, only increase it, as we have reduced the level of CIL to ensure we maintained viability.

6. Orchard Centre and Quantock House

- 6.1 The Orchard Centre has been successfully sold and completion of the sale occurred early January 2013. We have met with the new owners and it is impressive how they have assembled a large professional team to review all aspects of the business, benefits and constraints, on retail trade in Taunton with a view to investing in the centre. They appear committed to taking forward an extension to the centre in conjunction with us and have already prepared sketch plans of how this may look which have been shared with our officers.
- 6.2 They are fully aware of the risks of out of town shopping harming the town centre and I believe will work with us to try and prevent this hence the swift action in assembling the professional team to advise the best way forward.
- 6.3 There is also a recognition that our multi-storey car park is the main access to their centre for a lot of visitors. They are open to discussion about working with us to make the car park far more welcoming and certainly wish to help with changing the method of parking payment from “pay and display” to “pay on exit” to remove the uncertainty for time limited shoppers. This has to be excellent news and one we are pursuing.
- 6.4 Our officers have been in negotiation with the owners of Quantock House. Heads of Terms have been agreed and a report to a special Full Council will follow shortly. If I have further information at the time of presenting this report I will update Members accordingly.

7. West Somerset District Council

- 7.1 This has been the subject of various meetings and a very detailed report to scrutiny recently so I will not reiterate old ground but feel it important to say that if we do not review the possibility of shared services or joint management then we will not have any credibility with the Government.
- 7.2 They are clearly of the opinion that all Councils should be considering this so I would encourage you to accept and let us proceed at a pace and direction in our control. We can then at least make objective decisions based on fact as we have taken the trouble to assess and analyze. Anything less would leave us extremely vulnerable when we reach our own “Fiscal Cliff” as referred to in the report to Scrutiny.

Finally, a great story of personal initiative!

Community Development

A group of 18-25 year olds from Halcon approached Community Development a few months ago because they were unable to continue using the youth club or Street Linkz which are for under 18's. They were keen to set up a space of their own not just for somewhere to hang out but with access to a computer and as a base for some local training as they are keen to work.

They were linked up with Fixers (a voluntary body which aims to help towards solving problems) who have made a DVD with the young men about their environment, what they see is missing and what might be done to help them help themselves. ITV picked up on this and I was interviewed to comment on encouraging self help and how we (through the Community Development Team under the umbrella of the Priority Area Strategy) can offer support.

Community Development would like to set up a pilot project running over six months and I suggested a possible venue in the empty (charity) shop in Halcon. This is being followed up through Housing and Asset Management and will be great if we are able to help these young people help themselves.

Councillor John Williams

Council Meeting - 26 February 2013

Report of Councillor Jane Warmington - Community Leadership

1. Police and Crime Plan

- 1.1 Sue Mountstevens, the new Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner visited Taunton Deane last month to consult the public on the new Police and Crime Plan and community priorities for policing. The online consultation closes at the end of this month.
- 1.2 The refreshed Somerset Community Safety Strategic Assessment has also fed into this consultation from the Safer Somerset Partnership.
- 1.3 Other local feedback has included more funding for wider community involvement such as Community Justice Panels and Community Speedwatch. There is interest in rolling out the Street Pastor Scheme beyond Taunton Deane; support for the Neighbourhood Policing Teams (which include the PCSOs); continued CCTV coverage; better victim support through one integrated service; and more help with drug rehabilitation.

2. Voluntary and Community Sector Grants and the Youth Fund

- 2.1 Four more projects have been supported in this financial year by the Grants Panel as a result of some underspend.
- 2.2 Applications for small grants in the next financial year closed after a six week period half way through February. The Panel has met to consider both these and the service level agreements starting in April 2013. These will be published in the Weekly Bulletin and should be in time for those projects starting just after Easter which is so early this year.
- 2.3 We are very grateful for the transfer of nearly £30,000 from Somerset County Council (SCC) for 2013/2014 only, which is there to support youth projects.

3. Health and Wellbeing

- 3.1 The new **drop-in GP surgery** at the Acorns in Halcon, Taunton is now open on Tuesdays from 11am until 1.30pm. This is a pilot project set up between the Blackbrook and Victoria Gate Practices whose surgeries are a long walk away. Please encourage residents to use it so that it stays.

4. Community Development

- 4.1 The bid to SCC's Community Enablement Fund by Councillor Brooks (supported by Councillor Jane Warmington) for the **Link Power** Project was unsuccessful. However the project which began in September 2012 is already growing and

funding (mainly for training and equipment) will be looked for by partners from elsewhere.

- 4.2 This project is an initiative from the Police as a way to address two issues - unemployment and a deteriorating local environment in Halcon.
- 4.3 A group of four young men who were already volunteering (on TDBC housing estate community clean-up days every two weeks in the summer) wanted to do more. An inclement summer and reduced local authority spending had meant long grass, weeds and accumulated litter which were causing concern locally. Added to this is a perception of a poor trolley collection service for Asda.
- 4.4 The first work undertaken was to tidy up the grounds of the local church (All Saints) where overgrown pathways were cleared, lawns mowed and litter collected resulting in a dramatic improvement in the appearance of the area and wholehearted community support. This was then extended to include general litter picking and trolley collections across the area (supported by Asda who also provide breakfast for the volunteers in their staff canteen). The volunteers work for three mornings a week.
- 4.5 Training has been provided to enable them to use hand tools and some power tools in public spaces and alongside roads. A programme of work has been identified ahead. The number of volunteers has now grown to thirteen (so more training now required) and the area is really benefitting.
- 4.6 The project is run from the Link Centre and is supported by partner organisations. At the moment the lead for Link Power sits with the local PCSO Linda Ebdon with support from Taunton Deane's Community Development Officer Penny Comley-Ross.
- 4.7 The aim of the project is to get the local community through a group of trained supported volunteers to be responsible for the look and feel of the area they live in. The volunteers would gain work experience (and all that this involves including discipline, reliability, collaborative working, using initiative and developing leadership and communication skills) and recognised training qualifications which would hopefully help them into full time employment.
- 4.8 This work fits into Priority 4 of the Priority Area Strategy (PAS) 'to improve the look and feel of these areas'. The PAS is the action plan of the Taunton Deane Partnership.
- 4.9 Our local MP and Home Office Minister for Crime Prevention Jeremy Browne has recently visited the project, been shown around by and talked to some of the team of volunteers. His visit was much appreciated as is his letter of support.
- 4.10. **Halcon Supported Sports Project** aims to nurture 9-11 year olds within the ward into sports activities and for them to aspire to join clubs such as Taunton Rugby Club, Taunton Town Football club, other youth clubs or local sides.
- 4.11 The Halcon Ward has seen significant investment over recent years, especially in relation to new and upgraded open spaces. Viridor Green was specifically designed to incorporate equipment that would encourage and develop healthier

living. It has a purpose built multi use games area, which offers a protected arena, ensuring safe play.

- 4.12 Local businesses, members of Taunton Rugby Football Club, Taunton Town Football Club, the School and current partners operating within the Halcon Ward would like to deliver a programme of Tag Rugby from both Halcon Primary School and Viridor Green during the summer. Further sporting activities to be considered under the same plan include Football Coaching and Street Hockey.
- 4.13 **Halcon Brunch Club** served up nearly sixty breakfasts over two mornings during half term. Families also enjoyed board games and other activities. The number of local volunteers is growing.
- 4.14 The **Graffiti Art Project** began at the Link Centre this half term for 8-12 year olds with an introductory session on paper to develop technique. This will be followed up with three more sessions over Easter and Whitsuntide working on two local teen shelters and if there is time some panels to brighten up some park fencing. This is a Community Development project (with bought in expertise) to challenge some of the livelier local boys. They have already produced some terrific art work.
- 4.14 The first **community clean up** day of the year has taken place in Priorswood with partners Knightstone Housing Association.
- 4.15 Priorswood Resource Centre is hoping to open a **youth drop in** one evening a week, an idea born of seeing local youngsters hanging about outside with nowhere really for them to meet up. Recognising and responding to a local need.
- 4.16 A new **Youth Cafe** has opened on Friday evenings (and some Saturdays) in the old chapel at the top of Paul Street in Taunton Town Centre. This is a lovely shared space with CICCIC the local business based there. Some Taunton Deane small grants money has helped this to open amongst others not least Asda. It has been set up by Stand Against Violence.
- 4.17 Please refer to the Leaders Report for details of **17-24ers**, the older youngsters who made the film with Fixers and are looking for their own space to look after, use and develop in Halcon.

5. Priority Areas Strategy (PAS)

- 5.1 The Spatial Planning Working Group (SPWG) is a sub group of the Taunton Deane Partnership and was set up under the Local Development Framework. The group is Chaired by Councillor Andy Govier and has developed a rural focus as it is well supported by parishes and rural organisations.
- 5.2 It has now agreed to take on the rural aspects of the PAS which is to be welcomed. Key issues include the difficulties for rural areas to access services, transport and advice. Rural isolation is a problem as is fuel poverty particularly for the elderly and also for teenagers.
- 5.3 The rural areas by their very nature are harder to assess as scattered communities with few local services. Communities tend to be more self reliant.

- 5.4 A very good example of self reliance is the Wiveliscombe Area Partnership (WAP) which pre-dates other resource centres, which set itself up and continues to respond to needs across its wider community. It is a beacon. The Wivey Link, their community transport service is needed, efficient, hugely valued and very well used.
- 5.5 Delivering rural services tends to be more expensive though and something of a challenge. Sadly we are seeing this with West Somerset District Council which we at Taunton Deane are endeavouring to try and help out with.

6. Family Focus (Troubled Families)

- 6.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has visited Somerset and are concerned about the slow progress across the districts in signing up families to the Troubled Families programme. That said, 70% of the sign up to date has been in Taunton Deane where we have 20 families and expect to have signed up many more by the end of March.
- 6.2 The DCLG have seen the best results where family intervention workers were put in place to work closely with the families, show persistency, assertiveness and be challenging with those families by providing support but not creating dependency. We know this is successful from the pilot in Highbridge. This has been shown to be successful elsewhere but there was concern about how sustainable this was.
- 6.3 The Taunton Deane model to date has been based on workers from different agencies taking on a 'key contact' role with families. However progress is slow and available capacity is getting rapidly used up. So there is now a need to recruit some family intervention workers as well to take responsibility for a number of families each if we want to try and turn the lives of these families around.
- 6.4 This investment in capacity will be met from the upfront Central Government funding given to us for the project (£163,000) which is as yet largely unspent.
- 6.5 With increased capacity we have agreed to cover West Somerset's Troubled Families programme (40 families in total) and have received £70,000 to do so.
- 6.6 The Troubled Families project is extremely challenging both in the families we are dealing with and with changing the mindset of agencies who have worked in silos for years. That said the project has the potential to change the way local government and other agencies interact and work in deprived areas. It will not be a quick fix but now we do have the opportunity.
- 6.7 These families lives will be better and with other community development work already underway we can aim to prevent other families in the future ending up being highly dependent and as unhappy as these families are. The numbers will reduce over time as will the enormous associated costs. I really do believe that everyone wins if we tackle this.
- 6.8 For a regular update visit www.tauntondeane.gov.uk/familyfocus

7. Equalities and Diversity

- 7.1 South West Audit Partnership recently undertook an audit of the Borough Council's

approach to equalities and diversity. They scrutinised various Executive reports and undertook interviews with various members of staff. They found some good practice, but ultimately there are short-comings and concerns relating to:-

- lack of awareness regarding responsibilities in relation of legislative requirements;
- the degree of understanding; and
- wide variations in the quality and appropriate use of Equality Impact Analysis (EIA).

7.2 In response, the Strategy and Performance Unit have prepared a Corporate Equalities Action Plan (CEAP). This will be considered by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) during early March. The action plan (if approved) will deliver the following:-

- Effective performance monitoring Executive reports (including quality compliance);
- Improvements to Equality Actions Plans (for inclusion within Service Plans);
- Training for CMT/Leads and all new staff;
- Training for Members every four years; and
- Equality Surgeries for staff on a monthly basis.

7.3 In all there are over 20 actions within the CEAP. The aim is to embed equalities within the organisation, thereby ensuring we deliver inclusive services and ensure that we reduce the risk of legal challenge.

Councillor Jane Warmington

Council Meeting - 26 February 2013

Report of Councillor Cavill - Economic Development Asset Management Arts and Tourism

We have recruited two new members for the Economic Development and Regeneration Team (ED), and both officers have now started. Anne-Marie Spalding is the new ED Lead, she has worked in Somerset for a considerable number of years, including a period as Head of ED at Sedgemoor. Most recently she was the Programme Manager for the Western Somerset Local Action for Rural Communities. Anne-Marie will be leading on support for inward investors, and our services to assist people into work via Job Clubs, EDF Employment Brokerage and others.

Sally Attfield has been recruited through the Somerset College Apprenticeship Scheme. She will be working across all sections of ED to provide admin and project support.

1. Launch of Taunton Means Business

- 1.1 This was launched in November, as the new inward investment web site for Taunton Deane. In January a media/PR company was appointed – A Head for PR – who will be carrying out a three month programme to raise awareness of the site and the support the Council is able to offer investors.
- 1.2 In February a meeting was held to further plan the following activities:-
 - Production of a 3 minute video, to be made in the last week of February, featuring successful local businesses and the USP's of the area;
 - A Regional Business Breakfast, hosted jointly with Business Insider magazine;
 - Social media activities;
 - PR campaign; and
 - Case studies of local businesses.
- 1.3 In April the Council will rejoin Into Somerset, which will strengthen and be complementary to our own marketing work.

2. Rigid Containers Limited

- 2.1 The Council has been working closely over several months with the new investor at Chelston Park, Rigid Containers. The company is taking the former Cooperative Distribution depot and is currently seeking planning permission on the property. Initially 40 jobs assembling and distributing cardboard boxes will be created, and the site, when fully developed, intends to create in the order of 150 FTE's.

- 2.2 We are pleased to have gained this investment for Wellington against strong competition from other areas, and to have been able to support them in a number of ways. In particular, to be able to offer them funding under our new Investment Grant Scheme which was a major incentive in enabling Rigid Containers' investment in our area.

3. Mid-Summer Festival

- 3.1 This event, to be held on Saturday, 16 June 2013, based around the town centre and Castle Green, is being organized by the Events Group. This Group is part of the legacy of the Olympic Torch Relay Events Group and continues to be chaired by Councillor Mark Edwards.
- 3.2 The Group is made up of many local cultural organizations and supported by the Town Centre Company and the ED Team. The activities will use the town centre's various open spaces, Castle Green, Goodlands Gardens and Somerset Square. It is also hoped that North Street can be closed for sports activities amongst the local schools.

4. Business Start up Grants and Rural Retailer Grants

- 4.1 Recently, awards have been made to the Lamb and Flag Pub in Blagdon Hill, who are setting up a local Post Office, and the Churchinford Village Shop. At the moment two more applications for start-up business grants are under consideration. So far, this year, ten new businesses and five rural retail businesses have been supported.

5. Hinkley Nuclear New Build

- 5.1 We are working closely with EDF Energy to enable Taunton Deane businesses and residents to benefit from the major investment soon to be going into Hinkley Point C. The final investment decision by EDF is expected in the early summer of this year.
- 5.2 *Hinkley Supplier Forum.* EDF commissioned the Somerset Chamber of Commerce to set up the Hinkley Supplier Portal. In excess of 1,000 businesses are now registered on the web portal, setting out the products and services they could offer to the development. In January the Council supported a 'Meet the Buyer' event at the County Ground, hosted by Kier Bam, to which local businesses were invited to meet with the company's procurement team. Our officers attend monthly Supplier Engagement Forum meetings where updates on progress are given, including appointment of contractors.
- 5.3 *Hinkley Employment Brokerage.* MAC is the contractor appointed by EDF to ensure the availability of local employees for EDF and its primary suppliers. We meet on a monthly basis with them and the Employment Brokerage is already actively encouraging local people to

sign up to a Talent Pool. We are also working with MAC and Somerset College, through our Job Clubs and other mechanisms, to ensure that Taunton Deane residents are aware of this resource.

6. Taunton Town Centre Company

- 6.1 The Company has carried out a fundamental review of its structure and its role. This means that all businesses that take up membership will have an opportunity to nominate and elect the Board members.
- 6.2 As a result of this and other initiatives that have been taken, as an outcome of face to face meetings with town centre businesses, I am pleased to say that there has been an increase in Membership and many more positive comments on the benefits of a Town Centre Company. A decision on whether or not to proceed with another BID ballot will be taken by the new company Board later this year.

7. Make it Your Business, Wellington Business Event

- 7.1 The ED Team was pleased to support the Wellington Business Association in delivering the annual business event in Wellington on Wednesday, 13 February 2013. The event was attended by around 50 local businesses seeking advice and support on growing their business. It is good to see that there are companies seeking to expand and that they are choosing Taunton Deane.

8. Asset Management

- 8.1 In Goodlands Gardens work on conversion of the toilets and future lease scheme have been agreed. Redevelopment of the site should commence this month.
- 8.2 Sale of TYCC: Negotiations with the prospective purchasers are continuing in respect of Heads of Terms, planning and liability or not for CIL.
- 8.3 High Street: The lighting project being managed by the Public Arts Panel now has a costed scheme, and with the assistance of Reed Holland, an application will be made to the Arts Council. Some of the funding that the Council would contribute would already be part of the upgrading of power to the High Street.

9. Tourism and the Arts Update

- 9.1 **Visitor numbers and spend**
Whilst visitor throughput and spend has slightly decreased in this quarter (which can be partially blamed on the recent poor weather), the Cards for Good Causes Christmas Card shop bucked national trends and reported an increase in sales year on year.

9.2 Tourism Update and business support

In addition to the general advice offered to new and existing tourism businesses. The Tourist Information Lead continues to work with the trade-led Somerset Tourism Association (STA) in their efforts to promote the county as a tourist destination. Current STA initiatives include a conference in Wells in April to discuss their future priorities and marketing strategy and the launch of the first annual Somerset Tourism Awards taking place in May.

9.3 The TIC Team have assisted the Brewhouse Theatre and Orchard Shopping Centre with their public art project 'Snout and About'.

9.4 Support has also been given to the Museum of Somerset who are organising their first Literature Exchange event at the Museum on Monday, 4 March 2013 (between 10am and 1pm).

9.5 New activities planned

The annual refresh of the office will take place over the next few weeks in preparation for the start of the new season at the end of March.

The TIC Team continues to work to raise the profile of and market Taunton Deane, and does an excellent job.

9.6 Hestercombe Gardens

The Hestercombe Centre for young musicians had its opening concert on Saturday, 16 February 2013. The Guildhall School of Music and Drama has forged a new relationship with both Somerset and Norfolk music education hubs. Talented children will be invited to audition for places at the Hestercombe Centre for Young Musicians (CYM).

9.7 The centre, with 90 rooms available, will be able to offer fantastic support to young musicians, forming part of the South West Music School. It is very much hoped that, in partnership with the Music Hub, the Guildhall School can offer talented young musicians in Somerset the same opportunities it is able to provide in London.

Councillor Norman Cavill

Council Meeting – 26 February 2013

Report of Councillor Ken Hayward – Environmental Services

1. Environmental Health

1.1 The Council is involved in two significant Health and Safety prosecutions:-

- The first relates to the investigation of the M5 crash in 2011 and is being lead by the Crown Prosecution Service, with the Council's support.
- The second relates to an incident at a farm machinery sale, also in 2011. A telehandler operator and an individual from a local business are answering offences under the Health and Safety at Work Act. This will be the subject of an initial hearing on 1 March 2013.

Both have involved significant officer time to get them to this stage.

1.2 The Council is subject to an objection to the accounts relating to fees and charges levied against the Taxi and Private Hire trade. A local elector has lodged the complaint. The Council has responded to this objection and this is with the Council's Auditors for an initial assessment prior to adjudication being made as to whether a Public Inquiry is necessary. The background to this case was discussed at Corporate Governance Committee on 4 February 2013, where papers can be referenced. The Council has been able to use this process to ensure that the fee setting process remains robust for the coming financial year and has developed a model which will be able to inform fee setting across other areas of Licensing.

1.3 Food inspections are much in the news and the Food Team will be completing all of its highest risk inspections this year. This helps to maintain the standards expected by the public and the authorities and to ensure public health. There is a danger that medium risk inspections will not all be completed this year although the expectation is that the majority of these will be completed by the end of the year. This has been caused by the increased workload in Health and Safety and an increased inspection burden relating to butchers in particular. This increased burden has come about due to new guidance from the Food Standards Agency relating to the specific risk caused by eColi 0157.

This further means that a number of the lowest risk inspections will not be completed. A programme will be put into place to tackle this in 2013/2014.

1.4 Taunton Deane Borough Council will be hosting other Local Authorities from across Somerset on the 12 March 2012 as part of a Partnership Action Day. Items on the agenda include an update from the Health and Safety Executive who are consulting on reforms of the Health and Safety regulations; guidance on asbestos; and our own staff leading on event management following the successful operation of several high profile events last year, not least the Olympic Torch.

2. Climate Change / Carbon Management

2.1 Blackbrook Solar PV project:

A business case has been worked up for installing up to 50kW of solar PV to the roof of the Indoor Tennis Centre at Blackbrook Pavilion. The project would cost £80,000 and create an income of approximately £180,000 over 25 years. The payback is about 9.6 years. The carbon savings are 23 tones per year.

On 10 January 2013, the Carbon Management Steering Group agreed the project in principle and subject to a 'sound' roof has tasked Roger Mitchinson and Torsten Daniels to produce a report for Scrutiny in March.

A structural engineer has been appointed to model whether the roof can take the additional weight of the solar PV installation. The results of his assessment will be known by the end of this month.

2.2 Progress on Schneider project:

We have agreed a final package of energy saving measures for Schneider to be priced up. Schneider will produce a final report for Blackbrook, Wellsprings and Wellington Sport Centre by the end of February. The internal project group will discuss the outcomes of this report and make a recommendation to Scrutiny.

The report will not include Taunton Pool and The Deane House. The proposals for Taunton Pool have been 'parked' due to a pending bid for refurbishing the pool using Sport England funding (outcomes to be known end of March 2013).

Southwest One decided that they are not interested in progressing the project for The Deane House. The returns from implementing the energy efficiency measures proposed for The Deane House – £5,000 per year during the rental period – do not make it viable.

2.3 Taunton Pool Solar PV installation:

The data screen at Taunton Pool is now operational. Additional information about the project – a notice board and leaflets – is available for pool customers.

2.4 Implementation process of Carbon Management and Energy Resilience Plan (CMERP):

Current CMERP for 2012/2013 contains 45 actions of which by Mid January 2013:-

- 25 were either completed or on track of completion;
- 16 actions were off track or have uncertainties with regard to successful delivery by April 2013;
- 4 actions that had been cancelled for technical or other reasons

3. Cremation Services

- 3.1 The installation of three new cremators and mercury filtration equipment is a major project at the crematorium and is progressing extremely well.
- 3.2 The new cremators are very sophisticated enabling close control over the cremation process, which is far quicker, cleaner and more efficient than the previous equipment. The handover date for the new equipment is May 2013.
- 3.3 There is a new private crematorium being built at Pawlett, Bridgwater which is understood will be completed in October, this will consequently reduce the number of cremations received at Taunton crematorium and be reflected in future budgets.

Councillor Ken Hayward

Council Meeting - 26 February 2013

Report of Councillor Mrs Catherine Herbert – Sports, Parks and Leisure

1. Parks

- 1.1 Vivary Park, Taunton has continued to struggle with the bad weather and has been closed on various days to protect the park when there has been standing water. Some of the edges of the grass have become quite badly damaged so we are putting protective fencing up in areas to try and let the grass recover once repaired.
- 1.2 We have written to the local secondary schools and various other youth groups in Taunton inviting them to use the bandstand in Vivary Park at weekends from May onwards. I hope that we will get a positive response to this as it would be great to see the bandstand used for more live performances.

2. Community Leisure and Play

Some details on play and outdoor recreation Section 106 Agreement spend over the last year:-

- 2.1 **Wellington Playing Field Pavilion** - Work has commenced on the £355,073.00 refurbishment and extension of the Wellington Playing Field Pavilion, and expected to take 26 weeks. The existing Pavilion facilities did not comply with current regulations or meet National Governing Body Standards. The building was inadequate in size to cater for the number of teams using the site. Furthermore it did not enable women's, men's and children's teams to use the facilities at the same time. The project cost is being met from Section 106 Agreement developer contributions together with a grant of £125,858 from the Sport England Inspired Facilities Grant Scheme.
- 2.2 **Wiveliscombe Lion d'Angers** - After consultation with Wiveliscombe Parish Council the Section 106 funding from the development at Tucker's Meadow has been spent on a climbing frame, which has been installed in Taunton Deane's children's play area at Lion d' Angers.
- 2.3 **Taunton, French Weir Park** – Section 106 children's play contributions have been used to install a climbing wall and sand play equipment in French Weir Park. The equipment was chosen by local children who were consulted on behalf of the Council by the Friends of French Weir Park.
- 2.4 **Taunton, Lyngford Park** - A first for Taunton Deane Borough Council. Outdoor gym equipment requested by the local community at Priorswood has been installed at Lyngford Park, using Section 106 outdoor recreation contributions.

- 2.5 **Taunton, Longrun Meadows** - Cycle jumps and picnic tables have been installed at Longrun Meadows using Section 106 outdoor recreation contributions, at the request of the Friends of Longrun Meadows.
- 2.6 **Taunton, Goodland Gardens** - Section 106 outdoor recreation contributions have provided additional benches in Goodland Gardens.

3. Tone Leisure (Taunton Deane) Limited Activities

Community, Sports and Health Development

- 3.1 Tone continues to work hard to develop a number of community outreach programmes:-

Health Development

3.2 Weight Management

- 3.2.1 The Community Pounds project has finished in Halcon, Taunton with over 20 residents signing up and losing weight. The participants will be continuing their success through attending physical activity classes.

3.3 NHS Health Checks

- 3.3.1 NHS Health Checks created a partnership with the Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure that NHS Health Checks remain an important part of the agenda across Taunton Deane. Health Checks will take place within the community in a number of different locations at Health Promotion events in the coming weeks.

3.4 Volunteering Strategy

- 3.4.1 Since launching the Volunteers' Strategy Tone has recruited approximately ten volunteers to date in various posts such as Health Walk Leaders, Flexercise Leaders and Promotional Assistants. A Volunteer Celebration event will take place in March 2013 to recognise the work Tone's volunteers have been doing.

3.5 Hearts and Soles Nordic Walking

- 3.5.1 Cold and wet weather has certainly not deterred people from trying Nordic Walking! Since 31st October 45 people have done a taster session and 86% of them have gone on to learn the full technique by doing the Learn to Nordic Walk course. Many of the participants are new to Tone Leisure.
- 3.5.2 Instructor-led Adventure walks are now taking place twice weekly from various meeting points across the district including leisure centres, parks and green spaces in the towns, in villages and on the Quantock Hills. Tone are working to convert those who have completed the course into regular walkers.
- 3.5.3 Participations in the programme are expected to grow during 2013 as further tasters and courses are provided and additional Adventure walks are put on.

The next step is recruiting and training volunteer leaders to help lead the Adventure walks. The project, Hearts and Soles Nordic Walking has been part-funded by the British Heart Foundation and will help older adults in Taunton Deane, particularly heart patients and their family members to lead an active lifestyle.

Facility News

3.6 Wellington Sports Centre

3.6.1 With assistance from the Somerset Activity Sports Partnership (SASP) team Wellington has launched two ladies' netball sessions. In just six weeks there are already two regular training sessions held at the centre and lots more ladies interested.

3.6.2 In January Tone held two Pony Club Triathlons - both were very successful and well supported. The Annual Aquathon is taking place on Sunday, 17 February 2013 and again this event has proved very popular.

3.6.3 The Health Suite has been closed since 16 December 2012 due to the Sauna cabin failing a service inspection. Tone has been working closely with Taunton Deane Borough Council to replace the unit and also refurbish the facility. The Health Suite is expected to re-open early in the new financial year.

3.7 Taunton Tennis Centre

3.7.1 Tone has successfully secured funding and recruited a new Tennis Apprentice to add to the staffing at the Tennis Club. The Apprentice is employed on a fixed term contract for 12 months, allowing Tone to expand class sizes when they are used as an assistant and cover coaches' annual leave and sickness seamlessly with consistency of coaching.

3.7.2 Tennis tournaments at Taunton Tennis Club have been very successful to date, mainly due to the personnel involved in running the events and the central location in the South West of England. Over the winter period Tone has expanded the tournament programme to deliver new timed match play events for juniors and 'open' events for adults to compete.

3.8 Wellsprings Leisure Centre

3.8.1 Following the opening of the Wyvern Day Nursery in June Wellsprings has now joined with Wyvern and is offering a crèche facility to the customers, which started in January 2013.

3.9 Vivary Adventure Centre and Vivary Golf Course

3.9.1 The last few months have been a testing time for both the Adventure Centre and the Golf Course - the park has flooded three times since November 2012, causing closure to the whole centre.

3.9.2 The Golf Course has been water logged for a considerable amount of time and has only been open for ten days since 21 November 2012. The Mini Golf

and the Adventure Centre suffered for 2-4 days each time the park flooded due to access.

3.9.3 The High Ropes course has seen over 7,000 visitors since opening in June 2012 with many schools starting to make enquiries, birthday parties being booked and general awareness increasing every day.

3.10 Taunton Pool

3.10.1 Swimfit is a seven week course designed to help improve fitness. It can be quite challenging and is ideal for those wanting to push themselves to new fitness goals. Its popularity last year has meant extra courses being offered this year on Monday and Wednesday evenings.

3.11 St. James Street

3.11.1 A new Water Polo Club started on Sunday, 6 January 2013. Bookings have really taken off for the new venture, working in partnership with Taunton Deane Swimming Club. The sessions led by Rose Younger, an ex - GB goalie and team captain, have proved a great success.

Councillor Catherine Herbert.

Council Meeting – 26 February 2013

Report of Councillor Mrs Jean Adkins – Housing Services

1. Housing Enabling - Regeneration

- 1.1 The Creechbarrow Road, Taunton scheme, which has been brought forward following further consultation with residents and stakeholders has received support from the Tenant Services Management Board, the Community Scrutiny Committee and the Executive. The approval of Full Council will be sought on 4 March 2013.
- 1.2 This scheme is a first for Taunton Deane, as it involves a joint undertaking between Housing Services and a Registered Provider, but will build on experience gained in other “traditional” Regeneration schemes, particularly around decanting tenants.
- 1.3 Decanting is currently underway at Parmin Close, Taunton and a new package of tailored support to assist elderly and vulnerable tenants is about to be introduced. We hope this will help to allay the concerns naturally felt by tenants faced with a move.
- 1.4 Construction on other sites has been delayed by the weather and, at Ruskin Close, Taunton, by a Highways issue.

2. Affordable Housing Target

- 2.1 Due to the problems mentioned above and, as I mentioned in my last report, the fact that a large number of completions were scheduled for Quarter 4, the danger of slippage has been realised. It is now unlikely that the target of 200 units will be reached by year end.
- 2.2 46 units at Ruskin Close have been moved into the 2013/2014 pipeline, although 14 of these could complete earlier if the Highways issue is resolved.
- 2.3 Some of the shortfall may well be made up by Firstbuy sales on the many developments offering this scheme, which is proving very popular. Figures will be provided by the Homes and Communities Agency.
- 2.4 Although this is very disappointing, taking into account that for the last two years the target has been exceeded (by 23 last year and 6 the year

before), we may still achieve the targeted 600 over the three year period. There will also be a healthy start to achieving the target, again 200, for 2013/2014.

3. Sellicks Green, Blagdon Hill

- 3.1 Councillor Jane Warmington, representing the Leader of the Council, and I recently attended the opening of Sellicks Green, where four Affordable Homes, two of which are Shared Ownership, for local people have been built by one of the members of our Affordable Housing Partnership, Raglan. This has been achieved without Government grant.
- 3.2 Although the numbers are not hugely significant in terms of our target, nevertheless a welcome contribution, they are of major significance in the small local community. Built by local builders, Tottle Brothers, on land used previously as their yard, to Code 3 with Air Source Heat Pumps, they meet a local need.
- 3.3 We viewed one of the Shared Ownership homes and were then able to meet the tenant of one of the other properties, who kindly showed us around and was thrilled with her new home.
- 3.4 If such a development were built in every village in Taunton Deane, this would go a long way towards meeting rural housing need.

4. Right to Buy Sales

- 4.1 Sales stood at 23 at Quarter 3, with total receipts of £1,573,693.
- 4.2 The retainable receipts, £831,587 can be used for building more Council Houses or put to Enabling schemes for Affordable Housing. Of these £2,771,957 have to be spent within three years and the Council has to supply match funding under the revised Right to Buy scheme.

5. Council House Building

- 5.1 The four Phase One sites (3 in Taunton and 1 at West Bagborough), which include a scheme for 4 Passiv Haus, are progressing towards planning applications .
- 5.2 These units and those at Creechbarrow Road, will count towards our Affordable Housing targets, with the 30 Knightstone units due to be completed by March 2015.

6. Housing Services

- 6.1 The contract for fascias and soffits has now been awarded to DR Jones with work due to start shortly.
- 6.2 As well as the Council House building programme, the Business Plan is investing heavily in our existing stock. The budget for 2013/2014 includes £7.7 million of work (a similar amount would have been handed over to the Government under the old Subsidy system).

7. Estates Management – Voids

- . The average time to relet empty properties is now 20.85 days, just within the target of 21 days. This is a significant achievement with voids on the increase and we have also seen an improvement in new tenants' satisfaction with the standard of the property, 93% against a target of 86%.

8. Estates Management – Benefit Changes

- 8.1 Work has been under way to try and mitigate the impact of Welfare changes on our tenants. A leaflet entitled "What you need to know about changes to housing benefit" has been distributed to all tenants. There have also been articles in the Deane Housing News.
- 8.2 Welfare Reform visits have been made by the Welfare Reform Project Officer, Michaela Mullen, to those tenants whom we can identify as being affected (around 500, but subject to change).
- 8.3 Appointment letters were sent to 105 tenants. 13 wanting to downsize were seen and of these 3 mutual exchanges have been agreed, one direct match and two have successfully bid on Homefinder Somerset.
- 8.4 All those visited have been offered help to complete application forms, advice on the Homefinder system and also help with financial statements, where required.
- 8.5 We have a pot of money set aside for Transfer Removal Grants to assist those for whom the expense of a move is unaffordable, on a first come first served basis.
- 8.6 The Tenants' Forum are hosting a Tenant Information Day on 20th February at the Cricket Ground at which Michaela will be present and also a team from Revenues and Benefits to offer advice.
- 8.7 In association with Shelter, we are offering three workshop sessions at the The Deane House on 7 March 2013 for tenants wishing to learn about budgeting and money management. The response has been

excellent with a number of places already booked at the time of writing this report. If you know of anyone who might be interested, they can telephone 01823 356319 to book a place.

Councillor Mrs Jean Adkins

Council Meeting - 26 February 2013

Report of Councillor Mrs Vivienne Stock-Williams - Corporate Resources

1. Customer Contact Centre

1.1 Service Delivery

The past quarter, November 2012 – January 2013, proved an interesting challenge for the Contact Centre due to the weather situation, which considerably increased both the number of calls and the challenges staff faced in their determination to come into work. The service did, however, achieve significant success with its performance. The team also managed to continue with their planned annual development programme during this difficult period. For the fourth year running, the Centre operated a telephone service between Christmas and New Year, with approximately 75% of usual call volumes. In January 2013, there was increase in call volumes of about 6% above last year's figure. Despite this increase, there was an improvement in overall performance due to the increase in multi-skilling which has been developed within the service.

1.2 Training

The purchase by Southwest One of the Customer Contact Centre's new e-learning tool – Knowlagent – is now complete and the software is installed. Initial soft skills courses have been rolled out to all advisors in the service. Service specific training courses are currently in the process of being designed and rolled out and these are being well received. The most recent training related to the Garden Waste renewal process.

1.3 Telephony Refresh

All approvals have now been received for the refresh of the Contact Centre's telephony hardware and software systems. Managers are currently working with procurement and the suppliers to reach contract signature. It is expected that implementation of the new call distribution system will take place during the summer 2013 and Members will be updated on progress and performance on a regular basis. The system will be designed to provide a greater level of resilience. It will also enable us to introduce a 24/7 automated payment service, which has been under discussion with the Authority for several years. Additionally, there will be an automated switchboard facility, which will make it easier to transfer people who know to whom they wish to speak, leaving advisers free to deal with customer queries.

1.4 Statistical Information – November 2012 to January 2013:

Service Line	Reporting Authority	KPI No	Performance Measure	Frequency of Reporting	2012/2013 Target	Nov-12	Dec-12	Jan-13	Feb-13	Mar-13
						QUARTER 3			QUARTER 4	
Customer Contact	TDBC	1	% of calls answered in 20 secs	Monthly	80%	86%	87%	80.16%		
Customer Contact	TDBC	2	% of calls resolved at first point of contact	Monthly	92%	96%	97%	98%		
Customer Contact	TDBC	3	% of external customers rating the Customer Contact service as Very Good/Good	Annually (monitored quarterly)	75%		87%			
Customer Contact	TDBC	4	Abandoned call rate - less than 5%	Monthly	<5%	3.49%	2.66%	3.91%		

During the quarter November 2012 - January 2013, a total of 7,903 enquiries were dealt with at The Deane House main, Housing and Planning Receptions. 5,652 people visited Wellington Community Office – 3,527 to make enquiries including TIC and 2,125 to make a payment through the kiosk. Staff dealt with 928 letter and email enquiries during this period.

2. Corporate and Client Services

2.1 Client Team

The current focus for the Client Team is to work with Southwest One to agree the necessary contractual changes and handover arrangements required to bring the Revenues and Benefits service back in-house. This is a complex and detailed project, but it is progressing well and the return of the service remains on target for 1 April 2013.

2.1.1 Performance and Delivery

In addition, the team is currently in the process of finalising agreement with Southwest One on the Key Performance Indicator targets (KPIs) and Service Development Plans (SDPs) for the coming financial year.

2.1.2 Service Monitoring

The team continues to monitor service delivery by the various Southwest One services, which is broadly on track. (For more information, please refer to the detailed six monthly update report which went to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 24 January 2013).

2.2 Procurement

The shortfall in delivered savings through the Procurement Transformation Project remains a significant concern and issue for the Authority. Consequently, we are closely managing the position and a detailed Procurement Transformation update report was presented to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 24 January 2013.

2.2.1 Savings

Savings continue to be delivered, with a further £100,000 having been delivered since July 2012. This brings the total savings delivered to date to more than £1.5million. Current savings initiatives being looking at relate to potential savings in fleet, banking and domestic heating. The work on savings initiatives related to waste removal, disposal and recycling (excluding those items within the scope of the Somerset Waste Partnership) is continuing.

2.3 Retained Finance and Corporate Insurance

The Retained Finance Team continues to manage the finance functions not provided by Southwest One, provide support to the Section 151 Officer, assist the Client Team in monitoring the Finance Service element of the Southwest One contract and provide support for the retained Parking functions.

2.3.1 Revenues and Benefits Contract

A key activity has been to agree with Southwest One the financial aspects of the contract changes to facilitate the return of the Revenues and Benefits service. The necessary price changes to the contract have been agreed.

2.3.2 Procurement of New Contracts

Additionally, work to procure new bank, insurance and treasury management advice contracts is progressing well.

2.3.3 Treasury Management

A Treasury Management Strategy Statement has been produced which will go to Full Council for approval.

2.4 Retained HR

The Retained HR Manager continues to provide strategic HR support to the Authority, manages the HR functions not provided by Southwest One and assists the Client Team in monitoring the HR aspects of the Southwest One contract.

2.4.1 Current Priorities

Current priorities include:

- Managing the HR aspects of the forthcoming return of the Revenues and Benefits service in relation to secondees and any staff who will TUPE transfer to the Council;
- Assisting in the provision of cover for the vacant Health & Safety role and the recruitment of a new Health & Safety Officer;
- Monitoring sickness levels throughout the Authority;
- Ensuring the implementation of the new lease and car allowance policies.

2.5 SAP Re-Launch and Patching

The key elements of the system have been launched and are working.

2.5.1 PREDS Module

The revised staff performance review (PREDS) module has been delivered and tested and is ready for rollout. The original functionality provided within SAP did not work efficiently and we insisted upon revisions before we were prepared to use it. The team is currently planning the rollout and how best to prepare the organisation for its implementation.

2.5.2 Sickness Module

The priority for 2013 will be to launch the sickness module, which should be ready for testing on 4 March 2013. This is the last major outstanding element of SAP.

2.6 Corporate Projects

2.6.1 ICT Infrastructure Upgrade

The initial stage of the infrastructure upgrade has commenced, which has involved the upgrading of network switches in The Deane House. New servers have been delivered and installed. The servers are in the process of being configured and will be brought into live use from February 2013 onwards.

2.7 Welfare Benefits

The new local Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme has been agreed by Members and is in the process of being implemented in time for the annual billing process. The project is on-track.

3. Corporate Performance

3.1 Corporate Performance

The Quarter 3 Corporate Performance report was considered by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 21 February 2013 and will be brought before the Executive on 13 March. Once the new Corporate Business Plan is approved, CMT will commence a review of the Corporate Performance Scorecard and recommend new measures / updated targets for implementation in 2013/2014. Members will also be invited to help develop a refreshed scorecard and suite of performance indicators

3.2 Performance Scorecards

Members are reminded that a full suite of 'Theme / Service' performance scorecards are also now produced quarterly by Theme Managers. These include a wide range of operational performance measures and are a useful tool for Members and Managers when discussing performance issues and progress against objectives

3.3 Monitoring Audit Recommendations

The Performance Lead and South West Audit Partnership (SWAP) have commenced a new process whereby the implementation of all audit recommendations (external and internal audits) is regularly monitored. Managers have been asked to provide an update on the status of all current audit recommendations by the end of February 2013. There are a total of 185 recommendations, with 48 of these (26%) assessed as high priority.

3.4 Risk Management

The Corporate Risk Register was reviewed by CMT as part of the Quarter 3 performance review (4 February 2013). The updated risk register will be reported to the Corporate Governance Committee on 11 March 2013, together with progress of the Council's Risk Management Action Plan.

3.5 Corporate Change Programme

The Council's Corporate Change Programme is now being overseen by the Strategy and Performance Team. Project Managers for all major corporate projects are currently reporting monthly to the 'Programme Management Group'. The major corporate projects currently within the scope of this group are:

- Corporate Business Plan (Simon Lewis / Dan Webb)
- Community Infrastructure Levy (Tim Burton)
- DLO Depot re-location business case (Sue Tomlinson)
- Welfare and Finance Reform (Paul Harding)
- Flood Alleviation Solutions (Mark Green)
- Taunton Retail and Firepool (Ian Franklin)
- New Swimming Pool (Sue Tomlinson / Alison North)

An overview and progress summary of each of the above projects is provided in the 'Key Projects' section of the Quarter 3 corporate performance scorecard.

3.5.1 Corporate Support Requirements

The Programme Management Group is currently focusing on understanding the corporate support requirements (eg Finance, HR, Legal) for the programme, and on ensuring appropriate rigour and good practice are applied to project management.

4. Legal and Democratic Services

4.1 Elections

More information has now come through regarding the implementation of the Individual Registration Process, which will be fully implemented by July 2014. There will be a lot of work to do to get the processes and procedures in place over the coming few months, especially relating to IT.

4.1.1 SCC Elections

The team is currently preparing for the Somerset County Council elections which take place on 2 May 2013.

5. Revenues and Benefits

5.1 Welfare Reform

Whilst annual billing and benefits up-rating is always busy, this year presents an unprecedented level of change. There are major challenges in delivering the new Localised Council Tax Support Scheme, under-occupancy changes in benefit for social sector tenants and reforms in Council Tax discounts and exemptions. This is on top of the usual year-end activities of producing and sending 50,000 Council Tax bills, nearly 4,000 Business Rate bills and up-rating approximately 9,600 benefit claims. To help customers plan for these significant changes, in February the service will send fact sheets to everyone affected. These fact sheets will provide an overview of the potential impact through the various changes in benefits and Council Tax, and will signpost customers to further information and advice.

5.2 Speed of Processing and Collection Rates

Benefit processing is currently up-to-date and Council Tax collection is ahead of target. Businesses are struggling in the ongoing economic climate to meet their business rate obligations and unfortunately collection is not quite on target.

5.3 Fraud

As Members will be aware, we have had several recent successes in prosecuting people committing benefit fraud. At present, we have several cases going through the Court system, one of which involves a fraud of over £25,000 going back to 1993. We will publicise the outcome of these cases in an attempt to deter those who may commit benefit fraud in the future.

6. Wellbeing Initiatives

6.1 Care First

The Council continue to provide an Employee Assistance Programme to all employees through Care First. A recent procurement exercise is drawing to a close which will see a reduction in cost for these services.

6.1.1 Care First Provision

Care First provide an independent service offering confidential help and advice to employees (and managers). In addition to advice services, both telephone and face-to-face counselling are available.

6.1.2 Care First Monitoring

Anonymised usage reports are provided to help the Authority identify trends and concerns.

6.2 Flu Jabs

Due to the fall in cost and as an initiative to support front line services and help reduce sickness levels, 'flu jabs' have been offered to staff in a number of front line services. Over 70 staff in services such as Housing, Deane DLO and the Deane Helpline have taken up the offer.

6.2.2 Flu jabs monitoring

The impacts of this vaccination programme in respect of staff motivation and sickness will be monitored through, for example, discussions and surveys.

6.3 Promotion of Exercise

There is strong evidence that exercise results in immediate psychological improvements, including reduced anxiety, enhanced relaxation and improved mood. The Council, therefore, continues to support a range of exercise-related initiatives designed to help staff. Schemes such as the Cycle Saver Scheme also support the Staff Travel Plan.

Councillor Vivienne Stock-Williams

Council Meeting – 26 February 2013

Report of Councillor Mark Edwards - Planning, Transportation and Communications

1. Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan

- 1.1 The Planning Policy Department is currently engaged in initial consultation with local communities and statutory undertakers on the first stage of preparing this Plan.
- 1.2 This includes consulting on a range of issues and options for allocating a range of sites to accommodate the growth targets set in the Core Strategy and also a review of development management policies required when considering planning applications.
- 1.3 The consultation runs until 7 March 2013 when responses will then be considered to inform a 'Preferred Option' document for further consultation during summer 2013.

2. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLA)

- 2.1 The Council published its annual SHLA report in December following a 'call for sites' over the summer of 2012.
- 2.2 The SHLA is used as an evidence base, used in Plan making and appeals.

3. Planning appeals

- 3.1 The Policy Team have recently been involved in providing evidence at Inquiry on two major housing appeals (Milverton Road, Wellington and Maidenbrook, Taunton). Both appeals were dismissed.
- 3.2 We will robustly defend the decisions made by the Planning Committee at appeal and I see these decisions as an indication of the quality of advice and interpretation of policy by our officers and supports the final decision making process of the Planning Committee.
- 3.3 I have allocated a further £45,000 from Planning income to the Planning Reserve in case it is required for any further planning appeals that come forward.

4. Core Strategy

- 4.1 With the recent dismissal of their appeal into the refusal of planning permission for land at Maidenbrook Farm, Tarker Limited have now notified the Council of their intention to withdraw their legal challenge to the Core Strategy.
- 4.2 To this end, the Plan remains, as adopted and with no further challenges made within the statutory challenge period, will continue to carry full weight in the decision-making process.

5. Authorities Monitoring Report

- 5.1 The Council is required to publish an annual report on progress in meeting statutory plan targets and issues through a regular monitoring exercise. The report covers areas such as housing, employment, retail and environmental matters.
- 5.2 It is available to view on the Councils website.

6. Neighbourhood Planning

- 6.1 Plans are progressing in the three designated Neighbourhood Plan Area's (Trull, Wellington and Wiveliscombe). Four other communities have had discussions with the Council's Planning Policy Team about Neighbourhood Planning, with Bishops Lydeard preparing an application to the Council for designation of Bishops Lydeard Parish as a Neighbourhood Plan Area.
- 6.2 All three Neighbourhood Planning Areas have been gathering quantitative information on their area - statistics on demographics, services, landscape character, flood risk, etc. This will be complimented with qualitative information - perceptions of an area from residents, businesses and organisations. Wellington held workshops with schools, residential homes, residents and businesses. Trull held an exhibition at the Memorial Hall. Wiveliscombe is getting information via a questionnaire.
- 6.3 With the help of Trull Neighbourhood Plan Group, funds were secured for Planning Aid to support the Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Groups in this financial year. A Plan Preparation workshop was held in October. It brought focus and clarity to the groups and more importantly enthusiasm and confidence. A second workshop on Policy Writing is being held in March. There is immense benefit to the Authority and the Communities with continued professional input from and discussions with Planning Aid. To this end the Council is doing what it can to help them in their bid for funding into 2013/2014.
- 6.4 The Government has announced a fund for Local Authorities to help with the administrative and regulation costs associated with designation and examination. These payments, made in arrears, are

welcome but may not cover the full costs incurred by the Council as there is a cap on the funds available and number of claims which can be made.

- 6.5 As the Council's Site Allocation and Development Management Plan (SADMP) progresses and adopts site allocations, revises settlement boundaries and development management polices the ability of Neighbourhood Plans to influence that process diminishes. However, Neighbourhood Plans can still allocate land in addition to that in the SADMP and provide policy guidance.

7. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 7.1 The Council is publishing its draft charging schedule for consultation over the period 1 February to 15 March, 2013 with a proposed Examination in May/June. Adoption of CIL is estimated for late summer 2013.

8. Heritage

- 8.1 Sandhill Park – A new Listed Building application and revised plans for the enabling development to the rear is expected to be lodged shortly.
- 8.2 Tone Works – The viability of approved schemes are in question and more information is awaited.
- 8.3 Tonedale - Implementation of the approved scheme, is due to progress by June.

9. Parking

- 9.1 Potholes are an everyday occurrence in our car parks but the recent bad weather has exacerbated the problem. We now have within Deane DLO an officer dedicated to 'hard surface maintenance' across the Council's property portfolio. He is able to carry out immediate temporary repairs and then to organise permanent works as appropriate.
- 9.2 Last month all surface car parks were inspected as a special exercise and a number of issues identified. The worst of these have already been dealt with. The Parking Manager and Deane DLO have agreed an inspection and response regime going forward but if Members do come across serious potholes I would encourage them to report them by email.
- 9.3 The Car Parking Strategy approved in 2011 included proposals to change the way we manage Blue Badge parking. These include restricting the time badge holders can stay for free in designated bays to three hours (in line with on-street practice) and requiring badge holders to pay in normal bays.

- 9.4 The number of designated bays will be re-examined in line with Department of Transport guidelines with the expectation that we will be increasing the number of dedicated disabled spaces. The proposals will be published very shortly as a draft Traffic Regulation Order to give everyone the chance to comment.

10. Communications

- 10.1 The recent bad weather – flooding, snow and more flooding – made for a busy December and January but thankfully Taunton Deane was not as badly affected as in November.
- 10.2 The press office led on publicity for the joint scrutiny exercise on flooding and will continue to support initiatives that might arise from discussions.
- 10.3 The year to date has been exceptionally busy with press releases ranging from planning consultations and economic development news to the marketing of the Deane DLO depot and benefit fraud.
- 10.4 A successful media budget briefing was held to explain the proposals for the coming financial year. This provides a valuable opportunity to meet the local media face to face.
- 10.5 Taunton Deane's Press Office is working with other Somerset local authorities on the new youth housing project, Pathway to Independence – P2I – and on the annual Council Tax booklet.
- 10.6 We are also providing support to West Somerset District Council on the project towards forming a Business Plan, supporting the Taunton Means Business initiative and Project Taunton

Councillor Mark Edwards