

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Executive to be held in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton on 9 September 2015 at 18:15.

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## **Agenda**

- 1 Apologies.
- 2 Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 8 July 2015 (attached).
- 3 Public Question Time.
- 4 Declaration of Interests  
To receive declarations of personal or prejudicial interests, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.
- 5 Construction Skills. Report of the Economic Development Project Officer.  
Reporting Officer: Matt Parr
- 6 Proposed Apprentice Post in Housing and Communities. Report of the Tenant Empowerment Manager.  
Reporting Officer: Martin Price
- 7 Quarter 1 Financial and Performance Monitoring. Report of the Principle Accountant - Services.
- 8 Executive Forward Plan - details of forthcoming items to be considered by the Executive and the opportunity for Members to suggest further items (attached)

The following items are likely to be considered after the exclusion of the press and public because of the likelihood that exempt information would otherwise be disclosed relating to the Clause set out below of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 9 CONFIDENTIAL - Write-Offs over £10,000. Report of the Senior Debt and Recovery Manager.  
Reporting Officer: Dean Emery

18 July 2016

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.

Except at meetings of Full Council, where public participation will be restricted to Public Question Time only, 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](http://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](mailto:r.bryant@tauntondeane.gov.uk)**

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**Executive Members:-**

Councillor M Edwards	(Business Development and Asset Management and
Communications (Deputy Leader))	
Councillor J Warmington	(Community Leadership)
Councillor R Parrish	(Corporate Resources)
Councillor P Berry	(Environmental Services & Climate Change)
Councillor T Beale	(Housing Services)
Councillor J Williams - Leader of the Council	(Leader of the Council )
Councillor R Habgood	(Planning Policy and Transportation)
Councillor C Herbert	(Sports, Parks and Leisure)

## **Executive – 8 July 2015**

Present: Councillor Williams (Chairman)  
Councillors Beale, Berry, Edwards, Habgood, Mrs Herbert, Parrish and  
Mrs Warmington

Officers: James Barrahan (Director – Housing and Communities), Paul Fitzgerald (Assistant Director – Resources), Steve Plenty (Finance Manager), Paul Harding (Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager), Tim Burton (Assistant Director – Planning and Environment), Julie Moore (Major Applications Co-ordinator) and Richard Bryant (Democratic Services Manager)

Also present: Councillor Coles

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm.)

### **36. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 10 June 2015, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and were signed.

### **37. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Beale declared personal interests as a Board Member and Director of Tone FM, Chief Executive of the 'Think Amy' Charity and as a Governor of the South West Ambulance NHS Trust. Councillor Mrs Herbert declared a personal interest as an employee of the Department of Work and Pensions. Councillor Edwards declared a personal interest as the future Chairman of Governors of Queens College. This appointment would commence with effect from 1 September 2015.

### **38. Financial Outturn 2014/2015**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the Council's financial outturn for revenue and capital expenditure in 2014/2015 for the Council's General Fund (GF), Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and trading services.

Effective financial management formed an important part of the Council's overall performance management framework. It was also vital that the Council maintained strong financial management and control in the face of continuing and unprecedented financial pressures as funding for Council services was squeezed, and the community continued to face up to effects of wider economic pressure.

The outturn figures were provisional at this stage. The financial outturn would be taken into account when preparing the Council's Statement of Accounts, which was due to be approved by the Strategic Director (Section 151 Officer) by the end of June, and would then be subject to review by the Council's External Auditor. Should

the External Auditor identify any changes to the Accounts these would be reported to the Corporate Governance Committee later in the year.

The outturn position reported for the General Fund contained some estimated figures for Government subsidies on Housing Benefit and the total of Business Rates Retention funding. These were based on unaudited claims, and it was possible that final figures post-audit could change.

### **2014/2015 Financial Performance**

Reported that the position could change between 'in year' projections and the final outturn position. As with any forecast there was always a risk that assumptions and estimates would differ from the eventual outcome, and a number of risks and uncertainties had been highlighted in previous quarterly reports. The outturn had been reasonably close to forecast in the majority of budgets. However, there were high value differences on a small number of budgets that had contributed to the overall change since Quarter 3.

There had been a number of significant challenges faced by the Council this year, and these had had an impact on the overall financial position for the authority. These included:-

- The new Business Rates Retention scheme had presented some challenges during the year for the authority. There had been a huge increase in appeals by rate payers to the Valuation Office in March 2015, which has adversely affected the funding position at the year end.
- Forecasting for demand-led services had continued to be a challenge especially in the current economic climate. The Council has directed more focus on the higher risk / more volatile areas in an effort to further improve forecasting in the future.
- The Council had undertaken major restructuring throughout the year with the implementation of joint management and shared services (JMASS) with West Somerset. This had required significant changes to accounting arrangements to support the new structure of the Councils.

A summary of the Outturn was as follows:-

#### ***General Fund Revenue***

The General Fund (GF) Revenue Outturn for 2014/2015 was a Net Expenditure position of £13,901,000, which was a £222,000 (1.7%) underspend against the Final Net Budget for the year. The financial position in respect of Retained Business Rates had again highlighted the significant risks to this funding stream through appeals and refunds, with net outstanding appeals increasing from Gross Rateable Value £34,000,000 in March 2014 to £48,000,000 in March 2015. Provisions related to a large increase in appeals lodged in March 2015 had effectively fully allocated the Council's contingency for Business Rate funding volatility. It was therefore proposed to allocate the £222,000 underspend to the Business Rates Smoothing Reserve. Carry Forwards of £443,000 were also proposed.

The GF Reserves balance as at 31 March 2015 stood at £2,109,000. This balance would reduce to £1,887,000 if the allocation of the 2014/2015 underspend to the Business Rates Smoothing Reserve was approved. The balance remained above the minimum reserves expectation within the Council's Budget Strategy (£1,500,000).

The Earmarked Reserves balance as at 31 March 2015 was £15,308,000, representing funds that had been set aside for specific purposes to fund expenditure in 2015/2016 or later years. This had grown largely in respect of funds committed to support future capital programme spending, a new Business Rates Smoothing Reserve, and funding set aside to support service restructuring and transformation projects and provide service resilience. The majority of this was planned to be spent in 2015/2016.

#### ***Deane DLO Trading Account***

The DLO had made an overall profit of £109,000 after contributing £101,000 to the General Fund. This surplus had been transferred to the DLO Trading Account Reserves increasing the reserve balance to £314,000.

#### ***Deane Helpline Trading Account***

The Deane Helpline had reported a net deficit of £49,000 for the year, which was an underspend of £34,000 against the final budget and represented the net cost of the service to the General Fund.

#### ***General Fund Capital***

The General Fund profiled Capital Programme at the end of 2014/2015 was £4,365,000. The profiled expenditure on Capital Programmes during 2014/2015 was £2,351,000, with £2,374,000 being carried forward to support delivery of approved schemes in 2015/2016.

#### ***Housing Revenue Account Revenue***

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was a 'Self-Financing' account for the Council's Housing Landlord function, which was budgeted to 'break even' (net of approved transfers to/from HRA Reserves). The HRA Outturn for 2014/2015 was a net underspend of £1,269,000 (4.8% of gross income). Approval was sought for a number of proposals which, if approved, would allocate £776,000 of the net underspend to support investment in housing services.

The HRA Reserve balance as at 31 March 2015 stood at £3,484,000, which was above the minimum level (£1,800,000) set within the Council's Budget Strategy and HRA Business Plan. This balance would reduce to £2,708,000 if the allocations of £776,000 were approved.

The HRA Earmarked Reserves balance as at 31 March 2015 stood at £2,222,000. This included £112,000 related to the Social Housing Development Fund, which was earmarked for a range of purposes including to fund investment in new social housing provision within the Council's own housing stock, capital funding, the Community Development Fund and maintenance contracts.

#### ***HRA Capital***

The HRA approved Capital Programme at the end of 2014/2015 was £24,907,000. This relates to schemes which would be completed over the next five years. The actual expenditure on Capital Programmes during 2014/2015 was £9,869,000, with £14,793,000 for planned investment to implement approved schemes in future years. The underspend reported in 2014/2015 against the overall programme was £245,000, related to disabled facilities adaptations. A Carry Forward of £9,583,000 is also proposed.

Noted that the Corporate Scrutiny Committee had considered the Financial Outturn at its meeting on 25 June 2015 and the views expressed by Members were submitted for consideration by the Executive. The Scrutiny Committee had supported the proposals outlined.

**Resolved that:-**

- (a) The reported General Fund Revenue Budget underspend of £222,000 in 2014/2015 and the General Reserves Balance of £2,109,000 as at 31 March 2015 be noted; and
- (b) Full Council be recommended to approve:-
  - (1) The transfer of £222,000 from General Reserves to the Business Rates Smoothing Reserve at the beginning of 2015/2016;
  - (2) The General Fund Revenue Budget Carry Forwards totalling £443,000;
  - (3) A General Fund Capital Programme Budget Carry Forward totalling £2,374,000;
  - (4) A Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme Budget Carry Forward totalling £9,583,000; and
  - (5) £776,000 of Supplementary Budget allocations for the Housing Revenue Account, utilising 2014/2015 underspends, for the following areas:-
    - i. £150,000 to fund a full review of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan in 2015/2016;
    - ii. £160,000 to fund Pre-Void and Tenant Inspections in 2015/2016 and 2016/2017, with any balance across financial years held in an earmarked reserve;
    - iii. £100,000 to fund a Lettings Contingency Budget in 2015/2016 and 2016/2017, with any balance across financial years held in an earmarked reserve;
    - iv. £60,000 to fund a Sheltered Housing Project Management to October 2016;
    - v. £41,000 to fund Mental Health Support for tenants;

- vi. £138,000 to fund Employment and Skills Development in 2015/2016, 2016/2017 and 2017/2018, with any balance across financial years held in an earmarked reserve; and
- vii. £127,000 to fund a One Team Co-ordinator post in 2016/2017 and 2017/2018, with funding to be held in an earmarked reserve.

**39. Performance Monitoring – Quarter 4 Outturn 2014/2015 (to March 2015)**

Considered report previously circulated, which provided details of the Councils performance during Quarter 4 of the 2014/2015 financial year.

As part of the Council’s performance framework, summary reports on performance against the Council’s key priorities, finance and corporate health indicators key were provided to both the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and the Executive on a quarterly basis.

The purpose of these reports was to provide Members with an overview of performance. In total, 54 measures were currently reported within these quarterly reports.

The following table detailed the High Level Performance Summary for Quarter 4:-

Total No. of measures	Green	Amber	Red
54*	35	16	3

Noted that the report had identified three measures where at the end of March 2015, performance had varied significantly from the target set. These ‘red’ indicators related to:-

- Licensing – Processing applications within 14 days of receipt;
- Complaints – Response to be given within 10 working days; and
- Corporate Health and Safety.

Full details of the issues which had led to the performance difficulties together with the measures that were being taken to remedy the situation were submitted for the information of Councillors.

Further reported that the table below provided information as to how the Council was performing against each of the Corporate Aims and the Finance and Corporate Health indicators:-

Section	Number of measures	Green	Amber	Red
<b>Corporate Aim 1 –</b> Quality Sustainable Growth & Development	9	4	5	0
<b>Corporate Aim 2 – A</b> Vibrant Economic Environment	7	4	2	1
<b>Corporate Aim 3 –</b> A Vibrant Social, Cultural and Leisure Environment	8	6	2	0
<b>Corporate Aim 4 –</b> A Transformed Council	4	3	1	0
<b>Managing Finances</b>	14	12	2	0
<b>Corporate Health</b>	12	6	4	2
<b>Totals</b>	54	35	16	3

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee had considered the Performance Outturn at its meeting on 25 June 2015 and the views expressed by Members were submitted for consideration by the Executive.

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

40. **Executive Forward Plan**

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

**Resolved** that the Forward Plan be noted.

41. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

**Resolved** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item because of the likelihood that exempt information would otherwise be disclosed relating to Clause 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

42. **Proposed Compulsory Purchase of Land at Monkton Heathfield**

In order to ensure the full development of the Monkton Heathfield Local Plan and

Core Strategy allocated site, it was essential that a new road link was provided in the location identified in the report. Planning permission was granted in February 2015 which established a route for the new road.

The plan submitted showed the approved road with the land that would be the subject of any Compulsory Purchase Order if such action was deemed to be necessary. This proposed link would travel over land in separate third party ownership.

Discussions were currently underway between the developer and the third party land owners to secure the required land but negotiations had not yet been completed, and the Council needed to have a contingency plan in place in the event that the acquisition of the relevant land did not proceed by agreement in order to facilitate continuous delivery.

**Resolved** that subject to the securing of financial arrangements which protected the Council – either in the form of a back to back Legal Agreement or otherwise a full underwriting of the costs of a Compulsory Purchase Order including acquisition – and which ensured that the entire Compulsory Purchase Order process was cost neutral and there were no on-going liabilities for the Council, the authorisation of the use of Compulsory Purchase Powers in order to acquire the necessary land to deliver the Monkton Heathfield Western Relief Road be approved and that a recommendation be made accordingly to Full Council.

(The meeting ended at 7.13 p.m.)

## **Usual Declarations of Interest by Councillors**

### **Executive**

- **Employee of the Department of Work and Pensions –  
Councillor Mrs Herbert**

# Taunton Deane Borough Council

**Executive 9 September 2015**

## **Proposal to Adopt a Client-based Approach to Delivering Construction Skills in Taunton Deane**

### **Report of the Economic Development Officer**

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Mark Edwards)

#### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 Officers are seeking the Council's approval to work with the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) to adopt a Client-Based Approach (CBA), to deliver employment, apprenticeships and training through planning obligations related to major construction projects.
- 1.2 The Council considered and resolved to adopt the CBA through **procurement policies** at its meeting in September 2011. However, by proposing to deliver the CBA through **planning obligations**, officers are seeking a slightly different and wider reaching resolution to the Executive Committee's decision to deliver the CBA through the Council's procurement policies.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 As part of their planning development management function, local authorities can request contributions, either financial or in kind, through planning obligations for measures directly related to a development. This arrangement derives from S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 2.2 'Section 106' agreements can include contributions to ensure that developments complement and benefit the local labour market and economy, by raising skills and enabling local people to compete for the jobs generated. Specific measures can include training (pre-employment and vocational), apprenticeships, employment advice, interview guarantees, work placements, transport arrangements and childcare. Many Local Authorities and other public sector bodies are already using charters, voluntary agreements and contract clauses to achieve this, tying developers and construction companies into delivery of a minimum number of skills and employment opportunities.
- 2.3 CITB is the Sector Skills Council and Industry Training Board for the Construction industry. The Client-Based Approach (CBA), facilitated by CITB,

and a product of the National Skills Academy for Construction, provides a toolkit to deliver employment, apprenticeships and training for public sector clients through their construction projects. Based on successful National Skills Academy for Construction projects, it includes all of the necessary components to deliver opportunities using benchmarks that have been 'employer approved'. The CBA would also build on Taunton's 'Taunton Protocol' by ensuring that firm, measurable outputs for providing construction skills are delivered.

- 2.4 Whilst the KPIs and benchmarks developed for the CBA apply to construction projects only there is the potential to work together with other Sector Skills and Training bodies to develop opportunities in other sectors locally.
- 2.5 The KPIs and benchmarks, approved by employers within the Construction sector, will be used by the Council to justify and secure s106 contributions for education, employment and skills through the planning process. Economic Development Officers will liaise with colleagues in Development Management to embed the CBA in the planning process.
- 2.6 Taunton Deane Borough Council's Core Strategy makes direct reference to the importance of Employment & Skills initiatives. Policy CP2 'Economy' states that "the Borough Council and its partner organisations will work with developers and contractors on allocated sites to secure job sustainability by improving local skills and employment opportunities by ensuring that an optimum proportion of jobs are sourced from within the local area and employers investing in relevant training and learning schemes for employees". This is supported by Policy CP5 'Inclusive Communities', which states that "Development proposals will make provision and access for all to Training and Employment Opportunities – raising the skill and wage level as well as diversifying the range of jobs".
- 2.7 There are a number of significant infrastructure projects on the horizon, for which TDBC will be the planning authority. These include the urban extensions at Monkton Heathfield and Comeytrove, Taunton Town Centre Redevelopments, and Junction 25 Employment Site Delivery. Each planning application would have a dedicated Employment and Skills Plan, submitted by contractors, with KPI's and associated benchmark targets.

### **3. Proposal**

- 3.1 CITB has approached the Council to adopt a Client Based Approach to delivering construction skills locally. The approach would be embedded in all planning obligations relating to allocated sites, and would open up the opportunity for the Council to apply for National Skills Academy for Construction Status.

### 3.2 Officers propose that the Council:

- Confirms its commitment to jointly adopting the CBA and applying for National Skills Academy for Construction Status;
- Revise the necessary Planning policies and processes to embed the CBA;
- Maintain ongoing dialogue between Planning and Economic Development Teams to monitor qualifying planning permissions.

### **Author's Comment**

- 4.1 In adopting this approach, the Council can strengthen its commitment to generating and safeguarding jobs within the local economy, supporting a rebalancing of the economy and providing leadership to other public, private and voluntary and community sector organisations.
- 4.2 It is inevitable that the majority of contracts will not run in parallel with the academic year. Therefore, particularly when apprenticeships are offered, it will be vital to make timescales explicit.

### **5. Finance Comments**

- 5.1 There is currently no financial request of the Council in relation to the scheme. Officer time to draft and administer the contracts would be met from within the Economic Development team, working closely with the Development Management service.

### **6. Legal Comments**

- 6.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

### **7. Links to Corporate Business Plan**

- 7.1 This proposal links to the 'Quality and Sustainable Growth and Development' and 'Vibrant Economic Environment' Aims of the Corporate Business Plan.

### **8. Environmental and Community Safety Implications**

- 8.1 There are no direct environmental or community safety implications arising from this report.

### **9. Equalities Impact**

- 9.1 The Client Based Approach will strengthen the Council's commitment to enabling people from a disadvantaged background and people who are from a background of deprivation and a low income to access skills and employment opportunities.

## 10. Risk Management

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Low/Medium/High</b>	<b>Mitigating Action</b>
Benchmarks are set at too high a level and act as a disincentive to development	Low	The benchmarks proposed by ConstructionSkills have been drawn up after close consultation with construction employers. If the CBA does act as a disincentive the Council will be able to disengage from the programme.

## 11. Partnership Implications

- 11.1 In addition to Taunton Deane Borough, this will also support the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership and the Somerset Employment and Skills Board to achieve their priorities for job creation, economic inclusion and skills, as well as providing opportunities to develop local supply-chains.

## 12. Recommendation

- 12.1 **That the Council adopts the Client-based approach to strongly encourage delivery of employment and skills opportunities in all major construction projects in which it is the Planning Authority, and authorises Officers to progress an application for National Skills Academy status.**

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# Taunton Deane Borough Council

**Executive – 9 September 2015**

## **Apprenticeships in Housing and Communities**

### **Report of the Tenant Empowerment Manager**

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Terry Beale)

#### **1. Executive Summary**

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2012-2042 details where the housing monies will be invested. This report proposes the introduction of an apprenticeship scheme into different sections within Housing and Communities to provide an introduction to employment for those not in education, employment or training.

This scheme was identified as a future initiative as part of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2012 – 2042 Review that was presented to the Tenant Services Management Board on the 19<sup>th</sup> January 2015, Community Scrutiny Committee on the 6<sup>th</sup> January 2015 and the Executive on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015.

A decision to allocate funding for the scheme was approved by the Executive at its January 2015 meeting along with a number of funding recommendations for Housing and Communities. The scheme detailed in this report also received the unanimous support of the Tenant Services Management Board at its meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015 and is to be presented to the Community Scrutiny Committee on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015.

The Executive is recommended to approve the introduction of the proposed Apprenticeship Scheme in Housing and Communities.

#### **2. Background**

An apprenticeship is a job that combines on and off the job training. The apprentice is employed and gains a nationally recognised qualification, giving the opportunity to train as they work and earn money.

Apprenticeships are available to anyone aged 16 and over who is not in full-time education and is eligible to work in the UK.

Apprenticeships offer a practical solution to reducing unemployment, particularly by supporting individuals who are not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Apprenticeships have been shown to facilitate the often difficult transition between full-time learning and work. The opportunity to work alongside experienced staff and gain job specific skills is designed to open future career paths to apprentices.

The council has experience of employing apprentices. The DLO currently employs ten apprentices, one in response repairs and nine across other areas. The apprenticeship lasts for two years and all undertake NVQ Levels 2 and 3 at Somerset College. The DLO scheme is effective at not only training young people but also retaining those who are successful at college and in the work place by the apprentices applying for and filling permanent posts at the end of the scheme.

The Executive of 14<sup>th</sup> January 2015 approved £24,000 per annum as part of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2012 – 2042 Review to support the costs of the scheme.

The scheme detailed in this report also received the unanimous support of the Tenant Services Management Board at its meeting on the 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015.

### **3. Proposed Apprenticeship Scheme**

It is proposed that the scheme will be a rolling programme appointing one apprentice per year over three years to gain skills in three different sections of Housing and Communities.

In April 2012, the Government announced that the minimum length for all apprenticeships will be 12 months in an effort to eliminate bad practice. At the same time, it also said that all apprentices must be employed for a minimum of 30 hours a week. This includes time spent away from the workplace engaged in training. Research shows that the normal length is two years, allowing for experience to be gained and studies to be completed. It is proposed that each apprentice will be appointed on a two year contract

Part of an apprenticeship is to study for a nationally recognised qualification. This scheme proposes that in the first year the apprentice will study NVQ Level 2 in Business Administration which takes one year to complete. Having passed this course the apprentice will progress in the second year to the one year course NVQ Level 3. Both courses are studied via day release at a local college.

It is proposed that the apprentices will be employed by Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) and have the same rights as any other employee. As such TDBC will be required to issue a contract of employment. TDBC already has a standard contract for apprentices.

Three service sections have been identified where an apprentice could enhance service delivery while gaining valuable experience of on the job training and work experience.

- 3.1 In Year One (from November 2015) it is proposed that an apprentice will fill the role of Housing IT Support Apprentice in the Business Support section. Duties will include:
- Support IT systems used in Housing and Communities;
  - Maintain and administer electronic records;
  - Produce reports from IT systems.
- 3.2 In Year Two (from September 2016) it is proposed that an apprentice will be employed in one of the three area community teams within housing services. The range of tasks that will be undertaken include:
- Assist in the effective management of the estates to ensure the environment is maintained to a high standard;
  - Work in partnership with other agencies (for example; Police, Social Services, Health) to ensure prompt and effective action is taken to resolve problems;
  - Assist in the management of breaches of tenancy including: anti social behaviour, harassment, successions and prepare reports where necessary;
  - To ensure residents' complaints and concerns are responded to promptly and effectively.
- 3.3 In Year Three (from September 2017) it is proposed that an apprentice will be based in the Property Services section. Duties will include a focus on:
- Assisting in the monitoring of maintenance and repairs contracts;
  - Assisting in the awarding of maintenance and repairs contacts.

- 3.4 It is proposed to evaluate the scheme throughout its existence. If the scheme is deemed a success for both the apprentice and the organisation the council will need to consider a proposal for extending the scheme.
- 3.5 It is standard that employers require that apprentices have reached a minimum education level, usually three GCSEs including English and Mathematics at grade C or above to gain entry onto a scheme. Applicants are also asked to demonstrate that they have IT skills including Microsoft Office applications.

The recruitment and selection process is vital for finding the right candidates. Advertisements can be placed in:

- Local college
- Local newspapers
- TDBC website
- Job Centre Plus
- Using local centres such as the Wellington Office, Link Centre and Priorswood Community Centre.
- Tenant newsletters that are distributed to all tenants on a quarterly basis
- One Teams

It is proposed that TDBC seeks apprentices with these educational qualifications and that it follows the council's standard practice in terms of recruitment and selection of apprentices.

- 3.6 To ensure the success of the apprenticeship scheme, the apprentice needs to be put at the heart of the programme, with effective and appropriate support mechanisms built in. Providing the right practical support and guidance to an apprentice will help ensure they settle in well, develop with the organisation and help contribute to the success of TDBC.

It is proposed that a mentor will act as an advocate. Line managers within service areas can also pick up on any issues in terms of performance, behaviour or attendance as soon as they emerge.

Under this scheme it is proposed that the college will provide support to ensure the apprentices are successful in passing the NVQ qualifications.

#### 4. Financial Implications of Apprenticeships

The National Minimum Wage for an apprentice is £2.73 per hour for 16 to 18 year olds and those aged over 19 in the first year of their apprenticeship. For all other apprentices the National Minimum Wage appropriate to their age applies. The National Minimum Wage for apprentices applies to time spent on the job plus time spent training. It should be noted that the employer pays these salary costs. The National Minimum Wage is revised on an annual basis and the rates below apply from October of each year.

Table 1 below shows the current and future levels of National Minimum Wage rates:

	<b>Apprentice</b>	<b>Under 18 Years Old</b>	<b>18 to 20 Years Old</b>	<b>21 Years Old and Over</b>
<b>From October 2014</b>	£2.73	£3.79	£5.13	£6.50
<b>From October 2015</b>	£3.30	£3.87	£5.30	£6.70

Table 1 Note: From 2014 to 2015 there is a 57 pence, or 21%, increase in the apprentice hourly rate.

4.1 Table 2 below shows the proposed financial cost of employing one apprentice per year on a three year rolling programme.

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	TOTAL
<b>Apprentice – Business Support</b>	£3,703	£10,326	£6,751	£0	£0	<b>£20,780</b>
<b>Apprentice – Estate Management</b>	£0	£4,904	£11,054	£4,822	£0	<b>£20,780</b>
<b>Apprentice – Property Services</b>	£0	£0	£4,904	£11,054	£4,822	<b>£20,780</b>
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>£3,700</b>	<b>£15,230</b>	<b>£22,709</b>	<b>£15,876</b>	<b>£4,822</b>	<b>£62,340</b>

Table 2 Notes:

1. Apprentice in Business Support from November 2015 to October 2017
2. Apprentice in Estate Management from September 2016 to August 2018
3. Apprentice in Property Services from September 2017 to August 2019
4. If an apprentice is aged 16 to 18 no course fees are payable by the employer, they are paid direct to the college by central government. If, however, the apprentice is aged 19 or above the course fees detailed below are paid by the employer:  
  
 NVQ Level 2 - £700  
 NVQ Level 3 - £1,300
5. An assumption has been made that the apprentices will be aged 18 to 20 in the second year of their apprenticeships and that course fees are payable by TDBC. The financial impact will be lower to TDBC if the apprentices are, when appointed, aged below 18. Inflationary increases for pay awards will be built into the normal TDBC budget setting cycle.

## **5. Finance Comments**

The HRA Business Plan includes provision of up to £24,000 per annum for an apprentice scheme. This proposal can be funded from these existing resources and so will not have an impact on the overall position of the HRA.

It is expected that the national hourly rate for apprentices will continue to rise with above inflationary uplifts until 2020 – in line with the introduction of the National Living Wage. These increases will be addressed as part of the annual budget setting process.

## **6. Legal Comments**

Contracts of employment will be entered into with each apprentice which is routine for the service. Therefore, it is not considered that any significant legal issues will arise from this report.

## **7. Links to Corporate Aims**

The proposal within this report is linked to the following Corporate aims:

- Aim 2 – a vibrant economic environment – increase the economic activity within the Borough including the number and value of jobs.
- Aim 3 – a vibrant social, cultural and leisure environment – work with partners to improve the lives of our most vulnerable households.

## **8. Environmental and Community Safety Implications**

There are no environmental implications identified as a result of information or actions contained or referred to within this report. Housing and Communities aims to take action so that disadvantaged communities will have better access to local housing services, training and employment.

## **9. Equalities Impact**

A full Equalities Impact Assessment was included with the approved Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2012-2042. Applications to the scheme are open to all and as such no potential discrimination amongst the protected groups has been identified.

## **10. Risk Management**

There are no significant risks identified with the introduction of this scheme.

## **11. Partnership Implications**

The service is not entering into a formal partnership agreement with a local college in relation to operating the scheme. However, the service will be working very closely with one of Taunton Deane's local colleges.

## **12. Recommendations**

The Executive is recommended to approve the introduction of the proposed Apprenticeship Scheme in Housing and Communities.

<b>Contact:</b>	Officer Name	Martin Price – Tenant Empowerment Manager
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# Taunton Deane Borough Council

## Executive – 9<sup>th</sup> September 2015

### Financial Monitoring – Quarter 1 2015/16

#### Report of the Finance Manager

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Richard Parrish)

#### **IMPORTANT NOTE –**

In order for this performance information to be debated in the most efficient manner at the Executive Committee, we would encourage Members who have queries with any aspect of the report to contact the appropriate officer(s) named (at the end of the report) **before the meeting** so that information can be collated in advance or relevant officers can be invited to the meeting.

#### **1. Executive Summary**

This report provides an update on the projected outturn financial position of the Council for the financial year 2015/16 (as at 30 June 2015).

Monitoring the budget is an important part of the Council's performance management framework.

The overall financial position of the Council remains within 1.0% of the approved budget.

The current forecast outturn for the financial year 2015/16 is as follows:

- the General Fund Revenue Account is forecasting an underachievement of income of £132k
- the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is forecasting a surplus of £12k

The current capital forecast position for 2015/16 is as follows:

- the General Fund Capital Account is forecasting spend of £7.575m with £6.007m to be spent in future years.
- the HRA Capital Account is forecasting spend of £18.433m with £5.026m to be spent in future years.

#### **2. 2015/16 Financial Position – Quarter 1 Update (to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015)**

##### **Introduction**

- 2.1 This section of the report provides an early indication of the potential variances that could be reported at the end of the financial year 2015/16.

- 2.2 Members will be aware from previous experience that the position can change between 'in year' projections and the final outturn position, mainly due to demand-led services. The budget monitoring process involves a detailed review of all budgets. Budget Holders, with support and advice from their accountants, regularly review the position and update their forecasts based on currently available information and knowledge of service requirements for the remainder of the year. As with any forecast there is always a risk that some unforeseen changes could influence the position at the year end, and a number of risks and uncertainties are highlighted within this report. However, the following forecast is considered to be reasonable based on current information. As we are in the final quarter of the year, which can produce some volatility in financial projections, we will continue to monitor this closely through this reporting cycle and provide updates to forecasts for both Scrutiny and Executive.

### **Corporate Scrutiny Comments**

- 2.3 The 2015/16 Q1 outturn forecast was reported to and reviewed by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 13 August 2015. The Assistant Director Resources indicated that overall the financial position remains on track and although there is a net overspend identified in this early projection for the year there is time for management and Members to take action to control the overall position. Members discussed and noted the risk and uncertainty around business rates retention forecasts, mainly due to matters beyond the Council's control in respect of business rates appeals to the Valuation Office. Clarification was sought regarding additional agency staff costs within the HRA, and this is explained later in this report.

### **General Fund Revenue Account – 2015/16 Forecast Outturn**

- 2.4 The overall financial position of the Council is that the General Fund outturn position is currently projected as a net overspend of £132k which is 1% above budget.
- 2.5 A summary of the General Fund Revenue Account budget and forecast for the year is included in **Annex A**.
- 2.6 At this early stage in the year, there is only one significant variance, which relates to **TDBC Assets Income** - This service is reporting an underachievement of income against budget of approximately £132k, mainly due to vacant units at Blackdown Business Park, the Auction House and Flook House.

### **General Fund - Risk and Uncertainty**

- 2.7 Budgets and forecasts are based on known information and the best estimates of the Council's future spending and income. Income and expenditure over the financial year 2015/16 are estimated by budget holders and then reported through the budget monitoring process. During this process risks and uncertainties are identified which could impact the financial projections, but for which the likelihood, and/or amount are uncertain.
- 2.8 The following risks and uncertainties have been identified though the Q1 process:

- 2.8.1 **Fluctuation in demand for services:** We operate a number of demand-led services and the levels of demand do not always follow a recognisable trend. We therefore have to caveat the forecasts in these areas to account for fluctuations.
- 2.8.2 **General Spend:** It is conceivable by experience that, whilst budget holders are optimistic that they will spend all of their budget, we could see underspends of £50k-£100k by year end caused by minor underspends in a number of service areas.
- 2.8.3 **Business Rates:** The Business Rates Retention system was introduced in April 2013, and results in the Council sharing in the benefits and risks around business rates growth within the district. A significant risk within the system relates to appeals and refunds, and this has been proven to be a major factor for Taunton Deane Council through the reduction in yield – and significant provision for refunds – in respect of sharp increase in appeals lodged by businesses in 2014/15 but yet to be settled. The income is currently projected to be on budget, however this will continued to be monitored as this can be volatile.
- 2.8.4 **Year End Adjustments:** Certain items are not determined or finalised until the financial year end. For example the final assessment of provisions required for bad debts, and final allocations of support service recharges. These can result in potentially significant differences to current forecasts.
- 2.9 The Council carries protection against risk and uncertainty in a number of ways, such as insurances and maintaining reserves. This is a prudent approach and helps to mitigate unforeseen pressures.

### **General Fund Reserves**

- 2.10 The General Fund reserve balance at the start of the year was £2.109m. The 2015/16 Budget includes a one-off transfer of £105k, and the Council approved an allocation of £222k to the Business Rates Smoothing Reserve through the Outturn report in July 2015. This reduces the current budgeted balance to **£1.782m**. If the current outturn forecast remains accurate and the Council takes no corrective action in the year, the potential overspend of £132k would be transferred to this reserve, decreasing the projected balance to £1.650m at the end of the financial year (see **Annex C**). This remains above the current minimum balance of £1.5m required in the Council's financial strategy.

### **Forecast Outturn Summary – Housing Revenue Account**

- 2.11 The current forecast outturn for the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a very small surplus of £12k (0.05% of budget). A summary of the HRA revenue budget and forecast for the year is included in **Annex D**.
- 2.12 The major underspends and overspends forecast for year are summarised as follows:
- 2.13 **Rental Income:** Weekly rental income is currently due to over-recover by £138k based

on rents in Q1. Rent loss due to void properties is currently approximately 0.7%, less than the 1.9% budgeted. However this is subject to change throughout the year as void levels vary and ongoing Right to Buy sales impact on the rental income received.

- 2.14 **Other Income:** Service charges are also due to over recover by £17k in line with rental income. There is also a higher than budgeted contribution for Supporting People of £19k due to agreements made after budget setting.
- 2.15 **Housing Management:** Currently there are surveyor vacancies which are being covered by agency staff pending recruitment. This is expected to create a pressure of £103k in this area as the vacancies are proving difficult to fill.
- 2.16 **Specialist Works:** Spend on specialist works, largely asbestos testing, is currently expected to exceed budget by £38k.
- 2.17 **Communal Areas:** Spend on communal areas for dwellings is forecast to be over budget by £23k at outturn. This is to be monitored throughout the year.
- 2.18 **Provision for Bad Debt:** Provision has been made in the Business Plan for an increased level of unrecoverable debt due to Welfare Reform. Universal Credit has not yet been fully rolled out across the borough, and with only a small number of tenants currently affected it is unlikely that this funding will be needed within this financial year. It is, however, recognised that Welfare Reform is likely to affect the position of the HRA over a longer period than has been allowed for in the Business Plan (with increased provision due to return to 'base' levels in Q4 of 2016/17). In light of this further work will be undertaken to review the current expected levels of bad debt for this year, with a request that the remainder of the funding to be put in an Earmarked Reserve. This would be used in future years to prevent large movements in bad debt affecting the bottom line of the HRA.

### **HRA - Risk and Uncertainty**

- 2.19 As with the General Fund, budgets and forecasts are based on known information and the best estimates of the Council's future spending and income. Income and expenditure over the financial year 2015/16 is estimated by budget holders and then reported through the budget monitoring process. During this process risks and uncertainties are identified which could impact financial projections, but for which the likelihood and/or amount are uncertain.
- 2.20 The following risks have been identified through the Q1 process:
  - 2.20.1 **Rental Income:** As stated above, rental income fluctuates due to Voids and Right to Buy, as well as new acquired or built properties becoming tenanted and therefore providing rental income to support the costs of the service.
- 2.21 The Council carries protection against risk and uncertainty in a number of ways, such as insurances and maintaining reserves.

### **Housing Revenue Account Reserves**

- 2.22 The HRA reserves (“working balance”), at the start of the year were £3.484m, and the Council approved an allocation of £776k for a number of initiatives and investment in services through the Outturn report in July 2015. This reduces the current budgeted balance to **£2.708m**, and is forecast to be £2,720k at the end of the current financial year (see **Annex F**) based on current projected outturn. This is above the minimum recommended reserve level of £1.8m.

### **Budget Changes**

- 2.23 There are no new requested “Supplementary Estimates and Returns” in either the General Fund or HRA included in this report (see **Annex G**).

### **Deane DLO Trading Account**

- 2.24 At Q1 the DLO is not forecasting an over/underspend/over recovery after contributing £101k to the General Fund. Any surplus will be transferred to the DLO trading reserve. Due to the complexities and significant monies involved in the DLO operation, the year end outturn forecast is a best estimate at this point in time. This forecast outturn needs to be flagged as a risk and will be continually monitored.
- 2.25 The Trading Account Reserves Position balance brought forward of £679k (see **Annex H**) relates to a retained trading surplus of £314k, plus capital reserves set aside to support investment in the service: £25k for fuel tanks; and £340k to fund vehicle replacement.
- 2.26 As agreed within the transformation plan, continuous improvement of DLO services will enhance all aspects of operational efficiency and effectiveness. The new in-house costing system (Open Contractor) has been implemented and will make improvements in the monitoring of finances. Work also continues on the Depot Relocation Project.
- 2.27 A Trading Account Summary and Reserves Position Statement for the DLO are included in **Annex H**. The trading account reserves are reported as part of the General Fund Earmarked Reserves balance.

### **Deane Helpline Trading Account**

- 2.28 The Deane Helpline is on budget forecasting a year end outturn net deficit of £80k.
- 2.29 There are no funds held in the Deane Helpline Trading Account Reserve.
- 2.30 The fundamental service review of Deane Helpline to address the costs to the General Fund of operating the service is ongoing, and various options are being explored.

### **Forecast Outturn Summary – General Fund Capital Programme**

- 2.31 The General Fund approved Capital Programme is currently £13.582m. This relates to schemes which will be completed over the next five years. Of this, Budget Holders are

projecting that £7.575m is planned to be spent during 2015/16 with £6.007m due to be spent in future years. The Council is supporting this investment through the use of Capital Grants and Contributions, Capital Receipts, Revenue Funding and Borrowing.

- 2.32 The major areas of capital spend planned for 2015/16 include £700k for the loan to Somerset County Cricket Club, £493k of Disabled Facility Grants, £315k for DLO vehicles and plant acquisition, £430k of grant support for private and social sector housing and £5.117m for Blackbrook Swimming Pool.
- 2.33 Of the £6.007m due to be spent in future years £840k relates to the JMASS IT Project, £360k to Crematorium chapel Roof, £800k investment in employment land in Taunton, £1.033m to Firepool Access, £580k Car Park Major Repairs.
- 2.34 A summary of the General Fund Capital Programme budget and forecast for the year is included in **Annex I**.

### **Forecast Outturn Summary – Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme**

- 2.35 The approved HRA capital programme is £23.459m, of which £12.927m relates to works on existing dwellings and £10.532m for the provision of new housing through development.
- 2.36 £9.202m of the capital budget in the HRA relates to major works on existing dwellings and includes works such as kitchens, bathrooms, heating systems, roofs, doors and windows. Contracts are now in place for kitchens and bathrooms replacement, air source heat pump installations and door entry systems. Contracts for the replacement of heating systems and fascia and soffits are due to start within the next quarter. Due to delays in the start of these contracts, £2.355m of the budget will be re-profiled into future years to cover the work to be completed by the contractors. The profiling of capital spend will be looked at in more detail as part of the Business Plan Review later in the year. Actual spend at Q1 is £459k. This is lower than would be expected at this point largely due to invoicing in arrears and some contracts starting mid-year.
- 2.37 £2.216m relates to other works such as disabled facilities adaptations, asbestos removal, external wall insulations and extensions. This is expected to be largely on track, although some expenditure relating to environmental improvements (used, for example, for scooter stores and additional car parking spaces), and extensions may slip into 2016/17. This is due to the large lead in times required for new schemes.
- 2.38 £1.509m relates to the new budget for adding solar PV systems to dwellings. This is currently underway and is expected to complete in Q2.
- 2.39 The remaining budget of £10.532m is for the provision of new housing through the Creechbarrow Road, Phase 1 sites and Weavers Arms new builds and the buyback of dwellings previously sold through Right to Buy. These are currently expected to complete within budget, with Phase 1 sites in the final stages and Creechbarrow Road set to complete later in the year. Weavers Arms, Oaken Ground is still in the early stages of development and will not complete during 2015/16. As such £2.671m of the Weavers

Arms budget is not expected to be used in 2015/16 and is to be re-profiled into later years.

2.40 A summary of the HRA Capital Programme budget and forecast for the year is included in **Annex I**.

### **3. Legal Comments**

3.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

### **4. Links to Corporate Aims**

4.1 The financial performance of the Council underpins the delivery of corporate priorities and therefore all Corporate Aims.

### **5. Environmental and Community Safety Implications**

5.1 None for the purpose of this report.

### **6. Equalities Impact**

6.1 None for the purpose of this report.

### **7. Risk Management**

7.1 Financial controls are operated throughout the year to manage financial risks, which are subject to review through internal and external audit, as well as through reporting to the Corporate Governance Committee.

### **8. Partnership Implications**

8.1 A wide range of council services are provided through partnership arrangements e.g. Tone Leisure for leisure services. The cost of these services is reflected in the Council's financial outturn position for the year.

### **9. Recommendations**

9.1 It is recommended that the Executive Committee note the Council's performance as at the end of Quarter 1.

#### **Contact:**

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Finance Manager

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## ANNEX A

## GENERAL FUND REVENUE ACCOUNT SUMMARY 2015/16

	Current Budget £000s	Forecast Outturn £000s	Forecast Variance £000s
<b>Service Portfolios</b>			
Community Leadership	574	574	0
Corporate Resources	1,264	1,264	0
Economic Development, Asset Management, Arts & Tourism	1,353	1,353	132
Environmental Services	4,510	4,510	0
General Services	1,065	1,065	0
Housing Services	2,432	2,432	0
Planning, Transportation & Communications	(1,658)	(1,658)	0
Sports, Parks & Leisure	2,791	2,791	0
West Somerset(Administration)	(2)	(2)	0
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>12,329</b>	<b>12,461</b>	<b>132</b>
<b>Other Operating Costs and Income</b>			
Deane Helpline Trading Account	80	80	0
DLO Trading Account	(101)	(101)	0
Interest and Investment Income	(314)	(314)	0
Parish Precepts & Special Expenses	620	620	0
Capital Financing from GF Revenue (RCCO)	649	649	0
Appropriations	(148)	(148)	0
Repayment of Capital Borrowing (MRP)	562	562	0
Transfers to Capital Adjustment Account	(2,536)	(2,536)	0
Transfers To/(From) Earmarked Reserves	2,142	2,142	0
Transfers To/(From) General Reserves	(105)	(105)	0
Transfers To/(From) Pension Reserve	0	0	0
<b>Total Other Operating Costs and Income</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>849</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>NET EXPENDITURE BEFORE GRANTS AND TAXATION</b>	<b>13,178</b>	<b>13,310</b>	<b>132</b>
Business Rates and Council Tax Income	(9,999)	(9,999)	0
New Homes Bonus Grant	(3,179)	(3,179)	0
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>(13,178)</b>	<b>(13,178)</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>PROJECT (UNDER)/OVERSPEND FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>132</b>

## ANNEX B

### GENERAL FUND REVENUE ACCOUNT FORECAST VARIANCES TO BUDGET 2015/16

	Port- folio	Cost Centre Description	Forecast Variance Updates				Variance explanation	Management Action
			Q1 £k	Q2 £k	Q3 £k	Total £k		
1	ECD	TDBC Assets	132			132	Q1 projected underachievement of income against budget of approximately £132k, mainly due to vacant units at Blackdown Business Park, the Auction House and Flook House.	Budget holder will review costs with the aim of mitigating the shortfall.
		<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>132</b>			<b>132</b>		

#### Key: Portfolios

COM	Community Leadership
COR	Corporate Resources
ECD	Economic Development, Asset Management, Arts & Tourism
ENV	Environmental Services
GEN	General Services
HSG	Housing Services (Non-HRA)
PTC	Planning and Transportation/Communications
SPL	Sports, Parks & Leisure
OTH	Other Central Costs and Income

## ANNEX C

## GENERAL FUND RESERVES SUMMARY 2015/16

	£k	Current Budget & Forecast £k
Balance Brought Forward 1 April 2015		2,109
<u>2015/16 Original Budget – One-off transfer from Reserves</u>		(105)
<u>Supplementary Estimates</u>		
<u>Transfer 2014/15 underspend to Business Rates Smoothing Earmarked Reserve</u>	(222)	
Sub-total		(222)
<u>Returns</u>		
Sub-total		0
Budgeted Balance March 2016		1,782
Projected Outturn 2015/16		(132)
Projected Balance Carried Forward 31 March 2016		1,650

## HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT SUMMARY 2015/16

	Current Budget £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000	Forecast Variance £'000
<b>Income</b>			
Dwelling Rents	(24,933)	(25,071)	(138)
Non Dwelling Rents	(565)	(565)	0
Charges for Services/Facilities (Service Charges, Rechargeable Repairs, Leaseholder Charges)	(1,031)	(1,048)	(17)
Contributions Towards Expenditure	(402)	(421)	(19)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(26,931)</b>	<b>(27,105)</b>	<b>(174)</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Repairs and Maintenance	7,272	7,310	38
Supervision & Management	5,848	5,949	101
Rents, Rates, Taxes and Other Charges	339	362	23
Capital Charges – Depreciation and Impairment	6,745	6,745	0
Debt Management Expenses	8	8	0
Provision for Bad Debt	515	515	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>20,727</b>	<b>20,889</b>	<b>162</b>
<b>Other Costs &amp; Income</b>			
CDC Costs	206	206	0
Interest Payable	2,960	2,960	0
Interest and Investment Income	(51)	(51)	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital	873	873	0
Provision for Repayment of Debt	893	893	0
Social Housing Development Fund	1,000	1,000	0
Procurement Savings	323	323	0
Transfers To/(From) Earmarked & Other Reserves	0	0	0
<b>Total Other Costs &amp; Income</b>	<b>6,204</b>	<b>6,204</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>NET (SUPLUS)/DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(12)</b>	<b>(12)</b>

**ANNEX E****HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT FORECAST VARIANCES TO BUDGET 2015/16**

	Cost Centre Description	Forecast Variances Updates				Variance explanation	Management Action
		Q1 £k	Q2 £k	Q3 £k	Total £k		
1	Income	(174)			(174)	As per main report.	Budget holder will review on a monthly basis as per the HRA Business Plan.
2	Expenditure	162			162	As per main report.	Budget holder will review on a monthly basis as per the HRA Business Plan.
	<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>(12)</b>			<b>(12)</b>		

**ANNEX F**

**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT RESERVES SUMMARY 2015/16**

	£k	Current Budget & Forecast £k
Balance Brought Forward 1 April 2015		3,484
<u>Supplementary Estimates</u>		
Initiatives approved utilising 204/15 underspend	(776)	
Subtotal		(776)
<u>Returns</u>		
Subtotal		0
Budgeted Balance March 2016		2,708
Projected Outturn 2015/16		12
Projected Balance Carried Forward 31 March 2016		2,720

**BUDGET VIREMENTS FOR APPROVAL**

*None requested in Quarter 1*

#	Fund	From		To		Explanation	
		Amount £	Heading	Amount £	Heading		
			<b>Total Revenue Budget Virements</b>				

## DEANE DLO TRADING ACCOUNT AND RESERVES SUMMARY

	2015/16		
	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Net £'000
(Surplus)/Deficit for the year:			
Grounds Maintenance	(3,332)	2,831	(501)
Building Maintenance	(5,527)	4,768	(759)
Trading (Surplus) / Deficit Before Adjustments	<b>(8,859)</b>	<b>7,871</b>	<b>(1,260)</b>
Capital Charges & Income			140
Net Recharges			773
Offset IFRS* Technical Accounting Adjustments			246
Adjusted Trading (Surplus) before Contributions			<b>(101)</b>
Contribution to General Fund			101
Contribution from Trading Reserve			0
Trading Surplus After Adjustments and Contributions			(0)
<b>Surplus transferred to Trading Account Reserve</b>			<b>(0)</b>
	Reserves £000s		
	Vehicle	Capital Replacement	Trading
Reserve balance brought forward 1 April	(340)	(25)	(314)
Retained Trading (Surplus) / Deficit			
Transfer to Capital Replacement Reserve Fund			
Transfer to Vehicle Replacement Reserve Fund			
Other transfers			
Reserve balance carried forward 31 March	(340)	(25)	(314)

## Notes:

1. These are forecast figures provided by managers from the DLO, and may be subject to change as the year progresses.

## CAPITAL PROGRAMME FORECAST 2015/16

## ANNEX I

Scheme	Original Budget 2015/16 £	Previously Approved Budget £	Carry Forward from 2014/15 £	Current Budget 2015/16 £	Actual Spend To Q1 £	Forecast Spend in 2015/16 £	Total Spend in 2015/16 £	Total Spend v Current Budget £	Forecast Spend in Future Years £	Total Programme Spend £	Forecast Programme Variance £
<b>General Schemes</b>											
Swim Pool PV Cells	-	5,600	-	5,600	-	5,600	5,600	-	-	5,600	-
PC Refresh Project	60,000	-	2,600	62,600	35	62,565	62,600	-	-	62,600	-
Members IT Equipment	-	9,700	-	9,700	-	9,700	9,700	-	-	9,700	-
IT Infrastructure	-	-	23,200	23,200	(24,000)	47,200	23,200	-	-	23,200	-
SCCC Loan	-	700,000	-	700,000	700,000	-	700,000	-	-	700,000	-
Gypsy Site	-	-	25,000	25,000	-	25,000	25,000	-	-	25,000	-
Joint Mgt & Shared Services Project	-	925,000	14,600	939,600	17,000	922,600	939,600	-	-	939,600	-
Special Expenses Play Grants	-	16,800	-	16,800	-	16,800	16,800	-	-	16,800	-
Waste Containers	50,000	-	2,200	52,200	(15,705)	67,905	52,200	-	-	52,200	-
Mercury Abatement	-	-	3,800	3,800	-	3,800	3,800	-	-	3,800	-
Crematorium Chapel Roof	-	180,000	180,000	360,000	-	360,000	360,000	-	-	360,000	-
Cemetery Extension - Crematorium	-	77,730	-	77,730	54,352	23,378	77,730	-	-	77,730	-
Energy Efficiency	-	-	29,900	29,900	-	29,900	29,900	-	-	29,900	-
Landlord Accreditation Scheme	-	-	5,000	5,000	-	5,000	5,000	-	-	5,000	-
Wessex Home Improvement Loans	-	-	10,400	10,400	-	10,400	10,400	-	-	10,400	-
DFGs Private Sector	388,000	147,840	104,500	640,340	(55,125)	695,465	640,340	-	-	640,340	-
Grants to RSLs	-	205,000	455,600	660,600	-	660,600	660,600	-	-	660,600	-
Deane Helpline Equipment Replacement	25,000	-	-	25,000	4,374	20,626	25,000	-	-	25,000	-
DLO Vehicles Acquisitions	180,000	-	104,600	284,600	79,525	205,075	284,600	-	-	284,600	-
DLO Plant	23,000	-	7,500	30,500	5,687	24,813	30,500	-	-	30,500	-
PT Longrun Meadow Bridge C	-	78,000	25,000	103,000	-	103,000	103,000	-	-	103,000	-
PT High Street Project	-	-	700	700	(1,270)	1,970	700	-	-	700	-
DLO System	-	-	102,400	102,400	-	102,400	102,400	-	-	102,400	-
PT Castle Green	-	218,000	-	218,000	(29,558)	247,558	218,000	-	-	218,000	-
PT High St Retail	-	-	2,800	2,800	-	2,800	2,800	-	-	2,800	-
PT Urban Growth	-	-	28,000	28,000	-	28,000	28,000	-	-	28,000	-
PT Coal Orchard	-	-	2,500	2,500	-	2,500	2,500	-	-	2,500	-
PT Signage	-	-	200	200	(134)	334	200	-	-	200	-
Brewhouse	-	-	5,000	5,000	-	5,000	5,000	-	-	5,000	-
Thales Site	-	790,000	10,000	800,000	-	800,000	800,000	-	-	800,000	-
Creech Castle Improvements	-	-	375,000	375,000	-	375,000	375,000	-	-	375,000	-
Firepool Access	-	1,000,000	33,000	1,033,000	-	1,033,000	1,033,000	-	-	1,033,000	-
Relocation of Tourist Information Centre	120,000	-	-	120,000	67,768	52,232	120,000	-	-	120,000	-
Paul Street Car Park Major Repairs	-	340,600	-	340,600	-	340,600	340,600	-	-	340,600	-
Canon St Car Park	-	-	900	900	-	900	900	-	-	900	-
Car Park Improvements	126,000	70,800	42,200	239,000	26,763	212,237	239,000	-	-	239,000	-
Grants to Halls and Sports Clubs	10,000	41,400	-	51,400	-	51,400	51,400	-	-	51,400	-
Grants to Parishes Play Equipment	10,000	4,500	7,500	22,000	-	22,000	22,000	-	-	22,000	-
Replacement Play Equipment	20,000	-	4,100	24,100	-	24,100	24,100	-	-	24,100	-
Station Road Swimming Pool	-	-	27,700	27,700	-	27,700	27,700	-	-	27,700	-
Blackbrook Swimming Pool	-	4,369,500	748,400	5,117,900	713,296	4,404,604	5,117,900	-	-	5,117,900	-
<b>Sub-total - General Schemes</b>	<b>1,012,000</b>	<b>9,180,470</b>	<b>2,384,300</b>	<b>12,576,770</b>	<b>1,543,008</b>	<b>11,033,762</b>	<b>12,576,770</b>	-	-	<b>12,576,770</b>	-

## CAPITAL PROGRAMME FORECAST 2015/16

## ANNEX I

Scheme	Original Budget 2015/16 £	Previously Approved Budget £	Carry Forward from 2014/15 £	Current Budget 2015/16 £	Actual Spend To Q1 £	Forecast Spend in 2015/16 £	Total Spend in 2015/16 £	Total Spend v Current Budget £	Forecast Spend in Future Years £	Total Programme Spend £	Forecast Programme Variance £
<b>S106 Funded Schemes</b>											
Wellington Skate Park	-	-	-	-	(8,712)	-	(8,712)	(8,712)	-	(8,712)	(8,712)
Long Run Meadow Play Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fitzhead Tythe Barn (SCC)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
French Weir Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Lyngford Skate Ramps	-	-	-	-	4,762	-	4,762	4,762	-	4,762	4,762
Wellington Pavilion	-	-	-	-	120	-	120	120	-	120	120
Langford Budville Play Area	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Taunton Athletics Club	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Norton Fitzwarren Village Hall	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Farriers Green	-	-	-	-	7,390	-	7,390	7,390	-	7,390	7,390
West Monkton Cricket Club	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Staplegrove Play Area	-	-	-	-	3,500	-	3,500	3,500	-	3,500	3,500
Stoney Furlong	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Wiveliscombe Swimming Pool	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hudson Way	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Churchinford	-	-	-	-	3,810	-	3,810	3,810	-	3,810	3,810
Leycroft Park	-	-	-	-	(4,369)	-	(4,369)	(4,369)	-	(4,369)	(4,369)
Hamilton Park	-	-	-	-	(5,168)	-	(5,168)	(5,168)	-	(5,168)	(5,168)
North Curry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Staplegrove Village Hall	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
S106 Milverton Capital	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
S106 Sampford Arundel	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub-total - S106 Schemes</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>1,332</b>	-	<b>1,332</b>	<b>1,332</b>	-	<b>1,332</b>	<b>1,332</b>
<b>General Fund Programme Total</b>	<b>1,012,000</b>	<b>9,180,470</b>	<b>2,384,300</b>	<b>12,576,770</b>	<b>1,544,340</b>	<b>11,033,762</b>	<b>12,578,102</b>	<b>1,332</b>	-	<b>12,578,102</b>	<b>1,332</b>

Scheme	Original Budget 2015/16 £	Previously Approved Budget £	Carry Forward from 2014/15 £	Current Budget 2015/16 £	Actual Spend To Q1 £	Forecast Spend in 2015/16 £	Total Spend in 2015/16 £	Total Spend v Current Budget £	Forecast Spend in Future Years £	Total Programme Spend £	Forecast Programme Variance £
<b>HRA Schemes</b>											
HRA Community Alarms	-	-	65,800	65,800	3,278	62,522	65,800	-	-	65,800	-
HRA Kitchens	635,000	-	721,300	1,356,300	793	549,207	550,000	(806,300)	806,300	1,356,300	-
HRA Bathrooms	1,640,000	-	292,800	1,932,800	80,149	1,269,851	1,350,000	(582,800)	582,800	1,932,800	-
HRA Roofing	50,000	-	-	50,000	(1,963)	51,963	50,000	-	-	50,000	-
HRA Windows	50,000	-	96,000	146,000	14,035	335,965	350,000	204,000	(204,000)	146,000	-
HRA Heating Improvements	2,220,000	-	674,000	2,894,000	29,112	1,595,888	1,625,000	(1,269,000)	1,269,000	2,894,000	-
HRA Doors	460,000	-	170,500	630,500	165,369	434,631	600,000	(30,500)	30,500	630,500	-
HRA Fire Safety Works in Communal Areas	165,000	-	169,200	334,200	75,193	259,007	334,200	-	-	334,200	-
HRA Fascias and Soffits	460,000	-	408,700	868,700	(5,798)	874,498	868,700	-	-	868,700	-
HRA Air Source Heat Pumps	695,000	-	14,500	709,500	96,585	612,915	709,500	-	-	709,500	-
HRA IT Development	100,000	-	206,900	306,900	-	306,900	306,900	-	-	306,900	-
HRA Door Entry Systems	205,000	-	65,000	270,000	650	399,350	400,000	130,000	(130,000)	270,000	-
HRA Aids and Adaptations	120,000	-	-	120,000	4,916	115,084	120,000	-	-	120,000	-
HRA Meeting Halls	30,000	-	-	30,000	975	29,025	30,000	-	-	30,000	-
HRA Asbestos Works	260,000	-	-	260,000	4,674	255,326	260,000	-	-	260,000	-
HRA Tenants Improvements	5,000	-	-	5,000	-	5,000	5,000	-	-	5,000	-
HRA DFGs	315,000	-	-	315,000	(11,413)	326,413	315,000	-	-	315,000	-
HRA Creechbarrow Road	-	-	4,862,000	4,862,000	412,017	4,187,983	4,600,000	(262,000)	262,000	4,862,000	-
Sustainable Energy Fund	100,000	-	446,400	546,400	-	546,400	546,400	-	-	546,400	-
Environmental Improvements	50,000	-	262,000	312,000	7,357	142,643	150,000	(162,000)	162,000	312,000	-
Other External Insulations	10,000	-	-	10,000	4,575	5,425	10,000	-	-	10,000	-
Garages	30,000	-	-	30,000	-	30,000	30,000	-	-	30,000	-
Sewerage Treatment Plants Extensions	20,000	-	-	20,000	-	20,000	20,000	-	-	20,000	-
HRA Phase 1: Vale View, West Bag	-	-	160,000	160,000	-	130,000	130,000	(30,000)	30,000	160,000	-
HRA Phase 1: Bacon Drive	-	-	253,400	253,400	(16,340)	269,740	253,400	-	-	253,400	-
HRA Phase 1: Normandy Drive	-	-	550,400	550,400	(10,157)	560,557	550,400	-	-	550,400	-
HRA Phase 1: Normandy Drive	-	-	366,100	366,100	(19,589)	385,689	366,100	-	-	366,100	-
HRA Buybacks	-	-	161,100	161,100	243	160,857	161,100	-	-	161,100	-
HRA Unadopted Areas	45,000	-	-	45,000	(2,223)	47,223	45,000	-	-	45,000	-
HRA Social Housing Development Program	1,000,000	-	-	1,000,000	-	1,000,000	1,000,000	-	-	1,000,000	-
HRA Weavers Arms	-	-	3,338,500	3,338,500	50,531	617,169	667,700	(2,670,800)	2,670,800	3,338,500	-
HRA PV Systems	-	-	1,509,100	1,509,100	720,271	788,829	1,509,100	-	-	1,509,100	-
<b>HRA Schemes Total</b>	<b>8,665,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>14,793,700</b>	<b>23,458,700</b>	<b>1,603,239</b>	<b>16,376,061</b>	<b>17,979,300</b>	<b>(5,479,400)</b>	<b>5,479,400</b>	<b>23,458,700</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME ALL SCHEMES</b>	<b>9,677,000</b>	<b>9,180,470</b>	<b>17,178,000</b>	<b>36,035,470</b>	<b>3,147,580</b>	<b>27,409,823</b>	<b>30,557,402</b>	<b>(5,478,068)</b>	<b>5,479,400</b>	<b>36,036,802</b>	<b>1,332</b>

**09/09/2015, Report:Write Off Report**

Reporting Officers:Steve Read

**09/09/2015, Report:Firepool Land Assembly - Confidential**

Reporting Officers:Tom Gillham

Contains exempt information requiring private consideration: Yes

Exempt reason:The report will contain confidential information relating to land-holdings and other related material.

**09/09/2015, Report:Citizens Advice Bureau Constructions Skills**

Reporting Officers:Matt Parr

**09/09/2015, Report:Proposed Apprentice Post in Housing and Communities**

Reporting Officers:Martin Price

**03/12/2015, Report:Council Tax Support Scheme 2016/17**

Reporting Officers:Heather Tiso

**03/12/2015, Report:Proposed Sheltered Housing Service Model Report**

Reporting Officers:Gary Kingman,Stephen Boland

**03/12/2015, Report:Fees and Charges 2016/2017**

Reporting Officers:Steve Plenty

**03/12/2015, Report:Local Development Orders – Progress Report**

Reporting Officers:Tim Burton

**03/12/2015, Report:Q2 Financial Monitoring 2015/2016**

Reporting Officers:Steve Plenty

**03/12/2015, Report:New Homes Bonus Report**

Reporting Officers:Dan Webb

**04/02/2016, Report:Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Annual Investment Strategy and MRP Policy 2016/17**

Reporting Officers:Paul Fitzgerald

**04/02/2016, Report:Earmarked Reserves Review**

Reporting Officers:Steve Plenty

**04/02/2016, Report:Capital Programme 2016/2017**

Reporting Officers:Steve Plenty

**04/02/2016, Report:General Fund Revenue Budget 2016/2017**

Reporting Officers:Steve Plenty

**04/02/2016, Report:Housing Revenue Account Budget 2016/2017**

Reporting Officers:Steve Plenty

**04/02/2016, Report:Corporate Strategy 2016/2020**

Reporting Officers:Paul Harding

**04/02/2016, Report:Somerset Waste Partnership Business Plan**

Reporting Officers:Chris Hall

**09/03/2016, Report:Community Asset Transfer Policy – Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council**

Reporting Officers:Tim Child

Contains exempt information requiring private consideration: Yes

Exempt reason:Yes. The report may contain some commercially sensitive information.

**09/03/2016, Report:Q3 Performance Report**

Reporting Officers:Paul Harding

**09/03/2016, Report:Corporate Equality Objectives**

Reporting Officers:Christine Gale

**09/03/2016, Report:Q3 - Financial Performance report**

Reporting Officers:Steve Plenty

**09/03/2016, Report:Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Review**

Reporting Officers:James Barrah

**24/03/2016, Report:Creedwell Orchard, Milverton Option Agreement – Proposed Extension of the Trigger Date**

Reporting Officers:Adrian Priest

Contains exempt information requiring private consideration: Yes

Exempt reason:The report may contain a confidential appendix.

**21/04/2016, Report:Empty Homes Strategy and review of Empty Property Coordinator**

Reporting Officers:Mark Leeman

**21/04/2016, Report:Superfast Broadband Phase 2 report**

Reporting Officers:Ian Timms

**09/06/2016, Report:Car park variable message signage and pay on foot – Request for budget allocation**

Reporting Officers:Ian Timms

**09/06/2016, Report:TDBC revised Corporate Debt Policy**

Reporting Officers:Dean Emery

**07/07/2016, Report:Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Review**

Reporting Officers:James Barrah

**07/07/2016, Report:Q4 - Financial Outturn report**

Reporting Officers:Steve Plenty

**07/07/2016, Report:Q4 Performance Report**

Reporting Officers:Paul Harding

**04/08/2016, Report:Housing Company**

Reporting Officers:James Barra

**04/08/2016, Report:Report on Grants Policy**

Reporting Officers:Christian Trevelyan,Mark Leeman

**08/09/2016, Report:Review of Deane Helpline**

Reporting Officers:Chris Hall

Contains exempt information requiring private consideration: Yes

Exempt reason:The report may contain some commercially sensitive information.

**08/09/2016, Report:Update on Coal Orchard Consultation**

Reporting Officers:Ian Timms

**09/11/2016, Report:Review of Council Tax Support Scheme**

Reporting Officers:Heather Tiso

**09/11/2016, Report:Deane Lottery**

Reporting Officers:Angela Summers

## **Executive – 9 September 2015**

Present: Councillor Williams (Chairman)  
Councillors Berry, Habgood, Parrish and Mrs Warmington

Officers: Penny James (Chief Executive), Matt Parr (Economic Development Project Officer), David Evans (Economic Development Manager), Paul Fitzgerald (Assistant Director – Resources), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager), Steve Plenty (Finance Manager) and Richard Bryant (Democratic Services Manager)

Also present: Councillors Coles and Morrell

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm.)

### **43. Apologies**

Councillors Beale, Edwards and Mrs Herbert.

### **44. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 8 July 2015, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and were signed.

### **45. Proposal to Adopt a Client-based Approach to Delivering Construction Skills in Taunton Deane**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning a proposal to work with the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) to adopt a Client-Based Approach (CBA), aimed at delivering employment, apprenticeships and training through planning obligations related to major construction projects.

As part of their planning development management function, local authorities could request contributions, either financial or in kind, through planning obligations for measures directly related to a development.

Noted that the CBA, facilitated by the CITB, and a product of the National Skills Academy for Construction, provided a toolkit to deliver employment, apprenticeships and training for public sector clients through their construction projects. This included all of the necessary components to deliver opportunities using benchmarks that had been 'employer approved'. The CBA would also build on the existing 'Taunton Protocol' by ensuring that firm, measurable outputs for providing construction skills were delivered.

The Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) and benchmarks, approved by employers within the construction sector, would be used by the Council to justify and secure Section 106 Agreement contributions for education, employment and skills through the planning process.

Reported that the Council's Core Strategy made direct reference to the importance of employment and skills initiatives through Policies CP2 'Economy' and CP5 'Inclusive Communities'.

There were a number of significant infrastructure projects on the horizon, which included the urban extensions at Monkton Heathfield and Comeytrowe, Taunton Town Centre Redevelopments and Junction 25 Employment Site Delivery. Each planning application would have a dedicated Employment and Skills Plan, submitted by contractors, with KPI's and associated benchmark targets.

The CITB had approached the Council to adopt a CBA to deliver construction skills locally. It was intended that this approach would be embedded in all planning obligations relating to allocated sites, and would open up the opportunity for the Council to apply for National Skills Academy for Construction Status.

It was therefore proposed that the Council:-

- Confirmed its commitment to jointly adopting the CBA and applying for National Skills Academy for Construction status;
- Revise the necessary Planning policies and processes to embed the CBA;  
And
- Maintain continuing dialogue between the Planning and Economic Development Teams to monitor qualifying planning permissions.

**Resolved** that:-

- (1) The Client-Based Approach be adopted to strongly encourage delivery of employment and skills opportunities in all major construction projects in which the Council was the Local Planning Authority; and
- (2) Officers be authorised to progress an application for National Skills Academy status.

#### 46. **Write-Offs over £10,000**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the write-off of two irrecoverable debts which had an individual value greater than £10,000.

The debts – one relating to a Housing Benefit overpayment, the other a Sundry Debt invoice concerning commercial rent arrears– had a combined value of £30,083.78, as detailed in the confidential appendix to the report.

In accordance with good financial management principles, the Council had made a provision for bad debts in all its income streams. This provision recognised that a proportion of the authority's debts would prove irrecoverable. Some common reasons for write-off included unable to trace the debtor, debtor insolvency or where a debtor had died with an insufficient estate.

Where a debt was deemed irrecoverable it was good practice to write-off the debt rather than provide a false impression of funds likely to be available to the Authority.

Reported that any debt that was written off could subsequently be re-raised should circumstances change, such as an unexpected dividend being received in an insolvency case, an absconded debtor being traced or if a person living abroad moved back to England or Wales.

In the two particular cases outlined in the report, it had been concluded that no further enforcement action could be taken on the Sundry Debt matter, however investigations around taking out a Charging Order to recover the Housing Benefit Overpayment were being researched.

Both of the debts were old and, as part of continuing reviews of debt by both the Joint Management Team and Corporate Recovery had been identified as irrecoverable at this time.

Noted that processes had been strengthened around commercial rents to help stop the build-up of arrears in the future.

During the discussion of this matter it was brought to the attention of the Executive that it might also be possible to pursue a debtor residing in Europe by way of a European Payment Order.

**Resolved** that:-

- (1) The write-offs detailed in the report be approved; and
- (2) It be agreed that the Housing Benefit matter be monitored in pursuance of a Charging Order and written back on should further legal action be deemed to be possible.

#### **47. Apprenticeships in Housing and Communities**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning a proposal to introduce an apprenticeship scheme into different sections within Housing and Communities.

Apprenticeships were jobs that combined on and off the job training, offering a practical solution to reducing unemployment, particularly by supporting individuals who were not in education, employment or training.

Apprenticeships had also been shown to facilitate the often difficult transition between full-time learning and work. The opportunity to work alongside experienced staff and gain job specific skills was designed to open future career paths.

It was proposed that the scheme would be a rolling programme appointing one apprentice per year over three years to gain skills in three different sections of Housing and Communities. Part of an apprenticeship would be to study for a nationally recognised qualification – NVQ Levels 2 and 3 in Business Administration.

Full details of roles the apprentices would perform over the period they were employed by the Council were detailed in the report.

To ensure the success of the scheme, the apprentices needed to be put at the heart of the programme, with effective and appropriate support mechanisms built in.

It was proposed that a mentor would act as an advocate. Line managers within the service areas concerned would also be able to pick up on any issues in terms of performance, behaviour or attendance as soon as they emerged.

Further reported that the National Minimum Wage for an apprentice was £2.73 per hour for 16 to 18 year olds and those aged over 19 in the first year of their apprenticeship. For all other apprentices the National Minimum Wage appropriate to their age would apply.

The following table showed the current and future levels of National Minimum Wage hourly rates:-

	<b>Apprentice</b>	<b>Under 18 Years Old</b>	<b>18 to 20 Years Old</b>	<b>21 Years Old and Over</b>
<b>From October 2014</b>	£2.73	£3.79	£5.13	£6.50
<b>From October 2015</b>	£3.30	£3.87	£5.30	£6.70

Noted that the proposed financial cost of employing one apprentice per year on a three year rolling programme would be as follows:-

	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>Apprentice – Business Support</b>	£3,703	£10,326	£6,751	£0	£0	<b>£20,780</b>
<b>Apprentice – Estate Management</b>	£0	£4,904	£11,054	£4,822	£0	<b>£20,780</b>
<b>Apprentice – Property Services</b>	£0	£0	£4,904	£11,054	£4,822	<b>£20,780</b>
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>£3,700</b>	<b>£15,230</b>	<b>£22,709</b>	<b>£15,876</b>	<b>£4,822</b>	<b>£62,340</b>

Reported that the proposed apprenticeship scheme had been considered by the Community Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 6 September 2015.

Whilst Members were generally supportive, there were concerns as to the level of pay which would be offered to the apprentices. It had therefore been recommended that HR should be requested to review the appropriateness of the hourly rates quoted in the report. This view was supported by the Members of the Executive.

**Resolved** that subject to the proposed hourly rates for apprentices being reviewed by HR as to whether they had been set at the appropriate level, the introduction of the proposed apprenticeship scheme in Housing and Communities.

#### 48. **Financial Monitoring – Quarter 1 2015/2016**

Considered report previously circulated, which provided an update on the projected outturn financial position of the Council to the end of Quarter 1 of 2015/2016 (as at 30 June 2015).

Monitoring the budget was an important part of the Council's performance management framework. Regular scrutiny of its performance was an essential part of the Council's Governance framework.

Reported that a summary of the Council's Financial Performance at the end of Quarter 1 was as follows:-

##### **General Fund (GF) Revenue**

The overall financial position of the Council was that the GF outturn position was currently projected as a net overspend of £132,000 which was 1% above budget.

At this early stage in the year, there was only one significant variance which related to Taunton Deane Assets Income which was reporting an underachievement of income against budget.

Budgets and forecasts were based on known information and the best estimates of the Council's future spending and income through the budget monitoring process. During this process risks and uncertainties were identified which could impact the financial projections, but for which the likelihood, and/or amount were uncertain.

Reported that the risks identified through the Quarter 1 process were Fluctuation in demand for services; General Spend; Business Rates and Year End Adjustments.

##### **General Fund (GF) Reserves**

The GF reserve balance at the start of the year was £2,109,000. The 2015/2016 Budget included a one-off transfer of £105,000, and the Council approved an allocation of £222,000. If the current trend continued and the Council took no further alternative action in the year, the potential underspend of £132,000 would be transferred to this reserve, decreasing the projected balance to £1,650,000 at the end of the financial year.

##### **Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

The current forecast outturn for the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was a surplus of £12,000 (0.05% of budget). The major underspends and overspends forecasted for the year were Rental Income; Other Income; Housing Management;

Specialist Works; Communal Areas; and Provision for Bad Debt.

Noted that the only risk identified to date was Rental Income which fluctuated due to Voids.

#### **Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Reserves**

The HRA reserves at the start of the year were £3,484,000, and the Council had approved an allocation of £776,000 for a number of initiatives and investment in services through the Outturn report in July 2015. This reduces the current budgeted balance to £2,708,000 and was forecasted to be £2,720,000 at the end of the current financial year.

#### **Deane DLO Trading Account**

At Quarter 1 the DLO was not forecasting an over/underspend/over recovery after contributing £101,000 to the General Fund. Any surplus would be transferred to the DLO trading reserve.

The Trading Account Reserves Position balance brought forward of £679,000 related to a retained trading surplus of £314,000, plus capital reserves set aside to support investment in the service.

#### **Deane Helpline Trading Account**

The Deane Helpline was forecasting a year end outturn net deficit of £80,000. There were no funds held in the Deane Helpline Trading Account Reserve.

#### **General Fund (GF) Capital Programme**

The GF approved Capital Programme for 2015/2016 was £13,582,000. This related to schemes which would be completed over the next five years. Of this, £7,575,000 was planned to be spent during the current financial year.

#### **Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme**

The HRA approved Capital Programme for 2015/2016 was £23,459,000 of which £12,927,000 related to works on existing dwellings and £10,532,000 for the provision of new housing through development

**Resolved** that the report be noted.

#### 49. **Executive Forward Plan**

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

**Resolved** that the Forward Plan be noted.

(The meeting ended at 7.05 p.m.)