

WEST SOMERSET DISTRICT COUNCIL

Meeting to be held on Wednesday 18 June 2014 at 4.30 pm

Council Chamber, Williton

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes

Minutes of the Meeting of Annual Council held on 14 May 2014 to be approved and signed as a correct record – **SEE ATTACHED.**

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive and record any declarations of interest in respect of any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

4. Public Participation

The Chairman to advise the Committee of any items on which members of the public have requested to speak and advise those members of the public present of the details of the Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public wishing to speak at this meeting there are a few points you might like to note.

A three-minute time limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak before Councillors debate the issue. There will be no further opportunity for comment at a later stage. Your comments should be addressed to the Chairman and any ruling made by the Chair is not open to discussion. If a response is needed it will be given either orally at the meeting or a written reply made within five working days of the meeting.

5. Chairman's Announcements

6. Core Members of Policy Advisory Groups (PAGs)

To approve the core membership of Policy Advisory Groups (PAGs), the proposed membership is as follows:-

Housing, Health & Wellbeing

*Councillor K H Turner
Councillor D J Westcott
Councillor A M Chick
Councillor B Heywood
Councillor A F Knight
Councillor L W Smith
Councillor A P Hadley
Councillor E May

Environment

*Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew
*Councillor C Morgan
Councillor G S Dowding
Councillor S Y Goss
Councillor J Freeman
Councillor I R Melhuish
Councillor E May
Councillor M A Smith
Councillor B Heywood
Councillor M O A Dewdney

Community and Customer

*Councillor D J Westcott
Councillor K H Turner
Councillor G S Dowding
Councillor K M Mills
Councillor A F Knight
Councillor L W Smith
Councillor I R Melhuish
Councillor E May
Councillor D J Sanders

Performance & Corporate Support

*Councillor T Taylor
*Councillor S J Pugsley
*Councillor K V Kravis
Councillor M J Chilcott
Councillor R P Lillis
Councillor M O A Dewdney
Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew
Councillor J Freeman
Councillor I R Melhuish
Councillor D D Ross
Councillor P H Murphy

Regeneration & Economic Growth

*Councillor K M Mills
Councillor R P Lillis
Councillor M O A Dewdney
Councillor S Y Goss
Councillor A M Chick
Councillor M J Chilcott
Councillor A P Hadley
Councillor K J Ross
Councillor E May
Councillor M A Smith
Councillor D D Ross
Councillor P N Grierson

Hinkley

Councillor C Morgan
Councillor M A Smith
Councillor T Taylor
Councillor I R Melhuish
Councillor K V Kravis
Councillor S Y Goss

7. Member Reporting on Membership of Outside Body for Information

- Armed Forces Covenant Committee by Councillor G S Dowding – **SEE ATTACHED**
- Police and Crime Committee by Councillor G S Dowding – **SEE ATTACHED**
- Management Committee of Broadlands by Councillor P Grierson – **SEE ATTACHED**
- Somerset Play Forum and Somerset Rural Youth Project by Councillor E May – **SEE ATTACHED**

8. Dulverton Weir Repair Works

To consider Report No. WSC 85/14, to be presented by Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew, Lead Member for Environment - General - **SEE ATTACHED**.

The purpose of the report is to update on steps taken to secure a repair to the damaged Weir in Dulverton and to seek consent for a Capital contribution to initiate works. This report and the recommendations have previously been approved by Cabinet.

9. Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Discretions

To consider Report No. WSC 84/14, to be presented by Councillor K V Kravis, Lead Member for Resources and Central Support - **SEE ATTACHED**.

The purpose of the report is to set out some minor wording amendments to the current LGPS Discretions as suggested by the Pensions Manager at Peninsula Pensions; and to set out wording for two new discretions which arise as part of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 and which need to be approved by 30 June 2015.

10. WSC's Response to Somerset's Health and Wellbeing Strategy

To consider Report No. WSC 88/14, to be presented by Councillor K H Turner, Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing – **SEE ATTACHED.**

The purpose of the report is to seek approval for West Somerset Council's (WSC) response to Somerset Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2013 - 2018.

11. Superfast Broadband Extension – Request for Match Funding

To consider Report No. WSC 86/14 to be presented by Councillor K M Mills, Lead Member for Regeneration and Economic Growth – **SEE ATTACHED.**

The purpose of the report is to update council on the proposal to extend the superfast broadband rollout project to increase the coverage in the district; and to outline the requirement for match funding and request that Council determine whether to agree in principle to commit £240,000 to secure the extended coverage.

The report makes reference to a confidential appendix and should Council wish to discuss this part of the report it will be necessary to consider excluding the press and public in accordance with Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

COUNCILLORS ARE REMINDED TO CHECK THEIR POST TRAYS

The Council's Vision:

To enable people to live, work and prosper in West Somerset

The Council's Corporate Priorities:

- Local Democracy:
Securing local democracy and accountability in West Somerset, based in West Somerset, elected by the people of West Somerset and responsible to the people of West Somerset.
- New Nuclear Development at Hinkley Point
Maximising opportunities for West Somerset communities and businesses to benefit from the development whilst protecting local communities and the environment.

The Council's Core Values:

- Integrity
- Fairness
- Respect
- Trust

RISK SCORING MATRIX

Report writers score risks in reports uses the scoring matrix below

Risk Scoring Matrix

Likelihood	5	Almost Certain	Low (5)	Medium (10)	High (15)	Very High (20)	Very High (25)
	4	Likely	Low (4)	Medium (8)	Medium (12)	High (16)	Very High (20)
	3	Possible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
	2	Unlikely	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Rare	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
			1	2	3	4	5
			Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
			Impact				

Likelihood of risk occurring	Indicator	Description (chance of occurrence)
1. Very Unlikely	May occur in exceptional circumstances	< 10%
2. Slight	Is unlikely to, but could occur at some time	10 – 25%
3. Feasible	Fairly likely to occur at same time	25 – 50%
4. Likely	Likely to occur within the next 1-2 years, or occurs occasionally	50 – 75%
5. Very Likely	Regular occurrence (daily / weekly / monthly)	> 75%

- Mitigating actions for high ('High' or above) scoring risks are to be reflected in Service Plans, managed by the Group Manager and implemented by Service Lead Officers;
- Lower scoring risks will either be accepted with no mitigating actions or included in work plans with appropriate mitigating actions that are managed by Service Lead Officers.

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WEST SOMERSET COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 May 2014 at 2.30 pm

in the Council Chamber, Williton

Present:

Councillor G S Dowding Chairman
 Councillor A F Knight Vice-Chairman

Councillor M J Chilcott
 Councillor P N Grierson
 Councillor K V Kravis
 Councillor I R Melhuish
 Councillor C Morgan
 Councillor S J Pugsley
 Councillor K J Ross
 Councillor L W Smith
 Councillor T Taylor
 Councillor K H Turner

Councillor M O A Dewdney
 Councillor B Heywood
 Councillor R P Lillis
 Councillor K M Mills
 Councillor P H Murphy
 Councillor D D Ross
 Councillor D J Sanders
 Councillor M A Smith
 Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew
 Councillor D J Westcott

Officers in Attendance:

Chief Executive (P James)
 Assistant Chief Executive (B Lang)
 Meeting Administrator (K Kowalewska)

The meeting was opened with prayers led by the Reverend Jon Rose.

C1 Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor G S Dowding be elected Chairman of the Council for the ensuing Municipal Year.

Councillor Dowding thanked Councillors for re-electing him as Chairman. He stated that it had been a challenging year for West Somerset Council, namely to do with issues surrounding Hinkley Point, the harsh winter weather conditions and working together to become one team with Taunton Deane Borough Council. He advised that during the previous twelve months the Council had regrettably lost 18 members of staff and the Chairman personally thanked and acknowledged the immense amount of hard work undertaken by Adrian Dyer, Steve Watts and Kay O'Sullivan during their years of service to the Council and wished them well for the future. He thanked the Joint Chief Executive, Penny James who had ensured a seamless transition and he was pleased to report that it was working extremely well.

Councillor Dowding then went on to announce that Councillor D Ross was resigning from his position on the Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust - Foundation Trust Council of Governors and thanked him for representing West Somerset Council on hospital matters during his time as Governor.

C2 Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor A F Knight be appointed Vice Chairman of the Council for the ensuing municipal year.

Councillor Knight thanked Councillors for re-electing him and expressed his appreciation to Councillor Dowding for taking on the demanding role of Chairman for another year

C3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A M Chick, H J W Davies, J Freeman, E May and S Y Goss.

C4 Declarations of Interest

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a County, Parish or Town Council:

Name	Minute No.	Member of	Action Taken
Cllr P N Grierson	All	Alcombe	Spoke and voted
Cllr P H Murphy	All	Watchet	Spoke and voted
Cllr K J Ross	All	Dulverton	Spoke and voted
Cllr L W Smith	All	Minehead	Spoke and voted
Cllr K H Turner	All	Brompton Ralph	Spoke and voted
Cllr D J Westcott	All	Watchet	Spoke and voted

C5 Minutes

(Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 30 April 2014 and of the Licensing Committee held on 11 March 2014, circulated with the Agenda.)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of Council held on 30 April 2014 and of the Licensing Committee held on 11 March 2014 be confirmed as correct records.

C6 Public Participation

No members of the public spoke at the meeting on any items on the agenda.

C7 Appointment of Leader

RESOLVED that the appointment of Councillor T Taylor as Leader be confirmed for the ensuing municipal year.

C8 Appointment of Deputy Leader

RESOLVED that Councillor K V Kravis be appointed as Deputy Leader of the Council for the ensuing municipal year.

C9 Cabinet

The Leader announced the following appointments and portfolios:

CABINET			
Name	Political Group	Lead Member	Shadow Portfolios
Councillor T Taylor	Conservative	Leader and Performance and Corporate Support	Councillor I R Melhuish
Councillor K M Mills	Conservative	Regeneration and Economic Growth	Councillor K J Ross
Councillor K H Turner	Conservative	Housing, Health and Wellbeing	Councillor A P Hadley
Councillor S J Pugsley	Conservative	Executive Support and Democracy	Councillor P H Murphy
Councillor D J Westcott	Conservative	Community and Customer	Councillor E May
Councillor C Morgan	Conservative	Environment – Hinkley	Councillor M A Smith
Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew	Conservative	Environment – General	Councillor J Freeman
Councillor K V Kravis	Conservative	Resources and Central Support	Councillor D D Ross

The Leader of the Opposition, Councillor I Melhuish, announced the shadow portfolio holders as detailed in the table above.

RESOLVED that the appointments be noted and that the Corporate Plan, Constitution and any other relevant documents be updated accordingly.

C10 Allocation of Seats to Committees

RESOLVED that the nominations for Committee seats made by the political groups be ratified and that the composition of the Committees be as detailed below.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	
9 seats in total	
Conservative 6	
Democratic Alliance 3	
Name	Political Group
Councillor M J Chilcott	Conservative
Councillor M O A Dewdney	Conservative
Councillor G S Dowding	Conservative

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Councillor P N Grierson	Conservative
Councillor B Heywood	Conservative
Councillor R P Lillis	Conservative
Councillor J Freeman	Democratic Alliance
Councillor P H Murphy	Democratic Alliance
Councillor K J Ross	Democratic Alliance

It was noted that it had been agreed that meetings of the Scrutiny Committee were to be held on the 2nd/3rd Thursday of the month commencing at 3.30pm and that the timetable of meetings for 2014/15 would be amended accordingly.

LICENSING COMMITTEE	
11 seats in total	
Conservative 8	
Democratic Alliance 3	
Name	Political Group
Councillor A M Chick	Conservative
Councillor K H Turner	Conservative
Councillor S Y Goss	Conservative
Councillor A F Knight	Conservative
Councillor R P Lillis	Conservative
Councillor D J Sanders	Conservative
Councillor L W Smith	Conservative
Councillor D J Westcott	Conservative
Councillor H J W Davies	Democratic Alliance
Councillor A P Hadley	Democratic Alliance
Councillor E May	Democratic Alliance

PLANNING COMMITTEE	
15 seats in total	
Conservative 10	
Democratic Alliance 5	
Name	Political Group
Councillor A M Chick	Conservative
Councillor G S Dowding	Conservative
Councillor B Heywood	Conservative
Councillor A F Knight	Conservative
Councillor K M Mills	Conservative
Councillor C Morgan	Conservative
Councillor S J Pugsley	Conservative
Councillor L W Smith	Conservative
Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew	Conservative
Councillor K H Turner	Conservative
Councillor A P Hadley	Democratic Alliance
Councillor E May	Democratic Alliance
Councillor I R Melhuish	Democratic Alliance
Councillor D D Ross	Democratic Alliance
Councillor M A Smith	Democratic Alliance

AUDIT COMMITTEE	
7 seats in total Conservative 5 Democratic Alliance 2	
Name	Political Group
Councillor M J Chilcott	Conservative
Councillor M O A Dewdney	Conservative
Councillor S Y Goss	Conservative
Councillor R P Lillis	Conservative
Councillor D J Sanders	Conservative
Councillor E May	Democratic Alliance
Councillor D D Ross	Democratic Alliance

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PANEL	
8 seats in total Conservative 5 Democratic Alliance 3	
Name	Political Group
Councillor S Y Goss	Conservative
Councillor B Heywood	Conservative
Councillor A F Knight	Conservative
Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew	Conservative
Councillor K H Turner	Conservative
Councillor I R Melhuish	Democratic Alliance
Councillor K J Ross	Democratic Alliance
Councillor M A Smith	Democratic Alliance

STANDARDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE	
9 seats in total 3 West Somerset District Councillors 3 Independent Members 3 Parish/Town Councillors	
Councillor P H Murphy Councillor P Grierson Councillor D J Westcott	

C11 Appointment of Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees

The following appointments were made:

Scrutiny Committee

Chairman

Councillor P H Murphy

Vice Chairman

Councillor R P Lillis

Planning Committee

Chairman

Councillor A F Knight

Vice Chairman

Councillor I R Melhuish

Licensing Committee

Chairman

Vice Chairman

Councillor D J Sanders

Councillor A P Hadley

Audit Committee

Chairman

Vice Chairman

Councillor S Y Goss

Councillor E May

Local Development Panel

Chairman

Vice Chairman

Councillor K H Turner

Councillor A F Knight

C12

Appointment of Representatives on Outside Bodies

RESOLVED that the Members appointed to serve on Outside Bodies for the municipal year 2014-2015 be as follows:

ORGANISATION	REPS 2014/2015
Management Committee of Broadlands	Councillor P Grierson
MATA Regal Theatre Co Ltd	Councillor I R Melhuish
Watchet Youth Centre	Councillor D J Westcott
Somerset Rural Youth Project	Councillor E May
Early Childhood & Child Care Network Meetings	Councillor E May Deputy: Councillor D J Westcott
Strategic Partnership Group West Somerset Sports & Leisure Centre	Councillor I Melhuish
Somerset County Playing Fields Association	Councillor H J W Davies
Somerset Play Forum	Councillor E May
Somerset Passenger Transport Forum	Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew Councillor P H Murphy Sub: Councillor K Mills
Exmoor National Park (politically balanced)	Councillor S J Pugsley Councillor J Freeman Councillor C Morgan Councillor T Taylor
Somerset Building Preservation Trust	Councillor H J W Davies Deputy: Councillor G Dowding
The Parrett Drainage Board	Councillor R Lillis (Dunster Area) Councillor C Morgan (Stockland Area)
Wessex Water Customer Liaison Panels	Councillor P Grierson
Countywide Shared Services Task and Finish Group	Councillor T Taylor Councillor I Melhuish

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Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee	Councillor A Trollope-Bellew Councillor S Dowding
West Somerset Advice Bureau	Councillor P Grierson
ENGAGE - West Somerset Voluntary Sector Development agency	Councillor R Lillis
Hinkley Point Site Stakeholder Group	Councillor P Grierson Councillor C Morgan Councillor S Goss
Taunton & Somerset NHS Trust – Foundation Trust Council of Governors	Councillor M J Chilcott
Minehead EYE Management Committee	Councillor D J Westcott Deputy: Councillor E May
Somerset Armed Forces Community Covenant Partnership	Councillor S Dowding
Somerset Local Access Forum	Councillor A Trollope-Bellew
Minehead Visioning Group	Councillor M Chilcott Councillor A P Hadley Councillor K Mills (PH)
Rural Commission	Councillor A Trollope-Bellew Councillor B Heywood
Police and Crime Panel	Councillor G Dowding
Health and Wellbeing Board	Councillor K Turner
Minehead Events Group	Councillor P Grierson Councillor R P Lillis* *Note: subject to principle being agreed by the Minehead Visioning/Events Groups to increase WSC representation to two members

The meeting closed at 3.07 pm.

Member Reporting on Membership of Outside Body – Councillor G S Dowding

Report on Armed Forces Covenant Committee

This committee has met on 2 occasions during the year.

The relationship between Military medical requirements and NHS has been discussed as have WW1 centenary commemorations.

The initial Community Covenant bid by Williton RBL Rifle club failed but has been re-submitted with, I hope, better luck next time.

LIBOR fines are funding much of the Community Covenant bids. A splendid use for the ill-gotten gains from duplicitous (ex hopefully) bankers.

Joint working with Devon Committee has also been investigated.

Somerset military tattoo was held at Taunton racecourse in September and will be repeated this year.

RBL, H4H, SAFFA, Burma Star Association and Arctic Star members have all been in communication with the Covenant.

Sadly the Retreat at the old Smugglers pub in Blue Anchor failed to establish itself but the one at Ashcott remains in business and is run by ex-service personnel.

The Committee is keen to assist any ex-service personnel when needed.

Report on Police and Crime Committee

This committee has met on 6 occasions during the year.

Meetings dealt mainly with Budgets, Police and crime needs assessment and "Complaints" (few but tortuous!).

This is the first full year of a new Chief Constable (Nick Gargan) operating with a new Police and Crime Commissioner (Sue Mountstevens).

Sue has focused very much on Domestic violence and abuse.

Much of the crime is, by the nature of life, in and around Bristol where drugs and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) are quite prevalent.

The general impression within and without Avon and Somerset is that the PCC is working well and there have been very few teething problems.

The Badger cull impacted hard on our patch and although policing costs were high and there were some very ugly incidents by protestors the cull was well contained and the protestors did not achieve the same publicity as they did in Gloucestershire where policing was "heavier". The PCC and Chief Constable visited Minehead for an Open evening in March 2014 which was well attended.

The closure of the two local police station is logical so far as buildings are concerned but much remains to be done in respect of "alternatives".

Member Reporting on Membership of Outside Body – Councillor P Grierson

Report on Management Committee of Broadlands

Broadlands Home, is a Minehead based charity providing reasonably priced accommodation for those who have for various reasons found it difficult to remain in their own homes. They have to be able to walk and look after their own medical and personal needs as this care cannot be provided. All meals and entertainment are provided and staff provide 24 hour cover and provide a safe environment for the residents.

When the charity was formed they had a representative from the then Urban Council and they have always kept a link with the council although it became clear that there was some confusion as to why there were two reps from District and none from the Town, this was rectified last year and at the moment I am the only rep. I attend the six meetings a year and some social functions.

The trustees are very independent and have not made any request to the district for assistance. They are at the moment due to heavy financial costs, due to maintenance and updating projects, having to rethink their strategy and may well have to consider raising their charges.

Member Reporting on Membership of Outside Body – Councillor E May

Report on Somerset Play Forum, Early Childhood Children's Network Meetings, Children's Hub Meetings (- this is local children centres together) and Somerset Rural Youth Project

I attend most of these meetings although the Somerset Play Forum met in Chard and I thought too far to travel for an hour meeting but I will still get a report.

When I receive the reports (in the past I have asked Helen to pass on to all Cllrs - Thank you Helen) (now I ask Krystyna) so all Councillors can view. These reports are sent to me even if I don't attend the meeting.

I make sure Portfolio Holder is aware of all meetings results.

Report Number: WSC 85/14
Presented by: Councillor A Trollope-Bellew, Lead Member for Environment - General
Author of the Report: James Barrah, Director Housing and Communities
Contact Details:
Tel. No. Direct Line 01823 358699
Email: j.barrah@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Report to a Meeting of: COUNCIL
To be Held on: 18 June 2014
Date Entered on Executive Forward Plan Or Agreement for Urgency Granted: 12 May 2014

DULVERTON WEIR REPAIR WORKS

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update on steps taken to secure a repair to the damaged Weir in Dulverton and to seek consent for a Capital contribution to initiate works. This report and the recommendations have previously been approved by Cabinet.

2. **CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- 2.1 No direct link but the Council has a duty to maintain the Weir in a condition such that the associated Mill Leat continues to flow.

3. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Council:

- 3.1 Approves the proposed temporary repair to the Weir.
- 3.2 Approves an increase to the 2014-15 Capital Programme, by £20k to support the works.
- 3.3 Agrees to waive standing orders and appoint the Council's preferred contractor to undertake this work as a matter of urgency.

4. **RISK ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Civil legal challenge to the Council due to impact of dry Leat.	3	3	9
<i>Full mitigation by repair.</i>	2	1	3
Repair is not effective or is not resistant to river flood.	3	4	12
<i>Steps have been taken to design a suitable solution and rigorous project management on site will assist mitigation.</i>	2	4	8
Project runs over budget,	3	3	12

<i>Rigorous project management and clienting will be applied but the nature of the work may lead to some unforeseen issues, therefore reasonable contingency is included in budget request.</i>	2	3	6
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The scoring of the risks identified in the above table has been based on the scoring matrix. Each risk has been assessed and scored both before the mitigation measures have been actioned and after.

5. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 5.1 Dulverton Weir and the associated Mill Leat are owned by the Council. The Council has a covenant obligation to maintain the Weir and Leat in a condition such that water flows through the Leat. The Weir dates back to the 18th Century and is in a poor and deteriorating condition.
- 5.2 During a severe weather event in December 2012 a 6m breach of the Weir was created. Further subsequent damage has been experienced with a second smaller breach now present. This deterioration results in insufficient water retention in times of low flow to serve the inlet to the Leat, leaving it slow running or dry.
- 5.3 An emergency repair was undertaken last year with “dumpy bags” of rock, but this has subsequently dispersed.
- 5.4 Concern arises due to the loss of the amenity value of the Leat running through to Town and consequent potential impact on tourism. In addition it has been suggested that, the potential drying of the foundations of property adjacent to the Leat may result in structural damage to these properties. This may in turn expose the Council to civil legal challenge.
- 5.5 Consequently a detailed specification for options of a 6m rebuild for the breach area and a longer 26m rebuild of the Weir were designed, specified and tendered. Unfortunately only one tender was received for the work and the tender price was much higher than expected, well over £200k for the longer repair and £100K for the smaller one.
- 5.6 The Weir is located on the River Barle, a key Salmon water course. Any work undertaken in the river requires a Flood Defence Consent (FDC) from the Environment Agency. The purpose of the FDC is to ensure the EA can control the environmental and biodiversity impact of any proposed work.
- 5.7 An FDC application was submitted for the main repair. This required consultation and input from the local Fisheries Group and the completion of a specialist botanical survey to consider the presence of a rare species of River Jelly Lichen. The outcome of the botanical survey is that whilst River Jelly Lichen is present in the river, it is not located in the immediate vicinity of the Weir. However several rare plant species were identified that will need to be protected during the course of the work.
- 5.8 Subsequently the FDC has been granted but with a range of conditions. Agents acting for the Council have since been working with the EA to discharge a number of these conditions.
- 5.9 A further key consideration is the impact of the Salmon Freshwater Fisheries Act, which ensures spawning areas and access to them for the running fish are protected. Due to related implications the EA indicated that the smaller 6m repair to the same design as the current weir would not receive consent, as it would require the creation of a “fish pass” as opposed to the larger repair which has been designed to provide a “fish easement”, a cheaper alternative that the EA confirms meets with their acceptance.

- 5.10 The Salmon season results effectively in a window to undertake work of June-September, and this would be a condition required by the Environment Agency.

Current Position

Due to the significant cost of the main repair (for which there is no budget) and to give officers more time to investigate other potential options to address this problem, and possibly re-tender the work to get a more competitive price, it is suggested that a further more robust temporary repair is undertaken. This temporary repair would comprise of rock filled square gabion baskets secured in front of the weir breaches. This will retain enough water to raise the upstream water level to allow flow into the Leat during lower water conditions. This work should not necessarily be considered as wasted cost being essentially only temporary as any more substantial rebuild would require similar measures to hold back the flow adjacent to the breached areas to enable more extensive work to take place.

6. FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council has obtained a quotation for the work of £10.5k plus VAT. Additional costs for the submission of a further Flood Defence Consent application and on site management and clienting amounts to a further £5k. It is therefore proposed to allocate a capital budget of £20k, including a contingency.
- 6.2 The Council's Contract Standing Orders for works between £10k and £50k require three quotations to be provided. However in this case and to avoid further delay it is proposed to waive Standing Orders and progress with the quote obtained for the following reasons:-
- The Contractor is locally based providing good flexibility for an atypical job in a remote and challenging location.
 - The Contractor is well known to the Council with a very good working relationship.
 - The Contractor is familiar with the Weir and working in this vicinity having undertaken temporary repair work there previously.
 - Are able to progress the works in the required time window (June-September) due to the Salmon run season.

7. COMMENTS ON BEHALF OF SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 7.1 The Council has an obligation under the covenant, and it is evident that investment is needed to maintain the watercourse, and to help mitigate risk of challenge and potential claims for damages as referred in this report.
- 7.2 The works would be categorised under 'essential' under the current prioritisation framework and can be funded from existing capital receipts reserves. When the original 2014/15 Capital Programme was approved this reserve had a residual projected balance of £370k, therefore providing sufficient resources to cover these costs without the need for borrowing.

8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

Members need to demonstrate that they have consciously thought about the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty as part of the decision making process.

The three aims the authority **must** have due regard for:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

8.1 No disproportionate impacts.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None.

10. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Consultation has been undertaken with Dulverton Town Council and Exmoor National Park Authority who are both supportive of the repair proposed.

10.2 There has also been extensive dialogue with the Environment Agency via the Council's Agent, and related engagement with representatives of fishing groups. The proposed work will also require a Flood Defence Consent Permit to be issued by the Environment Agency, that will likely contain conditions regarding the works requirement and ecology impact mitigation measures.

11. ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Weir and Mill Leat are owned by the Council, works to repair these structures will extend their useful life. However the repair is temporary so ongoing consideration will need to be given to a more significant project to rebuild the structure in due course or to look for alternative approaches to achieve the same outcome.

12. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The works proposed (including a detailed method statement) require approval by the Environment Agency via a further Flood Defence Consent permit. Conditions attached to any consent will determine steps taken to mitigate the Environmental impact of the work.

13. HEALTH & WELLBEING

Demonstrate that the authority has given due regard for:

- People, families and communities take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing;
- Families and communities are thriving and resilient; and
- Somerset people are able to live independently.

13.1 The Weir and operational Leat improve the desirability of the town from a tourism perspective, boosting local businesses and therefore supports thriving communities.

14. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1 The Weir and Mill Leat are owned by the Council. The Council is obliged by a Transfer dated 11 November 1999 to keep the Leat north of Town Mills in good repair and condition and not to impede the flow of water along the Leat and to maintain an adequate flow of water. This covenant is enforceable against the Council by the owners of Town Mill. Allowing the Leat to dry up will expose the Council to claims for damages (to foundations of adjacent property) in tort.

Report Number: WSC 84/14
Presented by: Cllr K Kravis
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Report to a Meeting of: Council
To be Held on: 18 June 2014
Date Entered on Executive Forward Plan n/a
Or Agreement for Urgency Granted:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (LGPS) DISCRETIONS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To set out some minor wording amendments to the current LGPS Discretions as suggested by the Pensions Manager at Peninsula Pensions.
- 1.2 To set out wording for two new discretions which arise as part of the LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 and which need to be approved by 30 June 2015.

2. CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 2.1 These recommendations will ensure the Council continues to operate good governance arrangements for LGPS matters.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Council approve the minor wording amendments to the current discretions as set out in Appendix A.
- 3.2 That Council approve the wording for the two new pension discretions as set out in Appendix B.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Failure to comply with Regulations leading to challenge. <i>The recommendations within this report will significantly reduce the risk of challenge.</i>	1	1	1
Increased costs through lack of proper controls <i>The recommendations within this report will significantly reduce the risk of challenge.</i>	1	1	1

The scoring of the risks identified in the above table has been based on the scoring matrix. Each risk has been assessed and scored both before the mitigation measures have been actioned and after they have.

5. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 5.1 As part of the Pay Policy Statement adopted by Full Council each year approval is given to the LGPS Discretions Policy and with the changes to the LGPS from 1 April 2014 the Pensions Manager at Peninsula Pensions (Somerset and Devon Pension Services) has reviewed our existing policy as well as advising of two new discretions which the Council need to approve a policy statement.
- 5.2 Appendix A sets out a track change version of the 2014/15 Discretions Policy with some minor wording changes which the Pensions Manager feels would add clarity. The changes do not alter the approach taken to any of the current discretions.
- 5.3 Appendix B sets out the details of two new pensions discretions where a policy statement is required to be approved and published by 30 June 2014. These new discretions were not enacted in Regulations when Council considered the 2014/15 Policy. Recommended policy wording is also set out in Appendix B which has been discussed with the Pensions Manager, other neighbouring authorities HR departments and which complements existing discretions allowing for case by case decisions to be made.
- 5.4 In considering the new discretions there are a number of options which the Council could consider, these are:
- To permanently switch on the discretion and opt to pay actuarial reductions;
 - To permanently switch on the discretion and opt not to pay actuarial reductions
 - To not switch on the discretion and consequently not need to pay actuarial reductions;
 - To retain an option to switch on the discretion on financial/compassionate grounds with the ability to consider waiving actuarial reductions.
- 5.5 The two new discretions relate to the 'rule of 85' which was part of the previous LGPS schemes and an explanation is set out below;

What is the 'Rule of 85'?

Normal retirement age in the Local Government Pension Scheme is age 65 and is the same for men and women. However, under the Rule of 85 it is possible for Scheme members to retire at any time between 60 and 65, without their benefits being reduced. Their age and service in whole years must add up to 85. So, for example a Scheme member aged 60 with 25 years membership (adds up to 85) can retire immediately with their full pension entitlement.

6. FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the wording changes proposed in Appendix A and any financial implications from the discretions set out in Appendix B would need to be assessed as part of the consideration of any case.

7. COMMENTS ON BEHALF OF SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 7.1 The proposal to update the Policy to allow the discretion to switch on the rule of 85 and pay actuarial reductions on a case by case basis will have potential cost implications for the Council which are difficult to estimate with any certainty. However, it is considered appropriate to provide the Council with flexibility to consider using this discretionary power where it is either in the financial interests of the council or on compassionate grounds with the decision being exercised by the S151 Officer.

8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The policy wording on the new discretions complements existing policy and as such each individual case would need to be assessed against equality criteria when considered.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no crime and disorder implications.

10. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The WSC UNISON Branch has been consulted on these new discretions and also the amended wording.

11. ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no asset management implications.

12. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no environmental impacts.

13. HEALTH & WELLBEING

- 13.1 The new policy wording will allow for cases to be considered on exceptional compassionate grounds.

14. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1.1 Failure to adopt and publish a policy on LGPS Employer discretions could lead to challenge from individuals or the Pensions Ombudsman.

*Appendix A - Written Statement on Local Government Pension Scheme Employers
Discretions and Key Pensions Policy*

West Somerset Council

April 2014 to 31 March 2015

**LGPS (Benefits, Membership & Contributions)) Regulations 2007 in relation to members
leaving service on or between 1st April 2008 and 31st March 2014.**

~~LGPS (Administration) Regulations 2008~~

Regulation B12

It is not the policy of the Council to augment member's service made redundant/retiring in the interests of efficiency on or before 31 March 2014 other than through the employee being able to use their compensation payment. This discretion can be deleted on 30 September 2014 as former employees only have six months in which to make a request.

Regulation B30 (2)

The Council will allow individual former employees leaving employment on or before 31 March 2014 but after 1st April 2008 the option to request early payment of benefits after on or after age 55 and before age 60 which will be considered on a case-by-case basis following the production of a business case. In these cases no additional compensation will be awarded.

Regulation B30 (5)

With regard to the early payment of benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60 made under B30 (2) above the Council retains the right to waive the actuarial reduction of benefits on exceptional compassionate grounds.

Regulation B30A (3)

The Council will allow the option to request an application for reinstatement of a suspended tier 3 ill health pension on or after age 55 and before age 60 which will be considered on a case-by-case including the production of evidential support. This applies to employees leaving service on or before 31 March 2014.

Regulation B30A (5)

With regard to an application for reinstatement of a suspended tier 3 ill health pension on or after age 55 and before age 60 made under B30A (3) above the Council retains the right to waive the actuarial reduction of benefits on exceptional compassionate grounds.

Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 1997 (as amended) in relation to active councillor members and pre 1 April 2008 scheme leavers.

Regulation 31 (2)

The Council will allow a post 31 March 1998/pre 1 April 2008 leaver the option to request early payment of benefits after on or after age 55 and before age 60 which will be considered on a case-by-case basis following the production of a business case. In these cases no additional compensation will be awarded.

Regulation 31 (5)

With regard to the early payment of benefits made in accordance with Regulation 31 (2) the Council retains the right to waive the actuarial reduction of benefits on exceptional compassionate grounds.

Regulation 31 (7A)

The Council will allow pre 1 April 2008 employee optants out the option to request payment of benefits at normal retirement date and these will be considered on a case-by-case basis following the production of a business case.

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013

Regulation 100 (68)

It is not Council policy to extend the 12-month limit on transfer of previous pension rights into the LGPS.

Regulation 9 (1) and 9 (3)

It is Council policy to allow employee contribution rates to be determined as changes occur during the financial year.

Regulation 16(2)(e) and 16(4)(d) Funding of Additional Pension

It is not the policy of the Council to fund additional pension and will not enter into a shared cost additional pension contributions arrangement.

Regulation 30(6) Flexible Retirement

The Council will allow benefits to be paid to a member of staff if they reduce their hours/grade (known as flexible retirement) and this is set out in the Council's Retirement Policy. Each case will be decided individually after the consideration of a detailed business case and only applies to those aged 55 and over.

Regulation 30(8)

With regard to flexible retirement and requests from staff aged 55 or over for retirement the Council retains the right to waive the actuarial reduction of benefits on exceptional compassionate grounds.

Regulation 31 Award of Additional Pension

It is not the policy of the Council to award Employer APC for active member leaving on redundancy/efficiency other than by allowing employees leaving on grounds of redundancy/efficiency to use compensation payments to fund additional pensions.

The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) Discretionary Compensation Regulations 2006

As set out in the Redundancy Policy the Council do not limit redundancy payments to the statutory maximum weekly pay threshold and instead use actual weekly pay of the employee.

The Council does not offer a minimum payment with regard to redundancy. Benefits are calculated using actual weekly pay and the statutory number of weeks as calculated against continuous local government service (and service covered by the Modification Order).

The Council provides up to 30 weeks compensation, in addition to any redundancy payment as set out in both the Redundancy and Retirement Policies.

Where additional compensation is paid the employee has the option to augment pension benefits by using all of the additional compensation.

APPENDIX B – NEW DISCRETIONS

The details of the new discretions are set out below along with the new policy wording.

iv) whether, as the 85 year rule⁹ does not (other than on flexible retirement) automatically apply to members who would otherwise be subject to it and who choose to voluntarily draw their benefits on or after age 55 and before age 60, to switch the 85 year rule back on for such members [paragraph 1(1)(c) of Schedule 2 to the LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014]. Where the employer **does not do so**, then:

a) if the member has already met the 85 year rule, the member's benefits are to be reduced¹⁰ in accordance with actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State (with the benefits from any pre 1 April 2008 membership for members who will not be 60 or more on 31 March 2016, and benefits from any pre 1 April 2016 for members who will be 60 or more on 31 March 2016, which would not normally have been subject to an actuarial reduction nonetheless being subject to a reduction¹¹ calculated by reference to the period between the date the benefits are drawn and age 60) [paragraphs 1(2) and (4) of Schedule 2 to the LGPS (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014], or

b) if the member has not already met the 85 year rule, the member's benefits are to be reduced¹² in accordance with actuarial guidance issued by the Secretary of State (with the reduction on that part of the member's benefits subject to the 85 year rule being calculated by reference to the period between the date the benefits are drawn and age 60, or the date of attaining the 85 year rule, whichever is the later), and

c) the employer can exercise a discretion to waive actuarial reductions (at cost to the employer) – see (v) below.

It is Council Policy to allow the discretion to switch on the rule of 85 and pay actuarial reductions on a case by case basis where it is either in the financial interests of the council or on compassionate grounds with the decision being exercised by the S151 Officer.

Report Number: WSC 88/14
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Report to a Meeting of: Full Council
To be Held on: Wednesday 18th June 2014

Date Entered on Executive Forward Plan
Or Agreement for Urgency Granted:

WSC'S RESPONSE TO SOMERSET'S HEALTH & WELLBEING STRATEGY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for West Somerset Council's (WSC) response to Somerset Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2013 - 2018.

2. CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 2.1 Whilst this report does not directly contribute to the council's priorities, the proposed action plan has the potential to contribute to our community's health and wellbeing. Thus enabling them to live, work and prosper in our district.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That Council approves the WSC response; see Appendix A, to the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
 3.2 Agree that the Joint Management Team adopt and monitor delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Action Plan.
 3.3 Consider future budget decisions in line with the delivery of the action plan.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Loss of engagement with our community and partners through non-delivery of health and wellbeing priorities. <i>Through partnership working we will aim to align our actions and outcomes and pool resources to enable delivery of the priorities.</i>	3 Possible	3 Moderate	9 Medium

The scoring of the risks identified in the above table has been based on the scoring matrix. Each risk has been assessed and scored both before the mitigation measures have been actioned and after they have.

5. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 5.1 WSC has a role to play in improving our residents' health and well-being. The return of public health to local government in April 2013 provides the council with the opportunity to improve the health outcomes for our local population. With public health now being a statutory function of Somerset County Council, these *'...reforms give a greater focus and strategic direction to the impact of local government's contributions to the wider determinants of health, health improvement and health protection, and utilise the sector's unique position as the centre of local communities.'*¹
- 5.2 The Somerset Health & Wellbeing Strategy (SHWBS)² was adopted by the Somerset Health & Wellbeing Board in July 2013. The Board has requested that WSC conduct an audit of the services delivered in West Somerset which assists in delivering the priorities of the SHWBS. WSC's response to the SHWBS provides an audit of the services delivered both by the council and our partners within the district and identifies gaps in provision and clearly demonstrate how these can be addressed as part of our action plan.
- 5.3 Through core service delivery we are already contributing significantly to the broad health outcomes in the district. Below is a selection of health and wellbeing impacts which are being addressed by our Environment Health, Housing and Economic Regeneration Teams:

5.31 **Environmental Health**

Present Health & Wellbeing Impacts

- *"Each year, around one million people suffer food-borne illnesses, resulting in 500 deaths and costing an estimated £1.5 billion*
- *Infectious diseases now account for 1 in 50 deaths per year, cases of tuberculosis and sexually transmitted infections are rising and pandemic flu remains a threat*
- *Contamination of land can pose a threat to the environment and the health of humans, animals and plants*
- *Noise has a significant impact on physical and mental health, including loss of sleep, risk of cardiovascular diseases and high blood pressure."*
- *Poor air quality reduces life expectancy by an average of 7-8 months.*³

WSC Delivery

Our Environmental Health Team continues to provide essential frontline intervention to protect our communities from environmental hazards as well as providing local intelligence on health protection. Our Team is a vital partner in emergency planning and delivery for major public health incidents in disease control and environmental contamination. The Team undertakes the monitoring of: private water supplies (West Somerset has one of the highest proportions of homes with private water supplies in England) air quality, food hygiene (including hygiene ratings for restaurants, cafés, B&Bs and hotels), cooling towers, pollution, noise, and pest control.

5.32 **Housing and Affordable Housing**

Present Health & Wellbeing Impacts

- *"Homeless people use health services at a disproportionate level compared to the general population, with 78% of those homeless reporting having at least one specific health issue.*
- *Every year 1 in 3 people over 65 and almost 1 in 2 people over 85 experiences one or more falls, with many occurring within the home*
- *21.5% of the 23,800 Excess Winter Deaths during 2009/10 can be attributed to cold housing*
- *The annual cost to the NHS of treating winter-related disease due to cold private housing is over £850 million."*⁴

¹ (Source: http://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/11215/district-action-on-public-health_2013_rtpi_endorsed.pdf)

² To view the strategy, please visit: www.somersetpct.nhs.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allid=24308

³ (Source: http://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/11215/district-action-on-public-health_2013_rtpi_endorsed.pdf)

WSC Delivery

The Housing Team have worked hard to prevent homelessness and figures had been declining in West Somerset. The last three years has seen a gradual increase in homeless percentages (see table below), though this does not reflect the substantial increase in national figures. The Housing Team provide advice on suitability of housing, Homefinder Somerset Scheme and options available for people threatened with homelessness.

Percentage of Homeless People in West Somerset					
Year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Yearly Average
2011/12	10	21	19	13	16
2012/13	21	15	24	7	17
2013/14	14	20	14	25	18

This has been helped by 88 new affordable homes coming available in the last year for local people. A further 73 affordable homes are expected in this financial year and potential for an additional 53 in 2015, thereby increasing the supply to our community. Improving housing conditions is another essential element to preventing premature deaths due to cold housing. WSC continues to work with Forum 21 and Centre for Sustainable Energy to help residents improve the energy efficiency of their homes. Other activities include: low interest loans for approved landlords and homeowners for improvements, heating fuel loans and handihelp service for home enhancements,

In the financial year 2013 -2014, 420 empty properties that were empty for six months or more came back into use; many of which as a direct result of intervention from the Council. Intervention can involve lengthy negotiations with the owners to encourage the right environment for them to make a decision on what to do with the property. Empty properties provide a vital resource to maximise the number of properties available in the private sector for ownership or rent.

5.33 Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Culture Present Impacts

- *"Health choices in the long term unemployed, such as drinking, smoking and exercise are far worse than the employed"*
- *Young people who are not in employment, education or training are more likely to suffer health problems and five times more likely to enter the criminal justice system*
- *In 2010/11 1.1 million working people were suffering from work-related illness, resulting in an estimated 27 million working days."*⁵

WSC Delivery

Our Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Culture Team facilitate local conditions for sustainable economic growth and job creation which in turn result in rising living standards. Our response to the Somerset Health & Wellbeing Strategy contains a wealth of programmes which the Team is currently delivering.

Our Environmental Health Team support local businesses in helping them to meet their statutory duties in relation to occupational health and safety by providing information and advice to support business success and improve health outcomes.

- 5.4 WSC has an influence on the health of our community including both health protection and improvement. With shrinking public sector resources and widening health inequalities, WSC is aiming to work with partners and develop a holistic approach to preventative public health in West Somerset.

⁴ (Source: http://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/11215/district-action-on-public-health_2013_rtpi_endorsed.pdf)

⁵ (Source: http://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/11215/district-action-on-public-health_2013_rtpi_endorsed.pdf)

6. FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The £3.8 billion Better Care Fund (BCF) was established by Government (proposed in Spending Review 2013) to support health and social care by bringing together NHS and Local Government resources. In particular, transferring resources from acute services into community and preventative measures.
- 6.2 The BCF is not new money; it does not address any financial pressures. The aim is to bring together resources which are already committed to existing core activity. The BCF has to contribute to £300 million savings in Somerset. The goal is to create the opportunity to redirect and reapply funds to shared programmes that deliver better outcomes for individuals.
- 6.3 The BCF draft plan submission was made on 14th February 2014 and final submission on 4th April 2014. The Fund will be fully operational by 1st April 2015.
- 6.4 Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) funding is currently received directly from Government and DFGs are administered through the Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership (SWPSHP) and delivered through the Home Improvement Agency contract (currently Aster) on behalf of WSC in West Somerset. Future funding will be allocated via the BCF from 2015 onwards. Allocated amounts will be ring fenced to Districts and authorised to SWPSHP for the first 2 years – it is currently unclear how this will then operate beyond the first two years. The BCF will be incorporated into a pooled budget which will be administered by the CCG and Somerset County Council. Financial responsibility for meeting the awards of DFGs beyond budget remains with WSC, as is currently the case under the historic funding arrangements for DFGs.

7. COMMENTS ON BEHALF OF SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 7.1 There is no funding from Somerset Health & Wellbeing Board or internal budget to deliver the action plan. Through partnership working we will aim to align our actions and outcomes and pool resources to enable delivery of the priorities. This will be based on prioritisation of use of staff time.
- 7.2 Our understanding currently is that the funding for DFGs via the BCF will be similar amounts to those currently received, potentially including a marginal increase year on year. The main difference is that the funding we have until now received directly from Government will be incorporated into the BCF and therefore paid to the County Council, for allocation to districts as described above. This Council's risks and opportunities will remain the same in the near term, despite this change in funding approach. DFGs are demand led and a statutory function, therefore there is potential for the demand to outweigh the funding and therefore place pressure on the Council's local funding resources. This will need to be monitored closely with funding issues reported to Members if necessary.
- 7.3 The funding arrangements and financial risks beyond the next two years remain unclear, and we will continue to work in partnership with CCG and SCC to address this. This is important as there is a mismatch in that district councils have the statutory responsibility to deliver DFGs whereas the funding is allocated to the County Council.

8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

Members need to demonstrate that they have consciously thought about the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty as part of the decision making process.

The three aims the authority **must** have due regard for:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation

- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

8.1 WSC's response to the Strategy will aim to benefit the health and wellbeing of all our residents, including the most vulnerable. WSC has already taken the first step to addressing the inequalities in accessing services. The Council has produced a directory of health and wellbeing services provided by the voluntary and community sector and ourselves for use by our general practitioners and their staff in our local surgeries. The staff within the surgeries will be able to use the directory to signpost residents to these services.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The Council's response refers to the Family Focus project which includes working with families to address anti-social behaviour. Also, the CCTV project for Minehead with proposed extensions to Watchet and Williton, designed to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

10. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Discussions have taken place with our delivery partners to capture their activities within our response. The draft response was presented to Corporate Policy Advisory Group on 21st May 2014.

11. ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Continue to manage open spaces within the district for the benefit of our community.

12. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The Health & Wellbeing Strategy supports the continuation of maintaining open spaces and supporting the natural environment.

13. HEALTH & WELLBEING

Demonstrate that the authority has given due regard for:

- People, families and communities take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing;
- Families and communities are thriving and resilient; and
- Somerset people are able to live independently.

13.1 The Council's attached action plan proposes working partners and stakeholders to help address the above in West Somerset.

14. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1 None in respect of this report.

APPENDIX A – WEST SOMERSET COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO SOMERSET'S HEALTH & WELLBEING STRATEGY



West Somerset Council's Response to the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy



Kitesurfing in Minehead Bay © Philip Sanderson



Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy Response

Issue details	
Title	West Somerset Council's Response to the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy
Issue and version number:	Issue 1 Version 3 – 3.6.14
Officer/Panel Controlling Procedure:	Assistant Director Housing & Community Development

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Foreword

Every person living in West Somerset should have the right to enjoy good health and wellbeing to enable them to live, work and prosper in our community. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Somerset sets out a shared vision for improving the health and wellbeing of all residents with a particular focus on making improvements for the most vulnerable.

The responsibility for Public Health returned to councils in 2013. Although most of the statutory responsibilities now sit with Somerset County Council, WSC has a key role to play in community health protection and improvement in our district. The public health reforms provide the council with the opportunity to improve the health outcomes for our local population, through the continued delivery of such service provision as housing inspections, environmental services, tackling fuel poverty and supporting economic growth. This document brings together these examples along with others to provide the current picture of how the Council and organisations it funds improves health and wellbeing locally. It also proposes an action plan to add further value to the priorities identified in the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

WSC is committed to improving health and wellbeing and establishing strong partnerships, working collectively to make a difference to maximise the benefit of our ever shrinking public sector resources and widening health inequalities. Together we need to develop a holistic approach to preventative public health in West Somerset. The aim will be to align our actions and outcomes to address the needs in the district, based on our local base data and health profiles.

The Council is already represented on the Somerset Health & Wellbeing Board, the West Somerset Health Forum and has met with the Williton & Watchet Surgery to start to explore how we can work together more effectively in the future. We are working with the voluntary and community sector to raise the profile of their services with General Practitioners (GPs) in the district and aim to have a directory of services ready for GPs by the end of May 2014. Our local community and voluntary sector have a wealth of knowledge and experience of those with the greatest health and wellbeing needs in the district. The Council is facilitating meetings between newly commissioned health services and this sector to ensure effective service delivery by reaching those in greatest need. We also plan to meet with the Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group to explore new opportunities as well as continuing to build on our existing partnerships with such organisations as Magna.

I welcome the opportunity for our Council to work with partners and stakeholders to make West Somerset a healthier place to live, work and prosper.

Councillor Keith Turner
Lead Member for Health & Housing
Member of Somerset Health & Wellbeing Board



Introduction

This audit and action plan aims to:

- A.** Produce a better understanding of the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the priorities identified for action for WSC.
- B.** Identify the areas where WSC currently makes a robust contribution to the health and wellbeing priorities in the strategy.
- C.** Identify areas where changes in WSC policy and service delivery could improve health and wellbeing.
- D.** Identify links with voluntary and other partners to strengthen our ability to influence health and wellbeing in West Somerset.
- E.** Identify areas of health and social deprivation in WSC and target resources to provide support and aid those most in need.



Cycling beside Wimbleball Lake

Executive Summary

- A comprehensive audit has been carried out on the services and activities that WSC undertakes directly, commissions, grant funds or provides in partnership against the three priorities of the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy (SHWS):
 - People, families and communities take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.
 - Families and communities are thriving and resilient.
 - Somerset people are able to live independently.
- An action plan has been developed which prioritises and addresses gaps in provision relating to Health and Wellbeing.
- Ensure that all future strategies, policies and service developments consider how they can align with and further support the priorities of the SHWS.
- Carry out an annual review of statistical information relating to Health and Wellbeing on the Somerset Intelligence Partnership and other relevant websites and include this in the development of the West Somerset Community Profile.
- Establish WSC as Dementia Friendly and work with external partners to increase Dementia awareness in the community.
- Council to undertake appropriate partnership engagement with others, including West Somerset Health Forum, GP Practices, and the GP Federation to allow the Council to improve its support and delivery against health and wellbeing objectives and be able to commit to signing the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco.
- Embed principles and recommendations from the WSC response to the SHWS in Local Planning Policy.
- Increase suitable housing provision by focusing on reducing the number of empty homes across West Somerset.
- Work with partners to reduce the number of households suffering from fuel poverty across West Somerset, with a focus on rural communities.

The Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The County Strategy as adopted by the Health and Wellbeing Board in July 2013 focuses on one strategic vision and three themes as set out below:

Shared Vision for Health and Wellbeing in Somerset

People live healthy and independent lives, supported by thriving and connected communities with timely and easy access to high-quality and efficient public services when they need them.

Priorities

Theme 1:	People, families and communities take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.
Theme 2:	Families and communities are thriving and resilient.
Theme 3:	Somerset people are able to live independently.

The Strategy Underlying Principles

Equity

The provision of services should be proportional to need and targeted the areas, groups and individuals that need them most.

Accessibility

Services should be accessible to all, with factors including geography, opening hours and physical access being considered.

Integration

Where the integration of services provides an easier system and better outcomes for people within the same overall cost, all relevant organisations should work together to maximise the local benefits.

Effectiveness

Activities and services should be evidence-based and provide value for money.

Sustainability

The work contributing to this strategy should be developed and delivered with due regard to the environmental, economic and social dimensions of sustainability.

Diversity

Activities and services should have due regard to the specific needs of protected groups and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their duties.

Priority One: People, families and communities take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

Action 1 – Community action

The Health and Wellbeing Board will give greater support for community-led action to encourage healthier lifestyles. Examples of action include developing local health walks and other community action as well as developing a more joined-up approach to providing information about local opportunities.

Action 2 – Healthy planning and policy

The Health and Wellbeing Board will ensure that health and wellbeing is given due consideration in planning and other policy decisions to maximise the positive impact of our environment on healthy lifestyles. Examples of action could include identification of community food growing spaces and use of planning to influence the position of takeaways.

Action 3 – Prevention first

The Health and Wellbeing Board will be used alongside other impact assessments, when developing new local policy, taking significant decisions on services and during commissioning processes. It will help organisations give due consideration to how the work aligns and contributes to the themes within this strategy and give particular emphasis on focusing greater attention on prevention.

Priority Two: Families and communities are thriving and resilient.

Action – Well-connected, vibrant communities

There will be a much greater focus on supporting neighbourhoods and communities to take responsibility for shaping and transforming their own lives and their local services. Examples of action include the development of local forums which inform community and health services.

Action – Improving educational attainment

The Health and Wellbeing Board will focus on continuing to improve educational attainment at GCSE and foundation level with particular emphasis given to the groups with lowest attainment. Examples of action include work to support families to prepare children for starting school.

Action – Supporting families and people with low resilience

There will be specific focus on working with the least resilient families and people in our communities and ensuring smooth access to relevant and tailored services. Examples of action include the development of a Troubled Families Programme and specific work with excluded and/or vulnerable groups.

Priority Three: Somerset people are able to live independently.

Action – Housing for independence

There needs to be an increased focus on the changing housing needs of the Somerset population, with particular emphasis given to widening the housing options for achieving and maintaining independent living. Examples of action include delivery of the Somerset Vision for Housing through a joined-up Somerset Housing Framework, which also considers issues of affordability, benefit changes and fuel poverty and housing conditions.

Action – Support for carers

The Health and Wellbeing Board will ensure support for carers is integrated across health and social care. Examples of action include the setting up of a new universal service for carers in Somerset and establishing a Carers Partnership Board.

Action – Joining up of support services

Integrated health and social care will be developed across the county to support people to regain and maintain their independence for as long as possible. Examples of action include extending Integrated Living Teams across the county.



Figure 1: Public Health Outcome Framework Indicators illustrates the key role WSC has as a district council in improving public health and wellbeing in West Somerset.

¹ Figure 1: Source: http://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/11215/district-action-on-public-health__2013__rtpi_endorsed.pdf

Analysis of West Somerset Council District Population and Problem Areas

Bordering the Bristol Channel, West Somerset benefits from some of the most scenic landscape in England; two thirds of Exmoor National Park lies within its boundary, as does the Quantock Hills, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Large amounts of both areas are designated sites of special scientific interest due of their value to wildlife.

- West Somerset Council covers an area of 72,519 hectares and has a population of 35,600. The largest town is Minehead with an estimated population in the winter of 11,000 which doubles in the summer tourist season.
- West Somerset has the lowest proportion of young people (<15) across Somerset and the highest proportion of older people (>75) across Somerset. West Somerset has the highest proportion of people aged 65+ of any local authority in England. The area faces further challenges arising from an ageing population as well as inaccessibility of many rural parts of the district.
- 96% of working people both live and work in West Somerset.
- There is a predicted decline in the working age population of West Somerset as the retired population increases to 40% by 2028.
- According to the 2011 census, 10.6% of the population of West Somerset reported that they had a long term health or disability problem that restricted their activities a lot (Somerset 8.3%, England 8.3%).
- For the over 65s, West Somerset has the highest rate of both private rented 7.6% and social rented 12.1% housing in the county (in Somerset 4.8% and 7.2%).²
- The number of recipients of council tax and / or housing benefits in 2013 was 3,960.³
- Out of 326 Local Authorities in UK, West Somerset ranked 45 based on Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), overall rank (1 = worst, 326 = best). None of West Somerset Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) are in the national 5% or 10% most deprived. However, rural areas of West Somerset are amongst the 10 most deprived, alongside parts of urban Bridgwater, Taunton, and Yeovil. Williton, Watchet and Carhampton and Withycombe are ranked the 6th, 7th and 8th most deprived wards in Somerset.

² Source: ONS

³ Source: ONS

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- Health deprivation and disability is most prevalent in parts of Williton, Watchet and South Minehead.
- Two thirds of the District is within the Exmoor National Park which has its own planning authority, with a large proportion of the balance within the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- The tourism industry is worth over £60 million to the economy of West Somerset and is viewed as a key economic driver for the district. Of this some £10 million is generated by the West Somerset Railway running from Bishops Lydeard to Minehead.



West Somerset Railway © Craig Palmer

- Hinkley Point C nuclear power station in the East of the district is scheduled to produce 4,200 megawatts of electricity once on line, and will provide over 5,000 jobs during construction. This is recognised as both an opportunity and the cause of significant problems for the area.
- House price to income ratio in West Somerset is now exceeding 10 to 1. This makes West Somerset the least affordable for home ownership outside London.
- According to the WSC Corporate Plan, of the 36 parishes only 6 have a village plan, design statement or undergone any strategic planning. Play and recreational space, bus shelters, benches, road improvements, affordable housing, broadband, economic development support, car parking and village hall improvement are the most common priorities for parish/town councils.
- 4.2% of the population are lone parents with dependent children, a low figure representative of West Somerset's large older population. West Somerset still operates a 3 tier school system. There are 18 schools in the area 14 primary, three middle, one upper and no special, independent or

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free schools in West Somerset. There are 4 Children's Centres in Williton, Alcome, Dulverton and Watchet.

- Fuel poverty: 18% of households in West Somerset spend more than 10% of their income on fuel.

	Number of fuel poor households	% of households fuel poor	No. households
West Somerset	2,859	18.1%	15,793
Mendip	5,841	12.9%	45,313
Sedgemoor	5,601	11.9%	46,972
South Somerset	8,295	12.2%	68,020
Taunton Deane	4,633	10.0%	46,258
SOMERSET	24,370	11.8%	206,563

- Whilst West Somerset has the lowest level of overall crime at 5,211 per 100,000 population (Somerset 6,033 per 100,000), it has the highest rate of sexual offences (98 per 100,000) in the county (Somerset 85 per 100,000)

Local and National Influences on Health and Wellbeing

- Recent changes in government benefits legislation, including:
 - Universal Credit,
 - Spare Room Subsidy,
 - the 1% cap on the increase in benefits,
 - payment of benefits on a monthly rather than weekly basis,
 - payment of rents to the tenant rather than the landlord,
 With the amounts of bad debt likely to increase, more discretionary support payments may be required for a considerable time before the new reforms bed in. Forward estimates for discretionary payments are: 2013/14 £30,000 - £35,000
- The building of **Hinkley Point C** nuclear power station is expected to impact on housing with an influx of construction workers. This will create an opportunity to attract workers and affiliated businesses to locate in the Bridgwater Bay area and spend within the local economy. However, it will also create an upward pressure on rent levels and a reduction in available private rented supply, which is likely to make landlords more selective in letting their properties, increasing pressure on the Housing Associations and Homelessness service.
- The creation of a spent fuel plug recycling facility on the site of Hinkley A will add further to the number of construction workers on the site.
- Currently Hinkley B represents 1/3rd of the business rates in any year, with normal planned outages included in this calculation. Problems arise when

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there are unexpected outages which can give rise to significant refunds of rates which are purely the responsibility of WSC. When Hinkley C comes on stream it will represent an even bigger proportion of Business Rates retention. The only other significant business rates in any year are from Butlins and the Wansborough Paper Mill.

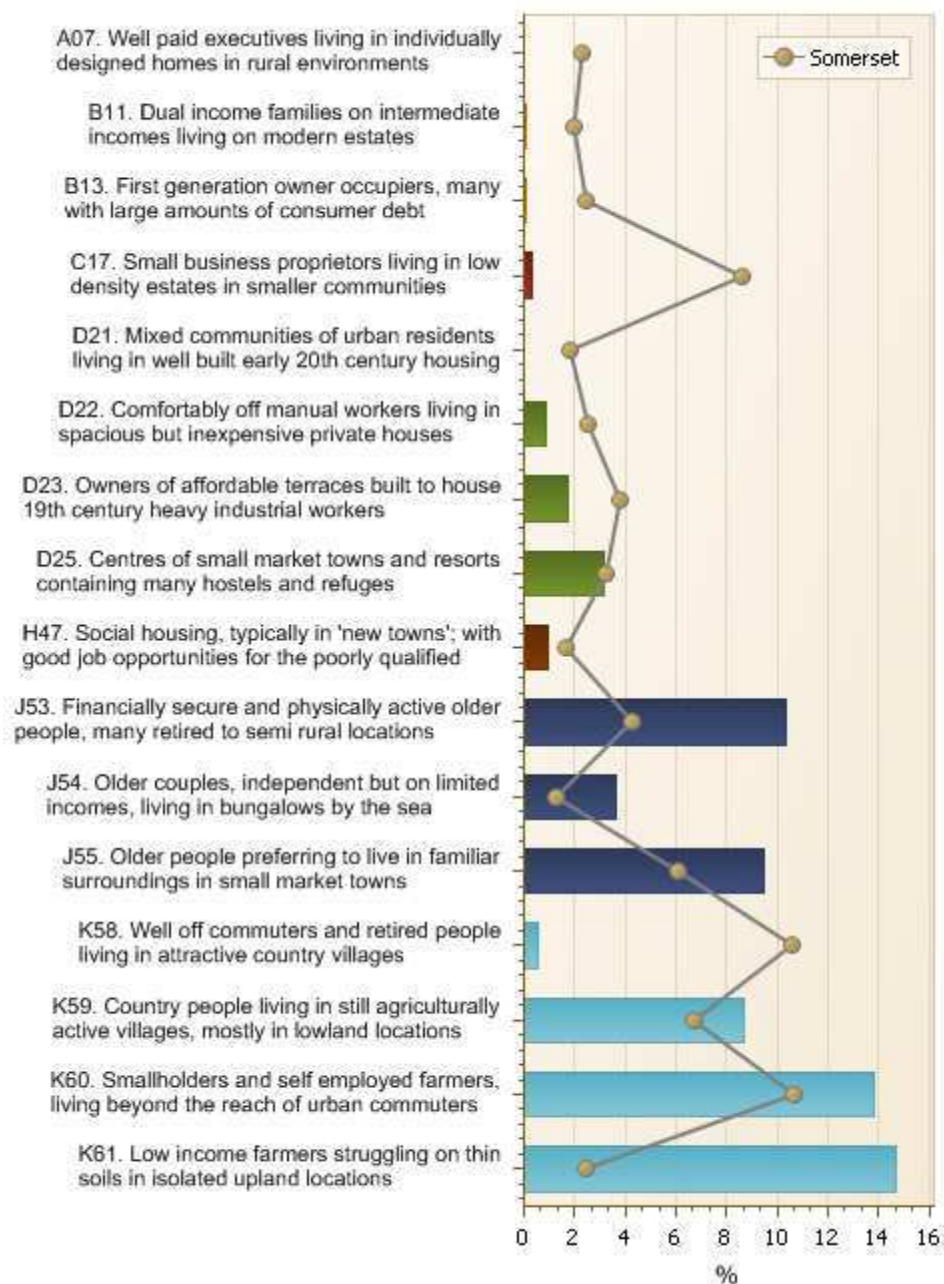
- Other problem areas within West Somerset that impact on health and wellbeing are high house prices relative to incomes and rural deprivation, and isolation caused by poor transport and communication links and especially the low rate of transmission on broadband.
- The problems delineated above are likely to increase the workload of the West Somerset Advice Bureau and other voluntary bodies associated with housing, and the potential demand from them for a higher level of financial support.

Age Pyramid per five year age groups by male and female



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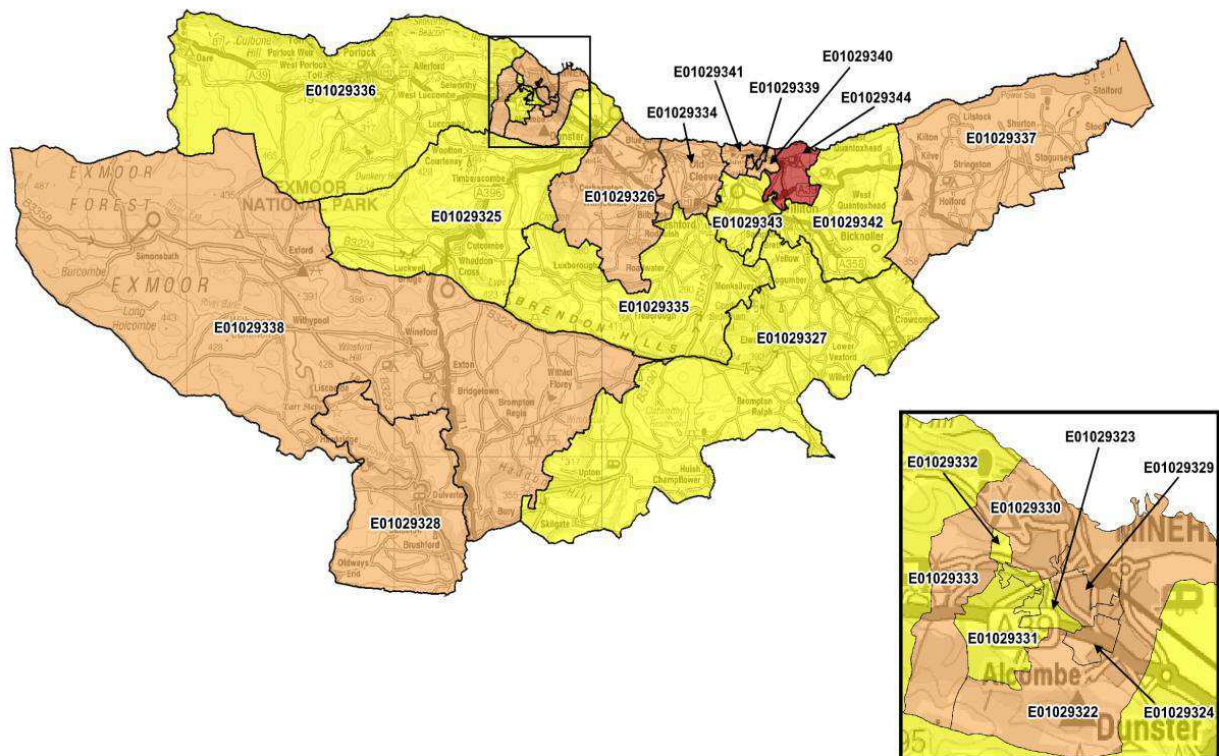
K Analysis of Population by Occupation



West Somerset has a higher proportion of people living in those areas that are considered rural, especially in relation to “smallholders and self employed farmers, living beyond the reach of urban commuters” and even more so with “low income farmers struggling on thin soils in isolated upland locations”. There are also sizeable numbers of neighbourhoods characterised by “financially secure and physically active older people, many retired to semi-rural locations” and “older people preferring to live in familiar surroundings in small market towns”.

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West Somerset Areas of Deprivation in National Quintiles



In Quintile 1 (most deprived 20% nationally)

In Quintile 2 (2nd most deprived 20%)

In Quintile 3 (3rd most deprived 20%)

(Note: there are no LSOAs in the 4th and 5th quintiles)⁴

Family Focus: As part of a national initiative 84 “troubled families” have been identified who will be targeted for support and mentoring by WSC with a view to improving the life chances, health and wellbeing of families and reducing the overall cost of these families to the public purse. Local government research has shown that a “troubled family” can cost the state (Local government, NHS, judicial services, Social Services etc.) on average £75,000 per annum as opposed to an “mean average” family cost of circa £7,800.

Family Focus seeks to work with the most troubled families within our local community. To qualify, a family must demonstrate at least three of the following four criteria:

- Education – absenteeism / exclusion,
- Anti-social behaviour or crime,
- In receipt of out of work benefits,
- Local discretion – various including living in deprived areas, mental health, domestic violence, high cost to the public sector, etc.

In addition, a family must contain at least one child (0-18 years).

⁴ This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. (Somerset County Council) (100038382) (2009)

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Dementia: Based on modelled data West Somerset appears to have slightly more undiagnosed cases of dementia than in the county as a whole. Dementia is largely an illness of old age and as the population of West Somerset is disproportionately older than the county as a whole, so the proportion of cases per head of population is greater than for the county as a whole. The number of cases is projected to increase from an estimated 834 cases in 2010 to 937 in 2015 and 1,061 in 2020 (POPPI). (Source WSJSNA 2010)

It is important to recognise that one-third of all people with dementia in the UK live alone in their own homes. As the symptoms of dementia progress, people need increasing amounts of support. Once the symptoms of dementia become severe it is often appropriate for an individual to live in a care home. One-third of people with dementia live in a care home and at least two-thirds of care home residents in the UK have dementia. People with the condition are also core users of NHS care – a quarter of hospital beds are occupied by people with dementia over the age of 65 at any one time. As a response to an ageing population WSC is aiming to become a "Dementia Friendly Council" ensuring that people affected by dementia are supported when accessing our services, and are treated with dignity and respect.

WSC will work closely with the Alzheimer's Society and the Dementia Action Alliance to develop key staff to become Dementia Champions. Front line staff will receive Dementia Awareness Training; these include Revenues and Benefits, Customer services and reception staff.

Williton is on course to become a dementia friendly community with the full support of the parish council and WSC. The Alzheimer's Society also run Memory Café and Singing for the Brain sessions take place regularly in Minehead.

Travelers & Gypsies: The Communities and Local Government office released their report of the number of Gypsy and Traveller caravans in Somerset, following the count in January 2010. The number of caravans in the county has increased by 16% since the last count in July 2009 (445 to 516). In West Somerset, there are 10 caravans and the rate of caravans per population is lower in the district than the county average but similar to the national and regional averages.

Major employers in West Somerset

Butlins (Bourne Leisure) Minehead is West Somerset's biggest employer and is the most seasonally affected

Wansbrough Mill (DS Smith) in Watchet is the largest UK manufacturer of coreboard. The total annual production capacity of the mill is around 180,000 tonnes on two machines.

Hinkley Point A (Magnox), B, & C (EDF Energy) Nuclear Power Stations power generation and construction.

Alignment of WSC Corporate Plan 2013-16 with the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-18

The WSC Corporate plan sets out its vision as:

To enable people to live, work and prosper in West Somerset

By:

- *Championing and enabling the people, local organisations and communities of West Somerset*
- *Working with Partners, both inside and outside of West Somerset.*

The priorities that the council are focussing on are:

- **Local democracy:** *Securing local democracy and accountability in West Somerset, based in West Somerset, elected by the people of West Somerset and responsible to the people of West Somerset*
- **New Nuclear Development at Hinkley Point:** *Maximising the opportunities for West Somerset communities and businesses to benefit from the development whilst protecting local communities and the environment.*

The Council's Priorities, Objectives and Key Tasks

Local Democracy Objectives:

1. *-establishing a resilient operating model that is financially sustainable and delivers effective, efficient services*
2. *Maximising the funding opportunities from Central Government*

New Nuclear Development Objectives;

3. *Communities in West Somerset can access and understand the process for funding opportunities provided for by the development at Hinkley Point and are supported in delivering funded projects and initiatives.*
4. *The economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximised.*

Protecting Local communities

5. *The availability of housing supply within West Somerset is increased to mitigate the extra demands linked to the Hinkley Point workers.*
6. *The development at Hinkley Point is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and ensuring that the council actively monitors the development and responds to any complaints received in a timely and sound manner.*

Protecting local environment

7. *The effects on the environment by working with partners positively to respond to opportunities to enhance the environment in the affected communities using secured funding within Section 106 agreements are mitigated.*

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WSC's Corporate Plan will support delivery of some aspects of the Somerset Health & Wellbeing Strategy (SHWS). However the SHWS adds the requirement that WSC takes action to ensure: that people can live independently at home for as long as possible, and that families and communities are thriving and resilient.

West Somerset's Response and Contribution

Priority One: People, families and communities take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

Action One: Community Action

WSC has very limited funding available for financing allotments, parks, leisure and sporting facilities which would support the SHWS.

- WSC strongly encourages local and neighbourhood action and has used its in house staff's expertise to write robust funding bids for a variety of local projects on behalf of third parties in order for them to deliver various services and outcomes. For 2013/14 West Somerset Council awarded £78,204 in grant funding to community partnerships. Even the smallest grants can have a significant impact. Home Start West Somerset, which offers support, friendship and practical help to families with young children, used their £3,000 WSC grant as match funding for the Big Lottery's Reaching Communities Fund, which resulted in a grant for £183,065 over a five year period.
- West Somerset Advice Bureau, which provides free, independent, advice and information to our community largely focused on debt management, was awarded £38,000 by WSC. By working with the Council and other partners, last year, they managed to secure £205,790 funding from the Big Lottery Advice Service Transition Fund over a two year period.
- Engage West Somerset CVS utilised WSC's £3,000 grant to manage the West Somerset Voluntary Sector Forum. The Forum provides the opportunity for the sector to share good practice, exchange ideas and promote their services. Also they employ a part-time funding advisor to support local community groups with funding applications. Volunteers in West Somerset provide an enormous value to a huge range of organisations that support our communities, often with health and wellbeing benefits. Open volunteering provides the opportunity for social interaction and physical exercise again with significant health benefits for individuals. Engage also operate a volunteer service and a furniture re-use project.
- CLOWNS used their £8,602 grant to help provide 12 days of play schemes for school age children up to 13 years in 12 different locations across the district during the school summer holidays. In total through CLOWNS 214

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different children attended 488 days of activities, including zorbing, segways, archery, bogtastic, woodland adventure, kayaking, climbing, talent show, water games and slides as well as sports, arts and crafts.

For more information on voluntary and community group support, please see Appendix I.

Action Two: Healthy Planning and Policies.

- West Somerset has many footpaths which provide opportunities for gentle exercise for all ages. The South West Coast Path was voted the best trail in the country by readers of the "Country Walking Magazine- Nov 2006". Other major routes available are:
 - Samaritans Way SW
 - Quantock Greenway
 - West Somerset Coastpath
 - River Parret Trail
 - Celtic Way
 - West Deane Way
 - Coleridge Way
 - Macmillan Way West
 - Two Moors Way
 - Channel to Channel

The website 'www.WalkingWestSomerset.co.uk' was created by two enthusiastic walkers to assist both the serious and occasional walker enjoy this delightful part of the country and get a true flavour of the area at any time of the year.



Walking on Dunster Beach © Fred Owen

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- Exmoor National Park (ENPA), DCC and SCC will be working together on a three year 'Health and Wellbeing Project' from 2014/15. The concept is to network health and wellbeing service providers/users with environmental/countryside managers/organisation and demonstrate the value of National Parks as environments for improving mental, emotional and physical wellbeing.
- The Steam Coast Trail: initially a cycle project, the prospects for this multiuse, off road path between Williton and Minehead has moved a step closer with the grant of planning permission for the stretch between Blue Anchor and Dunster. The Friends of the Steam Coast Trail have formed a support group with its own website and activities.
- The Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Service undertakes activity for the Quantock Hills Partnership in line with a statutory AONB Management Plan. The Management Plan was adopted in April 2014. The AONB Service is planning the following areas of work to assist with delivery of the Management Plan which also input into the delivery of the Somerset Health & Wellbeing Strategy, see table below.

Project	Running / Planned	H&WS Action
The running of 4 volunteer groups which encourages people to engage with caring and understanding the natural environment. All groups are engaged with physical tasks, some low impact [wildlife surveying / heritage monitoring], some higher impact [land management]. Currently total membership of all groups 70 people. Project runs across whole AONB area.	Running	1
Development of work experience / work placement role, covering all aspects of AONB Services work but concentrating on rural skills working alongside Rangers. Role will require enthusiasm rather than qualification based and will look to target NEET.	Planned	5
Green Quantocks Project – A project which aims to increase the opportunity for young people and those with mental health problems to realise the potential of the Quantock Hills as a green exercise environment. The project will look to develop and pilot the resources which will allow groups to undertake activity or therapies on the Quantock Hills which increase the physical and mental health of participants. This project is an extension of the successful pilot project run in 2012.	Planned	1
Development of office based volunteer roles. The aim of the role is to provide opportunities to people who are unable or do not wish to undertake physical volunteering roles. The role would include specific elements of office based work allowing the volunteer to feel valued, part of a team and also encourage social engagement with the AONB Service and its partners.	Planned	3

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Riding along Selworthy Combe © Shirley Turner

Action Three: Prevention First.

- Smoking is the single greatest cause of premature death and disease in Somerset, and the single largest factor in health inequalities. It is also a major driver of poverty. Tobacco use is still the leading cause of preventable death and of health inequalities. Each year there are around 71 premature deaths in West Somerset caused by smoking. Although the numbers are going down each year as smoking rates decline, tobacco will remain the major preventable cause of premature death and disease for many years to come. For example, smoking causes nine in 10 cases of lung cancer. The move of public health to local government presents an opportunity for local authorities to lead local action to tackle smoking, and to ensure that the tobacco industry is not able to influence local tobacco control policy. There have been a number of studies that show links between smoking and alcohol and drug abuse both of which have further links to crime and antisocial behaviour. Smoking also presents a fire hazard with careless disposal of cigarettes being cited as the single biggest killer in house fires. WSC is aiming to include the policies in the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco in future policies. Enforcement of smokefree legislation is carried out by the Environmental Health Team who are able to issue verbal and written warnings to members of the public and business owners and take further enforcement action in the form of fixed penalty notices where necessary.
- The preventative work carried out by the Environmental and Licensing Team at WSC is extremely diverse and wide ranging. The team work in partnership with Public Health England to investigate confirmed cases of infectious diseases in people living in West Somerset. The team investigate outbreaks of food poisoning and work alongside colleagues in other local authorities to investigate cases where people have visited West

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Somerset and become unwell. The Team also investigate reports of accidents involving people at work and also members of the public. The Food Team carry out approximately 200 inspections of food premises and have contact with over 350 of those businesses annually. The authority inspects every new food business opening in West Somerset and provides free advice on food hygiene and safety, pest control, waste, training and business management. Currently 84% of food premises in West Somerset in the Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (Scores on the Doors) are rated as a 4 or 5 score. These are the highest scores available to food business owners and represent a Good or Very Good rating on the scheme.

- The Environmental Health Team investigate complaints of nuisance from residents living in West Somerset. These complaints can be about issues such as noise nuisance, drainage, pests and filthy premises. Issues regarding nuisance can have a significant impact on the health of residents including mental health and social cohesion within communities. The Environmental Protection Team work closely with colleagues in planning to ensure that communities are protected from the impacts of the Hinkley Point C development and also monitor air quality throughout the district.
- Complaints from tenants living in the private rented sector concerning the condition of their housing is also another area of work for the Team. The most common hazards identified are excess cold, damp and mould, falls in the home and leaking roofs. Enforcement action is available to officers where landlords are not complying with the relevant legislation.
- As part of the EDF Section 106 Agreement an initial £20,000 was paid to WSC and subsequently allocated to a Task and Finish Group and £40,000 to the Bridgwater Bay GP Federation, to assist with health related problems anticipated in the local population during the construction phase of the Hinkley C nuclear power station.
- The Council allocates Section 106 monies to parish/town councils and community groups to install recreation equipment to encourage physical activity. A good example was the bid for outdoor gym equipment in Watchet, led by Watchet Roots, as a local community organisation that has secured £24,995 Section 106 monies. This equipment will be located with existing play equipment and will encourage communities of all ages to exercise.
- West Somerset has its own NHS Health Trainer, who provides free sessions in Watchet/Williton/Minehead three days a week. The Trainer is able to help anyone over 16 years old with:
 - Physical activity
 - Stopping smoking
 - Stress and anxiety reduction
 - Building confidence
 - Weight management
 - Healthy eating
 - Reducing alcohol consumption

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WSC officers are committed to raising profile of the use of Health Trainer and encouraging uptake.

Priority Two: Families and communities are thriving and resilient

Action One and Two: Well-connected vibrant communities and improving educational attainment

- WSC is active at various events across the district in trying to recruit from the large and variously talented pool of retired residents to become involved in local voluntary action and support groups. We have recently approved a Volunteer Policy for the Council.
- West Somerset has provided a variety of Employment and Skills Outreach Projects for members of the general public. The funding that has supported this activity has been provided by EDF Energy as part of the Section 106 agreement associated with the build of HPC. Activity is primarily focused on:
 - Addressing identified skills gaps and shortages and raising attainment levels to ensure that individuals are suitably prepared and skilled for work.
 - Raising aspirations and improving motivation, including developing knowledge of local employment and training opportunities and associated progressions routes.
 - Overcoming identified barriers which are restricting individual's access to employment and training opportunities. This includes lack of basic skills and IT skills, (mental) health issues, criminal activity / anti-social behaviour and homelessness.
 - Expanding and enhancing the provision of appropriate training opportunities enabling increased access to jobs for local residents at HPC and associated developments. Also supporting businesses to recruit staff replacing those that might be lost to the HPC Workforce.
 - Reducing Worklessness within the district.
 - Support those furthest away from the labour market into employment.

Projects include:

- Community Learning Project: Currently funding a 10 week healthy living workshop through the local Children's Centre for 10 individuals. This workshop supports pathways to employment and / or further training and develops essential interpersonal skills as well as builds confidence and raises aspirations. This activity facilitates pathways to employment through linking activity to further training and employment related activity.
- Upskilling Pot: This fund has been developed to expand current access to employment opportunities coming forward at Hinkley Point C and associated developments. It provides financial assistance to cover

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costs associated with individuals accessing relevant training and upskilling opportunities and gaining associated recognised qualifications. The fund covers the costs of qualifications that are currently not funded, yet are required for the world of work. This fund in particular is used to cover costs of individuals completing and achieving the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Test and obtaining the CSCS Card.

- Phoenix Project: This project run by the Fire & Rescue Service and supported by WSC will allow for individuals to address barriers to employment and training that are associated with poor motivation, low self-esteem and low aspirations and will also seek to break cycles of worklessness within identified deprived communities.
- Taster Roadshows: These engage local individuals, including those who are most disadvantaged and least likely to participate in mainstream learning and / or employment related activity. They aim to improve individual's confidence, self-esteem and willingness to engage in (further) learning and promote new skills in preparing people for training, employment and self-employment. Activities also look to improve the mental and physical health and social well-being of individuals. It is hoped that they will help to create a long-term change in the culture individuals and patterns of learning allowing for the progression of further skills development. The Taster Roadshows are run by West Somerset College on behalf of West Somerset Council and are supported by West Somerset Children's Centre.
- Minehead has a CCTV operation centre based in Minehead police station which is staffed by one paid part time employee and several volunteers. This facility works in partnership with the police and volunteer street pastors to reduce crime and Anti-Social Behaviour in the town. The scope of this operation is being extended to Watchet and Williton.
- Home Start West Somerset works with families with children under seven years old and provides support for school readiness. The volunteers role model ways of engaging family members in positive early learning experiences in the home, and help them liaise with early years settings to enable a positive transition into the child's formal education. Volunteers play and read with children, accompany families to local play groups, and help them to access other services such as the CLOWNS Playbus.
- Our Place - A successful funding bid was submitted to Locality to produce a Local Development Strategy for transforming employment and skills provision in Williton and Watchet. The aim is to avoid duplication of provision, and ensure higher levels of co-operation and collaboration between communities / support agencies and employers.

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Action Three: Supporting Families and people with low resilience

- WSC runs a bi monthly pre-employment and skills steering group which is attended by key organisations to address barriers to employment and training within the district
- WSC actively supports Pathways to independence (P2i) which focuses on preventing homelessness of young people, as well as supporting those aged 18-26 leaving care, or experiencing ejection from the family home. P2i provides training and mentoring to give young people the skills to live independently, remain healthy and maintain their tenancy.
- Families are routinely referred to Home Start West Somerset (HSWS) by health professionals who recognise that there is a need for improved lifestyles within the family. The volunteers help the family to identify their own targets and then enable them to achieve them. For example, a Home-Start volunteer will help the family develop a realistic household budget, accompany the family to do their weekly food shopping, help them to select low cost nutritious ingredients, and then create family meals together with what they have bought. The newly established breastfeeding support service also makes a direct contribution to this priority.
- HSWS benefits from the volunteer ethic in its approach with families. Vulnerable families, often deemed 'hard-to-reach', are often wary of intervention having felt criticised in the past by statutory agencies. Volunteers provide a uniquely non-threatening, empathic approach which enables relationship building to take place as a first step towards confidence building and improving life chances of children.
- Additional Council Tax Rebate and Discretionary Housing Payments: WSC has designed two discretionary payment schemes to help alleviate poverty exacerbated through Welfare Reforms. This poverty is often felt through households not paying utility bills or turning heating off or being unable to afford to travel (particularly pertinent in rural areas of West Somerset) all of which could lead to poor health and isolation. Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) provides help with rent, and Additional Council Tax Rebate (ACTR) provides help with council tax liability. Council Tax Rebate (CTR) Scheme: WSC recognises being in work is a vital component of maintaining the health and wellbeing of the individual and their family, and that in such a rural area transport costs bear a disproportionate effect on the net income of families in work. WSC is keen to ensure that their CTR scheme does not cause undue deprivation and hardship. It decided to reduce the CTR minimum payment level of 30% for people of working age to a more manageable 15%. This level is the lowest in Somerset. In an effort to ensure that working people on low incomes remain in work with all the attendant social benefits, WSC decided to increase Earnings Disregards for the Council Tax Benefit when it introduced Council Tax Rebate in April 2013. The Authority is keen to ensure that that the scheme

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incentivises work, so have decided to undertake a consultation to reform the Council Tax Rebate Scheme from 2015/16.

- WSC has a duty to maintain a financially sound budget structure and has used the Council Tax Technical Reform to adjust the way Council Tax is levied on empty and second homes. A 50% levy on council tax has been introduced on homes left empty for more than two years. The normal period allowed for which empty homes discount is allowed has been reduced from six months to one month. The Second Homes Discount of 10% has also been withdrawn.
- With the Community Council for Somerset, WSC strongly supports Village Agents who are local people employed on a part-time basis to become trusted members of their communities and a valuable sign posting resource. They network extensively with Parish Councillors, Police Community Support Officers, social group organisers, transport providers, church groups, youth workers and others within their community to identify those most in need of support. They receive 'referrals' from agencies and members of the community about people needing information or support.

Priority Three: Somerset people are able to live independently

Action One: Housing for independence

- Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership (SWPSHP) and Somerset West Landlord and Tenant Services (SWeLT) are able to assist vulnerable residents with advice on fuel poverty, minor repairs via Aster Living, and advice on adaptations to the property to enable them to continue living in their own homes for as long as possible. For those on low incomes low cost loans are available through the Wessex Trust.
- Forum 21, Landlords' Project - The project aims to find ways to make private rented properties more energy efficient. Working with partners WSC, WSAB and others. It plans to create a database of landlords and properties; to support and promote the WSC's Landlord Accreditation scheme and to pilot a feasibility study to find ways of funding improvements in a small group of properties as an exemplar. Additionally it aims to provide expert training in carrying out energy surveys for one or two members of our existing energy team.
- WSC operates in conjunction with Homefinder Somerset to aid people to find suitable social housing, and helps those who are unable to use computers by offering alternative methods of access, or direct assistance.

Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy Response

- WSC is currently working on a revised Local Plan which will incorporate the aims and objectives of the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy and will be based on a robust statistical analysis of the District's special needs.
- Warmer Improved Somerset Homes (WISH): Homeowners who are over 70 or on a low income or in receipt of certain benefits are eligible for free cavity wall & loft insulation through the scheme, which is supported by West Somerset Council

Action Two: Support for carers

- WSC Supports Magna Housing Care Line which provides a valuable service of discretely monitoring the health and wellbeing of residents, which thereby allows elderly and disabled people to live independently for longer, and also signposts them to other support services when required.
- Accessible Transport West Somerset (ATWest) is a community transport service offering wheelchair-friendly and accessible transport for the residents of West Somerset. They cater for those who do not have their own transport, or who cannot access public transport, car or private bus schemes because of lack of availability or difficulties due to sickness, age or disability. ATWest aims to provide clean, reliable and well-organised minibus transport whose drivers and escorts all receive and pass county approved driving and wheelchair training.
- The following community car schemes operate in West Somerset⁵:
 - Bicklifts
 - Brompton Parish Lifts
 - Brushford Voluntary Lifts
 - Crowcombe Cars
 - KHARS
 - West Somerset Car Scheme (operated by ATWest)
 - Wheels – Watchet and Williton
 - Withycombe Wheels
 - Wivey Link

Action Three: Joining up of support services

- SWPSHP and SWeLT work in areas of high deprivation to identify empty homes with a view to bringing them up to a proper standard by advising landlords on Housing, Health & Safety Rating System (HHSRS), licensing, fire safety, property conditions and management standards, and offering financial assistance by way of grants and low cost loans. Incentives offered to Landlords include:

⁵ For more information on these schemes, please visit:
<http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Transport---Streets/Community-Transport>

Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy Response

- Grants up to £1,000 (subject to availability)
 - Low interest loans from 2%-4% up to £15,000
 - Access to the Bond Guarantee Scheme and Management Service
 - Dedicated phone line to Housing Benefit and Housing Advice
 - Free advertising on Homefinder Somerset
 - Membership certificate
 - Energy Performance certificates at a discounted rate
 - A regular email updates keeping landlords informed of new legislation
 - Free copies of Assured Shorthold Tenancy and Section 21 Notices
- SWPSHP is establishing further data on the energy efficiency rating of residential accommodation, including an address-level database of the local housing stock, capturing baseline housing characteristics and energy demand data, information on energy efficiency installations to date and the potential opportunity for installing measures under the Green Deal and ECO.
 - SWPSHP will be encouraging landlords to bring their properties up to the minimum required standard of an E rating by 2018.
 - WSC is actively trying to reduce the number of empty homes by monthly review of unpaid council tax statistics and a 50% levy on the council tax on long term empty homes, and with the help of SWPSHP to bring them back on the market as soon as reasonably possible by negotiation with owners and landlords.

Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy Response

WSC Current Core Service Offer to Health and Wellbeing Themes and Actions

(Forward Estimate figures taken from Budget Book 2014-15)

Activity or Service			Healthy Living			Thriving & Resilient			Independent Living		
			1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
	Statutory Requirement	2014/15 £'000									
Economic Development & Tourism		£40				✓					
Housing, Homelessness & Temp Accommodation		£213							✓	✓	✓
Planning policy		£92		✓		✓					
Environmental Health and Food Safety		£185		✓	✓						
Housing Benefits & HRA		£113				✓	✓	✓	✓		
Revenue Staff		£124					✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Housing Private Sector Renewal and Housing Enabling		£108							✓		✓
Coast Protection & Flood Defence		£50				✓					
Public Toilets		£122				✓					
Open Spaces		£193	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Waste		£1046				✓					
Street Cleansing		£436				✓					
Environment & Community Safety		£58				✓					
Community Development		£62				✓					
Minehead & Watchet Harbours		£14				✓					
Communications & IT		£390									

Summary

This health and wellbeing audit has provided a comprehensive picture of the activities that WSC undertakes directly, commissions and by supporting local voluntary organisations. West Somerset residents are well served by the Council in meeting the three priorities with an excellent range of provision particularly in the area of natural open spaces, volunteer support services, and housing benefits to ensure the viability of employment in rural areas. This will be further enhanced by the Council becoming a Dementia Friendly Council.

Because of the limited financial resources of the Council it will continue to support and work closely with town and parish councils as well as voluntary, charitable and regional bodies to encourage the growth of vibrant lively and connected communities. An important piece of work required is to identify the most appropriate means for the Council to add value to and influence the relevant health bodies in West Somerset to deliver tangible health and wellbeing improvements for residents. This will be a high priority moving forward.

The audit lays particular stress on people being able to live independently for as long as possible; because of the high proportion of aged people in the district and the age of properties. WSC should continue to identify older properties occupied by the elderly and ensure their houses have an acceptable standard of insulation.

As a council, 'improving educational attainment' was the priority which we influenced the least; however, there may be further opportunities for the Council to support (either directly or through the voluntary and community sector) volunteer schemes, apprenticeships and mentoring.

Digital inclusion remains an issue for the most vulnerable families in our communities and those living in rural areas where 'access to services' due to poor transport links and poor internet services has been highlighted as an issue. Imaginative solutions are required for people without private transport to enjoy the full range of leisure services available.

The work being undertaken by the Council in keeping people healthy, employed, and retaining independence for the elderly and disabled, will help significantly to reduce the demand on other public services such as the NHS, Social Services, the Fire, Police, Prison and Probation services, and help to deliver the three priorities of the Somerset Health and Wellbeing strategy.

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Voluntary and Community Service Sector Grants

Grants made by WSC 2013/14

West Somerset Council has limited funding available for grants, however it has supported the organisations listed below for many years.

Grants made to the voluntary and/or the social enterprise sectors in 2013/14 were:

- West Somerset Advice Bureau - £38,000
- ARTlife - £12,645
- Quantock Hills AONB Service - £9,957
- Creating Learning Opportunities in Western Somerset (CLOWNS) £8,602
- Engage CVS - £3,000
- Exmoor Parish Lengthsman - £3,000
- Homestart West Somerset - £3,000

For further information on these organisations and how they utilise their funding from WSC, please see Appendix A.

In addition to the regularly funded organisations, WSC staff support other community and voluntary groups to access / apply for funding if their activity is in line with the Council's priorities.

An example of this is the successful bids that WSC made to the recent RDPE Leader Programme (2008 – 2013) either to commission activity to support communities and businesses directly, or supporting others to submit bids.

Over the past 5 years The Western Somerset Local Action for Rural Communities (LARC) Programme 2007-2013 has funded 105 projects across Western Somerset with a total grant commitment of £1,971,590. West Somerset Council was directly involved with securing funding and delivery of the following projects:

Making the Links Micro - Business support project

Starting Out / Lifting Off Apprenticeship / Graduate Internship programme

Collaborative Business Enterprise Western Somerset – A programme of business mentoring and workshop support

Stepping Up to the Market – A project to assist in developing markets for food and drink producers

Blenheim Gardens Music - music festival in 2013

Regal Theatre - Support for provision of new entrance and lift

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Dunster Dolls Museum - Refurbishment and remarketing of Dolls Museum

Promoting Sustainable Tourism - Redevelopment of the Visit Exmoor Website

Exmoor at your Fingertips - Development and launch of the first mobile website in the South West

The Digital Vale - Development of Porlock Village Trails digital App

Watchet Market Event Vibrancy Project – Provision of new market gazebos and promotion

Other LARC funded projects delivered by the community, which contribute to community health and well being include:

Energy efficiency measures for Dulverton Town Hall Roadwater Village Hall and Moorland Hall and improvements to Clatworthy, Old Cleeve, Brompton Regis and EMN Village Halls

The Way To Go – pedestrian signage creating a circular walk, encouraging people to walk and explore Dulverton on foot.

Brompton Regis Village Shop

Somerset Rural Youth Project – new mopeds

Engage West Somerset – new delivery vehicle

Knights Templar Pool - extension

Appendix I: WSC Grant Funded Organisations

West Somerset Advice Bureau is an independent organisation, established in 1979, and provides free and confidential advice. It is a registered charitable company and is affiliated to Advice UK. Like Citizens Advice Bureaux, it operates with a team of trained (13-week training programme) and experienced volunteer advisers, backed and supported by 7 part-time salaried staff (including 3 specialist debt and welfare benefit workers).

From their extensive information base, West Somerset Advice Bureau can help with free confidential advice and information on:

- Welfare benefits
- Debt
- Energy advice
- Employment matters
- Divorce and Family concerns
- Housing problems
- Consumer issues
- Many other areas that affect daily lives.

The Bureau is open five days per week in Minehead, operates three half-day outreach sessions in rural areas of the district and provides home visits where appropriate.

The West Somerset Advice Bureau conducted a total of 3006 interviews with clients during the year 2011/12 (compared with 2793 interviews 2010/11) and dealt with a total of 12,186 issues!

In 2011/12 the WSAB generated £453,432.72 more income for residents of West Somerset. This income is from Employment, Debt write off and Welfare Benefits. It is the WSAB's aim to make sure clients are receiving all that they are entitled to.

ARTlife

In April 2000 West Somerset Council's arts service was devolved to **ARTlife**, putting responsibility for strategic development in the hands of those engaged in making art happen with local communities. **ARTlife** is a consortium of nine member organisations and has developed an arts service run for and by the people of West Somerset.

- manage a small grant scheme and a training bursary scheme
- fundraise for and deliver arts projects with local communities
- fund the work of arts organisations that deliver projects and develop professional arts practice
- provide advice and information
- support and deliver arts events across the district
- join projects with non-arts agencies, like The Coleridge Way
- promote the value of the arts to cross-sector initiatives in the District

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- commission and publish pieces of research in partnership with other agencies
- jointly undertake work in new areas as part of the Arts Council England South West/Somerset Local Authority Arts Partnership
- take a strategic role locally and regionally to ensure that West Somerset receives and develops the highest quality of arts service
- Aim to get West Somerset more creative by putting people in touch with each other and helping their ideas to flourish.

Anyone organising an arts project in West Somerset in 2014 may be eligible to apply for financial support up to the value of £500 from ARTlife.

CLOWNS

Creating Learning Opportunities in Western Somerset (CLOWNS) was created in April 1995. It currently operates a service for parents/carers and children in rural isolation and areas of need within the West Somerset District Council area.

CLOWNS provide a professional Outreach family support service for pre-school children and their parents/carers. The Outreach van visits families with children under five living in isolated rural/urban areas. They offer support and a listening ear in hourly sessions and can visit initially for a 12 week period. No problem is too small. The van has a small play area for children and a space for you to sit and relax. Other support services are able to access the van according to need.

CLOWNS provide Physical Family Fun activity with structured, themed sessions for pre-school children in village halls, children's centres, nurseries, pre-schools and parent/carer toddler groups.

CLOWNS provide a mobile and static Toy Library offering a large selection of toys and offer a Scrap store by forging a partnership between CLOWNS and local businesses, salvaging their clean and safe materials to meet the creative needs of groups and families. Their double-decker Playbus visits 6 different rural villages per week for 2 hours. Parents/carers are welcomed on board and sessions cost £2.00 per family.

Engage is a charity whose aim is to support the development of a vibrant, effective and influential voluntary and community sector by providing a range of services:

- Operating a local Volunteer Centre to bring together organisations offering volunteering opportunities and members of our community seeking to offer their time/expertise.
- Co-coordinating the West Somerset Voluntary Sector Forum, an opportunity for voluntary groups to meet, receive briefings and discuss matters of mutual interest.

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- Acting as a voice for the voluntary and community sectors in West Somerset.
- Providing advice and support on setting up and running charities.
- Advising on potential funding sources and on preparing funding applications.
- Establishing projects to respond to local needs – for example, Engage runs a recycling service for good quality used furniture, making it available at discount prices to low-income individuals/families. Engage also provides an Integrated Community Support Service for West Somerset in partnership with *Somerset-You-Can-Do*.

Engage Furniture Recycling: a wide range of furniture and other household items can be recycled and made available only to those on low incomes and / or benefits, including:

Suites	Individual Sofas	Armchairs
Kitchen Tables	Dining Tables	Computer Tables
Coffee Tables	Office Chairs	Dining Chairs
Side tables	Desks	Kitchen Chairs
Double beds	Single Beds	Sofa-beds
Double mattresses	Single mattresses	Wardrobes
Bed-side cabinets	Chests of drawers	Sideboards
Display Units	Paintings	Records
Crockery	Gardening tools	Fitness equipment

Volunteering – Engage often receive referral from the Barnfield unit at Minehead Hospital. People come with a support worker to look at volunteering opportunities to help them on the path to recovery following mental health issues. Currently there are two volunteers working on the Furniture Re-use project who have been referred in this way. Others have been placed with organisations that have registered their volunteering opportunities.

Home-Start

Home-Start is a voluntary organisation offering support, friendship and practical help to families at home with children under seven.

One in four children under five in the UK has a difficult start in life, because their families are under pressure. Yet every child deserves the best possible start; to be loved, to play, to learn and to grow in confidence. When this happens in a happy, secure family, a child's health, schooling and life prospects all improve. Home-Start believes that parents play the key role in ensuring that children have a happy and secure childhood, but even the most dedicated parents can face challenges that prevent them from doing all they want to for their children.

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Home-Start schemes are rooted in the communities they serve and managed locally. They are supported by the national organisation. This offers direction, training, information and guidance to schemes as well as a robust quality assurance programme in which Home-Start West Somerset received an outstanding 100% result in 2013.

There is no central funding available from the national body so the local scheme has to raise all of its own funds. This creates a significant challenge for the team. it now has 40 home visiting volunteers regularly supporting local families in their own homes across West Somerset, as well as 11 volunteer trustees, 6 volunteer advisors, 8 volunteer helpers and 4 part-time paid staff; a team of almost 70 local people contributing their time and skills voluntarily, facilitated by only 4 employees.

DRAFT

Ref	Action	Target Date	Owner	Measure of success	Outcome
Continued Support					
1	Continue to support delivery of the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy (SHWS) through <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Focus Bid funding support 	Ongoing	Simon Lewis – Assistant Director Housing and Communities	Number of families worked with and who we have claimed as a 'success'. Projects delivered in deprived areas.	Projects, activities and services are improving the lives Health and wellbeing of people living in deprived areas.
2	Continue to target financial support to enable the Voluntary and Community Sector to deliver the priorities and actions of the SHWS.	Annual	Lead Member for Communities	Grants are awarded with priority given to VCS organisations that improve Health and Wellbeing in West Somerset	VCS organisations are delivering services that meet local need.
Strategic Action					
4	Ensure that all future strategies, policies and service developments consider how can align with and further support the priorities of the SHWS	April 2015	Simon Lewis – Assistant Director Housing and Communities	All WSC strategy documents are aligned to the delivery of the SHWS	All WSC services and activities make a positive contribution to the Health and Wellbeing of communities in West Somerset
5	Carry out an annual review of statistical information relating to health available from Somerset Intelligence, including the profile from the West Somerset GP Federation.	May 2014	Simon Lewis – Assistant Director Housing and Communities	Strategies, plans, services and activities are developed in relation to statistical need, and successful delivery is monitored using annual health statistics.	Communities benefit from targeted services and are able to hold WSC to account in delivering change.
6	Establish WSC as a Dementia Friendly organisation and work with external partners to increase Dementia awareness in the Community	April 2015	Simon Lewis – Assistant Director Housing and Communities	WSC meets the requirements of a Dementia Friendly organisation as set by the Alzheimer's Society.	People suffering from Dementia are able to live independently for longer and feel supported in the community.

7	Embed principles and recommendations from the 'WSC response to the SHWS' in Local Planning Policy: e.g. provision of allotments in phased building developments, encouraging lifetime homes standard, provision of housing solutions for elderly people, increased number of cycle ways, open spaces and play areas, improved access to health services.	April 2015	Community Planning Working Group/Tim Burton – Assistant Director	Local Planning Policy specifically mentions and reflects principles of Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Established and new communities are able to improve their Health and Wellbeing through the provision of infrastructure and facilities that promote healthy outcomes.
8	Increase suitable housing provision by reducing the number of empty homes across West Somerset	April 2015	Somerset West Private Housing Partnership	The number of empty homes in WS is reduced	People are able to access a wider variety of accommodation to meet their needs.
Working in partnership					
9	Identify/put in place appropriate forums and networks to add value to and influence health and wellbeing improvements for local residents	Dec 2014	Simon Lewis – Assistant Director Housing and Communities	Strong partnership working in place, clear action plan for focus and health and wellbeing improvements	Tangible and measurable health and wellbeing, improved outcomes for residents.
10	Following the achievements of Action 9, develop a specific action plan for reducing the prevalence and impact of smoking, plus get Council approval of the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco	Feb 2015	Simon Lewis – Assistant Director Housing and Communities	Clear sector plan to influence and reduce smoking in West Somerset	Reduced prevalence of smoking, particularly uptake in young people. Reduced mortality and health issues for residents.
11	Work with partners, especially those in the Voluntary Sector to design, support and, where appropriate, deliver projects	April 2015	Corinne Matthews, Economic Regeneration	Educational attainment is improved.	Children and young people have improved life chances.

	that increase educational attainment in our most deprived areas through access to resources, volunteering schemes, apprenticeships and mentoring		Manager Simon Lewis – Assistant Director Housing and Communities		
12	Support communities through the challenges of Welfare Reform which may impact on Health and Wellbeing e.g. providing advice and support on money management, support the food bank.	Ongoing	Simon Lewis – Assistant Director Housing and Communities Paul Fitzgerald	Advice and support on maximising household income is available to the most vulnerable households	The most vulnerable households are able to successfully manage household budgets.
13	Work with partners in the public and voluntary sectors to improve provisions of mental health and drug and alcohol services in deprived communities.	April 2015	Voluntary Organisations Simon Lewis – Assistant Director Housing and Communities	Mental health, drug and alcohol services are working with local partnerships to deliver services in the most deprived areas of West Somerset	People can easily access advice and support in relation to mental health, drug and alcohol problems.
14	Work with partners to reduce the number of households suffering from fuel poverty across West Somerset, with a focus on rural communities.	April 2015	Somerset West Private Housing Partnership	The number of households reported to be in fuel poverty is reduced	People's health and wellbeing is improved.

APPENDIX B – BETTER CARE FUND – INFORMATION

The £3.8 billion Better Care Fund (BCF) was established by Government (proposed in Spending Review 2013) to support health and social care by bringing together NHS and Local Government resources. In particular, transferring resources from acute services into community and preventative measures.

Information on how it will work is outlined below:

- Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) have to submit a 5 year strategic operational and financial plans, with the first 2 years at an operational level of detail.
- Timing for the BCF will be aligned with the CCG 2 year operational plan.
- The BCF is required at Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB) level. Overview of the BCF:
 - To be spent locally on health and social care
 - To deliver closer integration and improve outcomes for patients and service users
 - Linked to achieving goals within areas
 - Health & Wellbeing Board will be sign off the plan.

The BCF is not new money; it does not address any financial pressures. The aim is to bring together resources which are already committed to existing core activity. The BCF has to contribute to £300 million savings in Somerset. The goal is to create the opportunity to redirect and reapply funds to shared programmes that deliver better outcomes for individuals.

Level of funding for Somerset in 2015/16 is £38.5 million. Approximately £10 million will be linked to meeting performance targets, including national conditions, national measures, local measures and pooled budgets, system redesign and reallocation of resources. Joint objectives will include:

- improving patient outcomes through integration and
- reducing costs through efficiency.

The following areas are being considered for inclusion as part of the Integration Transformation Fund:

- Overarching projects:
 - Reablement / independent living teams
 - Personal health budgets / personal health planning
 - Complex care teams / care closer to home
 - Frail elderly pathway
 - Housing to support independence
- Medium Term projects:
 - Personalisation and whole life planning for children with complex care needs
 - Joint mental health commissioning strategy
- Enabling projects:
 - Data sharing and ICT
 - Integrated / aligned procurement
 - Building trust between professionals in the system.

The BCF draft plan submission was made on 14th February 2014 and final submission on 4th April 2014. The Fund will be fully operational by 1st April 2015.

Disability Facilities Grants will remain the responsibility of the Somerset West Private Sector Housing Partnership (SWPSHP) in West Somerset. Future grants will be allocated via the BCF from 2015 onwards. Allocated amounts will be ring fenced and authorised to SWPSHP for the first 2 years. The BCF will be incorporated into pooled budget which will be administered by CCG and Somerset County Council. SWPSHP will not be party to the pooled budget. Financial responsibility for meeting the awards of DFGs beyond budget remains with WSC.

Report Number: WSC 86/14
Presented by: Cllr Karen Mills
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Report to a Meeting of: Council
To be Held on: 18th June 2014
Date Entered on Executive Forward Plan 14/5/14
Or Agreement for Urgency Granted:

SUPERFAST BROADBAND EXTENSION – REQUEST FOR MATCH FUNDING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update council on the proposal to extend the superfast broadband rollout project to increase the coverage in the district.
- 1.2 To outline the requirement for match funding and request that council determine whether to agree in principle to commit £ 240,000 to secure the extended coverage

2. CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 2.1 This report is broadly in line with the Vision of the corporate plan “To enable people to live, work and prosper in west Somerset”. It specifically relates to objective 2 which is to maximise the funding opportunities from central Government. This proposal would create match funding to help secure an overall sum of £22.75 million for the Connecting Devon and Somerset area.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Council is requested to determine the issue of whether this authority should make a financial contribution towards the project taking into account its wider corporate priorities.
- 3.2 If council determine that an in principle commitment is made they nominate the assistant Director Business Development to be the council’s representative throughout the procurement process.

4. **RISK ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Inability to provide match funding reduces access to superfast broadband across the district	4	4	16
<i>Remove risk by committing in principle to funding which will extend coverage from connecting another 2410 properties to broadband.</i>	2	2	4
Inability to provide funding due to lack of availability of capital funds	4	4	16
<i>Identify capital funding within MTFP and budget.</i>	2	2	4
Inability to provide funding will lead to other areas securing a competitive advantage for business, education and householders.	4	4	16
<i>Identify and secure funding</i>	2	2	4

The scoring of the risks identified in the above table has been based on the scoring matrix. Each risk has been assessed and scored both before the mitigation measures have been actioned and after they have.

5. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 5.1 As members will be aware the rural nature of West Somerset means that widening the availability of superfast broadband is vitally important for all elements of the community. The poor road (and rail) infrastructure presents, in addition to the shortage of employment land presents a significant barrier to the growth / inward investment potential of businesses. Broadband is now an essential utility for the majority of our residents to access important services.
- 5.2 These improvements are required to significantly benefit a range of sectors.
- Improved broadband speeds will lead to increased productivity in respect of many existing businesses, will improve business resilience and will retain many of those indigenous companies that are considering relocation. It will also help to improve future inward investment opportunities – especially from those high value operations (such as IT specialists / Architectures / Engineers) who make relocation decisions based on the quality of life offered by the area.
 - Both the Land Based and the Tourism industries are becoming more and more reliant on the fast Broadband speeds – with DEFRA having bought in a deadline of 2015 for all applications for Single Farm Payment to be registered on-line, and the Tourism sector needing to use a very wide range of IT related marketing tools.
 - In respect of the local community, those young people in full-time education now rely on the internet for accessing education materials and interacting with the educational virtual networks. The internet has become an essential learning tool, rather than a nice to have luxury.
 - General access to services is now internet dominated, with activities that range from booking appointments / paying bills / applying for tax discs and accessing substantial discounts for paying on-line for insurance / utilities etc. is now an essential part of modern day life.
- 5.3 The current Connecting and Devon and Somerset (CDS) Programme aims to deliver 90% superfast broadband coverage to the whole project area by the end of 2016. In West Somerset this translates into a projected increase of coverage which is lower than the target figure for premises. Whilst this percentage is lower than the stated 90% for the whole

project area this will in reality mean a significant projected increase in the homes and businesses in the area that will be able to access superfast broadband. The provision of Superfast broadband in West Somerset is challenging due to range of technical and practical factors that increase costs. Superfast broadband in the terms of this project is a speed of 24 Megabytes (MB) or more.

- 5.4 This current phase leaves 10% of the CDS area (Devon and Somerset) without any improvement in broadband speeds, which equates to approximately 90,000 premises. In West Somerset the gap is larger. This gap in broadband provision has been recognised by Government, which under the Superfast Extension Programme (SEP) has made available an additional £250m with the objective of bringing the UK up to 95% superfast broadband coverage by the end of 2017.
- 5.5 On February 25th 2014 Government announced how the £250m was to be allocated across the UK. CDS was granted £22.75m - the largest single allocation made to a programme in England. To draw down this funding Government has stipulated that Local Authorities provide 50% match funding. Somerset County Council's (SCC) Senior Leadership Team (SLT) met on March 24th 2014 and took the decision to agree an in principle capital match contribution of up to £2m, which is to be put to SCC Cabinet on June 30th 2014. Devon County Council has undertaken a similar process resulting in an in principle capital match contribution of £2m.
- 5.6 Following this is in principle decision by SCC, District Councils were briefed on SEP and asked to consider in principle their own capital contribution to support a full application to BDUK - the deadline for which is June 30th 2014 -and asked collectively to contribute an additional £2m, matching that of SCC. The High level breakdown of all the contributions from partners is as follows

Allocated SEP Funding	£22.75m	
Match Funding Requirement	£22.75m	
HOTSW LEP Provision	£4.50m	
SCC / DCC Provision	£4.00m	
Broadband Suppliers Contribution	£5.32m	
Somerset Districts	£2.00m	
(Devon Districts, Unitary Councils and additional European funding)		£6.93m

The West Somerset council is an element of the Somerset District's contribution. The breakdown illustrates that the commitment in principle by West Somerset Council of £240,000 will play a part in securing significant match funding.

- 5.7 In West Somerset the impact of this proposed extension, subject to the provision of appropriate funding, would increase premises coverage significantly. This in premises terms would secure coverage for an additional 2410 premises. This would leave the remaining premises not reaching broadband speeds of 24mb per second, although broadband speeds are expected to increase to nearly all properties. It should be noted that these figures are dependent on a range of technical considerations so are still indicative until a procurement exercise is undertaken.
- 5.8 We expect that a new procurement exercise will be required to create this extension in coverage which is in addition to the rollout being delivered by BT. In this new procurement a range of newer technologies such as wireless or 4G, could be deployed to improve connectivity on a more cost effective basis than the technology currently being used to deliver the CDS coverage. Given the nature of the geography in question, CDS expects that these technologies would be required to ensure value for money and to deliver the additional superfast broadband coverage into the deeply rural areas within West Somerset.

- 5.9 Members should note that this will be an open exercise allowing a range of providers to bid for the new extension contract. If the council does commit the funding outlined in this report West Somerset officers will be involved in this procurement process and will assist in agreeing the detailed tender requirements. Whilst the Council can look to ensure that parts of West Somerset not currently within the CDS programme are prioritised as part of the programme, it must be accepted that in some parts of the District achieving superfast connection speeds will remain cost prohibitive.
- 5.10 Any in principle commitment of funding will be formalised in a detailed partnering agreement which will include conditions that require the funding provided by West Somerset Council to be spent within the district council boundary. This agreement and the linked involvement in the procurement exercise as described in paragraph 5.9 will enable the council to influence where this additional coverage is placed. This creates an ability to provide the best possible increase in broadband speed for businesses and the wider communities.
- 5.11 Another important principle is that if following the procurement exercise the coverage is does not in the opinion of West Somerset Council meet Value for Money principles then the council is able to withdraw so this does provide additional security that the money will be effectively deployed in West Somerset.
- 5.12 At the cabinet meeting on 4th June 2014 two recommendations were agreed
- Cabinet register their support for the rollout of superfast broadband in West Somerset, recognising the significant benefits that it will bring to the whole community.
 - Council is requested to determine the issue of whether this authority should make a financial contribution towards the project taking into account its wider corporate priorities.

This report is requesting that Council consider the second recommendation

- 5.13 It should be noted that BD: UK Superfast Extension Programme (SEP) guidance states that any allocations not drawn down by local authorities could be redistributed to other local authority area throughout the UK. Therefore, there is a danger that a proportion of the current SEP allocation for CDS could be reallocated to other Local Authorities if the full match funding requirement were not to be met.

6. FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The funding request of Districts has been allocated on a fairly complex formula basis which the lead officer has reviewed and is satisfied is reasonable. The proportionate share for West Somerset Council has been calculated as £240,000. It is estimated that this will deliver an additional 2,410 superfast premises by the end of 2017. This is in addition to the premises that will be delivered under the current CDS programme within West Somerset.
- 6.2 **In order to secure this extension an agreement in principle is required to a total capital funding commitment of £240,000.** This could, for funding purposes, be spread over 3 years (£80k in 14/15, £80k in 15/16, and £80k in 16/17), recognising this will have an impact on the delivery programme.
- 6.3 Funding for capital schemes can come from a variety of sources (RCCO – revenue funding, borrowing, earmarked reserves, capital resources). Each of these are explored below as options for Councillors to consider:

6.3.1 RCCO – Revenue Funding

The Council could choose to fund this via Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO). This has a direct impact on the annual revenue budget of the Council and simply increases the level of “budget gap” faced by the Council. The medium term financial plan is currently being updated, but the “budget gap” for future years shared in February 14 will not have reduced, indeed I am certain it will have grown.

6.3.2 Borrowing

The Council could choose to fund this by “borrowing”. Again this will have a direct impact on the annual revenue budget of the Council and again simply increases the level of “budget gap” faced by the Council. The revenue impact of borrowing £240k for – say 10 years – would be an additional cost to the revenue budget of approx. £28k per annum.

6.3.3 Earmarked Reserves

The Council could choose to fund this from earmarked reserves. Some time ago the Council created a “sustainability” reserve to offer some additional financial resilience and support for the challenges ahead. The need for this reserve remains, and it currently has only £68k unallocated.

6.3.4 Capital Resources

The report to Full Council on 26th March 2014 presented the Councils position regarding capital and this made it clear that more work was needed to develop a “joined up” strategy to help prioritise capital schemes and ensure the impact was affordable for the Council. This will be done over the summer months alongside a refreshed medium term financial plan, and a proposed new approach to budget setting for 15/16. The report to Council in March showed unallocated capital resources of £370k. This figure didn’t reflect the entire capital approval made by Full Council in November 13 regarding the JMASS project. It should have said £129k. Since the March report, Councillors are progressing a capital scheme for Dulverton Weir of £20k. This leaves unallocated capital resources of only £109k. The list of “aspirational” capital schemes (not including broadband or a larger repair scheme for Dulverton Weir) totals £195k - this is repeated below for information only. The list of aspirational schemes will no doubt be added to as the year progresses.

Aspirational Bids (Unfunded at March 14)

Capital Scheme	Detail of Scheme	Potential Funding Source		
		Capital Expenditure (£)	Capital Receipts (£)	Grants (£)
Disabled Facilities Grants	Provision of Grants	80,000	(80,000)	
Decent Homes Grants	Provision of Grants	40,000	(40,000)	
Tourist / Community Bookshop	Replacement Doors / Windows	3,000	(3,000)	
Blue Anchor Hotel	Coast Protection Scheme	25,000	(25,000)	
Car Parks	Upgrade Solar Machines	2,000	(2,000)	
Public Conveniences	Invest to Save	40,000	(40,000)	

Coast Protection	Environment Agency Bid Writing	3,000	(3,000)	
Purchase of Dog / Litter Bins	Purchase of 25 Litter Bins	2,000	(2,000)	
	Total	195,000	(195,000)	

- 6.4 Clearly the unallocated capital resources of 109K are not sufficient to entirely fund the Broadband project, or indeed the aspirational schemes above. The unallocated capital resources fund will be topped up during the year as new capital receipts are received. The Council is expecting significant receipts during 14/15, but has a current strategy of using these to repay external debt. There will be some leftover after this has been done, but until the transactions are complete this is difficult to estimate with accuracy.

7. SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTS

- 7.1 The proposal clearly meets the Council's ambitions, but the challenge to Members is around affordability. The financial challenges facing the Council are well understood and this project places an additional "call" on the Council's already scarce capital resources. The decision is whether this is more important to the Council and the community it serves than some of the other calls on resources.

- 7.2 If Members are minded to support this scheme (effectively recognising this is a priority against other schemes) then there are choices to be made on funding:-

- The initial decision to be made is whether the Council has any appetite for additional borrowing (and taking on the additional burden on the revenue budget). The discussion at Cabinet suggested this would not be something that Councillors would NOT be willing to progress.
- This means the project would need to be funded from West Somerset Council resources – as set out in section 6 above – at least initially pending any applications for external funding for this project (there may be opportunities to apply for LEADER funding, to secure approval to use the Economic Development funding from the Hinkley Point Section 106 agreements, and for the Council to apply for CIM funding). Should these applications not be approved and no other source of funding be secured, then the fall-back would be West Somerset Council's unallocated capital resources, and then first call on capital receipts received during the year.

- 7.3 Members will need to prioritise their ambitions in terms of delivering capital schemes. *If* Broadband is the top priority, then this could be funded (underwritten) by West Somerset Council pending the outcome of bids for external funding. I recommend this is funded from the unallocated resources and takes first call on future capital receipts. This would mean there are no additional resources to fund ANY additional capital projects during 14/15 unless new sources of funding are found.

- 7.4 Should this be an acceptable funding solution, then draft recommendations to support this are as follows:

a/ Full Council is recommended to approve the sum of £240k for the SEP Broadband Project, underwritten by West Somerset Council in the following manner, pending the outcome of bids for external funding :

- £109k of unallocated capital resources, plus
- £131k from 14/15 expected capital receipts. Should capital receipts not be forthcoming, then this will be funded from General Fund Reserves.

b/ Full Council request the Assistant Director (Business Development) to urgently progress bids for external funding to cover the costs underwritten by West Somerset Council on the SEP Broadband project. An update report on progress to be shared with Corporate PAG in 6 months.

8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

Members need to demonstrate that they have consciously thought about the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty as part of the decision making process.

The three aims the authority **must** have due regard for:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

- 8.1 Any implications will occur as the rollout advances and these will need to be factored in to the detailed project plan. The commitment of this additional funding in a broad sense implies an improved equality of access to a range of services provided via the internet. Specifically for West Somerset Rurality and isolation would be tackled through improved connectivity but the direct outcomes cannot be quantified at the current time.

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no known implications related to this report.

10. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

The District Councils have been consulted by the County Council after they indicatively provided match funding. The Council would be involved in the procurement exercise along with partner Councils.

11. ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no direct links to council assets but clearly there will be wider benefits of faster broadband speeds.

12. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 These would be dealt with through the project delivery plan if agreed.

13. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 The key issue is linked to effectively financing the extension. However any agreement to supply this funding would need to provide a condition within the final partnering agreement that the funding provided by this council was spent and delivered with the district boundary. The council would also become a partner in the new procurement exercise.