

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting to be held on Monday 1 December 2014 at 3.30 pm

Council Chamber, Williton

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes

Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 13 November 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. Notes of Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points

To review the Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points from the Cabinet Meeting held on 5 November, 2014 – **SEE ATTACHED**

6. Cabinet Forward Plan

To review the latest Cabinet Forward Plan for the months of January, February & March published on 29 October 2014 – **SEE ATTACHED.**

7. Discretionary Grants – Update Reports from Voluntary Sector Partners

To consider Report No. WSC 169 /14, to be presented by Sam Rawle, Scrutiny Officer - **SEE ATTACHED.**

To provide Scrutiny Members with the opportunity to consider the work over the past year of the voluntary sector community organisations who receive a grant allocation from West Somerset Council.

8. Budget 2015/16 – Initial Savings Ideas

To consider Report No. WSC 170 /14, to be presented by Cllr K V Kravis, Lead Member for Resources & Central Services – **SEE ATTACHED**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Scrutiny Committee with an update on budget estimates for 2015/16 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) forecasts, and to consider initial savings options towards addressing the Budget Gap for next year.

9. Minehead Rhynes and Waterways

To consider Report No. WSC 171 /14, to be presented by Chris Hall, Assistant Director for Operations – **SEE ATTACHED.**

The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Scrutiny Committee with a briefing on the condition of the 'Rhynes' in and around Minehead and to explore future options for their maintenance.

10. Scrutiny Committee Work Plan

To receive items and review the Scrutiny Committee WorkPlan for 2014/15 – **SEE ATTACHED.**

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.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 November 2014 at 3.30 pm****Present:**

Councillor P H MurphyChairman
Councillor R LillisVice Chairman

Councillor M J Chilcott
Councillor G S Dowding
Councillor B Heywood

Councillor M O A Dewdney
Councillor J Freeman
Councillor D J Sanders

Members in Attendance:

Councillor H Davies
Councillor E May
Councillor K Mills
Councillor T Taylor

Councillor M Smith
Councillor K Kravis
Councillor D Ross

Officers in Attendance:

Assistant Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer (B Lang)
Assistant Director – Housing and Community Development (S Lewis)
Finance Manager (S Plenty)
Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager (P Harding)
Scrutiny and Performance Officer (S Rawle)
Administrative Support (A Randell)
Corporate Manager for Governance, Assets and Public Spaces – Mendip District Council
(D Nolan)

SC34 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors K Ross, A Trollope-Bellew and K Turner.

SC35 Minutes

(Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 16 October 2014 – circulated with the Agenda.)

It was agreed that the draft minutes be amended to explain gift aid relating to tax relief in the third bullet point, and that a statement be added at the end of the Community Asset Transfer Strategy item to reflect that the policy content was not discussed as it would be rewritten, and to reflect Member concerns with the process.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 16 October 2014, as amended, be confirmed as a correct record.

SC36 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.	Description of Interest	Personal or Prejudicial or Disclosable Pecuniary	Action Taken
Clr P H Murphy	All Items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and voted

SC37 Notes of Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points

(Copy of Notes of Cabinet Decisions/Action Points, to be circulated at a later date.)

RESOLVED that the Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points from the meeting held on 5 November 2014, be circulated and noted at a later date.

SC38 Cabinet Forward Plan

(Copy of the Cabinet Forward Plan published 29 October 2014, circulated with the agenda.)

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Forward Plan published on 29 October 2014, be noted.

SC39 Proposed Business Case for Shared Legal Service

(Report No WSC 152/14, circulated with the agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to provide the Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to consider the raft Business Case for establishing a shared Legal Service between Mendip District Council, TDBC and WSC and to submit any comments it wished prior to the matter being considered by Cabinet and Full Council.

During the course of discussion the following points were made:-

- Members questioned why Somerset County (SCC), Sedgemoor and South Somerset Councils were happy with their current arrangements and did not, at this stage, wish to join the partnership. The Assistant Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer explained that although the initial intention was for the partnership to be county wide, at this current time SCC, Sedgemoor and South Somerset wanted to see how the proposed Legal Shared Service developed before deciding whether or not to join.
- It was recognised that because of the scale of staff in the Legal Service plus timescales and software at SCC there would be additional complexity added. The costs compared with the SCC size ratio would be difficult in

terms of a shared service along with the differing areas, such as Social Services, which other authorities did not cover.

- Although Taunton Deane used external solicitors, it was believed that these were for individual projects. With a shared service the use of private practice might not be needed so often with more expertise to tap into. This would lead to savings being made.
- The ambition would be to go wider along with other authorities once the shared service was up and running.
- There was a difference in the way staff operated in the separate authorities. The introduction of a Case Management System would be used to make efficiencies in addition to allocating work more effectively.
- A shared service Business Development Manager was in post and would be involved in overseeing the proposals. The template for the proposals would be to deliver more services at less cost with less use of external services, ensuring smarter delivering of services with less travelling along with greater resilience than what was experienced currently.
- The role of scrutinising the service would be retained in all three councils with a review of the service in each authority after 5 years.
- Flat fees were discussed and it was questioned if profits could be made on charges.

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Cabinet that the Legal Shared Service Business Case be supported.

SC40 Financial Monitoring – Quarter 2 (1 April-30 September)

(Report No WSC 141/14, circulated with the agenda.)

The report provided the Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to comment on the Financial Monitoring Quarter 2 report.

Steve Plenty, the Finance Manager, presented the report providing Members with details of the Councils expected financial outturn position in 2014/2015 for both revenue and capital budgets, together with information relating to predicted end of year reserve balances.

During the course of the discussion the following points were raised:-

- The deficits in the last three years were requested to be provided in future financial monitoring reports along with the appraisal of the budget in 2015/2016.
- An update was requested by Members in relation to the Building Control Business Case.
- Usable capital receipts were discussed. These were held in reserves and used to fund capital expenditure. The reserve balance was built into the Quarter 2 report.
- The priorities around the use of surpluses generated were considered.
- The JMASS reserve detailed in Appendix B was questioned. It was requested if the proportioned split in the business case could be looked into. The Section 151 officer was aware of concerns relating to the split

of the grant. This would be monitored and more detail would be known when it was understood how the grant was to be spent.

RESOLVED that:-

(1) The current financial standing of the Council together with the estimated position at the end of the financial year be noted and that the comments made by Scrutiny be referred to Cabinet for consideration;

(2) Cabinet be recommended to approve the transfer of £136,318 to General Fund Reserves in respect of the following:-

- Council Tax Benefit £41,160;
- NDR Administration £75,158; and
- Interest Costs £20,000; and

(3) Cabinet be further recommended that £49,985 be transferred to the Business Rates Smoothing Reserve to set aside the updated forecast retained business funding surplus in the year.

SC41 Corporate Performance Report – Quarter 2 (1 April-30September)

(Report No WSC 153/14, circulated with the agenda.)

The report provided the Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to comment on the Corporate Performance Quarter 2 report.

Paul Harding, the Corporate Performance Manager presented the report providing Members with an update on progress in delivering the Council's Corporate Priorities and performance of Council services for the period from 1 April to 30 September 2014.

During the course of the discussion the following points were raised:-

- The likelihood of non-delivery was considered with indicators flagged as amber discussed.
- In relation to staff sickness figures it was considered that there were no issues at present.
- The increase in housing homeless applications along with the implications for those facing homelessness were discussed. In many cases accommodation was unaffordable for those on benefits, combined with difficulties in negotiating with landlords, reduced staffing of the service and the upheaval of JMASS. There was confidence that figures would improve in future quarters.
- Work done in attempting to put empty homes back into use was discussed. It was believed that targets would be met in relation to this.
- There had been consultation with the Private Sector Housing Partnership Manager on how the empty homes target was set. Many properties had been taken off the empty homes register, with a lot of work being done to get the figures down.
- An agency member of staff had been taken on to process minor planning applications until recruitment had been set up for that position.

- It was considered why energy efficient home improvements were still not undertaken. The Government criteria had changed for this, therefore continuing the scheme could not be justified if there was no demand for the service. It was believed that this would be picked up through volunteer routes. It was hoped that this would be reinstated if the opportunity arose.
- An update was requested into the merging of the Building Control partnership. There had been additional complexity experienced in negotiations. An update in relation to this would be forwarded to Councillors in due course.
- Information was requested on the review of the Constitutions. A target had been set to complete this by the end of March 2015.

RESOLVED that the progress in delivering the Corporate Priorities for 2014/2015 be noted and the highlighted areas of concern be brought to the attention of Cabinet to consider mitigating actions.

SC42 Scrutiny Committee Work Plan

(The Scrutiny Committee work plan, circulated with the agenda was considered.)

The Scrutiny Officer updated Members with progress in relation to the task and finish review of secondary education in West Somerset. She explained that a meeting with representatives from Somerset County Council was in the process of being scheduled either late November or early December.

In response to Members request to be updated on the new GP Out of Hours contract for West Somerset, the Scrutiny Officer confirmed that representatives from Somerset NHS Foundation Trust had agreed to attend the March meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

The Scrutiny Officer advised of two suggestions that had been received for the work plan concerning a JMASS Update post the tier 6 implementation stage and an item concerning use of the Transformation Award Funding.

Members considered that the item concerning Transformation Award Funding be included as part of the JMASS Update.

RESOLVED (1) that the Scrutiny Committee Work Plan be noted.

RESOLVED (2) that an item concerning the GP Out of Hours service be added to the work plan for March.

RESOLVED (3) that an item concerning JMASS Update post tier 6 be added to the work plan for February.

RESOLVED (4) that the meeting of the Committee scheduled for 18 December 2014 be cancelled.

Councillors S Dowding and J Freeman left the meeting at 4.40 pm and 4.55 pm respectively.

The meeting closed at 5.36 pm.

MEETING: CABINET

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DATE: 5 NOVEMBER 2014

NOTES OF KEY DECISIONS

Note: The details given below are for information and internal use only and are not the formal record of the meeting

AGENDA ITEM	DECISION	CONTACT LEAD OFFICER
Forward Plan (Agenda Item 5)	Agreed that the latest Forward Plan published 16 October 2014 be approved.	Assistant Chief Executive
Cabinet Action Plan (Agenda Item 6)	Agreed that CAB47 – Request for Allocation of Planning Obligations Funding be deleted as actioned. Agreed that CAB50 – West Somerset Local Plan Request for Additional Budget be deleted as actioned.	Assistant Chief Executive
HPC Planning Obligations Board – Allocations of Community Impact Mitigation Fund (Agenda Item 7)	Agreed (1) that the release of £9,600 (excluding VAT) for Somerset Youth and Community Sailing Association based at Durleigh Reservoir for the purchase of four new 'Pico dinghies, covers and trollies from the £3,500,000 that has been paid by EDF to West Somerset Council for the Community Impact Mitigation (CIM) Fund be approved. Agreed (2) that it be recommended to Council to allow for the release of £40,000 (excluding VAT) for Tropiquaria towards the relocation of primates' adversely affected by the works at Washford Cross roundabout from the £3,500,000 that has been paid by EDF to West Somerset Council for the Community Impact Mitigation (CIM) Fund. Agreed (3) that Cabinet refer the Porlock Bay Shellfish Project back to the Planning Obligations Board for further consideration because in the opinion of Cabinet the Board have not given sufficient regard to the Sustainability Criteria in this case - specifically the extent to which the project will contribute to the wider goal of achieving sustainable communities and regeneration objectives.	Major Projects Manager
Council Tax Rebate Scheme - Review for 2015/16 (Agenda Item 8)	Agreed (1) that it be recommended to Council that the 2014/15 Council Tax Rebate Scheme be retained for 2015/16. Agreed (2) that it be recommended to Council that Option D (reduce the level of funding passed through to parishes by 100% reducing grant funding by approx. £87,600 to nil) is the preferred option in respect of Council Tax Rebate grant funding to be passed on to parish/town councils in 2015/16.	Revenues and Benefits Manager
Non Recovery of Debts in respect of Somerset Coast Primary Care Trust (Agenda Item 9)	Agreed that the item be deferred.	Revenues and Benefits Manager
Earmarked Reserves Review (Agenda Item 10)	Agreed (1) that the outcome of the review of earmarked reserves be noted and it be recommended to Council that surplus uncommitted funds amounting to £107,581 are returned to the General Reserve balance. Agreed (2) that should there be a requirement for Disabled Facilities Grants in the future, Council should consider the possibility of a supplementary estimate.	Finance Manager
New Home Improvement Agency Contract (Agenda Item 11)	Agreed that the funding of the new Home Improvement Agency and Integrated Community Equipment Service, as shown in the table to report no. WSC 145/14 for the years 2015/16 and 2017/18, be approved in principle.	Assistant Director Housing and Community Development

Invest to Save New Homes Bonus Empty Property Coordinator (Agenda Item 12)	Agreed that the proposal, attached to report no. WSC 146/14, to employ an Empty Property Co-ordinator across both the Councils initially for a twelve month period and then continue this if the 'invest to save' business case demonstrates that this post as a minimum pays for itself be approved.	Assistant Director Housing and Community Development
Hinkley Tourism Action Plan – Allocation (Agenda Item 13)	Agreed (1) that it be recommended to Council the allocation of up to a maximum of £40,000 of the Phase 2 (Part One) S106 Tourism mitigation funds for the commissioning of 2 calendar years of visitor monitoring surveys. Agreed (2) that an additional allocation of £5,000 to provide tourism and marketing activity for the town of Watchet to help mitigate any potential impacts incurred by the up-coming Washford Cross road junction improvements be made available. Agreed (3) that in respect of this allocation, it be recommended to Council to approve an additional expenditure budget of £45,000 to the Revenue Budget for Hinkley Tourism Action Partnership activity with a corresponding income budget of £45,000 from the S106 Contribution.	Economic and Regeneration Manager
EDF Housing Funding Strategy (Agenda Item 14)	Agreed that it be recommended to Council to approve the Housing Funding Strategy (attached as Appendix A to report no. WSC 149/14) and four initial bids contained in Appendices B – E to the report.	Housing Initiatives Implementation Officer

For a record of the reasons for the decision; details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the decision-making body at the meeting at which the decision was made; a record of any conflict of interest relating to the matter decided which is declared by any member of the decision-making body which made the decision; and in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted by the relevant local authority's head of paid service, please use the attached link below, to the Council's website where the minutes and relevant reports can be viewed:
<http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Council--Democracy/Council-Meetings/Cabinet-Meetings/Cabinet---5-November-2014>

Date: 6 November 2014

9
Weekly version of Forward Plan published on 29 October 2014

Forward Plan Ref / Date proposed decision published in Forward Plan	Date when decision due to be taken and by whom	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring a resolution for it to be considered in private and what are the reasons for this?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
FP/15/1/02 6/02/2014	7 January 2015 By Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Allocation of Section 106 funds held – Quarter 3 Decision: to make proposals for the allocation of monies secured through planning obligations to individual schemes, and to update members with the current funding position		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Ian Timms, Assistant Director Business Development 01984 635271
FP/15/1/03 6/02/2014	7 January 2015 By Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Draft Capital Programme 2014-15 and Capital Strategy Decision: to present the draft Capital Programme 2014/15 and draft Capital Strategy for recommendation to Council		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Paul Fitzgerald, Assistant Director Resources 01823 358680
FP/15/1/04 6/02/2014	7 January 2015 By Councillor D Westcott – Lead Member for Community and Customer	Title: Consideration of nomination/s received under the Community Right to Bid Legislation Decision: To approve community listing		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/15/1/05 6/02/2014	7 January 2015 By Councillor C Morgan – Lead Member for Environment – Hinkley Point	Title: Hinkley Point Decision: to consider key issues relating to Hinkley Point		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, New Nuclear Programme Manager 01984 635245

Forward Plan Ref / Date proposed decision published in Forward Plan	Date when decision due to be taken and by whom	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring a resolution for it to be considered in private and what are the reasons for this?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
FP/15/1/06 29/04/2014	7 January 2015 By Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Hinkley Point C Community Impact Mitigation Fund Decision: to agree the release of funding for the Community Impact Mitigation Fund		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	James Holbrook, Major Projects Manager (Hinkley Point) 01984 635218
FP/15/1/07 5/06/2014	7 January 2015 By Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Proposed Shared Legal Services Partnership Decision: to consider a proposal to establish a shared legal services partnership between Taunton Deane Borough Council, West Somerset Council and Mendip District Council		Exempt information relating to staffing matters	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/15/1/08 28/10/2014	7 January 2014 By Councillor D Westcott – Lead Member for Community and Customer	Title: Assets of Community Value Process Report Decision: to streamline the Assets of Community Value (ACV) process at WSC, to reduce the resource implications for the Council		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Angela Summers, Housing and Community Project Lead 01984 635318
FP/15/2/01 6/02/2014	4 February 2015 By Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Annual Budget & Council Tax Setting 2015-16 Decision: to provide Members with all the information required for Council to approve the revenue budget and capital programme for 2015/16 for recommendation to Council.		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Paul Fitzgerald, Assistant Director Resources 01823 358680

Forward Plan Ref / Date proposed decision published in Forward Plan	Date when decision due to be taken and by whom	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring a resolution for it to be considered in private and what are the reasons for this?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
FP/15/2/02 6/02/2014	4 February 2015 By Councillor T Taylor – Leader of Council	Title: Draft Corporate Plan for 2015-16 Decision: to introduce the draft West Somerset Council Corporate Plan 2015/16 for recommendation to Council.		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Penny James, Chief Executive 01984 635246
FP/15/2/03 6/02/2014	4 February 2015 By Councillor D Westcott – Lead Member for Community and Customer	Title: Consideration of nomination/s received under the Community Right to Bid Legislation Decision: To approve community listing		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/15/2/04 6/02/2014	4 February 2015 By Councillor C Morgan – Lead Member for Environment – Hinkley Point	Title: Hinkley Point Decision: to consider key issues relating to Hinkley Point		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, New Nuclear Programme Manager 01984 635245
FP/15/2/05 6/02/2014	4 February 2015 By Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Fees and Charges Decision: to propose levels of fees and charges for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 (in some cases fee increases will be implemented earlier, this will be stated in the relevant sections of the report).		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Paul Fitzgerald, Assistant Director Resources 01823 358680
FP/15/3/01 22/04/2014	4 March 2015 By Councillor T Taylor – Leader of Council and	Title: Corporate Performance & Budget Monitoring Report 2014-15 – Quarter 3		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200

Forward Plan Ref / Date proposed decision published in Forward Plan	Date when decision due to be taken and by whom	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring a resolution for it to be considered in private and what are the reasons for this?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
	Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Decision: to provide Members with an update on progress in delivering corporate priorities, performance of council services including budgetary information and customer satisfaction.			
FP/15/3/02 22/04/2014	4 March 2015 By Councillor D Westcott – Lead Member for Community and Customer	Title: Consideration of nomination/s received under the Community Right to Bid Legislation Decision: To approve community listing		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/15/3/03 22/04/2014	4 March 2015 By Councillor C Morgan – Lead Member for Environment – Hinkley Point	Title: Hinkley Point Decision: to consider key issues relating to Hinkley Point		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, New Nuclear Programme Manager 01984 635245

Note (1) – Items in bold type are regular cyclical items.

Note (2) – All Consultation Implications are referred to in individual reports.

The Cabinet comprises the following: Councillors T Taylor, K V Kravis, K M Mills, C Morgan S J Pugsley, A H Trollope-Bellew, K H Turner and D J Westcott.

The Scrutiny Committee comprises: Councillors P H Murphy, R Lillis, M J Chilcott, M O A Dewdney, G S Dowding, J Freeman, P N Grierson, B Heywood and K J Ross.

Report Number: WSC 169/14
Presented by: Sam Rawle, Scrutiny Officer
Author of the Report: Sam Rawle, Scrutiny Officer
Contact Details:
 Tel. No. Direct Line 01984 635223
 Email: sjrawle@westsomerset.gov.uk

Report to a Meeting of: Scrutiny
To be Held on: 1st December 2014
Date Entered on Executive Forward Plan NA
Or Agreement for Urgency Granted:

DISCRETIONARY GRANTS – UPDATE FROM VOLUNTARY SECTOR PARTNERS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members of the Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to consider the work over the past year of the voluntary sector community organisations who receive a grant allocation from the Council.

2. CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 2.1 Although not directly linking to specific priorities this report links to the Councils overall vision:
- Championing and enabling the people, local organisations and communities of West Somerset, and
 - Working with partners, both inside and outside West Somerset.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To consider the reports from the voluntary sector community partners and make recommendations to Cabinet.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Failure to fully consider the benefits and outcomes from the Councils investment to the voluntary sector organisations who receive a grant allocation.	2	4	8
<i>Consideration of reports from partners as part of the annual budget setting exercise.</i>	1	4	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 and after the mitigation measures have been actioned.

5. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 5.1 In recent months the Scrutiny Committee have received informative reports from the Quantock Hills AONB and Engage West Somerset. After considering both organisations service achievements and outcomes in the last 12 months, Scrutiny Committee recommended to Cabinet that consideration be given to retaining the current level of grant allocation for the budget year 2015/16.
- 5.2 For the purposes of consistency, Scrutiny Committee requested update reports from the other voluntary sector community organisations that the Council award a grant allocation.
- 5.3 Reports have been received from West Somerset Advice Bureau, ArtLife, CLOWNS & Homestart. These are attached in the appendix to this report together with each organisations grant application form relating to 2015/16 and current budget statements where provided.
- 5.4 Financial accounts for each of the organisations have been examined by the Councils finance team and are considered to be financially sound. Paper copies of accounts can be made available to Members on request to the Scrutiny Officer.

6. FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 WSC allocated £75,204 worth of grants in 2014/15.

Organisation	Amount
ARTlife (Service Level Agreement)	£12,645
CLOWNS	£8,602
Engage CVS West Somerset	£3,000
Home-Start West Somerset	£3,000
West Somerset Advice Bureau (Service Level Agreement)	£38,000
Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Service	£9,957

7. COMMENTS ON BEHALF OF SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 7.1 As part of the 2015/16 budget setting process Scrutiny Committee have been looking at the voluntary sector organisations that currently receive discretionary grants from West Somerset Council.
- 7.2 Although there are no direct financial implications in respect of this particular report, Scrutiny Committee's comments will be considered by Cabinet as part of the ongoing 2015/16 budget setting process.

8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 **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 are:
- 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

8.2 The organisations referred to in this report support and assist some of the most disadvantaged communities within West Somerset, to improve opportunities and to elevate poverty.

8.3.1 Equality impact assessments will be carried out should there be reductions in grant allocations following the annual budget setting exercise.

9 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

None directly associated with this report.

10 CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

None directly associated with this report.

11 ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

None directly associated with this report.

12 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

None directly associated with this report.

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.

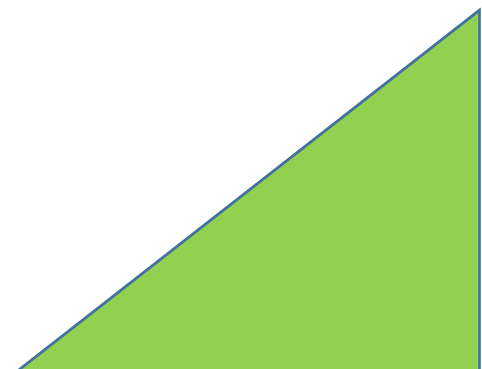
The organisations referred to in this report are able to demonstrate through their work the huge health and wellbeing benefits that they are able to bring to many families and individuals in West Somerset.

13 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None directly associated with this report.

West Somerset Advice Bureau

- Grant Award Pro-forma 2015/16
- Annual Report 2013/14 (inc financial outturn 2013/14)
- WSAB Management Accounts – Half year to 30/9/2014



Grant Award 2015/16– details of individual grant

(Please print your response)

Name of Organisation	WEST SOMERSET ADVICE BUREAU		Amount awarded for 2014/15	£
Number of paid staff (FTE)	11 part time (7 FTE)	Number of active volunteers	30 (as at 1/10/14)	
Contact for Organisation	Name:	NICK HUTT		
Tel No:	0773 9517102	Email:	nickhutt@westsomersetadvice.org.uk	
Please describe:				
<p>a) The service/s which are supported financially by this Council. What are the outcomes? How does the community benefit from the Council investment?</p>		<p>Services include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assessing client's circumstances and identifying problem areas to address 2. Research to determine appropriate advice/next steps 3. Advising on options 4. Form completion 5. Communication and Negotiation with 3rd Parties on client's behalf 6. Representation of client at hearings, tribunals and appeals. <p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits –clients understand forms and process, robust claims submitted, tribunal preparation completed and clients supported, income maximised • Housing – resolution of tenure and tenant issues. Homelessness managed • Tax – affairs properly controlled and managed • Consumer – rights understood • Legal – appropriate advice provided or signposted • Utilities – Bills managed and efficiencies/saving identified and implemented • Employment – rights understood and communication channels improved • Relationships - increased understanding of issues and rights and improved communication channels • Health – improved by relief of stress related to problem and improvement of circumstances 		

a) ...continued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debt advice - debt levels reduced, managed and solutions in place. Service (by virtue of additional project funding) includes an element of Money Management advice leading to improved budgeting skills, reduced payday lender use and financial security. Priority debts reduced by £300k (2013/14) <p>Community Benefits (2013/2014)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased income for WSC of £24,259 from council tax arrears Generally improved health and wellbeing in the community WSAB enabled to work in partnership and collaboration with other agencies to deliver joined up holistic services to the Community. 		
b) 2013/14 numbers of people using the service/s	2107 clients		
c) Numbers of people using the service/s to date for 2014/15	1160 clients (Increase of 10% on previous period) to 30/09/14		
d) Whether these are statutory or non statutory service/s (if known)	<p>WSC were asked to provide a list of statutory services but this turned out not to be straightforward request. Of those advised, it is fair to say that a significant proportion of Bureau advice falls under the following statutory services covered by various pieces of legislation: Homelessness prevention and relief, Housing Advice, Social Security and Council Tax Benefit (new claims, managing changes, appeals, reviews).</p> <p>50% of issues raised by clients in the last 6 months were benefits and housing related. This rises to 80% with Debts Issues (including Rent and Council Tax arrears) included.</p>		
e) Is there a service level agreement in place for this service with WSC? Please tick	Yes	✓	No , see below
If no, to e) above, please outline what arrangements/targets are in place for the funding	n/a		

f) For every £1 received in financial assistance from WSC, how much does this enable your organisation to lever in match funding from other organisations?		<p>Match funding for Core activities is not available. WSC funding to deliver to SLA does not contribute toward fund raising activity. External funders seek assurances WSAB is financially viable within timeframe of a new Project. Increased vulnerability = reduced funding opportunities.</p> <p>Total Core Funding (exc. LAS Scheme) to March 2015 = £86977. Funding secured to date: £71744. Equates to £0.84p raised per £1</p>		
g) Please list other funding sources	Funder name	Amount	Confirmed/ Anticipated	Would it be withdrawn if WSC funding was not available? Yes/ No Hopefully not but please see note (f) above
	Somerset County Council	£31638	Tbc	
	NHS Foundation Trust	£10705	Tbc	
	Wessex Water	£2500	Tbc	
	Somerset Community Foundation	£4136	Tbc	
	Big Lottery (ASTF)	£51744	Confirmed	
Henry Smith Charity	£20000	Confirmed		

h) Have any fund raising activities been organised to increase available funds to your organisation?	Yes , amount raised:	£	No	Other than Grants obtained as listed in (g) above to provide additional services
i) Does your organisation have standing order forms so that people can contribute directly from their bank account to your organisation?	Yes	WSAB has a Localgiving.com page	No	All contact is confidential Direct debits /STOs are difficult. A collection box is located in Bureau
j) Your organisation has the following policies in place: i. Equalities and diversity ii. Safeguarding iii. Child sexual exploitation	Yes	Equalities and diversity Safeguarding	No	Child sexual exploitation

What would be the impact if WSC grant funding was reduced or withdrawn?

Withdrawal of the WSC core services grant would represent a 44% reduction to total **Core** funding and 24% reduction in overall funding. While we have applied to Big Lottery, Comic Relief and the Henry Smith charity and others for additional separate project funding, withdrawal of the WSC grant would leave a significant gap for 15/16. Based on 2013/14 figures withdrawal of WSC Grant funding **could** mean:

- Between 500 and 900 less clients helped (§)
- Between £110k and £200k less in clients income raised (§)
- Between £185k and £338k less debt reduction achieved (§)
- The amount of depression, stress and ill health arising from any cut would be significant
- The area is already in the bottom 15% on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation a withdrawal or cut will make this figure even lower with serious consequences to community health/wellbeing.
- An increase in the number of clients approaching WSC benefits office for assistance
- And, in the worst case, the Bureau no longer being financially viable

(§) Note: The lesser of the 2 figures above assumes current level of additional Grant funding achieved is maintained

Withdrawal of WSC Grant funding **will** mean:

- Reduction in level of management, supervision and training of Bureau staff leading to quality of service being compromised
- Reduced Bureau opening hours
- Increased strain on the already overstretched resources at a time when the need for the Bureau's services continues to rise with no sign of that trend reversing.

A percentage reduction in funding will have the same impact on a Pro Rata basis.

Note: The precise impact is almost impossible to quantify given that the additional funding we are able to secure enables us to deliver additional services some of which are included in the statistics reported (in separate WSC SLA report enclosed)

In simple terms, Core Funding enables the Bureau to “keep the doors open and the lights on” to enable everything else to happen and is generally acknowledged as representing phenomenal value for money to WSC. An increase in funding, which is what is needed, would actually remove financial and administrative strain on WSC.

It is important to understand that grants are obtained from other organisations to deliver specified measured outcomes and it is a strict condition of the Grants received that funds are **not** re-allocated to Core activities covered by the SLA between us.

How have your activities supported the Council's objectives, if applicable? (Please see attached.)

Health and Wellbeing

- WSC core funding enables people and families to take charge of their own affairs with confidence, such as budgeting, money management, dealing with debt responsibly thereby reducing stress.
- People have a consequent reduction in mental and physical health issues, become more secure, happier, participate in their communities better, and have higher self esteem.
- Children benefit greatly from this through better family life with improved physical and mental circumstances, ie. less stress, less arguments, parents with more time for their children.
- There is a reduction in homelessness through better debt reduction and income maximisation. This makes people more secure, healthier and independent,

Equality and Diversity.

- Less debt, better incomes, reduced stress and increased security makes residents confident, more resilient and therefore less prone to discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- They have higher self esteem and therefore have better community relations and input.
- If secure financially and mentally, people can achieve greater equality through higher self esteem.
- All this promotes people who can take their best opportunities – including being able to cope successfully with applying for and securing jobs.

Local Democracy

One aim of all WSAB projects is to establish a means by which new services provided by the Grant funding are sustainable beyond the life of the project. This is not easy but this is the intent.

New nuclear Development at Hinkley point

At his stage in the Hinkley development, WSAB have been advised that an EOI is not appropriate. WSAB is liaising with Sedgemoor CAB CEO and is poised to maximise the opportunities that present themselves at the appropriate time.

		<i>Please tick</i>		<i>Please tick</i>
Please attach a copy of your <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most recent accounts, including annual income, expenditure and reserves/savings • budget • business plan • expected financial position for the current and next financial reporting period 	Yes	✓	No	
	Yes	✓	No	
	Yes	✓	No	
	Yes	✓	No	

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

- ✚ Local democracy and accountability remains within West Somerset by establishing a resilient operating model that is financially sustainable
- ✚ Maximise the funding opportunities from Central Government.

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.

- ✚ Communities in West Somerset can access and understand the process
- ✚ The economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximised
- ✚ The availability of housing supply within West Somerset is increased to mitigate the extra demands linked to Hinkley Point workers
- ✚ 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
- ✚ The effects on the environment by working with partners to positively respond to opportunities to enhance the environment in the affected communities using secured funding within Section 106 agreements are mitigated

Equality & Diversity

The three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- 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

Health & Wellbeing

The three priorities for the Health & Wellbeing Strategy:

- 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.

West Somerset Advice Bureau



A free service run by volunteers to help you

Annual Report 2013/2014
September 3rd 2014



The Lane Centre, Market House Lane,
Minehead TA24 5NW
Tel: 01643 704624
Fax: 01643 705931
enquiries@westsomersetadvice.org.uk

1.

Opening Times ...

free, confidential and impartial advice on a range of topics

- Help filling in a form such as disability or carers allowance
- If you are finding that there is little money to cover your bills, we can check your income and assist in reducing expenditure
- We can negotiate affordable payments on your debt
- We can advise with housing, employment or family concerns

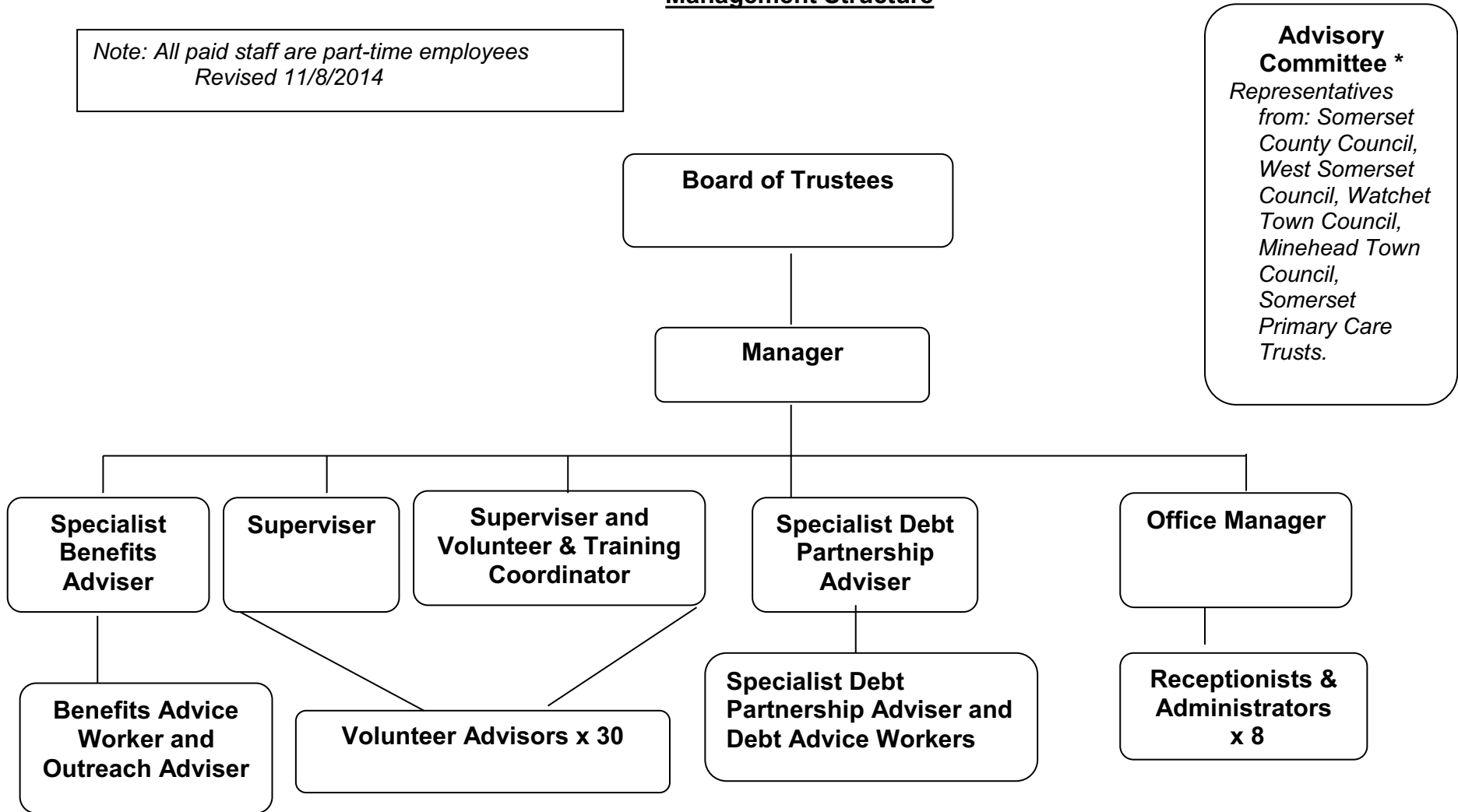
Location	Venue	Day	Time
Minehead	The Lane Centre, Market House Lane	Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday	10am – 1pm Drop In 1pm – 4pm Appointments Only
Williton	Williton GP Surgery	Wednesday	10am – 12noon Appointments
Watchet	Watchet GP Surgery	Thursday	10am – 12noon Appointments
	The Sanctuary, Swain Street	Wednesday	3pm – 5pm Drop In
Dulverton	Exmoor Medical Centre	Tuesday	10am – 12noon Appointments
Porlock	Porlock Medical Centre	Thursday	1pm – 3pm Appointments
Other Services Available			
Telephone: 01643 704624		Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday	10am – 3pm
Email: www.westsomersetadvice.org.uk or enquiries@westsomersetadvice.org.uk		Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday	10am – 3pm
Pop up locations across West Somerset Please check times at www.westsomersetadvice.org.uk or facebook.com/WestSomersetAdviceBureau		Various Days	Various times all Drop In

2.

West Somerset Advice Bureau
Management Structure

Note: All paid staff are part-time employees
Revised 11/8/2014

Advisory Committee *
Representatives from: Somerset County Council, West Somerset Council, Watchet Town Council, Minehead Town Council, Somerset Primary Care Trusts.



3 *West Somerset Advice Bureau***West Somerset Advice Bureau**WSAB Trustee Board

Chair:	Dave Williams
Vice Chair:	Phillip Mason
Board Member	John Austin
Board Member	Richard Bulpin
Board Member	Howard Mounfield
Treasurer:	David Bates
Secretary:	Georgie Reynolds

Volunteer Advice Workers

Ann L, Andy, Anne G, Dan, Daphne ,David, ,Derek, Dick, Doreen, Ella, Geoff, Hazel,
Howard, Jan, Jackie, Jean, Jennie, John , Keith, Laura, Liam, Margaret, Mike B,
Mike T, Pam, Ray, Richard, Rosemary, Sarah, Will

Volunteer Receptionists and Volunteer Admin Workers

Charlotte, Gill, Irene, Jim, Janet, Jean, Sharon, Sian

Paid Staff

Bureau Manager:	Georgie Reynolds
Supervisor / Volunteer&Training Co-ordinator	Catherine Hurd
Supervisor /Admin Assistance	Nic Wigley
Specialist Debt Partnership Adviser	Anne Western
Debt Advice Worker	Trevor Godley
Specialist Debt Partnership Adviser	Glynis Heymer
Debt Advice Worker	Sarah Buchanon
Specialist Benefits Adviser	Helen Tudball
Benefits Advice Worker (from Feb 14)	Sally Brent-Jones
Welfare Rights Worker(From Apr 14)	Sylvie Langdon
Office Manager:	Julie Bolton
Energy Adviser (funded until Jan 14)	Sylvie Langdon
Energy Adviser (funded until Jan 14)	Sally Brent Jones -
Fundraiser:	Barbara Middleton
IT Services:	CJS Systems
Cleaning Services:	Shane Roberts

4 *Chairman's Report*

The year 2013/14 has shown more challenges. Yet again 'change' is the word that comes to mind. The changes that the Government has continued to administer with regards to Welfare Benefits have contributed to the West Somerset Advice Bureau getting requests for help with more and more complex problems.

Many of you will have noticed the new frontage to the building that was made possible by the work of our fund raising team.

Fortunately, thanks to the ongoing hard work of Barbara, Georgie and others, the WSAB is continuing to secure funding from various organisations for specific projects that will help the WSAB carry on the good work for which it is renowned. The support from funders is always appreciated and long may it continue!

Other agencies and organisations working in and across West Somerset have continued to show great support to the West Somerset Advice Bureau over the last year. Sharing knowledge, facilities and training to create excellent joint working arrangements. We are proud to be able to unite with other organisations because of the fuller, stronger service it creates for residents of West Somerset.

The trustees again pay tribute to the professionalism and dedication of all the staff both paid and volunteers, without whose continued hard work we could not function. In particular we would like to thank Georgie Reynolds, not just for her work as Manager of the Bureau through the year but also her skill in managing the various changes that have taken place including the new data base. This change would not have been successful without the large amount of work put in by Julie Bolton and all of the other dedicated and valuable members of our team.

Dave Williams,
Chairman August 2014

5 Reports from Volunteer Administrator/Receptionists

About two years ago I made the momentous decision to retire after a long and varied working life. I lasted about two months of being lazy then decided I really did need to do something to enable me to use my brain again!

I contacted the West Somerset Advice Bureau and initially discussed becoming an Adviser. I did complete the Adviser training, which was very interesting and certainly made me aware of all aspects of how the bureau could help clients with all the various situations that may arise.

Due to a change in my family environment I realised I could not continue with the Advising but did not want to leave the Bureau as I knew how much I would miss the work and the people. I agreed to become the Monday and Friday receptionist and this then progressed to my also helping with administration which I am still finding extremely rewarding and, I hope, helpful to the Bureau

It is a pleasure to work with people who are genuinely so nice and also to see how pleased the clients are to have such an excellent service from such knowledgeable Advisers.

Gill - Volunteer Receptionist/Administrator July 2014

The West Somerset Advice Bureau has existed in Minehead as long as I can remember (yes, really – that long!) and I suppose it is testament to its necessity and the high esteem in which it is held, that it is still here: still dispensing free and impartial information to those who require it – and still staffed by people with a wealth of life experience, compassion and humanity towards their fellow travellers on life's journey.

We all learn that life ain't fair: that no matter how precisely one plans or how cautiously one acts, life has a propensity to bite us all at some time or another (that being the only other leveller in association with death and taxes).

How reassuring then, to receive the band-aid of empathy and the surgical truss of accurate information from the WSAB Advisers: - thus girded we are empowered to deal again with the world and our respective challenges.

My voluntary role is a minor one but it is the manifestation of my gratitude and admiration for the work of the Bureau. I received help when I needed it and this is my way of passing on the good deeds of fairness and social justice: a meaningful and worthwhile thing to do.

P.S. I'll have that truss back when you're finished with it – washed & ironed, please.

Sian - Volunteer Receptionist/Administrator July 2014

6. Reports from Volunteer Advisers

Hi, I'm Anne and I joined the bureau in February. I have always enjoyed helping others so the bureau is ideal as there seems to be no shortage of clients who need assistance and support. I enjoyed the training and was warmly welcomed by all Advisers when shadowing them. My first client was a big thing for me, but after that I was up and running and don't seem to have looked back since!

What I particularly like about volunteering here is that Advisers see each client without influence or prejudice. Also I am glad time spent with clients does not feel as if it has been "time and motioned" studied – a system which may work well when you are building a Ford motor car but not so well when you are trying to deal with a vast array of human experience. The Bureau is a complete team effort, if you don't know something then there is always someone who can help you with finding out, or others give you freely the benefit of their experience or specialist knowledge.

A lot has changed here even since I joined, from the way we write up consultation notes to having new carpets fitted. The change to layout upstairs has opened up the work environment, enabling easier communication between advisers which can only have a positive outcome.

The West Somerset Advice Bureau's service is free at point of access for clients and advisers give of their time freely too. I'm thinking that helps to ensure everyone is treated equally. Long may it continue!

AnneG - Volunteer Adviser July 2014

Report from a Volunteer Adviser

I had often thought about becoming an Advice Bureau Advisor but work and family commitments didn't allow it. However five years ago, I started training at the Bureau after encouragement from another Adviser who was already working here.

The training was very thorough but I sometimes wondered if I would ever get my head around benefits (and still do!). Finally I was ready to go solo, and although it was a bit daunting at first there was always someone to ask and willing to help you. The wide variety of questions we get asked, (no two are ever the same), and the knowledge you pick up along the way make the work interesting, and I find I am learning something new all the time. A recent example was a Client wanting detailed information about burials, not a subject I knew much about, but I do now! The satisfaction you get when you have successfully helped a Client make it all worthwhile.

And finally, the best part about being a Volunteer, - the great bunch of people you work with at the WSAB!

Rosemary - Volunteer Adviser July 2014

7 *Bureau Manager's Report*

The year 2013/14 has been another busy year for the West Somerset Advice Bureau (WSAB). An incredible year of change within the West Somerset Advice Bureau driven by the increasing workload, changes in what clients need as well as changes across the Welfare System but also in terms of the workload that is needed to assist residents of West Somerset with their queries.

The West Somerset Advice Bureau has redesigned systems and procedures to make limited resources stretch further in order to assist residents of West Somerset.

An overview of the work delivered

Residents of West Somerset can access the West Somerset Advice Bureau to receive advice about welfare benefits, income maximisation, reducing bills, negotiating on debt, employment contracts, tenancy agreements, accommodation or even family matters and neighbour disputes. Anyone can drop in to our main office in Minehead or phone to receive advice or even make an appointment at one of our outreach locations in Watchet, Williton, Dulverton and Porlock. We can also offer home visits to those who are not able to leave their homes.

The WSAB have achieved incredible results in raising income for clients. This is a combination of raising awareness of entitlement to benefits, assisting clients filling in forms and where appropriate appealing against decisions. In the year 13/14 the annualised figure raised for clients was £468,394.70.

This is the second year running in the WSAB history that the time needed per client has been over 2 hours each. This is a result of the queries clients have and the issues that residents of West Somerset are facing being more complex.

The focus for the year 2013/2014 was to make sure the services provided are as accessible to as many residents as possible. By developing the telephone advice line, creating more outreaches and raising the profile within communities of all advice services available. On page 13 of this report you will see a map of West Somerset with the number of clients assisted by the WSAB for each area. I am very pleased to report that these figures in 2013/2014 show that we have seen more clients in 11 wards out of the 16. This includes more clients than last year in Brendon Hills, Carhampton and Withycombe, Dunster and Timberscombe, Old Cleeve, Porlock and District, Quantock Vale and West Quantockshead. We are really pleased to be able to show that our free, impartial and quality advice service is now reaching more rural parts of West Somerset.

8. The Projects and Funding needed to deliver the service:

When an individual or family contact us we don't know what their enquiry is going to be but, because we have a variety of expert knowledge there is always support no matter what the query. The following is just a few of the funded projects which means we can offer additional services to residents of West Somerset:

Telephone System Update – LARC provided £3,255

In September 2013 we changed our telephone system to a more reliable system which would enable us to process more telephone enquiries.

In addition this system has a hearing loop allowing more volunteers to use the phones.

EDFE – Provided £30,000 towards 37 hours a week fuel debt adviser. Over two years:

- 1291 clients assisted,
- £770638.70 raised in potential benefit for clients
- £899010 worth of debt managed
- 64% of these clients were in fuel poverty

Advice Service Transition Fund from BIG Lottery started September 2013:

The aim of this project is to develop a new model for delivering advice across a rural area. The partnership will implement several work streams which will make advice more accessible including telephone, email, pop up locations and home visits. Collaboration between partners will increase the range of specialist advice services for residents of West Somerset by providing training to staff in four key areas. A money advice programme will be introduced to provide budgeting skills, debt advice and financial capability.

The grant awarded is distributed across the partnership in the following way:

West Somerset Advice Bureau over two years: £77,682.81

Wessex Resolutions, Somerset Care and Repair, Mind TWS, Somerset Advice Network over two years to deliver advice in West Somerset: £88,971.82 between 4 organisations.

All partner for training, travel, room hire, marketing and monitoring over two years: £39,135.44

In total £205,790 for West Somerset!

This will deliver the following things over two years:

5 info hubs, 24 pop up sessions across West Somerset, 800 home visits including 60 debt advice home visits, 240 clients assisted with budgeting skills and 80% increase in telephone advice.

Somerset Community Foundation - £4995
Field House Trust and the John & Dorothy Ball Fund supported work delivery advice through home visits and outreach locations to older people

Housing Multi-Agency Assessment Panel (MAAP) – This initiative, funded by West Somerset Council, assists agencies to find sustainable solutions for clients with complex housing needs. The WSAB has run the service since 2008 on behalf of the West Somerset Housing Forum.

Local Assistance Scheme – A Somerset County Council Scheme which has been administered by all local Advice Bureaux in Somerset. The scheme is to provide help when people have found themselves in an unexpected & unplanned crisis situation where they have no means of getting basic essentials. No cash is available but for the year end 31/3/2014 goods to the value of £8796.95 were supplied to the people of West Somerset.

9. Without the expertise, cooperation and assistance of the following voluntary, statutory and community interest companies working tirelessly in the West Somerset area, the WSAB would be far less effective. Our combined talents are not only incredible and inspiring but also essential as cases become far more complex with a variety of issues. From all the staff and volunteers we thank the following organisations for all they have provided to us and of course the residents of West Somerset, and more!

- Engage
- CLOWNS
- Mind Taunton and West Somerset
- Children's Centre
- Somerset Care and Repair
- West Somerset Council
- Homestart
- Barnfield Unit
- Somerset Advice Network
- ACAS
- Turning Point
- Forum21
- Alzheimer's Society
- Christians Together in Minehead
- Food Cupboard
- Magna West Somerset Housing Association
- Wessex Resolutions
- Compass Carers
- Village Agents
- The Hope Centre
- Job Centre Plus
- Somerset Community Care Matters
- Taunton Association for the Homeless
- YMCA
- Somerset County Council

10. Outstanding commitment, resilience and unstoppable determination from volunteers and paid staff.

The West Somerset Advice Bureau would not achieve all that it does without the incredible strength from both staff and volunteers. The volunteers have coped superbly with the pressure of full waiting rooms, many answer phone messages, complex cases and distressing situations. In addition to this we have changed the layout of the building, worked through a building site and changed out computer and telephone system! I would like to thank all of you personally as each of you have coped superbly with change whilst maintaining our high quality service to clients.

Thank you to all paid staff! Your knowledge, experience and professionalism are incredible and it is an honour to learn from you!

Thank you to Catherine who has nurtured and encouraged a brilliant holistic approach for clients.

Thank you to Nic for developing systems and procedures with enthusiasm.

Thank you to Helen, for training staff in the WSAB, completing talks and training to other organisations whilst delivering an amazing amount of home visits!

Thank you to Sally and Sylvie for pioneering new projects for residents.

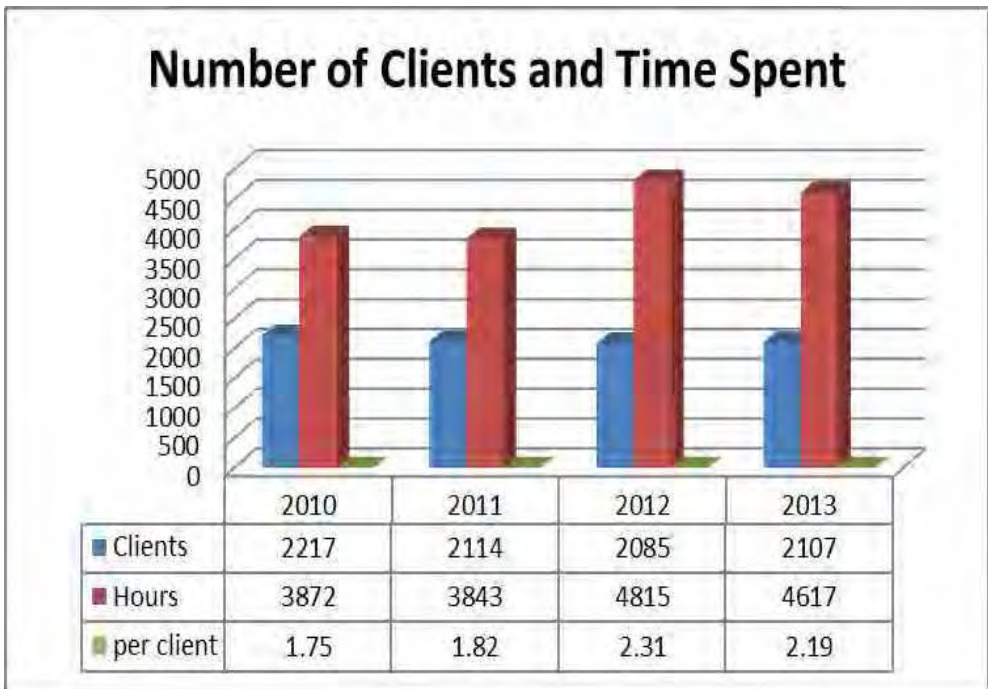
Thank you to Anne, Trevor, Glynis and Sarah for providing superb support and debt advice to clients!

Finally, my hugest thank you to Julie for being an outstanding support to all staff and volunteers!

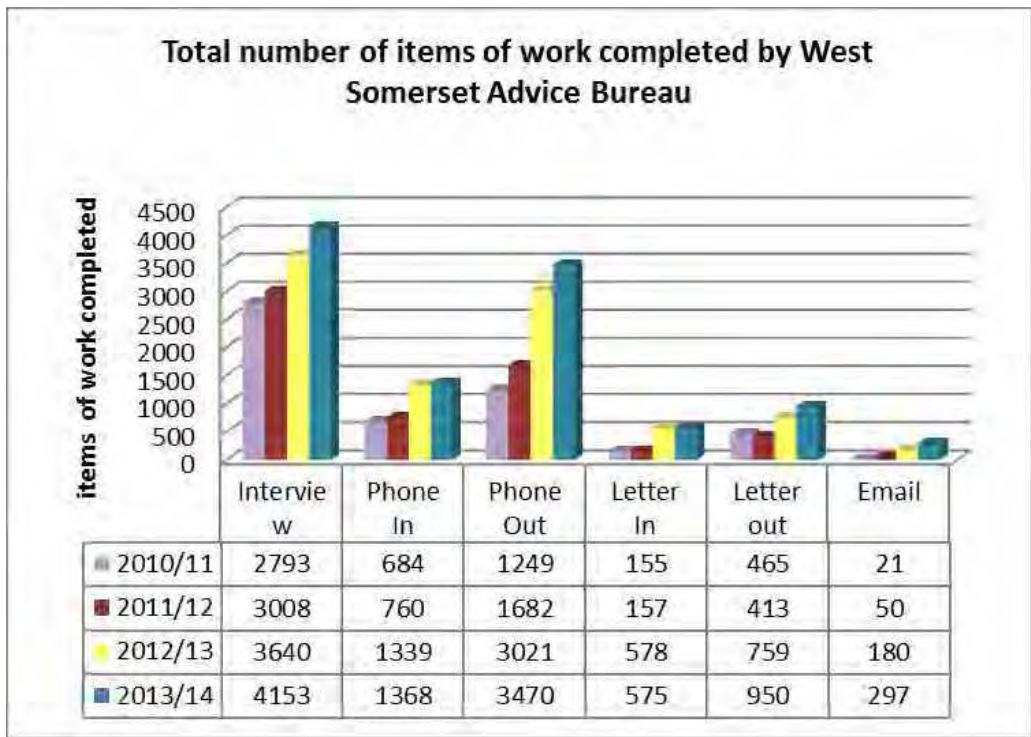
I really do feel privileged to work with a team of staff and volunteers who manage to smile, no matter how busy, how serious or how difficult the day gets, you all smile and support each other!

Georgie Reynolds, Bureau Manager, August 2014

11



The number of clients who have used the service in 13/14 is 2107, although this is not a significant increase on the previous year the number of hours that is needed by each person on average is 2.1. This is the second year in the WSAB history where the time needed from each client is over two hours. This trend we predict will continue as each case is more complex.

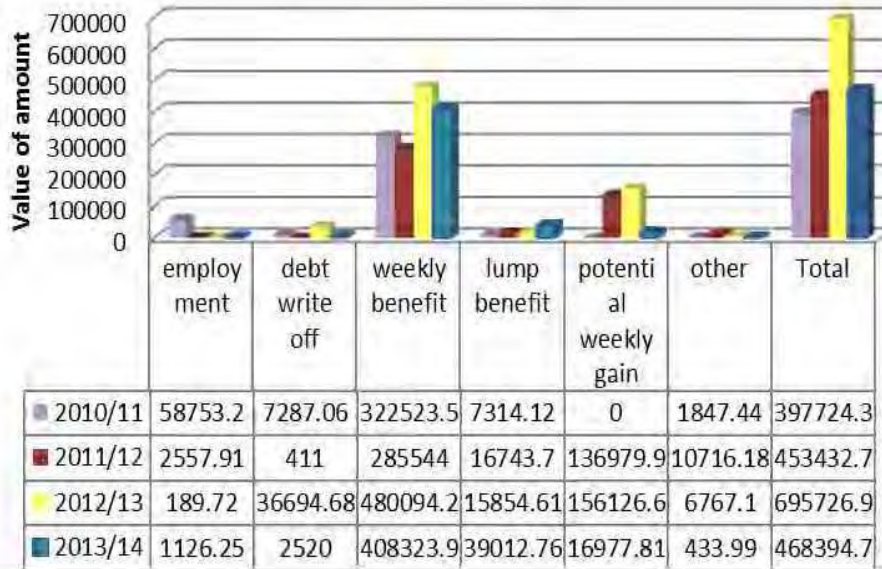


The total number of interviews completed with residents of West Somerset in the year 13/14 was 4153. Interviews are face to face advice sessions which are at either our main office in Minehead, our outreach locations or even on a home visit.

On average this is 80 interviews a week!

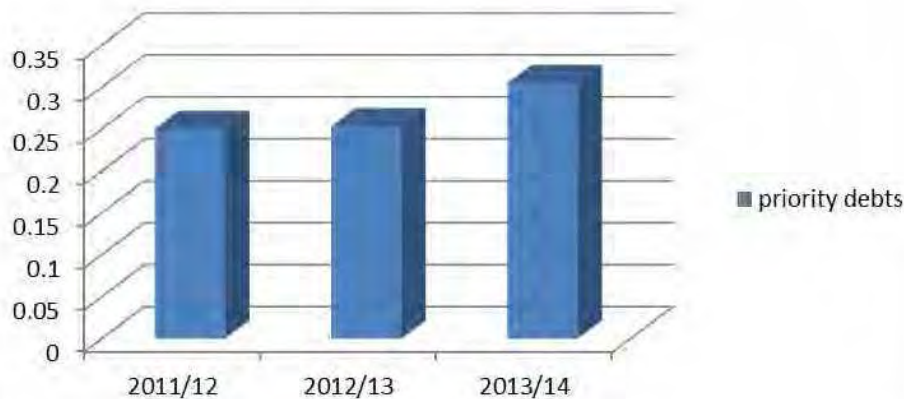
This is 10 more interviews a week than the previous year.

Amount of income gained for Clients by West Somerset Advice Bureau

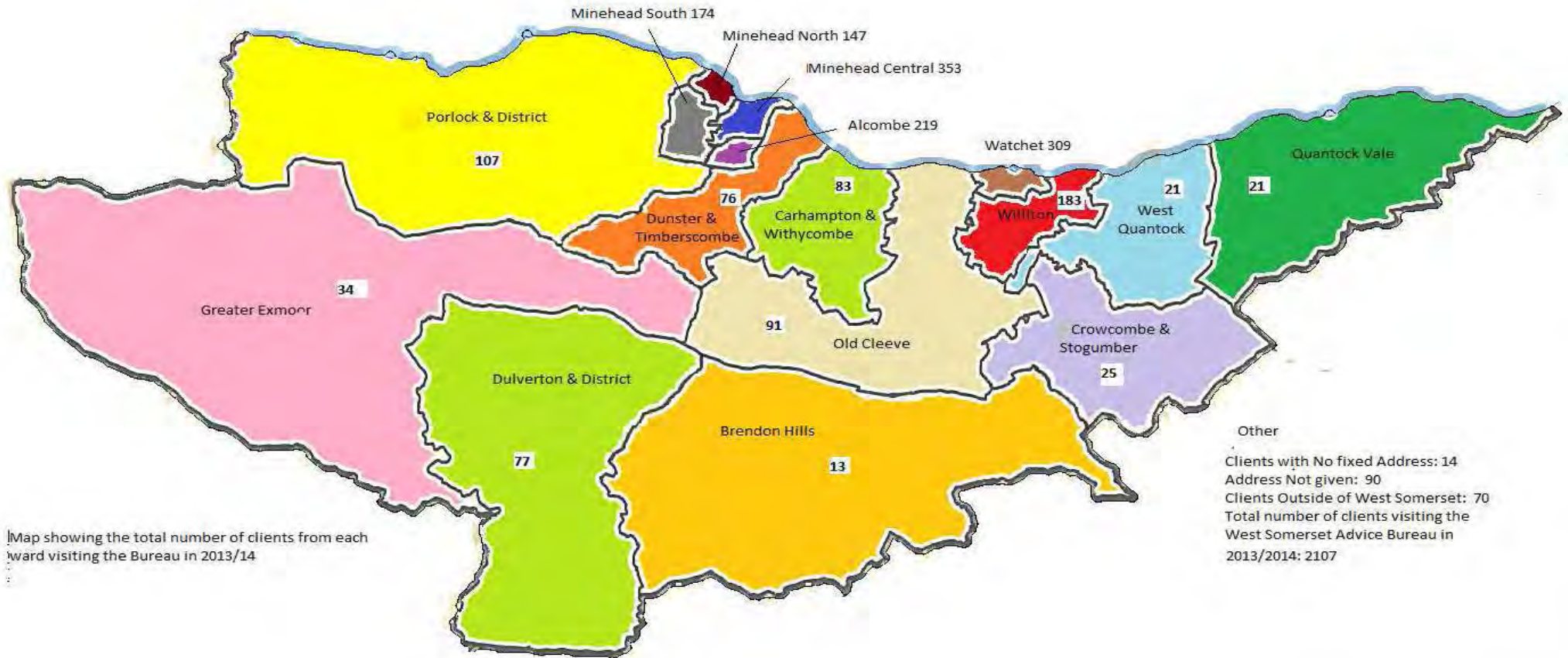


In the financial year ending March 2014, the **WSAB staff and volunteers raised £468,394 in income for residents of West Somerset.** This is not as high as the previous financial year. Through investigation we have noted that much of the work started on behalf of clients has not yet been confirmed by external agencies. For example Personal Independence Payment forms completed in August 2013 are only just being decided upon from June 2014 onwards.

Priority debts handled by WSAB on behalf of residents of West Somerset



The total amount of debt handled by the WSAB staff and volunteers in 2013/14 was £784,768.71. The total value of priority debts in 13/14 was £239,028 which includes rent arrears, court fines, income tax arrears, secured loans and £24,259.16 of council tax arrears. This represents the highest percentage of priority debts we have had over 3 years.



Map showing the total number of clients from each ward visiting the Bureau in 2013/14

Other
 Clients with No fixed Address: 14
 Address Not given: 90
 Clients Outside of West Somerset: 70
 Total number of clients visiting the West Somerset Advice Bureau in 2013/2014: 2107

14 *Specialist Report - Debt*

We continue to be very busy, not only with the sheer number of clients presenting with debt problems, but also with the complexity of the issues they raise. We were therefore very glad when Sarah joined the team in October 2013.

The trend from secondary debts (unsecured loans, credit cards etc) and towards the more serious priority debt (rent, mortgage arrears, council tax arrears and unpaid energy bills etc) continues, with most client owing money to at least one priority creditor, and many having multiple priority debts.

Many clients have suffered a reduction in income as a result of welfare benefit reforms, leading to a situation where they do not have sufficient money to live on, and this reduction is often not only the root cause of the debt problems, but also makes finding a sustainable solution very challenging and time consuming.

However, although it often now requires considerable analysis and creative thinking, we have still not yet come across a case where we can do nothing to help, and we hope this will continue!!

*Anne W
Debt Team July 2014*

First impressions of joining the Bureau as a Debt Advice Worker

I joined the Bureau on 1 October 2013 as a debt advisor. It is a very busy place with plenty of work which does not run out! I was surprised at how manual the procedures were after working in a very computerised organisation but this has been changed by AdvicePro which has made a huge difference to the amount of work I can do and the time that is saved by being able to see the notes on the computer rather than looking around the office for casesheets.

I find the debt work very interesting – every case is different and the experience of Anne, Trevor and Glynis is invaluable. The rest of the Bureau team always help with my enquiries and it is good that we work together to assist the clients. The frustrations occur when the client does not provide information which we need to proceed with the case but these are surpassed when a client has been helped, the case closed and the creditors are agreeable to our proposals.

I have enjoyed my first months of working at the Bureau, am learning a lot and really appreciate the supply of biscuits which make the stressful moments much easier!

Sarah

Debt Team July 2014

15. Specialist Report – Welfare Benefits

Again this year, Sylvie, Sally and I have been busy completing various benefit claim forms, with Attendance Allowance and Disability Living Allowance making up over 75% of the claims. From the results we know about, we have helped generate around half a million pounds (£500,000) a year in benefits for the residents of West Somerset.

Last year was exceptionally busy for appeals. I attended over 50, with 90% being successful! This is a similar story around the whole of Somerset, but following the introduction of Mandatory Reconsiderations last October, the number of appeals has dropped by around 70% in the first half of this year. It will be interesting to see if this trend continues, or if other factors such as the lengthy delays of medical assessments and decisions account for at least some of the change.

I am continuing my Outreach at the Barnfield Unit in Minehead Hospital every other Tuesday, spending nearly 70 hours with appointments, and a further 30 hours on the follow up work. This does not include referrals and further appointments with clients outside of Barnfield once contact has been established, and clients are happy to see me elsewhere – either in our office or at their own homes. I feel this is an invaluable service to clients, as well as providing good communications between the staff at Barnfield & the Bureau, the staff at Barnfield feel more comfortable making referrals to a person they have had some contact with previously.

I now have responsibility for the benefits team, so that we can pool information and spot trends, as well as share the workload. Sylvie is working towards establishing new Outreach locations, and Sally is working with the Childrens' Centres and CLOWNS bus to try to reach even more people – like we need the work!

Some of the trends we have already identified are the problems caused when one benefit is stopped causing a knock on effect of stopping other benefits. Another problem is caused by some benefits being backdated i.e. Housing Benefit, and getting refunds for clients from Housing Associations if they are paid directly. This is due mainly to the complication of the Housing Benefit being paid 3 weeks in arrears, and the rent being charged one month in advance. New claims for the new Personal Independent Payment (PIP) introduced last year to gradually replace Disability Living Allowance started slowly, and decisions came even slower, on average taking 9 months. Similar problems with ESA (Employment and Support Allowance) are being blamed on the delays in arranging the Medical Assessments carried out by ATOS. ATOS will be stopping their assessment of ESA claims in the near future, but continuing with their PIP medical assessments. So there's still plenty to do, but the occasional Thank You card is enough incentive for us all to keep going!

Helen

Welfare Benefit Team July 2014

16. West Somerset Advice Bureau – Training

Existing Staff and Volunteers

There has been a continuous programme of training for our volunteers and staff, with regular updates in Welfare Benefits and Debt Advice, which are the most common issues that the Bureau deals with during the year.

Advisers attended a Welfare Reform Conference in 2013 together with extra training days to expand our knowledge of Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment (PIP) to assist Clients with these recent changes. Other training sessions were Housing, Employment and Mental Health awareness.

Technology has played its part; we have had further training on our new telephones, and ongoing in-house Computer training as we update and streamline our systems.

New Volunteers

February saw the start of a 10 week induction course for a new cohort of Volunteer Advisers. The new volunteers shadowed the established advisers after week three to enable an early appreciation of the advice work they would be doing.

This programme covered the Aims of the Bureau, Confidentiality, Listening and Interviewing skills, Research and Use of our databases. Topics covered were Welfare Benefits, The Debt Process and a basic knowledge of law relating to:- Housing, Employment, Family & relationships, Consumer issues, Utilities, Tax, Immigration and Business Issues.

Congratulations to the five advisers who successfully completed the course and have now become valued members of our team!

The next course for new Advisers is commencing on 27th August 2014 and, of course, there is further ongoing training for all members of the team.

Catherine Hurd
Volunteer Training Co-ordinator / Supervisor

17.

New Building Frontage 2013



Picture of Building frontage before the building work had been done

The Frontage Project was started because the front of our building in Market House Lane was looking tired, worn and not very professional. In addition the single glaze windows were making the building cold. It really was not an environment that was welcoming to clients who needed our service or pleasant for staff and volunteers to work in. After much fundraising through bid writing we established enough money to start the process of getting architect plans and planning permission. In December 2012 draft versions of the work to the front of the building were drawn up by the chosen architect and approved by the Trustee Board. In January 2013 draft plans were sent to West Somerset District Council for pre-planning consideration. After consultation with the Trustee Board, Suppliers and the Planning Department final plans were submitted in March 2013, Plans approved in May, Building Regulations approved in August and the work started on the building in October 2013.

Thank you to each of these funders who have made this possible:

Norman Family Charitable Trust - £500,

Charles Hayward Foundation - £4000,

Clothworkers Foundation - £10,000,

Truemark Trust £4000

Thank you to Barbara Middleton who's creative vision and patience has enabled the West Somerset Advice Bureau to access a variety of much needed funds.



Picture of Building frontage after the building work had been done

18 *Treasurer's Report*

I am pleased to report on the financial activities of the West Somerset Advice Bureau for the year ended 31 March 2014

Included with the report is a detailed Income and Expenditures Account for the year and Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2014. The accounts have been subject to an independent review carried out by Messrs Amherst and Shapland Chartered Accountants. A copy of their report and the Statutory Accounts are available.

During the year we have received income from EDFE Energy, Somerset Community Foundation and The Advice Service Transition Fund. This is in addition to the Core funding we have received. This has provided support for the services, provided training and increased awareness of our services within West Somerset. We have also received specific funding for the improvement to our building frontage which is mentioned on page 17.

For the present year 2014-2015 we have obtained all the Core Funding from previous funders and further additional income from the Advice Service Transition fund, Somerset Community Foundation and the Henry Smith Charity. I anticipate a small but manageable deficit will arise. Our general Reserve Funds amounts to £30,581

Looking ahead I anticipate we still face a very difficult period financially with cuts in core funding remaining a strong possibility. Hopefully these problems will be overcome and we can maintain the valuable service provided to the residents of West Somerset.

Finally I would like to thank all the funders, staff, volunteers and everyone involved with the West Somerset Advice Bureau for contributing to its continual success.

David John Bates
Treasurer June 2014

19 *Accounts for 2013 - 2014***West Somerset Advice Bureau Ltd****Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2014**

<u>Fixed Assets</u>	£	£
Property at Market Value		90,000.00
Fixtures and Fittings		
Cost value	19,156.00	
Deprecation brought forward	(18,612.00)	
Deprecation for year	(134.00)	
		410.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
		90,410.00
 <u>Current Assets</u>		
Stock of Stationery etc	63.00	
Prepaid expenses	3,438.00	
Bank Accounts	53,659.00	
Cash	27.00	
	<hr/>	
	57,187.00	
	<hr/>	
 <u>Current Liabilities</u>		
Trade Creditors	1,657.00	
Sundry Creditors	1,015.00	
HM Revenue & Customs PAYE	2,063.00	
	<hr/>	
	4,735.00	
	<hr/>	
		52,452.00
		<hr/>
		142,862.00
		<hr/>

20. *Accounts for 2013 - 2014*

<u>Represented by:</u>	£	£
Revaluation Reserve		90,000.00
Funding Reserve		10,500.00
Restricted Fund – Building Frontage Project		
Balance brought forward	6,815.00	
Transfer to General Fund	<u>6,815.00</u>	0.00
Restricted Fund – EDF Project		
Balance brought forward	22,037.00	
Transfer to General Reserve	<u>22,037.00</u>	0.00
General Reserve		
Balance brought forward	24,113.00	
Building Frontage Fund	6,815.00	
EDF Project Fund	22,037.00	
	<u>52,965.00</u>	
Less deficit for year	10,603.00	
Transfer to Alliance Network Services Fund	<u>11,781.00</u>	
Balance carried forward		30,581.00
Restricted Fund – Advice Service Transition Fund		
Transfer from General Reserve		<u>11,781.00</u>
		<u>142,862.00</u>

West Somerset Advice Bureau Ltd**Income and Expenditure account for the year ended 31st March 2014****INCOME**

£

Grants etc

Somerset County Council (core)	31,638.00
West Somerset Council (core)	38,000.00
Primary Care Trust (core)	10,705.00
Wessex Water	2,500.00
West Somerset Council (Chairman's)	300.00
EDF	16,500.00
LARC (training)	3,865.00
Somerset Community Foundation (winter)	500.00
Somerset Community Foundation (outreach)	4,995.00
Somerset County Council (local assistance)	38,000.00
The Clothworkers Foundation (building)	10,000.00
West Somerset Council (multi-agency)	750.00
Advice Services Transition Fund	72,534.00
Advice Services Transition Fund (capital)	6,252.00

Other Income

Christians together in Minehead	125.00
Yorkshire Building Society	100.00
Gift Aid Tax Repayment	150.00
Donations	2,369.00
Collection Box	702.00
Bank Interest	133.00

TOTAL INCOME

240,118.00

22 *Accounts for 2013 - 2014*

<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	£	£
Stationery stock	93.00	
Wages & National Insurance	136,344.00	
Accountancy & Audit	2,489.00	
Annual Return	13.00	
Computer Sundries	312.00	
Cleaning	1,177.00	
EDF Project	1,014.00	
Somerset Community Foundation	728.00	
IT Support	4,320.00	
Information and Subscriptions	4,230.00	
Legal and Professional	2,933.00	
Miscellaneous and office	1,665.00	
Insurances	2,446.00	
Postage	931.00	
Premises Utilities	2,381.00	
Printing	1,299.00	
Project Officer	1,602.00	
Outreach Rents	430.00	
General Repairs & Renewals	3,498.00	
Room Hire	15.00	
Stationery	710.00	
Telephone	3,468.00	
Telephone system replacement	4,674.00	
Computer replacements	234.00	
Training	2,135.00	
Travel Costs	7,835.00	
Advice Alliance expenses	7,290.00	
<u>AdviNCice</u> Alliance Partners	32,709.00	
Depreciation of fixtures	134.00	
Building Frontage cost	23,620.00	
Stationery stock	(63.00)	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		<u>250,721.00</u>
 <u>SUMMARY</u>		
Receipts		240,118.00
Expenditure		<u>250,721.00</u>
Excess of Expenditure for year		10,603.00
 Add Restricted Funds brought forward		
EDF		16,500.00
Building Frontage		6,815.00
 Less Restricted Funds carried forward		
Advice Services Transition		<u>11,781.00</u>
 ADJUSTED SURPLUS		 <u>931.00</u>

23 *Funders of the West Somerset Advice Bureau*

A BIG thank you from all the staff and volunteers at the West Somerset Advice Bureau for all our funders! Without your support, all this work and our goals for the future would not be possible.

Big Lottery Transition Fund
 EDFE Energy
 Somerset Community Foundation
 Advice Service Transition Fund
 Local Action for Rural Communities
 Primary Care Trust
 Somerset County Council
 Minehead Town Council
 Wessex Water
 West Somerset District Council
 The Clothworkers' Foundation
 Quantock Rotary
 Churches Together in Minehead
 Christians Together
 Yorkshire Building Society
 Carhampton Parish Council
 Field House Trust and John & Dorothy Ball
 Foundation

And to all those individuals who have kindly donated!

WEST SOMERSET ADVICE BUREAU**MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS FOR THE HALF YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2014****ANALYSED BY PROJECT****ADVICE SERVICES TRANSITION**

	£	£
GRANT RECEIVED		
Lottery fund		51,842
EXPENDITURE:		
Wages & NI	15,938	
Stationery	444	
Travel Costs	699	
Training	7,493	
Miscellaneous	268	
Printing	52	
Room Hire	102	
Partners Payments	26,210	
Advertising	314	51,520
	_____	_____
Surplus		322

HENRY SMITH FUND

GRANT RECEIVED		10,000
EXPENDITURE:		
Wages & NI	5,369	
Travel Costs	397	
Training	120	5,886
	_____	_____
Surplus		4,114

£

£

LOCAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME

GRANT RECEIVED

Somerset County Council

17,885

EXPENDITURE

Wages & NI

11,506

Travel Costs

5

Miscellaneous

163

Equipment Purchased

1,440

13,114

Surplus

4,771CORE FUNDING

GRANTS RECEIVED:

Somerset County Council

15,819

West Somerset Council

19,000

Primary Care Trust

5,352

Wessex Water

1,250

Somerset Community Foundation

2,068

Collections and Donations

503

Employment Allowance

2,000

Bank Interest

49

46,041

EXPENDITURE:

Wages & NI

33,760

Accountancy & Audit

1,700

Annual Return

13

IT Supplies

1,222

Subscriptions & Information

3,999

Cleaning

221

Office & Miscellaneous

694

Postage

367

Insurances

1,365

Light and Heat

656

Water Charges

266

Printing

737

Project Officer

314

Room Hire

50

Repairs & Replacements – Building

3,688

Equipment

641

Stationery

600

Telephone

1,686

Travel Costs

3,049

Training

481

Advertising

347

Depreciation Fixtures

6855,924

Deficit

9.883

SUMMARY

Surplus on Advice Services Transition	(Restricted) 322
Surplus on Henry Moore Project	4,114
Surplus on Local Assistance Project	4,771
Deficit on Core Funding	<u>(9,883)</u>
DEFICIT FOR PERIOD	<u>676</u>

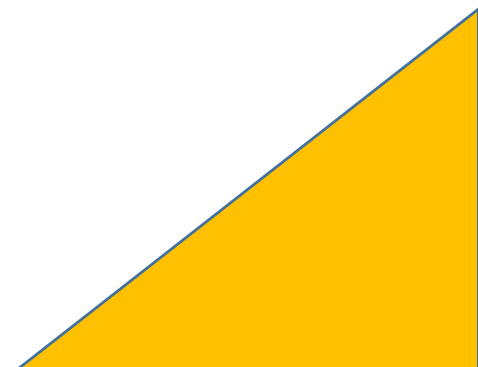
These accounts have been prepared on a strict accruals and prepayments basis in accordance with Charity Commission regulations.

WEST SOMERSET ADVICE BUREAU**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2014**

	£	£
-		
 <u>FIXED ASSETS</u>		
Property at Valuation		95,000
Fixtures and Fittings etc (written down value)		342
		<hr/> 95,342
 <u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>		
Stock of Stationery	63	
Bank Accounts	112,386	
Sundry Debtor	10,000	
Prepayments	<u>4,586</u>	
	<u>127,035</u>	
 <u>CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>		
Trade Creditors	782	
Sundry Creditors	14,052	
Grant Advances	70,082	
PAYE	<u>2,023</u>	
	<u>86,939</u>	
 NET CURRENT ASSETS		 <u>40,096</u>
 TOTAL ASSETS		 <u>135,438</u>
 REPRESENTED BY:-		
Revaluation Reserve		95,000
Designated Fund – Funding Reserve		10,500
General Reserve		<u>29,938</u>
		<hr/> <u>135,438</u>

Home Start

- Grant Award Pro-forma 2015/16
- Annual Report 2013/14
- Half year update – October 2014



Grant Award 2015/16– details of individual grant

(Please print your response)

Name of Organisation	Home-Start West Somerset		Amount awarded for 2014/15	£3000	
Number of paid staff (FTE)	3		Number of active volunteers	33	
Contact for Organisation	Name:	Clare Pound, Manager/Senior Organiser			
Tel No:	01643 707304		Email:	manager@homestart-westsomerset.org.uk	
Please describe:					
a) The service/s which are supported financially by this Council. What are the outcomes? How does the community benefit from the Council investment?			<p>Home-Start West Somerset manages and supervises volunteers who do weekly home visits of 2/3 hrs for families with a child under 7yrs who are experiencing difficulties. Our trained volunteers provide friendly, practical and emotional support in the home as well as linking families to other universal services. Home-start also offers a unique breast feeding support service which includes one to one or group support.</p> <p>Home-Start West Somerset is continually aiming to enhance our scheme and has recently been awarded 100% quality assurance endorsed by the Charity Commission through Home-Start UK.</p> <p>In the past year Home-Start has helped 89 families and 161 children.</p>		
b) 2013/14 numbers of people using the service/s			250		
c) Numbers of people using the service/s to date for 2014/15			159		
d) Whether these are statutory or non statutory service/s (if known)			non		
e) Is there a service level agreement in place for this service with WSC? Please tick			Yes		No, see below X
If no, to e) above, please outline what arrangements/targets are in place for the funding					
f) For every £1 received in financial assistance from WSC, how much does this enable your organisation to lever in match funding from other organisations?			WSC £1 : £ 28.46 other funding (for the year 2013-14)		

g) Please list other funding sources	Funder name	Amount	All Confirmed	Would it be withdrawn if WSC funding was not available? No
	Rotary	1150.00		
	Lottery	35236.00		
	CTiM	545.00		
	Fairfield Foundation	7500.00		
	Exmoor Moorhens	150.00		
	Children's Centres	8750.00		
Own Fundraising	4000.00			

h) Have any fund raising activities been organised to increase available funds to your organisation?	Yes, amount raised:	£4000.00		
i) Does your organisation have standing order forms so that people can contribute directly from their bank account to your organisation?	Yes			
j) Your organisation has the following policies in place: i. Equalities and diversity ii. Safeguarding iii. Child sexual exploitation	Yes √ √		No √	

What would be the impact if WSC grant funding was reduced or withdrawn?

Not to have the support from our local council financially endorsing our worth when it is evidential that we are an inexpensive but highly effective and locally recognised support charity that meets its criteria to a professional standard consistently would be detrimental to us and the families in West Somerset. We are extremely grateful for the support from our local council and we highlight this when we apply to other potential funders as your assurance in our scheme demonstrates to them your conviction in what we deliver.

Any reduction in our funding would have an effect on cutback of staffing, volunteer expense costs and training expenditure, this would then lead on to a direct impact on the number of families who could receive effective support in their home.

How have your activities supported the Council's objectives, if applicable? (Please see attached.)

Home-Start West Somerset helps the families in West Somerset in a way that enables them to thrive and live independently and to take responsibility for their own health and well being.

Please tick

Please tick

<p>Please attach a copy of your</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most recent accounts, including annual income, expenditure and reserves/savings • budget • business plan • expected financial position for the current and next financial reporting period 	<p>Yes</p> <p>Yes</p>			
---	-------------------------------------	--	--	--

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

- Local democracy and accountability remains within West Somerset by establishing a resilient operating model that is financially sustainable
- Maximise the funding opportunities from Central Government.

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.

- Communities in West Somerset can access and understand the process
- The economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximised
- The availability of housing supply within West Somerset is increased to mitigate the extra demands linked to Hinkley Point workers
- 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
- The effects on the environment by working with partners to positively respond to opportunities to enhance the environment in the affected communities using secured funding within Section 106 agreements are mitigated

Equality & Diversity

The three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- 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

Health & Wellbeing

The three priorities for the Health & Wellbeing Strategy:

- 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.

Scrutiny Meeting
Details as requested

Who else does Home-Start receive funding from?
Amounts?
Is this for core delivery or specific projects?

Attach key outcomes and outputs for 2014/15 to date
 Present financial position
 Annual report
All above attached

Does Home-Start organise any fundraising events?

Yes book sales, quiz, craft fairs, plant sale etc since April 2014 these events have raised £4,000.
 Currently organising a “snowflake appeal” incorporating a “blizzard in Park Street which drifts to St Michaels.

Does Home-Start have standing order forms so that people can directly contribute from their bank account?

Yes we have a Friends Scheme so people can pay £10 a year (or more if required) we currently have 93 friends.

What would be the consequences of a reduction in funding from the WSDC?

Not to have the support from our local council financially endorsing our worth when it is evidential that we are an inexpensive but highly effective and locally recognised support charity that meets its criteria to a professional standard consistently would be detrimental to us and the families in West Somerset. We are extremely grateful for the support from our local council and we highlight this when we apply to other potential funders as your assurance in our scheme demonstrates to them your conviction in what we deliver.
 Any reduction in our funding would have an effect on cutback of staffing, volunteer expense costs and training expenditure, this would then lead on to a direct impact on the number of families who could receive effective support in their home.

Does Home-Start meet any of our corporate priorities?

Home-Start West Somerset helps the families in West Somerset in a way that enables them to thrive and live independently and to take responsibility for their own health and well being.

YOU CAN COUNT ON ME... LIKE 1, 2, 3

Annual Review 2013-2014



COUNT ON HOME-START WEST SOMERSET

Home-Start West Somerset works at the heart of the family providing reliable friendship and support when it is most needed. It's a simple formula; as simple as 1, 2, 3. There are some key elements in the formula which, by coming together within the Home-Start model, have produced significant positive outcomes for children, families and communities in West Somerset in 2013-14, building on the successes of the past 11 years. Let's start with the most important element: the children.

I. CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

We know that parents and carers want to do their best for the children but that sometimes their circumstances prevent them from doing so. This year we have met parents who were feeling lonely or isolated, confused or frustrated, let down or recognising that they were letting others down, or just exhausted. Often they just needed someone to be there for them; someone that they could count on.

As usual our 2013-14 Home-Start families have come from all walks of life and the only thing that they have necessarily had in common with each other is that they live in West Somerset and they have at least one child under the age of 7.

On receipt of a referral and at the invitation of the family one of the Home-Start organisers visits them at home and helps them to identify their needs and the desired outcomes of the support arrangement. One of our trained volunteers is then introduced to the family and weekly support visits of 2 - 3 hours begin. Progress towards achieving outcomes is reviewed at regular intervals with the family and success is always celebrated. Barriers to success are explored with openness and honesty. The Home-Start approach is one that enables and empowers parents to overcome their difficulties and become independent; we don't 'do to' or even 'do for', but we do 'do with'. The outcomes of this approach have again included safer, healthier children, families enjoying and achieving, West Somerset residents making positive contributions to and enriching their communities, families having improved access to universal and specialist services, and improved life chances for vulnerable children.

(96% of families reported improvement in at least one area)

Need expressed by family at referral	Total Families	Need Achieved	Need Partially Achieved	Need Not Yet Achieved
1. Managing children's behaviour	14	7	6	1
2. Being involved in the children's development	6	4	1	1
3. Coping with physical health	15	9	5	1
4. Coping with mental health	30	17	11	2
5. Coping with feeling isolated	28	18	8	2
6. Parent's self-esteem	25	12	11	2
7. Coping with child's physical health	2	1	1	0
8. Coping with child's mental health	4	2	2	0
9. Managing the household budget	15	9	5	1
10. The day-to-day running of the home	9	3	5	1
11. Stress caused by conflict in the family	17	7	8	2
12. Coping with multiple children under 5	5	2	2	1
13. Use of services	18	11	6	1
14. Other	8	6	1	1



**OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS WE
HAVE SUPPORTED 89 LOCAL
FAMILIES WITH A TOTAL OF
161 CHILDREN**



2. HOME VISITING VOLUNTEERS ⁴⁵

We are so proud of our home visiting volunteers! They can be counted on by families to be consistently understanding, kind and non-judgemental. They provide confidential practical as well as emotional support in the home and support families in accessing other services relevant to their needs. We have worked with 46 home visiting volunteers during this year, each of them bringing something unique to the team and all of them achieving a special and effective relationship with at least one Home-Start family; a relationship in which parents and children have grown, developed and made better choices for their future.



Breastfeeding support service

During this year our local health visitors who regularly refer into the scheme, asked Home-Start West Somerset to consider providing some specialist breastfeeding support to complement their work with breastfeeding mothers. 13 of our volunteers came forward to take part in training provided by health visitor Ali Carter, mobile phones and additional funding were provided by the Minehead and West Somerset Golf Club, teaching resources were purchased thanks to a contribution from Watchet Roots and additional funds were provided by our local County Councillors from their Health and Well-Being budgets. With all this in place the breastfeeding support service was established and since it started, in October 2013, 26 families have been referred into this part of our service. The volunteers provide home visiting and phone support as well as providing advice at the ante-natal groups and breastfeeding cafes. They have also produced a 'Where's best for Breast?' guide to breastfeeding cafes in the area. You can count on them to challenge anyone who takes issue with a mum breastfeeding in a public place!

15 new volunteers joined the home visiting team this year when we ran preparation courses in the summer and autumn terms, four of them took part in our accreditation programme and successfully achieved the maximum three level 2 credits with the Open College Network. As well as the initial preparation course volunteers have taken part in a range of other learning and social opportunities including safeguarding training, supporting breastfeeding mothers, benefits advice, Red Cross First Aid course, volunteer support group sessions and a Christmas social event at CREAM. During each active support arrangement volunteers have face-to-face supervision meetings with one of the organisers every six weeks as a minimum. They all also take part in an annual appraisal programme.

**TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS – A BIG THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO,
AND ALL THAT YOU GIVE, WEEK IN, WEEK OUT,
TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.**

3. TRUSTEE BOARD



On behalf of all the trustees, thank you for your interest in and partnership with us. It is always with a deep sense of indebtedness to all those who have supported us and worked alongside us, that we get to this point each year. As Chairman of the scheme I recognise we count on:

1. Our team of trustees & advisors: all the trustees and advisors are willing and enthusiastic people who bring tremendous commitment, knowledge, experience and wisdom to the scheme. You are wonderful people.

2. The staff team: as well as supporting the trustees and volunteers our staff team makes a quantifiable difference to the lives of the families we support. Ali, Ros and Janet continued to fulfil their role with the professionalism that has become one of the hallmarks of the scheme and it has been a pleasure during this year to welcome Catherine onto the team to strengthen the team and extend our reach.

3. Our home visiting volunteers: it is always humbling to observe our home visiting volunteers continuing to perform their role with such self-less commitment and enthusiasm. As always we have had to say goodbye to some of our volunteers this year but we have also managed to recruit, train, and place others. We have piloted a breast feeding support group which some of our volunteers have been involved with. It goes without saying that we could not do what we do without them so we thank them very much indeed.



As a scheme we recognise that we count on you:

1. Our 'Friends' who support us financially and practically in so many ways;
2. Our partners who trust us and refer to us and work with us; and
3. Our funders, both large and small, who demonstrate the value they put on the work we do by digging deep.

As we count on you we believe that 1. The families we support; 2. The partners we work with; and 3. The community of West Somerset as a whole can justifiably count on us. Our team has been there to support families through thick and thin, a reliable friend in all seasons, and we believe you can count on us to continue.

Andrew McCausland, Chair of trustees

Each individual Home-Start scheme is an independent charity locally managed and responsible for raising all of its own funding. This is a big responsibility and one which our team of 11 trustees and 6 advisors take very seriously. They bring a wide range of skills and experience to their role and review their practice on an annual basis. They update their training regularly according to their individual responsibilities. They have continued to meet monthly throughout the year, alternately as a full board and then in smaller panels which have specific responsibilities.

- The Safeguarding and Quality Assurance panel address matters relating to staff and volunteers, health and safety, safeguarding children and quality assurance. They also carry out our annual policy review.
- The Community Networking and Fundraising panel raise the profile of the scheme in the community, as well as raising vital funds through a range of fundraising events throughout the year
- The Finance and Strategic Planning panel monitor the scheme's financial situation plans for sustainability and development of the scheme in the short and long term, and apply for funds from a wide range of grant making and contracting bodies.

The panel chairs and the manager/senior organiser report to and share stakeholder feedback at each full board meeting. These reports feed directly into the strategic planning process.

4. STAFF TEAM

The staff team consists of:

- Catherine Haydock, a new organiser who joined us in November 2013 and works a 16 hour week,
- Ros Owen who has been an organiser here for almost 8 years and who now works 10 hours each week,
- Janet Costello who has been here for 11 years and works 16 hours as an organiser and 16 hours as an administrator, and
- Ali Sanderson who has been here for 11 years and works 28 hours as manager/senior organiser.



Throughout the year each member of staff has continued to receive regular supervision, target reviews and appraisal and has taken up training opportunities relating to their role. We take our safeguarding roles and responsibilities very seriously and ensure that the scheme adheres strictly to the policies and procedures relating to them. As a result we have been able to effectively support the most complex families through very difficult times as they find a better way forward. Families, volunteers and referrers have counted on us to get one thing right every time – the all important ‘matching’ process between family and volunteer. When we get that right real relationships are established and progress is achieved.



Home-Start West Somerset fully engages in Home-Start UK's Quality Assurance programme. The consistent application of Home-Start's high standards throughout the network of Home-Start schemes across the UK has ensured that all involved with Home-Start can be assured of and benefit from the quality and standards enshrined in the ethos and approach.

This year we received our full our full 3 year external review report which showed that we had provided evidence against the maximum 182 performance indicators achieving a 100% result. This was a great boost to every member of the wider team. The achievement

was further acknowledged in December when another day of review earned us Charity Commission endorsement of our success. We were proud to be only the second scheme in the country to achieve this.

Ali is pictured receiving Home-Start West Somerset's Charity Commission Quality Assurance Endorsement Award from Home-Start UK's Chief Executive Rob Parkinson and Charity Commission Development Manager Tony Pino.



5. COUNTING THE PENNIES

48

Home-Start West Somerset started its new Rural Development Project in 2014 with significant funding from Big Lottery and Fairfield Foundation, together with Somerset County Council and West Somerset Council grants. The remainder came from our 'Friends of Home-Start West Somerset' Scheme, local clubs, societies and our loyal band of fundraisers as well as a small amount from our existing funds. Donations come from lots of different sources and special thanks this year go to those who took part in events and raised money through sponsored Sky Dives, Bike Rides, the Beacon to Beach Run and a trustee's 50th Birthday events. They had fun taking part but their pain was certainly Home-Start West Somerset's gain!

The Minehead and West Somerset Golf Club, Watchet Roots and others have given us targeted support for working with Breastfeeding mums; and until June 2013 we received a grant from Henry Smith Charity for help with our families in the Watchet and Williton areas.

The Big Lottery grant has enabled the project to grow. This has meant a larger budget for the year and enabled the scheme to engage another part time organiser.

I am grateful for Janet in her admin duties for keeping the day to day running of accounts and to Nick Shattock of Overstream Tax and Accounting who has given us advice and has prepared and examined the accounts (a copy is obtainable from the office).

Thank you to all who have supported in any way this year financially and to the many volunteers who give of their time freely.

Local Community Supporters 13/14

- Minehead Town Council, Rotary Club of Minehead and the Quantocks, Alcombe Friendship Group, Sing 4 Fun, Watchet Roots, Stuarts Home Furnishers, Minehead and West Somerset Golf Club, Magna, CTiM, Tangent and many generous individual donors.

Christine James, Treasurer



LOTTERY FUNDED



6. COUNTING ON EACH OTHER 49

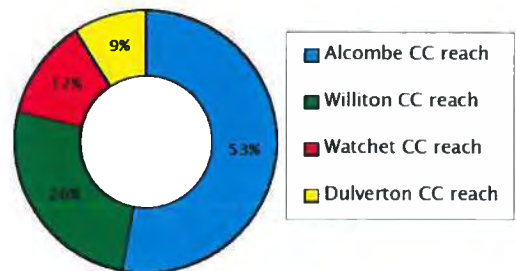
Home-Start West Somerset has built up a network of partnerships all of which add value to our work in the community. We are very grateful to the professionals from these organisations who offer their support and encouragement and who engage in genuine partnership work for the benefit of local families.

Home-Start UK

The re-structuring of the national body has brought about inevitable cuts to services available to local schemes such as ours. However, we have continued to receive valuable support, guidance, training and advice from Home-Start UK in return for the annual fee that we contribute to the organisation.

CLOWNS and the West Somerset cluster of Children's Centres

Throughout the year we have been pleased to continue to deliver outreach services for the West Somerset Cluster of Children's Centres along with our friends and partners at CLOWNS (the graph shows which children's centre the families live closest to). This continues to be a successful partnership which gives local families the opportunity to benefit from the range of specialisms available through the outreach teams. All agreed targets have been exceeded and we have been pleased to celebrate many positive outcomes for families as a direct result of the work, including families being enabled to access services that were previously inaccessible to them.



Health professionals and Children's Social Care

We continue to work closely with health visitors, midwives and social workers to provide a quick response to need and joined up approach to continued support. We are grateful to them for close liaison and appropriately shared information.

Local churches

We have enjoyed another year of generous support from many local churches who tell us that they value the presence of Home-Start in the communities of West Somerset. A special mention must go to the Food Cupboard which has continued to enable us to help many families through a difficult time.

Community groups

We have received warm welcomes from the following groups who have invited us to address their meetings and raise the profile of the work in the community: Porlock Ladies, Minehead Towns Women's Guild, West Somerset Council, Minehead and West Somerset Golf Club, Alcombe Active Living, Rotary Club of Minehead and the Quantocks, Minehead's United Reformed and Baptist Churches.

Referrers

We have continued to develop strong working relationships with many other local agencies who tell us that they are grateful for the opportunity to refer families to us for weekly support. They recognise the value of our confidential and discreet service as well as our willingness to share information appropriately in circumstances where children need to be protected from harm.

- 45 families referred themselves to the scheme this year
- 35 were referred by their Health Visitor
- 4 from Children's Social Care
- 2 from children's centres
- 2 from PFSA's
- 1 from Community Nursery Nurse



COUNT ON ME...LIKE 1, 2, 3

Home-Start West Somerset offers a unique service, recruiting and training volunteers – who are usually parents themselves – to visit families at home who have at least one child under 7 to offer informal, friendly and confidential support.

To help give children the best possible start in life, Home-Start supports parents as they grow in confidence, strengthen their relationships with their children and widen their links with the local community.

We believe that children need a happy and secure childhood and that parents play the key role in giving their children a good start in life and helping them achieve their full potential. We want to see West Somerset become a community in which every parent has the support they need to give their children the best possible start in life.

Home-Start has a proven, lasting, positive impact on the development of children and on the health and welfare of the family. This special ethos and approach is valued by schemes, families, volunteers and partners alike in West Somerset.

Our office base is in The Old Coach House, Martlet Road (in the car park of Wyndham House) and we were pleased this year to secure a further 3 year tenancy for these premises. At the same time as securing our physical presence in Minehead we worked on raising our online profile. Our website was expertly redesigned by James Cooper and can now be found at

www.homestart-westsomerset.org.uk

and our facebook page is

<https://www.facebook.com/homestartwestsomerset>

‘Coming to Home-Start was the first move in me taking control back, admitting I couldn’t do it all alone gave me the state of mind I needed to make changes that needed to be made. She is amazing, sweet, patient, kind and a listening ear – never patronising or judgemental and very good at “quirkie”! I will miss her’

‘It changed me for the better’



Registered Address and Contact Details

Home-Start West Somerset
 The Old Coach House
 Martlet Road
 Minehead
 Somerset
 TA24 5QD
 Tel: 01643 707304
 Home-Start West Somerset
 a company limited by guarantee
 Registered in Cardiff
 Registered Charity No 1113944
 Company No 5646970



Home-Start West Somerset October 2014.

We continue to provide the rural communities of West Somerset with our unique service, recruiting and training volunteers – who have parenting experience themselves- to visit families at home who are experiencing difficulties and who have at least one child less than 7yrs, to offer informal, friendly and confidential support. We continue to help parents to give their children the best possible start in life by supporting them as they grow in confidence, strengthen their relationships with their children and build positive links with the local community.

In the last year Home-Start West Somerset has supported 89 families and the vast majority have been able to identify positive outcomes that they have achieved with the support of their volunteer. These outcomes have included improved behaviour, parents being actively involved in their children’s development and learning, improved school readiness and attendance, improved physical and mental health of children and parents, better management of family finances, improved home environment and improved communication. These families now have happier, healthier lifestyles and are able to contribute positively to their community.

Our core activity remains the home visiting service and to deliver this service we are consistently recruiting and training our volunteers, we are starting a volunteer Prep course this Wednesday 8th Oct and we have 6 people attending and we will be hoping to run another volunteer Prep course early in 2015. The volunteer course is accredited at level 2 by the Open College Network and has provided a helpful stepping stone into further employment and or training, we also offer our volunteers a further qualifications with the Pre-School leaning Alliance.

Home-Start West Somerset has been recently subjected to a full external 3 year quality assurance review and we achieved a 100% evaluation where our scheme was described as “second to none” providing a safe practice, positive outcomes and excellent value for money, out of 360 schemes across the UK only 3 schemes have achieved this accolade. We feel we are making a huge contribution to the families of West Somerset and give an excellent and extremely professional provision at very little cost.



Home-Start West Somerset has recently experienced a lot of change with the employment of a new Organiser, a new manager, a new treasurer and very recently a new Administrator; these are exciting times with many new ideas being discussed. We are looking at ways to raise Home-Start's profile in the more rural areas and hope that the Council is able to assist us with this by telling everyone they meet about us. We look forward to the continuing of the established and supportive relationship Home-Start West Somerset has with the West Somerset Council.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank West Somerset Council not only for their financial support for which we are extremely grateful but also the recognition they give Home-Start West Somerset as being a high quality and effective service for the families in West Somerset.

Families supported by Home-Start West Somerset Supported 1st July - 30th September 2014

Home-Start uses a set of criteria to help referred families, together with one of our trained organiser's, assess their needs. Families are asked to score themselves on a scale of 0-5 within the following areas and their journey is then monitored throughout the support period. This enables us to see very clearly the difference the volunteers support has made to them.

Parenting Skills

- Managing the children's behaviour
- Being involved in the children's development/Learning

Parent's Well Being

- Coping with Physical health
- Coping with mental health
- Coping with feeling isolated
- Parent's self esteem

Children's Well being

- Coping with child's physical health
- Coping with child's mental health

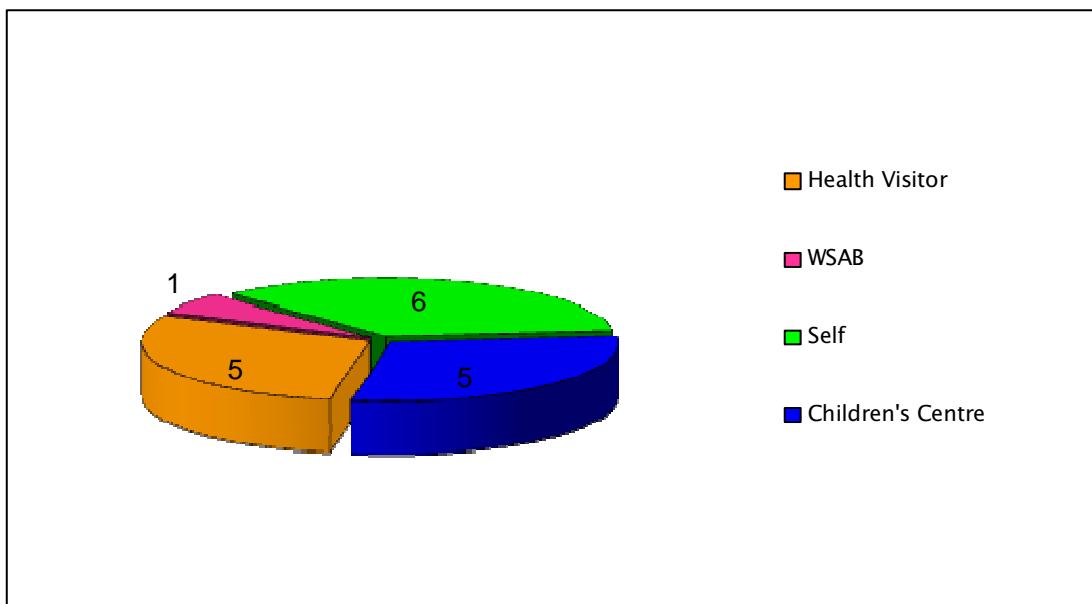
Family Management

- Managing the household budget
- The day to day running of the home
- Stress caused by conflict within the family
- Coping with the extra work caused by multiple birth/children under 5
- Use of services
- Other (for the West Somerset scheme this includes help with establishing and maintaining breastfeeding, drug and alcohol abuse, domestic abuse, self harm and eating disorders)

The figures in these tables relate to families who have been referred to Home-Start West Somerset and who have one or more of those needs:-

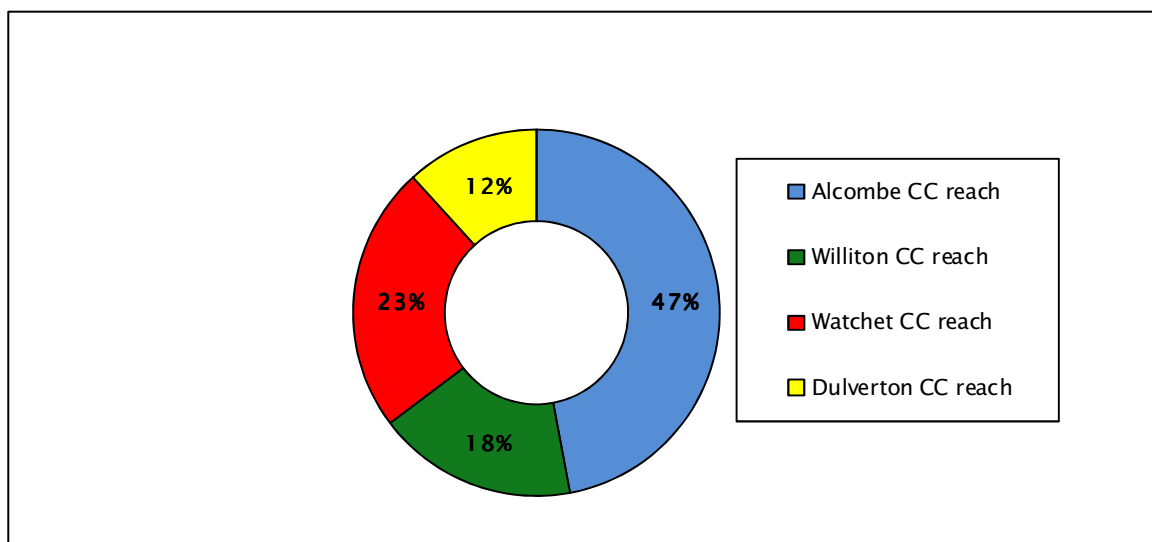
Total number of families referred during the period 1 July - 30 th September	17
TOTAL FAMILIES SUPPORTED SINCE 1ST APRIL 2014	58
Number of referrals under the Children's Centre contract during quarter	4
Number of referrals under the Breastfeeding Support Service during quarter	2
TOTAL CHILDREN SUPPORTED SINCE 1ST APRIL 2014	101

New referrals this quarter received from:



Referral received from	Number
Health Visitor	5
Self	6
WSAB	1
Children's Centre	5

Children's Centre reach for families referred:



Nearest Children's Centre to referred family	Number
Alcombe	8
Watchet	4
Dulverton	2
Williton	3

Families under the Children's Centre contract:

Number of families	CC Reach	Super output Area
1	Alcombe	E01029322
1	Watchet	E01029326
1	Watchet	E01029335
1	Williton	E01029343

Home-Start staff and volunteers receive regular supervision sessions and in addition the breastfeeding volunteers receive group supervision from a local health visitor.

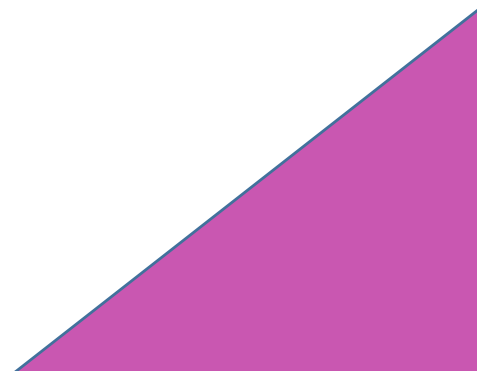
The information below demonstrates the important role that Home-Start West Somerset plays in supporting families. The following table refers to families for whom support has ended during this period and a final visit has taken place. Support often takes place over a period of months or even years, and positive outcomes may take a long time to become apparent.

Need expressed by family at referral	Total Families	Need Achieved	Need Partially Achieved	Need Not Achieved
1. Managing children's behaviour	1	1	0	0
2. Being involved in children's development	1	1	0	0
3. Coping with physical health	1	1	0	0
4. Coping with mental health	3	2	1	0
5. Coping with feeling isolated	4	2	2	0
6. Parent's self-esteem	4	2	2	0
7. Coping with child's physical health	1	1	0	0
8. Coping with child's mental health	2	2	0	0
9. Managing the household budget	1	1	0	0
10. The day-to-day running of the home	2	1	1	0
11. Stress caused by conflict in the family	3	2	1	0
12. Coping with multiple children under 5	0	0	0	0
13. Use of services	2	0	1	1
14. Other	0	0	0	0



CLOWNS

- Grant Award Pro-forma 2015/16
- CLOWNS Report
- Projected Budget 2015/16



Grant Award 2015/16– details of individual grant

(Please print your response)

Name of Organisation	CLOWNS		Amount awarded for 2014/15	£ 8,602
Number of paid staff (FTE)	9 Term Time Plus 9 summer	Number of active volunteers	6 Summer 2 term time 11 management committee	
Contact for Organisation	Name:	Kathy Morton		
Tel No:	01643 707190	Email:	clownsproject@tiscali.co.uk	
Please describe:				
a) The service/s which are supported financially by this Council. What are the outcomes? How does the community benefit from the Council investment?		<p>The £8,602 grant given by the Council for 2014/15 went towards the cost of inclusive Holiday Playschemes for school age children up to 13 years of age.</p> <p>OUTCOMES:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To provide 12 days of inclusive playschemes. Delivered in villages and woodland areas so that as many children as possible have the opportunity to attend. Provide a wide variety of quality activities. Children are given the opportunity to take controlled risks. <p>A grant (if awarded) in 2015/16 would be used towards the cost of delivering:- Physical Family Fun activities for pre-school children and their families.</p> <p>OUTCOMES:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Families will benefit by having increased regular opportunities to participate in fun, educational, physical activities and healthy living learning. Families will benefit from learning the importance of maintaining levels of fitness and will be more confident, willing and motivated to organise and participate in further family activities and regular exercise. Families will increase other skill areas such as literacy, numeracy and communication skills through participation in educational physical activities and be aware of further learning opportunities. Parent/carers will learn how to support their children in their learning and be supported, encouraged and motivated to do this. 		

b) 2013/14 numbers of people using the service/s		Holiday Playschemes:- 231 different children attended a total of 522 different sessions. Playbus: 273 sessions, 96 families regularly attended. Physical Family Fun: 169 sessions, 331 different adults and 418 different children. Outreach : 357 sessions, 30 adults and 40 children. Toy Library: 15 groups and 60 members Scrapstore: 50 members			
c) Numbers of people using the service/s to date for 2014/15		To Date:- Holiday Playschemes:- 214 different children attended a total of 488 different sessions. Playbus: 163 sessions to date, 98 registered families. Physical Family Fun: (Reduced from three days per week to one day per week) 40 sessions, 60 different adults and 75 different children. Outreach: (Reduced from four days to two days per week) 142 sessions 10 families. Toy Library: 10 groups and 40 members Scrapstore: 40 members			
d) Whether these are statutory or non statutory service/s (if known)		No			
e) Is there a service level agreement in place for this service with WSC? Please tick		Yes	✓	No, see below	No
If no, to e) above, please outline what arrangements/targets are in place for the funding		Annual Report, Accounts, Project Report and Income and Expenditure Account for that project.			
f) For every £1 received in financial assistance from WSC, how much does this enable your organisation to lever in match funding from other organisations?		WSC £1 : £ 12.37 of other funding Total Income: £115,025 Grant Awarded <u>8,602</u> Total 106,423			
g) Please list other funding sources		Funder name	Amount	Confirmed/ Anticipated	Would it be withdrawn if WSC funding was not available? Yes/ No
		Lottery – Reaching Communities	£39,328	Confirmed	No
		SCC	£15,000	Confirmed	No
		Local Trust	£5,000	Confirmed	No

h) Have any fund raising activities been organised to increase available funds to your organisation?	Yes, amount raised:	£20,000 From local donations		
i) Does your organisation have standing order forms so that people can contribute directly from their bank account to your organisation?			No	
j) Your organisation has the following policies in place: i. Equalities and diversity ii. Safeguarding iii. Child sexual exploitation	Yes Yes Yes		No	

What would be the impact if WSC grant funding was reduced or withdrawn?				
Detrimental effect of not having local authority backing:- 1. CLOWNS would be unable to provide Physical Family Fun sessions to families across rural West Somerset. 2. Definite lack of leverage for funds from external sources. Local Council Grant shows that services are clearly valued. 3. Cuts in provision of services to vulnerable families 4. Early intervention opportunities lost, cycle of disadvantage will continue. 5. For many families our service is the only one on offer to isolated communities.				
How have your activities supported the Council's objectives, if applicable? (Please see attached.)				
CORPORATE PRIORITIES:- 1. CLOWNS provides 9 employment opportunities for local people = 4 full time equivalents, with an additional 10 temporary jobs for summer playschemes. 2. We provide staff with the opportunity to access skills and training to create a skilled workforce in the district. 3. CLOWNS will be in a unique position to help mitigate the negative effect of Hinkley Point development on the lives of local families, and also on the lives of families moving into the district for the development of Hinkley Point. HEALTH AND WELL BEING:- Physical Family Fun :- 1. Families will benefit from learning the importance of maintaining levels of fitness and will be more confident, willing and motivated to organise and participate in further family activities and regular exercise. This will encourage families and communities to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing				
		<i>Please tick</i>	<i>Please tick</i>	
Please attach a copy of your <ul style="list-style-type: none"> most recent accounts, including annual income, expenditure and reserves/savings budget business plan expected financial position for the current and next financial reporting period 	Yes Yes Yes Yes		No No No No	

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

- Local democracy and accountability remains within West Somerset by establishing a resilient operating model that is financially sustainable
- Maximise the funding opportunities from Central Government.

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.

- Communities in West Somerset can access and understand the process
- The economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximised
- The availability of housing supply within West Somerset is increased to mitigate the extra demands linked to Hinkley Point workers
- 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
- The effects on the environment by working with partners to positively respond to opportunities to enhance the environment in the affected communities using secured funding within Section 106 agreements are mitigated

Equality & Diversity

The three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- 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

Health & Wellbeing

The three priorities for the Health & Wellbeing Strategy:

- 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.

CLOWNS 2015-2016

Mission, Values, Aims and Objectives

MISSION STATEMENT

To improve the quality of life for families in West Somerset by providing quality, accessible mobile support to those living in isolated circumstances, and by delivering opportunities to 0-13 year olds, encouraging families to learn, thrive, have fun and be happy.

VALUES

- Working to benefit families in West Somerset, assessing with them and our partners the needs of families and the best ways of meeting these needs locally.
- Operating in an inclusive, non-judgmental and trusting way, to ensure that all people have an equal right and an equal opportunity to participate in activities, plans and decisions, without discrimination, and valuing each as an individual. We seek to try to break down all barriers that may prevent families from accessing our services.
- Addressing the needs and wishes of our stakeholders in a responsive way.
- Working in partnership with our families and all other appropriate organisations and agencies.
- Providing opportunities of the highest quality and to the highest standards possible.
- Providing innovative and creative activities to meet the needs of our families.
- Building relations of trust with our stakeholders so that they can rely totally on our professional support.
- Caring for all our stakeholders.
- Favouring the most vulnerable families in our community.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1 To provide affordable, quality, outreach recreational and educational opportunities for families in rural, isolated areas of West Somerset by taking out sessions nearer to where people live, breaking down the barriers of lack of provision and lack of transport, by

- Organizing a possible 294 weekly sessions per year of Play Bus provision across 7 villages, with 90 families.
- organising Physical Family Fun provision as and when funding can be secured.
- organising two days of Outreach work (one to one family support) working with families for a maximum of 12 weeks.
- organising mobile and static Toy Library sessions.
- organising resource boxes and scrap store provision.
- organising play schemes during the school holidays, number of schemes depends on level of funding available.

2 To provide opportunities for Early Years Education for children from 0 to school age

- offering learning through play opportunities in all our Playbus, Physical Family Fun, Outreach Van and Toy Library sessions, meeting the Foundation Stage Learning Outcomes

3 To provide educational and recreational opportunities for children from 4 to 13 years by

- organising exciting, stimulating holiday play schemes in different venues across West Somerset, number of days depends on level of funding available, including play in the natural environment and opportunities for risky play

4 To work in partnership with other organisations and agencies by

- working together to develop a referral system so that families can be supported by the most appropriate organisation

5 To promote the inclusion of all disadvantaged families by

- taking outreach provision to individual families (Outreach Van and Toy Library) to groups of families (Play Bus, Physical Family Fun, Toy Library) and to children (Playschemes)
- recruiting volunteers to support individual children with special and additional needs to be able to access our provision

6 To be a good employer and manage human resources efficiently, be a valued employer and provide a good working environment by

- ensuring all staff have satisfactory terms and conditions
- providing a good induction programme
- holding regular supervision sessions and meetings with staff to discuss workloads, progression and future aspirations
- offering training and professional development opportunities to all staff

- encouraging staff to develop their work related skills and interests by attending conferences and training courses
- balancing job quality and financial incentives
- encouraging staff and trustees in planning reviews and decision making
- adopting and implementing effective Equal Opportunities and Health and Safety policies
- being understanding of family circumstances
- having staff representatives at Management Committee meetings

7 To identify and respond to the needs of families by

- carrying out needs assessments in the Community
- providing an information service about other services

CLOWNS OUTCOMES FOR PHYSICAL FAMILY FUN

Providing Physical Family Fun sessions enables parents to take part in physical activities WITH their children and to see how important healthy lifestyles and healthy eating are to them.

1. Families will benefit by having increased regular opportunities to participate in fun, educational, physical activities and healthy living learning.
2. Families will benefit from learning the importance of maintaining levels of fitness and will be more confident, willing and motivated to organise and participate in further family activities and regular exercise.
3. Families will increase other skill areas such as literacy, numeracy and communication skills through participation in educational physical activities and be aware of further learning opportunities.
4. Parent/carers will learn how to support their children in their learning and be supported, encouraged and motivated to do this.

CLOWNS OUTCOMES FOR PLAYBUS

We deliver 7 sessions of parent/carer/ toddler sessions each week, for a 2 hour period. Families can be encouraged and supported to join with other families so that children can come together to play and learn in a group, and parents/carers can come together to share experiences and enjoy other company. We offer families with young children under school age the opportunity to participate in themed crafts following the Early Years Foundation Stage outcomes and Every Child Matters framework through storytime, singing time, table top activities, such as show and tell, treasure boxes, adventure trays and free play time – the children will be able to choose. We are able to put stimulating play at the heart of our children's lives, providing opportunities for them to explore their creativity and encourage them to express their individuality through drama, arts, music making, storytelling and free play. A large majority of our users will only come together once a week and this is an important time to make lasting friendships and for the children to socialise with those they will be starting school with.

1. Families report on an improvement in their parenting skills by participating in regular fun, educational and supportive opportunities to develop their skills and understanding and to meet the challenges of being a parent.
2. Families will report they feel less isolated and have improved relationships with others in their community and are better placed to feel that they can play a part in their community or in the project.
3. Children will benefit from increased opportunities to participate in stimulating play and early years educational activities, have opportunities to socialise, to play and learn together, share together, grow in confidence and be more ready for school.
4. Families report that they are more aware of options available to support them in their family life, have used specialist support to improve their mental or physical health, or their financial health (eg debt advice) or their communication needs and report reduced stress as a result of this support.

CLOWNS OUTCOMES FOR OUTREACH

OUTREACH – Deliver 2 days of one to one family support, providing one hour per week for twelve weeks. Families must have at least one child under 5. We support families identified as “hard to reach”, where there is limited or no family support or early educational opportunities for children, and where there are many barriers – no transport, cost, accessibility. Referrals are made to us and we work with different ethnic and cultural groups, families in challenging circumstances, in temporary accommodation, single parents including very young mothers and single fathers, parents struggling with their new role as parents, children with disabilities, families where no extended family members can help with childcare and support.

We have funding from Somerset County Council until the end of August 2016

1. To improve the quality of life for vulnerable families in rural communities across isolated areas of Exmoor and West Somerset.
2. To provide affordable, quality, mobile outreach recreational, development and supportive opportunities
3. To provide opportunities for Early Years development for children
4. To identify and respond to the needs of families, improve relationships between parents and children. TO help parents develop stronger social networks and a sense of belonging.
5. To promote the inclusion of all disadvantaged families
6. To help them grow in confidence and self-esteem and encourage them to access universal services and where appropriate specialist services.

WE ALSO WORK TOWARDS THE GETSET CHILDREN'S CENTRE OUTCOMES:-

1. Improve school readiness and strengthen family relationships
2. Ensure children's safety and wellbeing and promote healthy lifestyles
3. education and employability. Ensure support for children in greatest need.
4. Strengthen links with partners.

CLOWNS OUTCOMES FOR TOY LIBRARY AND SCRAPSTORE

Clowns has been delivering and developing this part of the project for 17 years and was the first Toy Library in Somerset to gain the Quality Assurance Mark (in March 2010) by the National Association of Toy and Leisure Libraries.

1. Take toys, activities, etc to families across West Somerset, and have a positive influence on the lives of families in need, which will help make a difference to family situations, to the way families feel they belong in their communities and to the early development of their young children.
2. Parents will see the benefits of positive interaction with their children by participating with them in fun educational activities.
3. Our informal offer of support will help families cope better with their own problems, realise that they are not alone in their concerns, help them feel that they belong to their individual communities and that they can play a part.
4. Introduce them to specialist support from other agencies to help with their individual needs.

CLOWNS OUTCOMES FOR SUMMER PLAYSCHMES

1. To provide 12 days of inclusive playschemes for school age children up to 13 years of age.
2. Delivered in villages and woodland areas so that as many children as possible have the opportunity to attend.
3. Provide a wide variety of quality activities.
4. Children are given the opportunity to take controlled risks.

FUNDING – APRIL 2015 – END MARCH 2016

Playbus – Reaching Communities (Lottery) £38,560 plus £5,000 from A Trust Fund.

Outreach – Somerset County Council £15,000

The above two parts of CLOWNS are secure for the next financial year, however:-

Physical Family Fun,	£13,000
Toy Library/Scrapstore,	£17,000
Playschemes	£16,000

have no secure funding to date. We rely on The WSC grant, plus money from Trusts and local donations to fund them. If WSC reduced or stopped our grant it would

have drastic consequences on the level of services provided to families across West Somerset.

West Somerset would lose the following in a year:-

12 days of Summer Playschemes.

80 days of Static Toy Library/Scrapstore and 20 days of mobile

80 days of Physical Family Fun

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Two members of staff and a local childminder did a skydive for CLOWNS.

Two bands performed in The Regal Theatre in September in aid of CLOWNS and The West Somerset Nursery.

The Old Ship Aground donated a percentage of its takings from their Sunday Carvery during February, March and April of this year.

Carhampton Cricket Club held a special day in August.

CLOWNS are constantly fundraising, we have a page on Localgiving and Give It A Go.

WSC CORPORATE PRIORITIES

CLOWNS provides 9 employment opportunities for local people = 4 Full Time equivalents, with an additional 10 temporary jobs for Summer Playschemes.

We provide staff with the opportunity to access skills and training to create a skilled workforce in the district

CLOWNS will be in a unique position to help mitigate the negative effect of Hinkley Point development on the lives of local families and also on the lives of families moving into the district for the development of Hinkley Point.



CLOWNS

Creating Learning Opportunities in Western Somerset for children and adults



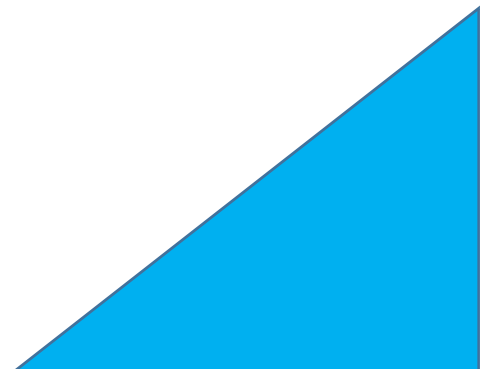
PROJECTED INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2015 - 2016 **Estimated as at 27th October 2014**

Projected Income	£	Projected Expenditure	£
Donations	8,000	Salaries + NI	56,954
Project Takings	5,000	General Expenses	10,200
Lottery Playbus	39,328	Staff Training/Travel	1,200
Wilfred & Constance Cave	5,000	Rent (Office)	2,000
SCC Outreach	15,000	Vehicle Expenses	18,050
		Vehicle Parking	7,200
TOTAL	72,328		
Shortfall	23,276		
	£95,604		£95,604

WAITING FOR CONFIRMATION:-
West Somerset Council £8,600 PFF

ARTlife (West Somerset Arts Consortium)

- Grant Award Pro-forma 2015/16
- ARTlife Report October 2014
- Budget 2014-15



Grant Award 2015/16– details of individual grant

(Please print your response)

Name of Organisation	ARTlife (West Somerset Arts Consortium)	Amount awarded for 2014/15	£12,645
Number of paid staff (FTE)	0.5	Number of active volunteers	9
Contact for Organisation	Name:	Tracey Roberts	
Tel No:	01984 635300 / 07949 485996	Email:	artlife-somerset@hotmail.co.uk
Please describe:			

<p>a) The service/s which are supported financially by this Council. What are the outcomes? How does the community benefit from the Council investment?</p>	<p>PLEASE REFER TO ARTlife's REPORT TO SCRUTINY FOR FULL DETAILS</p> <p>£4,266 - to Take Art, Somerset Film, Somerset Art Works £10,000 - in small grants (up to £1,000) to local groups to deliver arts projects/events</p> <p>The budget is supplemented from our reserves earned through external project management fees in previous years.</p> <p>OUTPUTS Arts Grants awarded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halsway Manor Society - £417 • Stogumber Festival - £500 • Watchet Roots - £500 • Minehead EYE - £650 • Contains Art - £700 <p>4,120 estimated beneficiaries of grants scheme. Based on previous years' grants, we would expect to see leverage of £15 raised for every £1 given by ARTlife.</p> <p>Advice sessions: 3 sessions to external groups/businesses, plus advising WSC staff on arts related issues.</p> <p>Delivery by professional arts companies: Take Art – 6 subsidised shows programmed into West Somerset village halls Somerset Film – ongoing support to West Somerset residents using the Engine Room in Bridgwater; specific one-to-one help to Frances Harrison (one of the Landscape Art project artists) to develop the film element of the Dark Starry Skies project; plus a Pop-Up Engine Room running for a week at the Beach Hotel in Minehead (11th- 13th Nov) Somerset Art Works – delivery of another very successful Art Weeks this September; plus educational work and ongoing individual support to West Somerset based artists.</p> <p>See Full Report to Scrutiny for outcomes of art service delivery and details of the EDF-funded Landscape Art scheme.</p>
<p>b) 2013/14 numbers of people using the service/s</p>	<p>7,900 arts service 1,900 Landscape Art scheme</p>
<p>c) Numbers of people using the service/s to date for 2014/15</p>	<p>6,000 arts service 5,700 Landscape Art scheme</p>

d) Whether these are statutory or non statutory service/s (if known)					
e) Is there a service level agreement in place for this service with WSC? Please tick		Yes	X	No , see below	
If no, to e) above, please outline what arrangements/targets are in place for the funding					
f) For every £1 received in financial assistance from WSC, how much does this enable your organisation to lever in match funding from other organisations?		For 2013-14 WSC £1 : £3 other funding			
g) Please list other funding sources	Funder name 2014-15: EDF Energy/WSC 106 EDF Energy/WSC 106 ENPA Lynmouth Pavilion Exmoor Trust	Amount 25,000 6,000 6,790 1,000 175	Confirmed/ Anticipated Received Confirmed Received Received Received	Would it be withdrawn if WSC funding was not available? Yes/ No no no no no no	

h) Have any fund raising activities been organised to increase available funds to your organisation?	Yes , amount raised:	£	No	X
i) Does your organisation have standing order forms so that people can contribute directly from their bank account to your organisation?	Yes		No	X
j) Your organisation has the following policies in place: i. Equalities and diversity ii. Safeguarding iii. Child sexual exploitation	Yes	X	No	

What would be the impact if WSC grant funding was reduced or withdrawn?

The funding from EDF maintains a part-time Coordinator post up to the end of March 2015 and funds a number of projects that make up the Landscape Art programme. Continuation of the Partnership Agreement with WSC, through a modest financial investment, will give us the confidence to plan ahead and the potential of raising funding from other sources to keep the Coordinator in post and run future projects.

The Partnership Agreement between ARTlife and WSC gives us credibility as well as leverage potential. Without it, raising funds from other sources becomes very challenging. With any further reduction in funding we would not be able to deliver an arts service, but we could maintain a small level of paid employment that would enable us to apply to funds such as CIM.

How have your activities supported the Council's objectives, if applicable? (Please see attached.)

Local Democracy

The Partnership Agreement between ARTlife and WSC is all about devolving strategic leadership in the arts to people who have expert knowledge and who understand the needs of the sector. ARTlife's member organisations are representative of voluntary arts groups, cultural organisations and public bodies, and our Board of Directors are 'on the ground' deliverers of arts activity and cultural development. The needs of West Somerset are identified through their memberships and feedback from their audiences, and filters up to ARTlife's thinking and planning. We are also active in networks for the whole county of Somerset (Creative Somerset) and the local creative sector (West Somerset Creatives Club) to ensure the basis of our strategic planning is good evidence.

New Nuclear Development at Hinkley Point

The Landscape Art programme, 'ARTlifeLAND', is part of the initial scheme of mitigation for the Hinkley C development.

Poetry Pin is a unique and ground-breaking combination of traditional poetry and GPS-location technology. It gives people locally and further afield (internationally) the opportunity to comment on the nuclear build through creative expression. We want to give those affected a space in which to discuss, explore, comment on and express their feelings about the new build – all through the moderating medium of poetry. We anticipated needing to manage negative anti-nuclear propaganda, but so far, the contributions have been intelligent, thought-provoking and highly creative. The project ends in February 2015, unless we are able to find continuation funding.

We have also focused on creating long term benefits from the funding along the **Coleridge Way**, enhancing the route with new digital products that will attract families and casual walkers. The hope is that adding value to the route will increase its sustainability and resilience in the face of expected detrimental effects on tourism once the major build gets underway.

Equality & Diversity

ARTlife works to a set of guiding principles and shared values with WSC that were first agreed in 2000 and continue to form the basis of our Partnership Agreement:

- Equality of access and quality of service
- Sustainability
- Cultural diversity and variety of opportunity
- Cultural innovation and risk
- The unique cultural distinctiveness of West Somerset

Also from the Partnership Agreement:

"In the three years of this partnership agreement, the focus of the service, initially through ARTlife's own project and development work, but ultimately through requirements and conditions of all investment, will be to enhance the quality and range of cultural opportunities available to:

- Young people and children
- Older people
- Disabled people
- People suffering an economic disadvantage"

Health & Wellbeing

Both Poetry Pin and the Coleridge Way projects encourage walking as a shared social experience as part of participating, as well as enjoying the high quality natural environment. Through our grants scheme we support vulnerable and low income families, e.g. helping Watchet Roots to run creative days for the families that were previously served by Watchet Kids Festival; helping Mind to support those with debilitating mental illness through regular sessions that facilitate social interaction and increased sense of wellbeing.

Please return to: Gail Sloman by Monday 3rd November 2014 – gksloman@westsomerset.gov.uk

		<i>Please tick</i>		<i>Please tick</i>	
Please attach a copy of your <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • most recent accounts, including annual income, expenditure and reserves/savings • budget • business plan • expected financial position for the current and next financial reporting period 	Yes		No		
	Yes		No		
	Yes		No		
	Yes		No		

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

- Local democracy and accountability remains within West Somerset by establishing a resilient operating model that is financially sustainable
- Maximise the funding opportunities from Central Government.

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.

- Communities in West Somerset can access and understand the process
- The economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximised
- The availability of housing supply within West Somerset is increased to mitigate the extra demands linked to Hinkley Point workers
- 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
- The effects on the environment by working with partners to positively respond to opportunities to enhance the environment in the affected communities using secured funding within Section 106 agreements are mitigated

Equality & Diversity

The three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- 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

Health & Wellbeing

The three priorities for the Health & Wellbeing Strategy:

- 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.

ARTlife Report to Scrutiny October 2014

This year the **Arts Service** investment of **£12,645** is being spent on delivery by our three professional arts partners and the local community:

£4,266 - to Take Art, Somerset Film, Somerset Art Works

£10,000 - in small grants (up to £1,000) to local groups to deliver arts projects/events

The budget is supplemented from our reserves earned through external project management fees in previous years.

The essential running costs of the company are as lean as we can achieve and approximately **£1,500** this year - insurance, accountancy, website, etc – and are covered by our reserves.

The Coordinator is employed 2.5 days per week and runs the company, oversees and monitors the arts service delivery and manages the EDF-funded Landscape Art programme. Her wages have been paid from the EDF funding since June 2012. This funding comes to an end in March 2015.

1 Arts Service outputs

1.1 Arts Grants:

We award grants to a range of activities and beneficiaries and geographic spread, and so far this year applications have come in for very diverse initiatives:

- Watchet Roots - £500 grant to run summer workshops for families at Contains Art, picking up the need for support to low income families that used to attend Watchet Kids Festival.
- Halsway Manor Society - £417 (guarantee against loss) for evening events targeted at local people and running alongside a residential week celebrating the Coleridge Way
- Stogumber Festival - £500 grant for ‘fringe’ street arts events, again targeted at the local community and especially those who might not be able to afford to or consider going to one of the main festival concerts
- Minehead EYE - £650 grant for a new initiative where young members work with a professional designer to create merchandise – t-shirts, hoodies
- Contains Art - £700 grant for community workshops alongside the recent ‘Making An Exhibition of Ourselves’ where 60 West Somerset artists made self-portraits. The workshops, including family-targeted sessions, encouraged a new audience into the Contains Art gallery during Somerset Art Weeks.

Total estimated participants/beneficiaries of grants scheme – 4,120

Based on last year’s grants, we would expect to see leverage of £15 raised for every £1 given by ARTlife.

1.2 Advice sessions: 3 sessions to external groups/businesses, plus advising WSC staff on arts related issues. The Coordinator has limited time to respond to general enquiries, but where possible, she advises on funding and other issues, and signposts to other agencies.

1.3 Delivery by professional arts companies:

Take Art – 6 subsidised shows programmed into West Somerset village halls

Somerset Film – ongoing support to West Somerset residents using the Engine Room in Bridgwater; specific one-to-one help to Frances Harrison (one of the Landscape Art project

artists) to develop the film element of the Dark & Starry Skies project; plus a Pop-Up Engine Room running for a week at the Beach Hotel in Minehead (11th- 13th Nov)

Somerset Art Works – delivery of another very successful Art Weeks this September; plus educational work and ongoing individual support to artists.

Total estimated participants/beneficiaries so far this year – 2,500

2 Arts Service outcomes

2.1 Feedback from completed evaluation forms from grant recipients in 2013-14:

“I think making art is in itself a therapeutic activity. All the group express how much they feel energised and emotionally fulfilled by what they do. If someone is feeling unmotivated, others will encourage and give ideas. The value of the group may be most importantly as a social event for people who are isolated, but it is definitely the individual focus which allows people to relax, express themselves and become more confident. At the end of term we had an exhibition of the work in Minehead library and in the foyer of the hospital.”

- Rachel Gundry, artist for the Mind Art Group

“The support from ARTlife enabled us to put together a package of music events which attracted a wide-ranging audience of local residents and visitors. While the (self-funding) ticketed events brought music of an international standard into this small village, the fringe and free events, comprising folk, jazz and acoustic, greatly enhanced the general ambience, generated a lively atmosphere, and appealed to a wider audience. We invited buskers to perform in the village Square and ran free art and music workshops for children. The fringe events supported by ARTlife formed a key part of this Festival experience.”

- Gill Jones, Stogumber Festival committee

“Our research shows our members greatly appreciate the chance to come to concerts locally and the fact that we continue to engage top quality professionals. 'Don't compromise on quality,' is the message.”

- David Drabble, Minehead & West Somerset Arts Society

2.2 Feedback from arts partners on work in 2013-14:

Take Art provided 15 fully and part-subsidised shows for West Somerset village halls and small venues. Their expert knowledge in choosing the menu of rural touring companies guarantees top quality shows for rural audiences. They support the volunteer promoters and encourage adventurous choices of shows so that the performing arts on offer to village communities is challenging and equal to that available in large towns and cities.

“Some shows are fully supported by the ARTlife grant and this allows for higher cost shows to be available to some villages. Other, more established venues and pay a full fee though we still do the liaison between venue and company. As a particularly rural district the loss of funds in West Somerset will reduce access to professional arts events by more isolated communities. We are also finding with the full fee basis that this disadvantages smaller communities who can't afford the shows on offer. It also means higher ticket prices that can disadvantage the low waged.”

- Ralph Lister

Somerset Film “is dedicated to telling people’s stories, to giving a voice to those seldom heard, and to empowering individuals and communities through the creative use of moving image and digital media. We can change people’s lives through offering opportunities supported by access to expertise and resources. Through telling their own stories and experiences they can gain skills and increase in confidence, which results in new horizons and doors being opened to them.

Building from core funding of £4,913 (from South Somerset, Taunton Deane and ARTlife) we leverage over £350,000 of additional investment, from earned income to lottery funding. Our services encompass information, advice and guidance through online resources, e-bulletins and networking events – including a pop-up Engine Room in the Beach Hotel in Minehead 11th-13th Nov. Access to expertise and equipment through The Engine Room in Bridgwater (including weekly free drop ins) and a satellite resource at Williton Children’s Centre. And the Ignite project, a countywide support for arts professionals wanting to develop their creative digital skills.

Frances Harrison, an Ignite artist living in Dulverton: “I have received invaluable support from the Ignite project. I have felt totally supported and encouraged, Ignite has introduced me to some key aspects of filmmaking concepts and practice and helped me to apply these to my first exhibited film. I have already gained so much from the Ignite project, it has made me think much more about the potential of film and I would value highly any future involvement.”

- Deb Richardson

Somerset Art Works supports the visual arts sector, professional and community, and has been very successful in managing educational projects with a wide range of partners from the land management, farming, heritage and environmental sectors.

“The Art Weeks Festival of group shows and community projects in September 2013 featured 11 venues in West Somerset including The Regal Foyer space refurbished by SAW artists as part of ‘Making Matters’, an intergenerational project. 2,420 visitors were recorded across the district with average sales of £2,417 per venue. Somerset Open Studios in September 2014 featured 24 venues in West Somerset, mostly individual artists’ studios. We currently have 80 artist members in West Somerset.

In 2013, Two Rivers Paper Mill in Roadwater was the industry partner for Irish paper artist Maeve Clancy for her residency at Barrington Court as part of SAW’s ‘Make the Most’ project for the National Trust New Art programme. In the same year, recent Somerset College graduate Leah Hislop won an ‘Abundance Garden Trail’ commission at Aller Farmhouse in Williton. Leah went on to successfully win a residency at Contain Arts, Watchet this spring. This year’s Creative Pathway bursary artist was hosted by Davina Jelley at No 7 Gallery in Dulverton. SAW also works with Contain Arts and provided resources for their recent artists’ talks programme.

The Art Week Education Pack is distributed to all schools in West Somerset and there are downloadable resources available too. The InspirED consortium of SAW and its partners (Take Art, Somerset Film and SPAEDA) offers co-development, facilitation and delivery of creative projects to build stronger working relationships between families, communities, venues and schools. Transition projects and a range of pilot projects are available to support collective participation in visual arts and media and identify opportunities for personal progression routes via Art Awards.”

- Carol Carey

3 Blenheim Gardens Music Festival

Sadly this long running event did not happen this summer due to lack of funding. However, ARTlife and West Somerset Council formed a new partnership with Minehead Town Council and the town clerk managed a diary to book seven local bands who played for free. ARTlife committed to pay the Performing Right Society fee for the concerts of up to £100. Minehead Events Group has shown an interest in programming the bandstand next summer and ARTlife has provided terms and conditions forms, schedules and contacts, and will help as much as possible. West Somerset Council will need to pay the PRS fee for all future music events in Blenheim Gardens which ARTlife has covered for the past 14 years.

4 Landscape Art Scheme

4.1 Outputs

1 part time Coordinator post
 3 long term freelance contracts
 2 new partnerships (with Contains Art and Lynmouth Pavilion)
 100 QR codes of children's poems placed along the first 36 miles of the Coleridge Way
 3 slate QR 'word clouds' given to the participating schools (Cutcombe/Timberscombe, Stogumber/Crowcombe, and Stogursey)
 8 Dark Starry Skies schools' workshops
 3 Coleridge Way schools' workshops
 1 Poetry Pin workshop for Stogursey School
 6 Coleridge Way Story Boxes deployed on the trail from June to August
 9 Story Books completed and retrieved ready for exhibition in Feb 2015 (one book lost)
 3 published authors/illustrators began the stories in 6 of the books
 4000+ people made contact with the Story Books
 68 walkers/poets joined seven Poetry Pin trail workshops
 24 Stogursey School children walked the trail and created beach poems
 40 poems placed on the Poetry Pin trail so far
 59 people subscribe to the Poetry Pin newsletter
 2 Dark Starry Skies pop up storytelling cafés and one illustrated talk
 12 Dark Starry Skies community storytelling workshops with accompanying exhibition
 2 Family Friendly events for Somerset Art Weeks (Poetry Pin and Dark Starry Skies)
 378+ pieces of artwork and stories by school children (Dark Starry Skies)
 Educational resources for Dark Starry Skies including Stargazing guides and 'how to keep a stargazing journal' given to each child; a new website with online resources; a growing exhibition of participants' stories, pictures and reminiscences for touring.
 1 new Dark Starry Skies film intended to support the tourism sector
 110 written memories from Dark Starry Skies participants (part of the community exhibition)

Plus - 50 blog posts; 422 Twitter posts (also shared through Facebook); 12,500 printed postcards and leaflets; 6 You Tube films and Soundcloud audios; 1 promotional open mic night; and many adverts, articles and website shares.

Total number of participants to date: 5,700
 Of which, school children: 402

4.2 Outcomes

Dark Starry Skies lead artist Frances Harrison:

“The impact on people is evident from the enthusiastic participation of pupils, teachers, elderly residents and their support workers, local residents, visitors and families. This has been verbal and written. I now have a new collection of written memories which is still growing. Each participating schoolchild has produced artwork or some creative writing in response to the touring exhibition and storytelling performance. Four poets have written new poems for the project.

Curating the December exhibition involves a considerable amount of new work and products e.g. creating an installation, online stories and making banners out of the participants’ contributions. A scientist from the high profile Rosetta project is coming to Lynmouth Pavilion to give a talk on comets on December 6th as part of the project finale and in collaboration with me as a storyteller. This is hugely beneficial for the project and my own professional development. I've had a number of enquiries from parents and teachers out of the area about future events and storytelling performances as well as two bookings.”

Christopher Jelley, lead artist for Coleridge Way and Poetry Pin:

“As a direct result of the QR code project, I have helped Crowcombe and Stogumber schools to secure a SHINE grant for pupils to create their own digital Story Walks, and I was commissioned to create and lead Story Walks for Stogumber and Porlock Festivals having worked with both schools through the ARTlife project. The success of Story Walks as an educational activity has spread further afield and in November I am working at Pembroke Dock School in Wales, and have also been invited to share practice with educators in Bristol.

Poetry Pin was invited to be part of Somerset Film’s pop-up Engine Room at the Beach Hotel Minehead, and the Lynmouth Pavilion team commissioned a series of Poetry Pin Boxes (based on the successful Coleridge Way Story Boxes) to be placed at the Valley of the Rocks this summer – the public response was incredible and the team are considering a similar project for next summer.

Alongside all of this work, I have developed links with the Break 3 project in Frome (an educational arts project) and its project leader Jo Plimmer – who is also ARTlife’s Communications Officer for the Landscape Art scheme. The link has generated increased social media activity and raised the profile of both projects.”

5 ARTlife’s present financial situation

As explained above, the funding from EDF maintains a part-time Coordinator post up to the end of March 2015 and funds a number of projects that make up the Landscape Art programme. Continuation of the Partnership Agreement with WSC, through a modest financial investment, will give us the confidence to plan ahead and the potential of raising funding from other sources.

6 Who else does ARTlife receive funding from?

The Landscape Art programme is funded primarily by EDF Energy through the planning agreement with WSC. We have augmented this with successful applications to other funders: Exmoor National Park Partnership Fund – £6,790; Lynmouth Pavilion Project – £1,000; Exmoor Trust - £175

The **arts service** is provided on behalf of and funded solely by WSC, but in recent years, we have supplemented it with varying amounts from our own reserves, earned mostly through managing projects on behalf of partner organisations.

7 Does ARTlife organise any fundraising events?

Our support to the community includes helping with funding applications where possible – either to our own grants scheme or to other pots of money. We contract a freelance Grants Officer to manage our grants scheme and advise potential applicants.

So far this year, the Coordinator has talked through future options with a commercial gallery owner who is considering a change of legal structure in order to remain financially viable. She has also helped a musician to fill in an application to Arts Council England Grants for Art fund, for a project that will create new work about the Coleridge Way. We do not have the capacity to run fundraising training events, but help individuals whenever possible.

8 What would be the consequences of a reduction in funding from WSC?

ARTlife can utilise the smallest investment from WSC to raise other funds. The Partnership Agreement between ARTlife and WSC gives us credibility as well as leverage potential. Without it, raising funds from other sources becomes very challenging. With any further reduction in funding we would not be able to deliver an arts service, but we could maintain a small level of paid employment that would enable us to apply to funds such as CIM.

9 Does ARTlife meet any of our corporate priorities?

9.1 Local Democracy

The Partnership Agreement between ARTlife and WSC is all about devolving strategic leadership in the arts to people who have expert knowledge and who understand the needs of the sector. ARTlife’s member organisations are representative of voluntary arts groups, cultural organisations and public bodies, and our Board of Directors are ‘on the ground’ deliverers of arts activity and cultural development. The needs of West Somerset are identified through their memberships and feedback from their audiences, and filters up to ARTlife’s thinking and planning. We are also active in networks for the whole county of Somerset (Creative Somerset) and the local creative sector (West Somerset Creatives Club) to ensure the basis of our strategic planning is evidenced.

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The Landscape Art programme, ‘ARTlifeLAND’, is part of the initial scheme of mitigation for the Hinkley C development.

Poetry Pin is a unique and ground-breaking combination of traditional poetry and GPS-location technology. It gives people locally and further afield (internationally) the opportunity to comment on the nuclear build through creative expression. We want to give those affected a space in which to discuss, explore, comment on and express their feelings about the new build – all through the moderating medium of poetry. We anticipated needing to manage negative anti-nuclear propaganda, but so far, the contributions have been intelligent, thought-

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10 Does ARTlife have standing order forms so that people can contribute directly from their bank account?

No. The ARTlife Board has not considered charging for the arts service. For the Dark Starry Skies project, we have invited donations from participants/audiences for refreshments, etc, to raise a small amount of earned income.

Tracey Roberts, ARTlife Coordinator

On behalf of the ARTlife Board

29th October 2014

ARTLIFE BUDGET 2014-15

<u>INCOME</u>	Unrestricted	Landscape Art	Restricted	Total
WSC GRANT	12,645			12,645
INTEREST EARNED	80			80
LANDSCAPE ART		48,500		48,500
DARK STARRY SKIES			10,690	10,690
PRIOR YEAR GRANTS	1,625			1,625
WORKING CASH	5,957			5,957
<u>TOTAL INCOME</u>	<i>20,307</i>	<i>48,500</i>	<i>10,690</i>	79,497
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>				
COORDINATOR/ Landscape Art		14,500		14,500
LANDSCAPE ART project		33,000		33,000
DARK STARRY SKIES			10,690	10,690
KSOs	4,266			4,266
ARTS GRANTS	8,000			8,000
PRIOR YEAR GRANTS	1,625			1,625
GRANTS OFFICER FEE	2,000			2,000
GENERAL EXPENSES	1,800			1,800
TRAVEL & EXPENSES		1,000		1,000
BANDS PRS for 2013 & 2014	300			300
CONTINGENCY	2,316			2,316
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</u>	<i>20,307</i>	<i>48,500</i>	<i>10,690</i>	79,497

Report Number:

Presented by:

Cllr. Kate Kravis, Lead Member for Resources & Central Services

Author of the Report:

Paul Fitzgerald, Assistant Director Resources

Contact Details:

Tel. No. (Direct Line)

01823 358680

Email:

p.fitzgerald@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Report to a Meeting of:

Scrutiny

To be Held on:

1st December 2014

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

BUDGET UPDATE AND INITIAL SAVINGS OPTIONS 2015/16

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Scrutiny Committee with an update on budget estimates for 2015/16 and Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) forecasts, and to consider initial savings options towards addressing the Budget Gap for next year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Scrutiny notes the latest budget estimates and considers the initial savings options for 2015/16 for recommendation to Cabinet and Full Council through the budget approval process.

3. RISK ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Risk - West Somerset Council is unable to balance the budget	Likely (4)	Catastrophic (5)	Very High (20)
<i>Mitigation - Savings are identified and actioned</i>	Rare (1)	Catastrophic (5)	Low (5)

- 3.1 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.

4. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 4.1 This report continues the series of updates for Members in meeting the financial strategy and objectives as set out by the Director of Operations in her "Towards a Financially Fit Future" report to Scrutiny Committee on 10 July 2014.

- 4.2 Further to the above report, following work undertaken with Members through a survey and 'budget workshop' in September, and consultation with Members via Corporate Policy Advisory Group, the Cabinet approved the Corporate Budget Principles on 1 October 2014. Officers and members are seeking to follow these principles in developing budget options to achieve a financially sustainable position for the future.
- 4.3 The financial challenges facing this Council are well known. In July 2014 the Budget Gap for 2015/16 was forecast to be £316,000. This Gap already takes into account the action taken by the Council to date in responding to the financial challenge, and for 2014/15 and 2015/16 is helped by the implementation of joint management and shared services (JMASS) with Taunton Deane Borough Council. Despite this, the longer term picture remains stark mainly due to the ongoing reductions in government funding, with the Gap at that stage forecast to increase to £841,000 by 2019/20.
- 4.4 It remains the case that closing a budget gap of this scale simply cannot be done without impacting on services to our community. This remains beyond the usual "budget savings routine" and will require further fundamental change over the medium term if we are to continue as a financially viable Council. Service transformation is a recognised priority under JMASS as indicated in the business case.
- 4.5 This report provides an update in respect of the MTFP forecasts and Budget Gap for 2015/16.

5. BUDGET GAP 2015/16

- 5.1 As referred above the report to Scrutiny in July identified a projected Budget Gap of £316,000 in 2015/16. Since that time, budget managers and the finance team have been progressing with the detailed estimates process. The main focus for this work to date has been on the implementation of updated budgets to reflect the new joint management structure and proposals for the shared services workforce. It is important to note that the 2015/16 budget and MTFP incorporates the savings identified in the implementation of the business case. For this Council the ongoing savings include £207,000 for staff savings and £100,000 for non-staff savings, representing our share of the savings forecast set out in the business case. There was a separate report presented to Scrutiny on 11 September 2014 detailing progress on implementation. As the project continues through to completion any variance to the savings target will need to be reflected in the MTFP.
- 5.2 The final phase of staffing restructuring is due to be completed over the next couple of months – and we will then be able to finalise our position against the Business Case. Currently the expectation is that the savings target built into the MTFP will be achieved. Any variance to target would impact on the Budget Gap.
- 5.3 As work has progressed on detailed estimates a number of changes to the underlying budget information and assumptions have been identified and it is proposed to amend the MTFP based on this information. The following table summarises proposed changes.

Table 1 – Budget Gap Estimate as at November 2014

	£k	£k
2015/16 Budget Gap July 2014		316,124
Capital debt repayment provision (MRP)	68,000	
Interest costs	35,000	
New Homes Bonus Grant Income	29,683	
Staff pay award estimates	52,280	
Council Tax Benefit historic budget removed	10,000	
Business Rates cost of collection	-74,500	
Business Rates Retention funding estimates	-91,880	
Business Rates earmarked reserve transfer	-100,000	
Budget Gap Estimate November 2014		244,707

Capital debt and interest costs

- 5.4 The initial MTFP forecasts earlier in the year assumed that the timing of capital receipts from asset disposals would enable the current £3.5m of external borrowing to be repaid in full before April 2015. Based on updated progress and information, assumptions for timing of capital receipts have been revised and it is assumed that £1.8m of borrowing can be repaid this year, with the balance of £1.7m during 2015/16. Therefore debt repayment and interest cost estimates have been revised.

New Homes Bonus

- 5.5 Members will be aware that all of the New Homes Bonus grant has in recent years been used to support the annual budget. Based on up to date tax base and affordable housing data our estimate if New Homes Bonus Grant for 2015/16 has been updated. Subject to confirmation as part of the annual Funding Assessment from Government, the predicted level of grant in 2015/16 is approximately £570,400 which is £29,700 less than previously projected within the MTFP.
- 5.6 It is assumed that all of the NHB Grant is needed for the annual budget in 2015/16. One of the corporate budget principles is to try and reduce reliance on NHB for annual service costs, however further savings will be needed for this to be an option in 2015/16.

Staff pay award

- 5.7 Pay award negotiations are continuing, and indications are that the latest offer from Employers will increase costs above previous pay award estimates which had only allowed for a 1% increase in both 2014/15 and 2015/16.

Council Tax Benefit

- 5.8 There is a historic budget in respect of the now obsolete Council Tax Benefit system. Having undertaken due diligence it is evident that there was an error when setting the 2014/15 budget. The CTB budget, net of subsidy, in 2014/15 is -£10,000 and this should be removed for 2015/16 adding £10,000 to the Budget Gap.

Business Rates Cost of Collection

- 5.9 As identified during the closure of the 2014/15 accounts and subsequently reported in the latest Financial Performance report, the budget related to the Cost of Collection charged to the Business Rates Collection Fund was removed from the base budget in error in 2013/14. This is now added back, resulting in approximately £74,500 income for the General Fund budget.

Business Rates Retention

- 5.10 In light of the updated current year forecast, as reported in the Financial Performance April to September 2014 report, we have reviewed the provisional estimates for 2015/16 assuming the current year position 'rolls forward' with limited changes. This will continue to provide for potential costs of appeals and refunds, and also reflects the expected increase of the business rates base "multiplier" in line with inflation of 2.3%. Of course, there remains the significant risk in respect of Hinkley B appeal, and some provision for this risk is incorporated within the budget estimates. Further work is ongoing to finalise business rates projections for 2015/16 and updates will be provided to Members together with the Provisional Funding Assessment.
- 5.11 On the basis of the estimated improvement to retention funding it is proposed to remove the previously planned transfer to the Business Rates Smoothing Reserve in 2015/16, saving £100,000 for next year's budget.

Addressing the Budget Gap

- 5.12 The key challenge with budget setting is to present options for Members to consider to address the budget gap. Table 2 below summarises potential measures to close the gap and indicates where further information is required to finalise the budget estimates for next year.

Table 2 – Projected Further Changes to the Budget Gap

	Options £k	Gap £k
2015/16 Budget Gap November 2014 (per Table 1)		244,707
Proposal to cease Parish CTR Grants	-80,359	164,348
Initial Savings Proposals – See Appendix A	-64,354	99,994
Fees and charges – various services proposals	-13,650	86,344
Fees and charges – car parking (provisional estimate)	-35,000	51,344
JMASS final staff structures	TBC	?
JMASS non-staff target delivery	TBC	?
Revenue implications of Capital programme	TBC	?
Business Rates Funding – final settlement and forecast	TBC	?
Revenue Support Grant – final settlement	TBC	?
New Homes Bonus – final settlement	TBC	?
Council Tax Base	TBC	?
Council Tax Collection Fund Surplus / Deficit	TBC	?
Budget Gap / (-)Surplus Estimate November 2014		51,344 +/-?

- 5.13 It can be seen that proposals presented to Members in respect of fees and charges

and initial savings proposals will reduce the Budget Gap but are not yet sufficient to close the Gap in full. Assistant Directors are continuing to review options and further ideas will be shared with Members in subsequent reports.

- 5.14 It is also important to note that there are some areas of the budget estimates yet to be finalised or confirmed which could change the forecast position. We are facing significant risks which are outlined in Section 6 below, which may also result in a wider budget gap and therefore we need to maintain a robust approach to finding savings and addressing budget pressures.

Fees and Charges

- 5.15 Initial draft proposals in respect of 2015/16 Fees and Charges were shared for consultation with Members at Corporate Policy Advisory Group on 29 October 2014. Following this consultation further work on the proposals has progressed. At the time of preparing this report it is anticipated that changes to Fees and Charges will contribute an additional £13,650 to income budget estimates for 2015/16. Fees and Charges are due to be considered by Cabinet on 3 December 2014 prior to recommendation to Full Council for approval on 17 December 2014.
- 5.16 Proposals for car parking fees are currently being developed which it is estimated at this stage will deliver an additional net income of approximately £35,000. Details of the proposals will be shared for consultation with Members at Corporate Policy Advisory Group on 27 November 2014, and then through the Council's formal decision process. Formal consultation will then be undertaken in line Traffic Regulations, and details of this consultation and subsequent approval process will be included in the report to CPAG. A verbal update on comments will be provided at this Cabinet Meeting as appropriate.

Initial Savings Options

- 5.17 The Council's management team is presenting a range of options that Members are requested to consider in respect of budget savings for 2015/16. The options are summarised in Appendix A, and if these are all implemented this will provide ongoing savings of £64,354 in 2015/16.

Funding Assessment and Further Budget Estimates To Be Completed

- 5.18 Funding forecasts for Revenue Support Grant (RSG) for 2015/16 is currently based on the provisional settlement information provided by the Government in February 2014. It is anticipated the Funding Assessment (for RSG, Business Rates Baseline, and New Homes Bonus) from Government for 2015/16 will not be confirmed until January/February 2015. Updated Provisional Settlement details should be received in December.
- 5.19 In addition to finalising our funding estimates, work is progressing to finalise several key areas of our budget:
- Business rates yield final assessment
 - Council Tax Base and Income Forecast
 - Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit estimates
 - New Homes Bonus forecast

- Capital programme options and funding implications

5.20 Updates will be provided to Members incorporating as many of these as possible in the December Budget Consultation Pack.

6. **RISK, OPPORTUNITIES AND UNCERTAINTY**

6.1 Ongoing risks and uncertainty for the budget at this stage include:

- **JMASS Business Case** – until we complete the implementation of the staffing structures we will not be able to finalise the savings delivered v business case. Any shortfall in savings from JMASS immediately increases the Council's budget gap.
- **Finance Settlement** – Provisional Business Rates Retention baseline and Revenue Support Grant settlement figures are not expected until late December, with final figures anticipated late January/early February.
- **Business Rates Forecast** – The Business Rates Forecast for future years is currently being prepared, and may result in changes to the 2015/16 estimates. The final estimates are due to be completed and approved by the S151 officer in January, and any updates to estimates will be reported to Members.
- **Council Tax** – MTFP is based on officer assumption of a tax increase of 1.99% in 2015/16. The Cabinet have yet to indicate their Council Tax proposals for next year. Government have previously indicated an intention to incentivise a tax freeze next year, with a grant equivalent to a 1% tax rise.
- **New Homes Bonus** – details of the Grant is expected to be received with the Provisional Settlement figures in December.
- **Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit** – an initial forecast has been completed, but the formal calculation to be used for budget setting is required to be completed on 15 January 2013;
- **Fees & Charges** – not yet been approved;
- **Capital Programme** – options for a Draft Capital Programme are being considered – any spending proposals could contain further revenue budget implications e.g. RCCO or borrowing costs;

6.2 Further updates will be provided in future reports as the budget setting process progresses.

7. **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN FORECAST**

7.1 Based on the above information the forecast Medium Term Financial Plan forecast has been updated.

7.2 The current forecast indicates that whilst the budget gap has reduced for 2015/16 – subject to Council decisions, residual budget work to be completed, and risks/uncertainties highlighted below – the medium term financial position continues to be very challenging. Budget proposals will need to be developed and implemented in future to produce a financially sustainable plan for important services for our community. Table 3 below shows the current forecast position prior to decisions being taken by Members in respect of Fees and Charges and Savings options (as per Table 1 budget gap).

7.3 Members are advised that there is a minor presentational change to the presentation

of the MTFP, to incorporate certain costs and income 'above the line' as part of the Net Expenditure. This relates specifically to Housing Benefit and Council Tax Admin Grant, CTR Grants to Parishes and Parish Precepts.

Table 3 – Medium Term Financial Plan Forecast

	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £
Forecast Net Expenditure	5,866,254	6,080,684	6,224,915	6,406,504	6,590,414
Earmarked Reserve Transfers	0	0	0	0	0
General Reserve Transfers	0	0	0	0	0
NET BUDGET	5,866,254	6,080,684	6,224,915	6,406,504	6,590,414
Retained Business Rates	-1,521,225	-1,551,640	-1,582,668	-1,614,318	-1,646,601
Revenue Support Grant	-838,063	-558,096	-306,953	-138,129	-48,345
New Homes Bonus	-570,364	-709,417	-757,180	-668,289	-572,888
Other General Grants	-20,547	0	0	0	0
Council Tax - WSC	-1,859,468	-1,902,068	-1,945,703	-1,990,246	-2,035,840
Council Tax - Parishes	-811,880	-811,880	-811,880	-811,880	-811,880
FUNDING AVAILABLE	-5,621,547	-5,533,101	-5,404,384	-5,222,862	-5,115,554
Budget Gap – In Year	244,707	302,876	272,949	363,111	291,218
Budget Gap – Cumulative	244,707	547,583	820,531	1,183,642	1,474,860

8. GENERAL RESERVES

- 8.1 The following table provides a reconciliation of the current balance on General Reserves and projected balance at the start of 2015/16.

	£
Balance Brought Forward 1 April 2014	991,866
Original Budget 2014/15	-321,108
<i>Supplementary Budget Allocations:</i> Sand Clearance, Blenheim Gardens, Blue Anchor Coastal Protection, Local Plan	-115,250
Current approved Balance	555,508
<i>Forecast:</i>	
In Year Savings – Recommended Transfer To General Reserves	95,318
Requested transfer of uncommitted balances from Earmarked Reserves	107,581
Projected Balance Carried Forward 31 March 2015	758,407
Underwritten Broadband Costs	-131,000
Possible uncommitted balance	627,407

- 8.2 Members should note that the Projected Balance includes approved or recommended reserve transfers to date, but does not include any further under or overspend from the current financial year. The S151 Officer's current recommended minimum reserves balance is £500,000, therefore the projected balance leaves modest "headroom" of approximately £127,000 for future years. It is advisable to aim to balance the 2015/16 without the need to use general reserves if possible as the Council implements measures to secure financial sustainability.

9. FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Contained within the body of the report.

10. COMMENTS ON BEHALF OF THE SECTION 151 OFFICER

10.1 This report provides a progress update and shows that the Budget Gap for 2015/16 has reduced. However the financial challenge remains serious and Members are encouraged to continue to engage in the budget process and carefully consider the difficult decisions that will be needed to produce a balanced budget for 2015/16.

10.2 Members are also encouraged to consider the longer term financial challenge when making decisions regarding next year's budget. As indicated in earlier reports the expectation is that funding from Government will continue to decline, placing pressure on our local budgets and services to our community.

11. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Each option must be examined to assess what impact it may have on equality and diversity.

12. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no direct implications connected to the recommendations in this report.

13. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

13.1 Some of the options put forward will need consultation with external organisations including Town and Parish Councils.

14. ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

14.1 Some of the options put forward will mean that there will be surplus assets.

15. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

15.1 Each option must be examined to assess what impact it may have on the environment.

16. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

16.1 Each option must be examined to assess whether there are any legal implications.

Assistant Director	Corporate Budget Principles	Service Option Heading	Description of the Service Option	Category	2015/16 £	Business Case: Service Impact Explained	Risk Management	Public Impact	Operational Impact	Confidence	Environmental Implications	Community Safety Implications	Equalities Impact	Partnership Implications	Legal Considerations and References	Health and Wellbeing Implications
TOTAL					64,354											
Chris Hall	Service delivery - reduction in costs	Coastal Protection	Minehead Seafront lights	Budget no longer required	4,000	This budget can be reduced based on historical underspends.	The residual budget will be £4,000 which should be sufficient to maintain lights	Low	Low	High	None	None	None	None	None	None
Chris Hall	Transfer of Services	Public Conveniences	Reduction by £3,000 in Non Domestic Rates budget	Partner/Outsource	3,000	This budget can be reduced based on the changes to the number of public toilets and the reduction in size of others.	Costs will be monitored	Low	Low	High	None	None	None	None	None	None
Chris Hall	Maximising income	Public conveniences	Increase in income for toilet charges from £700 to £4000	Income	3,300	Income has increased in the last 12 months and therefore the income budget can be increased to reflect this.	Costs will be monitored	Low	Low	High	None	None	None	None	None	None
Chris Hall	Service delivery - reduction in costs	Open Spaces	Reduction by £1,200 in disposal of green waste budget	Budget no longer required	1,200	This budget can be reduced based on historical underspends		Low	Low	High	None	None	None	None	None	None
Chris Hall	Service delivery - reduction in costs	Minehead Harbour	Reduction by £400 in Non Domestic Rates budget	Budget no longer required	400	This budget can be reduced based on historical underspends		Low	Low	High	None	None	None	None	None	None
Chris Hall	Service delivery - reduction in costs	Minehead Harbour	Reduction in water charges budget £50	Budget no longer required	50	This budget can be reduced based on historical underspends		Low	Low	High	None	None	None	None	None	None
Chris Hall	New Income	Minehead Harbour	Increased income for letting out of the Lime Kiln units £300	Income	300	This budget can be reduced as these charges are now picked up by the Lime Kiln unit operators		Low	Low	High	None	None	None	None	None	None
Chris Hall	Service delivery - reduction in costs	Street Cleaning	Reduction in fly tipping budget	Budget no longer required	500	This budget can be reduced based on historical underspends		Low	Low	High	None	None	None	None	None	None
Chris Hall	Service delivery - reduction in costs	Street Cleaning	Removal of tyre disposal budget	Budget no longer required	500	This budget can be reduced based on historical underspends		Low	Low	High	None	None	None	None	None	None
Ian Timms	Grant Expenditure	Contract	Transfer of Inward Investment costs allocated to Into Somerset Brand to HPC budgets due to integral supply chain links in WSC area (wsc)	Efficiency	3,000	Removal of cost from General fund at WSC		Medium	Medium	High	None	None	None	None	None	None
Ian Timms	Grant Expenditure	Arts Grants	Reduction in grant provided to Artlife	Service Reductions	6,245	Artlife is the key deliverer of cultural services in West Somerset. It has now developed to a point where is has a relatively sustainable business model in place. Residual grant would be £6,000.	Council will consult with Artlife regarding implications of reduced funding	Medium	Low	Medium	None	None	Impact Assessment to be completed	Council will consult with Artlife regarding implications of reduced funding	None	None
Kene Ibezi	Grant Expenditure	Community Assets	Removal of assets of community value budget.	Service Reductions	20,000	None.	Potential financial risk in the event of claim. A contingency is proposed to be held in earmarked reserves.	Low	Medium	Medium	None	None	None	None	None	None
Richard Sealy	Service delivery - reduction in costs	West Somerset House Wood pellets	Ceasing to use the wood pellet boiler & moving to the permanent use of gas will deliver a saving in energy costs.	Efficiency	3,000	No impact.	Low risk	Low	Low	High	None	None	None	None	None	None
Richard Sealy	Service delivery - reduction in costs	West Somerset House Boiler maintenance	Ceasing to use the wood pellet boiler will result in our no longer requiring annual maintenance	Budget no longer required	1,000	No impact.	Low risk	Low	Low	High	None	None	None	None	None	None
Richard Sealy	Service delivery - reduction in costs	West Somerset House Bird deterrent	Remove the bird deterrent budget.	Service Reductions	2,500	No impact anticipated.	Considered low risk. No deterrent implemented this year and no problems experienced	Low	Low	High	None	None	None	None	None	None
Richard Sealy	Service delivery - reduction in costs	West Somerset House Window cleaning	Move from the current quarterly cleaning to 6 monthly cleaning	Service Reductions	800	Should have no impact on service delivery	Low risk	Low	Low	High	None	None	None	None	None	None

Assistant Director	Corporate Budget Principles	Service Option Heading	Description of the Service Option	Category	2015/16 £	Business Case: Service Impact Explained	Risk Management	Public Impact	Operational Impact	Confidence	Environmental Implications	Community Safety Implications	Equalities Impact	Partnership Implications	Legal Considerations and References	Health and Wellbeing Implications
Simon Lewis	Grant Expenditure	Community Links - Grants	Reduction in grant provided to CLOWNS	Service Reductions	5,602	Business Case - councillors have indicated that these budgets should be reduced. An approach has taken to minimise the impact on services that support the most vulnerable people in West Somerset. Therefore budgets for Engage CVS, Home Start and WS Advice Bureau have not been cut: CLOWNS - organisation has been expecting cuts from WSC for some time. This brings funding to £3,000 in line with Engage CVS and Home Start. The cut would mean a reduction in play scheme activity days (last year 12 delivered, benefitting 214 children). Activities act as early intervention and help children with life skills.	Risk that organisations affected will no longer be viable and services will cease altogether and that the impact on the community would be detrimental. We would reduce the risk by working with the organisations to help them identify alternative funding streams which could help close the gap	Medium	High	Low	None	None	A reduction in provision of the CLOWNS service which is focussed on working with more vulnerable and isolated families could have an equalities impact. Further analysis would be needed on the families supported and whether cuts in service would have an adverse impact on any of the 7 equality domains	Although our grant arrangement is not strictly a partnership it could affect a number of voluntary and community organisations and would reduce the extent of service delivery of these organisations and potentially reduce their ongoing viability	None	Under Priority 2 of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy is an action to "support families and people with low resilience". Cuts to this budget will impact on this, particularly the cuts to the CLOWNS service. However the reduction is intended to bring funding in line with that paid to other services such as Home Start
Simon Lewis	Service delivery - reduction in costs	Homelessness Admin (WSC)	The Council underspent on homelessness prevention (bonds etc) last year by around £10k and is on track for a similar level this year. Reduce the 50152 prevention budget by £1000 and Multi-Agency Assessment by £3000 (zero spend last year and zero to date this year)	Budget no longer required	4,000	Through JMASS we will review thresholds for accepting people who are under genuine threat of homelessness and will work to ensure P21 delivers in West Somerset to help reduce demand.	The worst case scenario is that landlords refuse tenants which will increase spend on the B&B budget. The introduction of Somerset HomeLet should increase supply of willing landlords and additional Hinkley monies for rent and bond schemes will also help reduce pressure on this budget.	Low	Low	Medium	None	If the budget had an impact affect on housing vulnerable people and they were not housed appropriately or were street homeless then this will increase their vulnerability to crime	Potential impact for vulnerable people with people suffering from physical or mental disabilities more likely to be affected by homelessness. If the proposal was to affect our ability to support these people then it could have an equality impact on this group.	This could have some impact on our work with landlords	The Council has a number of statutory responsibilities around homelessness and housing advice	Under Priority 2 of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy is an action to "support families and people with low resilience". It is therefore important that there is no adverse impact on the service to affect this
Tim Burton	Grant Expenditure	Community Links - Grants	Implement a 50% reduction in grant provided to Quantock Hills AONB Service	Service Reductions	4,957	A proposal has been put forward to consider this, but further liaison is needed with the QHAONB to ensure that this reduced funding would still allow the partnership to produce the AONB Management Plan - a statutory requirement for WSC.		Low	Low	Medium	None	None	None	None	None	None

Report Number: WSC 171/14

Presented by: Cllr Anthony Trollope-Bellew, Lead Member for the Environment

Author of the Report: Keith Richards, Technical Officer; Operational Delivery

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Report to a Meeting of: Scrutiny Committee

To be Held on: 1 December 2014

Date Entered on Executive Forward Plan Or Agreement for Urgency Granted: Not Applicable

MAINTENANCE OF 'RHYNES' ON WEST SOMERSET COUNCIL OWNED LAND IN AND AROUND MINEHEAD

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide members of the Scrutiny Committee of West Somerset Council with a briefing on the condition of the 'Rhynes' in and around Minehead and to explore future options for their maintenance.

2. CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 2.1 Although this report does not specifically relate to the priorities of West Somerset Council directly, indirectly the core values; **Integrity** – be honest, do what is right and stick to it; **Fairness** – treat everyone equally, respecting his or her individual needs and abilities; **Respect** – always show respect for everyone; **Trust** – show trust in our staff and Members; do play a role in how West Somerset Council responds to points for consideration presented within this document.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 For the Scrutiny Committee to note the contents of this report and to agree the following recommendations.
- 3.2 To place all the Land Drainage budget into the Open Spaces budget and use the internal workforce of West Somerset Council to deliver rhyne maintenance.
- 3.4 To uplift the Land Drainage Budget to cover the uplift in the Internal Drainage Board yearly charge from £2,500 to £2,762.65, an increase of £262.65 for the current fiscal year.
- 3.5 To uplift the Land Drainage Budget by £2,000 PA to cover sandbag use, this will mirror the Coastal Protection Budget, significantly increasing the resilience of the Land Drainage maintenance works throughout the West Somerset region.

4. RISK ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Failure to maintain Rhynes in Minehead on WSC owned land resulting in flooding during extreme weather events	2	9	18
<i>Actions are described within this report</i>	2	4	8
Failure to maintain and return lagoons in Minehead to working order, resulting in flooding to the communities, businesses and tourism in Minehead	3	9	27
<i>Actions described within this report</i>	2	4	8
Failure to maintain 'Land Drainage' as a riparian land owner within the Minehead catchment area, resulting in flooding and damage to the environment in Minehead	3	9	27
<i>Actions described within this report</i>	2	4	8
Failure to maintain 'Land Drainage' as a riparian land owner within the Minehead catchment area, resulting in flooding having an adverse effect upon the Health and Wellbeing of communities in Minehead	3	9	27
<i>Actions described within this report</i>	2	4	8

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 and after the mitigation measures have been actioned.

5. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

5.1 During the past two years there have been unprecedented levels of rain in West Somerset and whilst the rhynes in Minehead have received some criticism, they have essentially coped adequately; in fact, they have endured and to the most part handled the extraordinary amounts of water, (217% of average annual rainfall as reported by the Environment Agency) vigorously.

5.2 A rhyne, (pronounced "reen"; from Old English ryne or Welsh rhewyn or rhewin "ditch") is a drainage ditch, or canal, used to turn areas of wetland at or around sea level into useful pasture.

Rhynes have been used extensively in the United Kingdom, especially on Somerset's marshy coastal areas such as the Somerset Levels, the River Parrett area and the Blue Anchor Bay area, of which Minehead is an intrinsic part.

Rhynes are used for drainage, to drain water from low-lying areas, alongside roadways or fields. In this region ditches are more commonly seen around farmland especially in low lying areas.

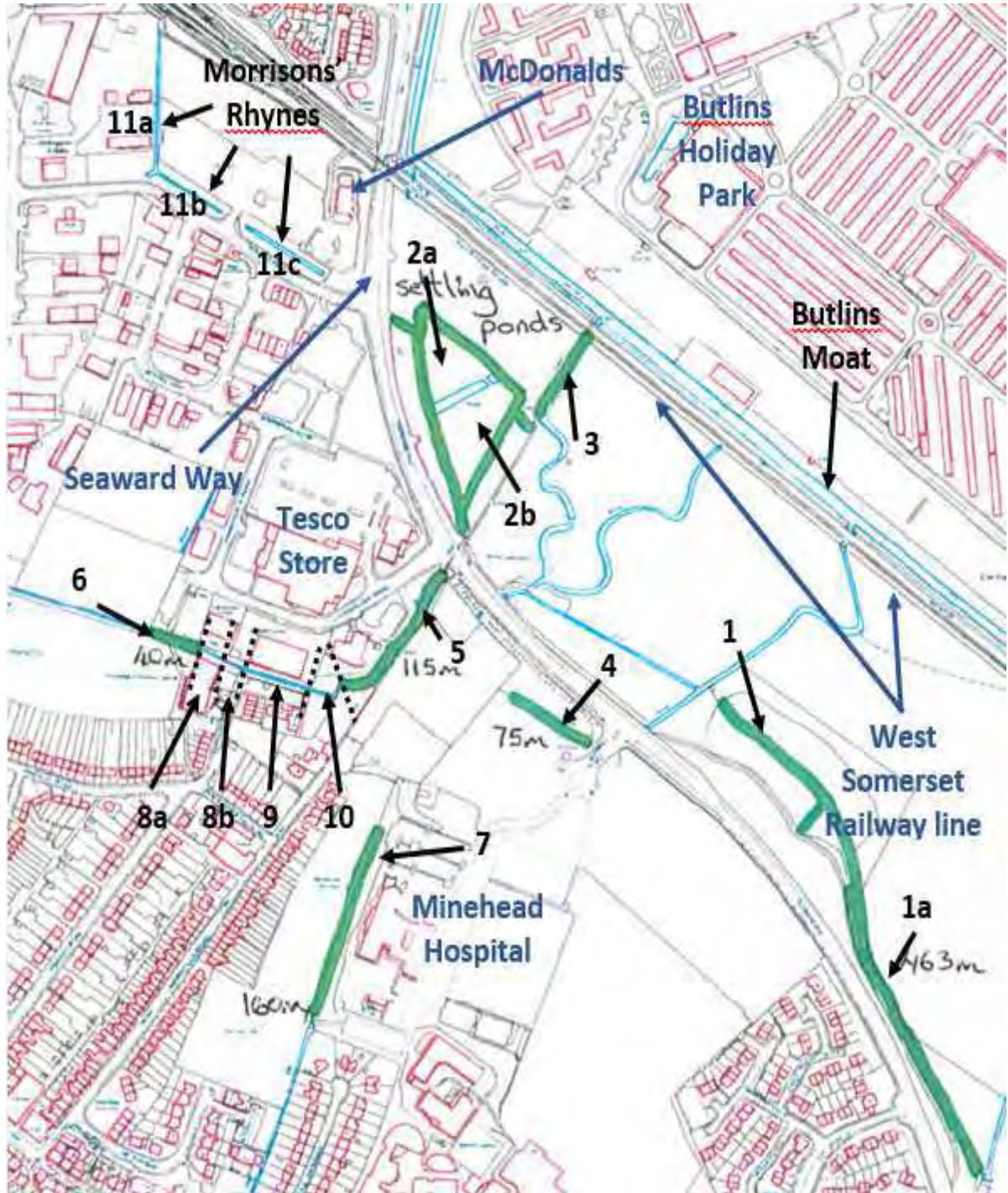
Drainage ditches play major roles in agriculture within the UK and throughout the world. Improper drainage systems accelerate water contamination, excessively desiccate soils during seasonal drought, and become a financial burden to maintain.

Industrial earth-moving equipment facilitates maintenance of straight drainage trenches, but entrenchment results in increasing environmental and eventually profound economic costs over time.

The rhynes in and around the Minehead area have been augmented overtime and changes have been made to their direction and use periodically. The most recent change being the cutting off of a section and the rerouting and a culvert section added to the Morrisons store and McDonald's restaurant site along Vulcan Way, adjoining Seaward way. This rhyne is not

maintained by West Somerset Council, Morrisons are the riparian owner, (a brief explanation of riparian ownership can be found in 5.24). However, at the time of writing this report WSC are seeking confirmation of ownership of the rhyne within McDonald's section.

- 5.3** The map below shows the rhyne in and around Minehead. The rhyne that West Somerset Council have riparian responsibility to maintain are shown in bold green. For ease of use and reference the map has been broken-down into zones. A brief snapshot of these zones follows after the map.



- 5.4** **Zone 1**, the southern lagoon has a perimeter of 412 metres and covers an area of circa 9000 square metres, this is a dry bed lagoon. C. J. Lynch carried out clearance maintenance on this area in 2013/14 at a cost of £2,434.75. At the time of inspection, (16/10/14) the rhyne channel running through the centre of the lagoon had water in, although the channel cut

appeared not to be of any considerable depth; flow was low. Tree saplings and bushes were growing within the lagoon, (Appendix A; fig 1 & 2) and into the channel, these are not of great concern presently however, in time will need to be removed. Reed has returned to the lagoon and although growth is not high this will effectively reduce and slow the flow of water from and in the lagoon channel.

- 5.5 Zone 1a**, a 463 metre channel running into the Southern lagoon from the south and running along Seaward Way. At the time of inspection, this section of rhyne appeared to be flowing, but at a reduced rate due to vegetation and reed growth.
- 5.6 Zone 2a**, the most northerly of the lagoons, has a perimeter of circa 250 metres covering area of circa 3,100 square metres and is a dry bed lagoon. At the time of inspection the area was overgrown with the common reed, (unfortunately the most evasive and difficult to eradicate) which raises concerns on the lagoons efficiency in draining water from the rhynes. There was no noticeable water flow and water appeared stagnant with a noxious odour. The lagoon area appears to have silted, due to vegetation the depth and amount of silt could not be ascertained, (Appendix A; fig 3 & 4). Inlet/outlet grills are blocked by reed and vegetation, (Appendix A; fig 5). After heavy rain the lagoon was inspected again on 16/10/14 and appeared full to the top on the left-hand side with no flow, full of weed and excreting a foul odour, (Appendix A; fig 6).
- 5.7 Zone 2b**, the bottom section of the Northern lagoons has a perimeter of circa 280 metres and covers an area of circa 4,500 metres. This is a wet bed lagoon. The lagoon is in a desperate condition that is of concern. It is overgrown with the common reed, which is turning the lagoon into reedswamp. Water appears stagnant with a pungent odour emanating, (Appendix A; fig 7 & 8). IDB recommend a use of a reed cutting boat such as the Aquaclear 'Truxor', (Appendix A, fig 8a) to clear the lagoon. This is the most effective and efficient method of clearance for wet bed lagoons, although expensive. A further inspection was carried out on 16/10/14 several days after heavy rain and the water level had reached the top of the lagoon bank. There appeared to be no water flow, which is a real concern this early into a mostly dry autumn, (fig 9 below) and clearly demonstrates a lack of water flow.



This lagoon has historically been free of vegetative growth and filled with clear fresh water. It was a popular course fishing pond populated with many species of fish and waterfowl, but this is no longer the case.

- 5.8 Zone 3**, an 80 metre rhyne channel which the northern lagoons drain into, flowing toward and into Butlins moat. The rhyne is full of foul smelling stagnant water and there is no discernible flow of water. The area is choked with common reed and vegetation, (Appendix A; fig 10).

The culvert running from zone 3 under the West Somerset Railway line and connecting to Butlins moat, is clogged with common reed and vegetation, (Appendix A; fig 11 & 12) both sides of the railway. Unable to investigate further due to fencing, (the culvert ownership needs to be established).

- 5.9 Zone 4**, a 75 metre section of rhyne to the north east of Minehead Hospital and just to the left of Seaward Way. On inspecting this area, it was immediately clear it is in desperate need of maintenance. Observing the grill retaining concrete wall, (Appendix A; fig 13 & 14) is the only way of discerning the rhyne channel. This area is of concern, young trees, saplings and shrubs grow freely, resulting in complete slitting of the channel cut, (fig 15 below).



- 5.10 Zone 5**, a 115 metre section of rhyne that has been strimmed by WSC grounds workmen, (Appendix A; fig 16) but they are unable to get into the rhyne to clear the reeds, (common reed) as WSC do not own the specialist equipment required to the complete process. The EA and local IDB recommend a weed cutting bucket for the task; this and can be hired at circa £60.00 per hour excluding workforce costs, although the overall cost of clearance is presently unclear. It was also noted that the outlet grill was blocked and restricting flow due to a Tesco trolley being stuck in the rhyne, (Appendix A; fig 17).

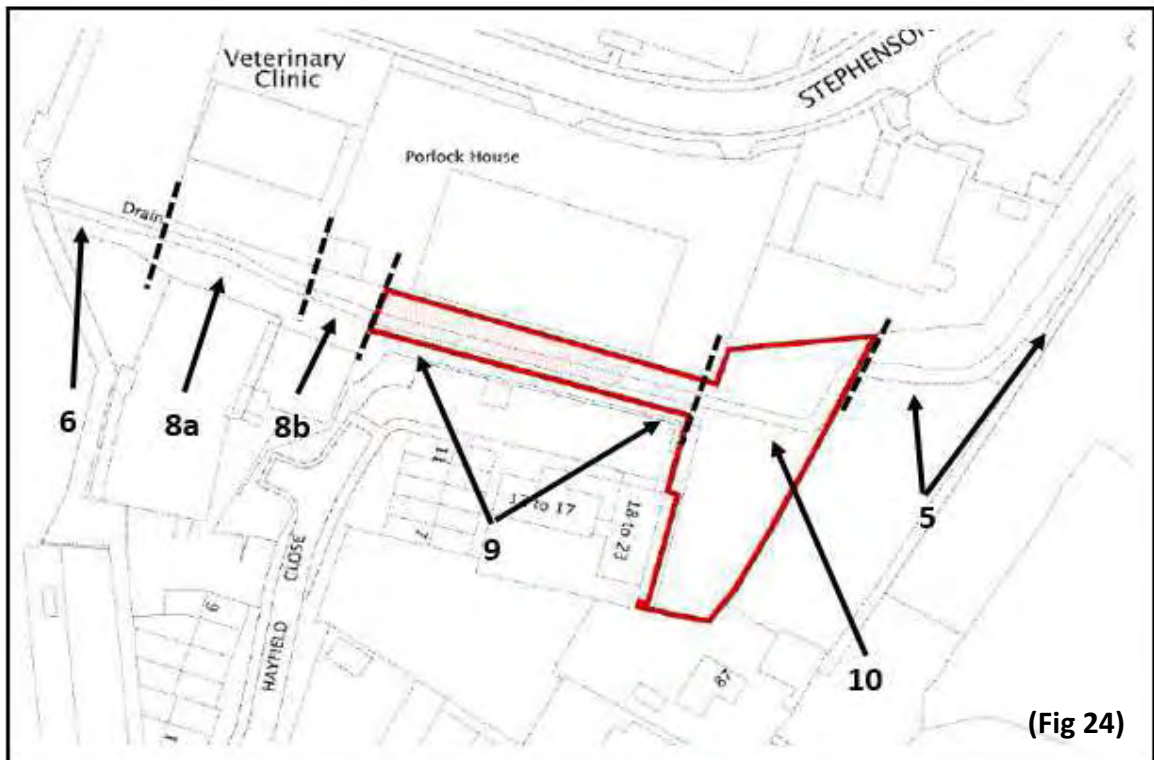
Zone 5 was inspected again to gauge how well the rhyne had responded to a period of rain. After 4 dry days the water level was still raised and there was no flow. Furthermore, there was an unhealthy odour emanating from the water due to stagnation and rotten vegetation, (Appendix A; fig 16a & 17a) and gas bubbles were rising from the rhyne bed.

Although Tesco's had been advised one of their trollies is stuck in rhyne, it has not been removed. Additionally, another trolley has been added to the rhyne in this zone, (Appendix a; fig 16b). Grill is fully blocked by vegetation caught in the grill, (appendix A, fig 17b). If trollies have not been reclaimed by Tesco, WSC will be forced to remove them to unblock the grill area; the grounds maintenance manager is aware of this issue.

- 5.11 Zone 6**, a 40 metre section of rhyne with a wooden bridge running over into King George V Playing Field. West Somerset Council and Minehead Town Council have joint riparian responsibility for this zone. However, West Somerset Council are looking into a reciprocal agreement regarding maintenance for this area with Minehead Town Council, (for instance; WSC take over maintenance of the area, while MTC take over watering of the hanging baskets in Minehead). The rhyne is full of common reed. As with zone 5, WSC grounds workmen do not have the specialist equipment to fully remove reed and debris from the rhyne

bed, (Appendix A; fig 18 & 19). WSC own the rhyne bed area, MTC own the banking field side of the rhyne.

- 5.12 Zone 7**, a 160 metre water course that is a fast flowing downhill section, known as the Alcombe Overflow. Zone 7 is located between Minehead Hospital and the allotment area. The top section of this zone has an elevation of approximately 20 metres above the bottom section. There are two inlet grill areas to catch debris at the top, (Appendix A; fig 20, 21 & 22) and one at the bottom next to the Hospital visitor car park. These have been recently replaced by West Somerset Council at a cost of £1, 525. The Deane DLO are contracted to clear the grill on a monthly basis costing £1,000 per year, (circa £84 per month). Alcombe Overflow flows into the culvert under car park and culvert joins Marsh Common rhyne, flowing directly into Butlins Moat, then into River Avill outfall into the Blue Anchor Bay at Dunster Beach.
- 5.13 Zone 8a**, the riparian ownership is being investigated, but it is thought to belong to SCC as Cheeky Cherubs Day Nursery and Pre-school abuts the zone. However, there is a case to suggest SCC gave this land to WSC for the day nursery build and SCC then rent the area back from WSC.
- 5.14 Zone 8b**, the riparian ownership is being investigated, White lodge Veterinary Clinic and Miles Tea abuts the zone. The title deed shows their ownership ends at the fence edge and does not include banking or the rhyne bed.
- 5.15 Zone 9**, the riparian ownership is being investigated; it is thought this area was the responsibility of Magna Housing although there is a possibility that 50% of area belongs to WSC. It has been highlighted that the car park is of a greater size that the planning consent allows. Additionally, a fence and bin areas have been added without consent. These block access to the rhyne and as a consequence the area is not maintained, (fig 24 below).



- 5.16 Zone 10**, the riparian ownership is split between the Badger Trust which has a section on the northern rhyne banking and the rhyne bed of this section belongs to WSC. The southern

section ownership is under investigation. Unable to gain access to area at the time of inspection due to fencing.

5.17 **Morrisons Area;**

Zone 11a, a small triangular area at the rear of Morrisons' car park. The area is open with a drainage pipe and a culvert openings meeting in the area. Removal of fly tipped items and vegetation is required, (Appendix A; fig 24 & 25). It is unclear where the culvert leads to under the car park and road. According to the plan there should be an open area next to the petrol station however; this was not visible. According to documentation WSC hold, this area is the riparian responsibility of Morrisons.

Zone 11b, an area of open rhyne between Morrisons store and the highway, (Vulcan Road). At time of inspection the area was full of stagnant water which is foul smelling. There were numerous shopping trolleys deposited within the rhyne, (Appendix A; fig 26, 27, 28 & 29). The bank showed signs of disintegration and vegetation on the banks had disappeared aiding soil erosion of banking. The common reed has started to invade this rhyne. There is no perceptible water flow.

Zone 11c, this section of the rhyne appears blocked, clogged by vegetation. The presence of water was not visible suggesting a blockage in the culvert under the road between Morrisons and McDonald's, (Appendix A; fig 30, 31, 32, & 33). This would suggest there is no flow from the rhyne into the lagoon in zone 2a, this is a concern due to risk of flooding to area. There is a collapsed road sign within the rhyne; SCC Highways are aware of this. WSC are actively seeking who has riparian responsibility for this area.

5.18 Marsh Common Rhyne, although this section of rhyne is not West Somerset Council's riparian responsibility, the IDB have recently carried out maintenance. This is an example of a well maintained drainage ditch and added to appendix A as an example of how WSC rhyne should be, (Appendix A; fig 34). On the day of inspection, the flow was strong and the channel was free from obstacles.

5.19 Internal Drainage Board, finished working on their rhyne in October taking several weeks to clear beds and side arming banks using an excavator fitted with a 'reed cutting bucket', (Appendix A; fig 35 & 36). They also used 'Tractor Mounted Flail Mowers' to clear vegetation from verges and banks. Whilst both these methods are effective and efficient in clearing areas, they are expensive to buy or hire; quote for the tractor mounted fail mower was £32.00 per hour excluding manpower costs, for a 3 metre wide cutter. Due to the nature of WSC areas, the amount of time to clear any section is not ascertainable.

5.20 **Creation of a maintenance schedule;**

The below table shows zone and description of work that should be on a maintenance schedule for the rhyne in and around Minehead. No costs are proportioned to these works as this is an unknown factor.

Area	Description of works	Measurement
Zone 1	Flail dry bed	9000 square metres
Zone 1	Flail length of perimeter	412 metres
Zone 2a	Specialist equipment required as wet bed	3100 square metres
Zone 2a	Flail length of perimeter	250 metres
Zone 2b	Specialist equipment required as wet bed	4500 square metres
Zone 2b	Flail length of perimeter	280 metres
Zone 1	Feed into pond; clearance of	2 inlet grills
Zone 1	Low flow channel length; clearance of	210 metres
Zone 2	Low flow channel length; clearance of	150 metres
Zone 3	To railway; clearance of	90 metres

Zone 4	Low flow channel length; clearance of	75 metres
Zone 7	Low flow channel length; clearance of	160 metres
Zone 5 & 10	Low flow channel length; clearance of	155 metres
Zone 6, 8a, 8b and 9	Low flow channel length; clearance of by hand	130 metres

5.21 A group inspection, of the 'rhynes' took place on Friday 10 October 2014, (In attendance; Cllr Trollope-Bellew, Cllr Brenda Maitland-Walker, Peter Owen from Somerset County Council, Philip Ham from Somerset Drainage Boards Consortium and WSC Officers, (Chris Hall and Keith Richards). The consensus of the inspection that a complete and total overhaul of the rhynes, especially in zones 2a, 2b and 3, is required to mitigate the risk of flooding to the low lying areas of Minehead. Although this would initially be an expensive process, once completed a cost effective maintenance schedule can be put in place.

The most pressing question for West Somerset Council is, is this maintenance realistically affordable?

The clearance of zone 2b would enable the reinstatement of course fishing, generating a revenue stream that could be used to maintain lagoon?

5.22 Point for consideration;

Working on the basis that the clearance of a rhyne costs circa £1,200 per 50 metres; WSC rhynes in and around Minehead equate to approximately 2,000 metres, clearance costs would equate to circa £48,000, (this does not include wet bed lagoon in zone 2b).

Could West Somerset Council secure wetland funding by means of wetland habitat creation in and around lagoon zones?

West Somerset Council Officers to research what other funding options might be available:-

There are schemes that could part finance works, for instance on zones 2a & 2b, such as The Birdfair/RSPB Research Fund for Endangered Birds that attracts funding of up to a maximum of £1,600 for projects.

Reductions in costs could be realised by using assets already in place; an example, leaving silt and vegetation from clearance on land to dry out; using common land adjoining zones 2a, 2b and 3 which is West Somerset Council owned land, (mostly used by dog walkers). Using this will realise a considerable cost saving by not having the expense of transporting to land fill and paying land fill costs. There is a precedence for this within Minehead, Minehead Town Council use land near to zone 5 for their green waste as they have no other cost effective means of disposal.

5.23 Why manage reedbeds?

Reedbed management is primarily concerned with two issues: the water regime and the vegetation. Reed cutting, or vegetation removal by other means, is traditionally undertaken for one or all of the following reasons:

- To slow, or reverse, the natural succession of reedswamp to scrub and woodland, primarily by reducing.
- The rate of litter accumulation, and at the same time stimulating the production of new vegetation/reed.
- To provide ideal conditions for wildlife through the creation of structure, including open, wet habitat pools, glades, reed edge etc.

- To supply reed for commercial purposes. (Would harvesting reed on land owned by West Somerset Council contribute toward maintenance costs?)

In addition, reedbed management may now also be undertaken on nature reserves to enhance the experience of visitors; attracting a greater range of species and making typical reedbed birds more visible. (Could this attract funding?)

Winter cutting of reed (assuming appropriate water levels) will maintain its dominance. Summer cutting reduces its competitive ability, allows a more diverse mix of vegetation and ultimately eliminates reed from the area.

5.24 What are West Somerset Council doing?

- The Ground Maintenance Team of West Somerset Council are strimming areas in and around Rhynes, cutting back reeds and vegetation from banks and removing debris where possible. To date, 60 percent have been strimmed.
- Planning of works schedule of the rhynes by our grounds maintenance team.
- The grills and gates along rhynes have been cleared of debris and are now on a monthly maintenance schedule.
- Bi-weekly inspections of the rhynes by West Somerset Council's Technical Officer.
- Monthly inspections by WSC Grounds Maintenance Manager.
- Monthly meeting between WSC Grounds Maintenance Manager and WSC Technical Officer to highlight and resolve pinch points; to better understand the risks and consequences of surface water flooding in Minehead.
- Opening lines of communication with other organisations and agencies, cross pollination of ideas, information and where possible to find funding opportunities.
- Active involvement in creation of 'District Flood Board' and support of 'West Somerset Flood Group'. One being community focused, (WSFG), the other to be at district level, (DFB) where it would be a sensible way to bring together organisations working within the West Somerset district to mitigate flooding where possible.
- Continuing to confirm riparian ownership of McDonald's sections upstream of WSC owned sections.
- Trolleys, dead trees and other items causing blockages have been removed from the rhynes.
- Continuing to respond to reports of blockages within sections under WSC control.
- Creation of a maintenance plan for the rhynes in Minehead, (see below table).

West Somerset Council Land Drainage Maintenance Plan: 2014/2015 Onwards			
Location	Date of Last Maintenance	Frequency	
Zone 1; Southern Lagoon	2013/14 season	1/3 per year or once every 3 rd year	-
Zone 1a; Rhyne flowing into zone 1	No record of works	1/3 per year or once every 3 rd year	-
Zone 2a; Most northerly of northern lagoons	No record of works	1/3 per year or once every 3 rd year	-
Zone 2b; Second lagoon of northern lagoons	2010/11	Every 3 rd year	2014/15
Zone 3; Rhyne flowing toward railway line	2012/13	Every 3 rd year	2015/16
Zone 4; 75 metre rhyne running southerly next to Seaward Way	2010/11	Every 3 rd year	2014/15
Zone 5; Flows from Stephenson way toward northern lagoons	2011/12	Every 3 rd year	2014/15
Zone 6; Rhyne section between King George Playing field and	No record of works	Every 3 rd year	-

green area. (wooden bridge crosses over)			
Zone 7; Rhyne area between Hospital and Allotment	No record of works	Every 3rd year	-
Zone 8a; Rhyne at back of Sure-start centre	2012/13	Every 3rd year	2015/16
Zone 8b; Responsibility unknown	n/a	n/a	-
Zone 9; Nature reserve, (thought to be Badger Trust)	n/a	n/a	-
Zone 10; Nature reserve, (thought to be Badger Trust)	n/a	n/a	-
Inlet Grills and Trash Screens, clearance at various locations in Minehead	Starts 2014/15 season	Monthly	£1,000 pa

- Look into use of vegetation; trees, shrubs and grass help protect the land from erosion by flood water. Encouraged use of vegetation to help break the power of moving flood water.
- Write to riparian owners and remind them of their riparian responsibilities.

5.24 Riparian Ownership and Enforcement

In brief; if you own land or property next to a river, stream, watercourse or ditch you are a riparian landowner, (A watercourse is any natural or artificial channel above or below ground through which water flows, such as a river, brook, beck, ditch, mill stream or culvert).

As a riparian landowner you have rights and responsibilities that have been established in common law for many years, but they may be affected by other laws. You may need permission for some activities from a third party, such as your Local Authority (Unitary, County or District Council), Internal Drainage Board or the Environment Agency. These organisations are known as risk management authorities. The Lead Risk Management Authority in the Somerset region is Somerset County Council.

A more expansive section on the rights and responsibilities of a riparian landowner, quantified by the Environment Agency are laid out in Appendix A. Below is a brief summary;

Riparian Owners Rights:

- You have the right to receive a flow of water in its natural state, without undue interference in quantity or quality.
- You have the right to protect your property against flooding from the watercourse and also to prevent erosion of the watercourse banks or any structures.

Riparian Owner Responsibilities:

- As a riparian owner your responsibilities include the maintenance of the bank and bed of your section of watercourse, in order to avoid any obstruction of flow in the watercourse.

Riparian Owners and the Law; riparian responsibilities are based on legislation summarised in the below Acts of Parliament:

- The Public Health Act 1936.
- The Land Drainage Acts of 1991 and 1994.
- Water Resources Act 1991.
- Environmental Agency Land Drainage Byelaws 1981.

The most common problems affecting watercourses:

- Failing to keep vegetation growth under control.
- Failing to obtain consent for installing pipes or culverting of watercourses.
- Disposal or storage of garden or domestic rubbish, waste etc. on the banks of watercourses.

Enforcement responsibility:

Within Somerset, on main rivers enforcement is the responsibility of the Environment Agency, for ordinary watercourses outside Internal Drainage Board areas it is the County Council and within Internal Drainage Board areas the Internal Drainage Board.

If an owner did not respond to requests from West Somerset Council and the serving of a notice was required, Somerset County Council would have to be involved. The conditions where a notice can be served are limited and would only be used as a last resort.

If a riparian owner failed to comply with a notice they could be prosecuted (but the level of fines are very low). Alternatively, the work required could be carried out, reclaiming the full cost from the riparian owner.

6. FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 West Somerset Council have a 'Land Drainage Budget' that is broken down as follows;

WSC annual Land Drainage Budget	
Lagoons and Flood Maintenance Works	£5,500.00*
Parrett Drainage Board contribution	£2,500.00
Trash Screen / Grill maintenance contract	£1,000.00
	£9,000.00

*Budget monies pertain to the whole of West Somerset areas and not just to the rhynes in Minehead.

Of the monies budgeted for, £2.5k is allocated for work in and around Dunster by the IDB, (Internal Drainage Board, District Councils pay a levy to IDB's, the scale of levy is determined by the IDB and Councils are obliged to pay this levy). West Somerset's IDB is known as The Parrett Drainage Board and the contribution has increased to circa £2,625.00 per year for the last 3 years however; LD Budget has not been increased in-line with this charge. Furthermore, the bill for 2014/15 for the IDB has increased to £2,762.65, (This is a 5½ percent increase on last year) leaving a budget of just £5,237.35 to cover land drainage/flood defence for the whole of West Somerset.

Due to the extreme weather conditions experienced last year, only limited maintenance was carried out. However there were no cost savings to our 'Land Drainage Budget', as all monies were expended assisting with flood alleviation efforts. Such was the effect on West Somerset Council's 'Land Drainage budget' that a budget overspend of circa £7k occurred. This was mostly caused by the public demand on sandbags.

There is a sandbag allocation of £2,000 that sits in the Coastal Protection Budget, this needs to be replicated for the Land Drainage Budget and one of the recommendations of this report, (to raise the Land Drainage Budget by £2,000 allowing for sufficient monies for sandbagging and distribution).

6.2 Cost analysts of the budget spend for the last 4 years is presented in the below tables;

Financial year: 2010 – 2011	
Woolston works	£885.00
Sampford Brett works	£790.00
Orchard Road, Carhampton replacement kerbing to stream	£1,680.00
Porlock replacement grill	£698.00
Minehead; Seaward Way rhynes – side armed	£200.00

Minehead; Rhyne clearing – Seaward Way to Surestart footbridge	£1,250.00
Parrett Drainage Board contribution	£2,625.02
	£8,128.02*

Financial year: 2011 – 2012	
Sampford Brett – maintenance to inlet grill and spilling pond outlet	£850.00
Orchard Road, Carhampton; to excavate base of stream, remove slit	£625.00
Washford ditch clearance	£268.00
Parrett Drainage Board contribution	£2,624.06
	£4,367.06

Financial year: 2012 – 2013	
New Hospital culvet; initial clearance and monthly clearance thereafter	£370.00
Doverhay; new silt trap	£65.00
Washford ditch clearance	£500.00
Minehead; Surestart rhyne area clearance	£1,200.00
Minehead; Lagoon side arming of rhyne banks	£260.00
Parrett Drainage Board contribution	£2,623.87
	£5,018.87*

*Please note £500.00 of this spend was recharged back to Somerset County Council for works carried out on Washford ditch clearance.

Financial year: 2013 – 2014	
Dulverton Mill Leat works	£2,900.00
Clearance South Lagoon, (Minehead Rhyne area)	£2,434.75
Non contract maintenance, (responsive flood works)	£9,325.00
Sandbags, (flood defence)	£6,768.75
	£21,428.50*

*Budget was overspent by £12,428.50 due to the extreme weather events that our region experienced and the responsive works we were required to undertake.

West Somerset Council submitted a Bellwin claim for monies pertaining to the 2013 – 2014 extreme weather events that was successful in gaining £5,175.35. Finance confirm Bellwin monies have been received by West Somerset Council however, monies received cannot be used in this fiscal year as “all expenditure and income was accounted for in the last financial year (2013/14) therefore no costs or income show in the accounts for the current financial year”. A brief on the Bellwin claim has been placed within Appendix A.

6.3 Budget 2014/2015 spend to date

West Somerset Council Annual Land Drainage Budget Spend 2014/2015		
Budget	£9,000.00	Leaving:
Parrett Drainage Board Contribution, Dunster	£2,762.65	£6,237.35
Inlet Grills and Trash Screen Maintenance, Minehead	£1,000.00	£5,237.35

The above table shows £5,237.35 remains of the budget for whole of West Somerset's 'Land Drainage' maintenance.

6. COMMENTS ON BEHALF OF SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 6.1** In respect of the Internal Drainage Board levy the budget should be updated to reflect the current true cost to West Somerset Council. Given the overall financial pressures faced by the council it is recommended that a 'virement' is sought to transfer the necessary funds from another existing budget.
- 6.2** I would also recommend that the same course of action is taken in respect of the monies required to uplift the land drainage budget to cover ongoing sandbag use. This will ensure that budgets can be aligned correctly in future years.

7. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1** **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 are:

- 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. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1** None associated with this report

9. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1** None associated with this report

10. ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1** None associated with this report however, the question is raised are the rhynes an asset?

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1** It is crucial West Somerset Council fully understands the risks to the environment, to assets, to the health and wellbeing of the public associated with flooding and plays its role fully and equitably in addressing flood alleviation.
- 11.2** The environment suffers when floods occur. Chemicals, toxins and other hazardous substances end up in water and eventually contaminate the water bodies that floods end up in.
- 11.3** Flooding kill's animals, and others are introduced to affected areas, distorting the natural balance of the ecosystem.
- 11.4** Cutting reed every two years in rotation is favoured for conservation to provide refuges for birds and invertebrates.

12. 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; able to live normally.
- People of West Somerset are able to live independently.

- At the most extreme effects to the health and wellbeing of our communities, people are injured, loss of life and others made homeless. Water, communication and energy supplies are disrupted and people struggle and suffer as a result.
- Flooding causes the likelihood of diseases and infections; raises the risk of electrocution.
- Livestock are also affected, sometimes insects and other creatures that make their ways to flooded areas.
- During floods (especially flash floods), roads, bridges, farms, houses and cars are destroyed. People become homeless. Firemen, police and other emergency agencies are deployed to help the affected. All these come at a heavy cost to people and to local infrastructure. It usually takes years for affected communities to be re-built and business to come back to normality.
- Contact with polluted waters; Wound infections; dermatitis; conjunctivitis; gastrointestinal illnesses; ear, nose and throat infections; possible serious waterborne disease.
- Damage to water supply systems; sewage and sewage disposal damage, insufficient water supply and possible waterborne infections; E coli, hepatitis A etc.
- Disruption of social networks; loss of property, jobs and family members/friends; possible psychosocial disturbance.
- Inability of households to get property insurance.

13. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

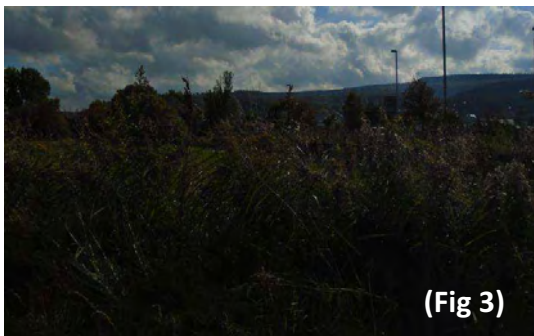
- 13.1** Under the Land Drainage Act 1991 West Somerset Council as a riparian landowner has a duty to maintain all watercourses on its land, to keep these watercourses free of obstructions and debris including anything that would inhibit the free flow of these water courses.
- 13.2** West Somerset council is designated as a 'Risk Management Authority' under the Flood & Water Management Act 2010 and this has some bearing on flood prevention and must;
- Assess the local flood risk
 - Set out objectives for managing local flooding
 - List the costs and benefits of measures proposed to meet these objectives, and how the measures will be paid for.
 - Co-operate with the Lead Local Flood Authority, (Somerset County Council)
 - To provide on request information to Lead Local Flood Authority relating to flooding
- 13.3** District Councils are key partners in planning local flood risk management and can carry out flood risk management works on minor watercourses, working with Lead Local Flood Authorities and others, including through taking decisions on development in their area which ensure that risks are effectively managed. District and unitary councils in coastal areas also act as coastal erosion risk management authorities.
- 13.4** West Somerset Council has similar powers to IDBs relating to flood prevention works on ordinary watercourses that are not within IDB areas. Being also responsible for local land use planning and needing to assess whether proposed new developments may result in flooding or lead to a significantly increased flood risk. Unitary and county councils are lead local flood authorities, required to develop a local flood risk management strategy that sets out the local organisations with responsibility for flood risk in their area and produce a plan for managing flood risk.

Maintenance of 'Rhynes' on West Somerset Council Owned Land in and around Minehead; Report Appendix A.

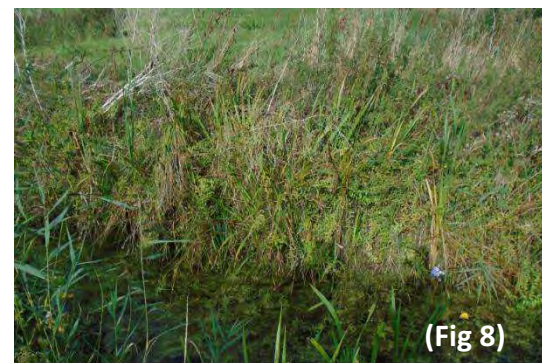
1.1 Point 5.4 – Zone 1;



1.2 Point 5.6 – Zone 2a;



1.3 Point 5.7 – Zone 2b;





1.4 Point 5.8 – Zone 3;



1.5 Point 5.9 – Zone 4;



1.6 Point 5.10 – Zone 5;



1.7 Point 5.11 – Zone 6;



1.8 Point 5.12 – Zone 7;



1.9 Point 5.17 – Zone 11a;



1.10 Point 5.17 – Zone 11b;



1.11 Point 5.17 – Zone 11c;



1.12 Point 5.18 – Marsh Common rhyne;**1.13 Point 5.19 – Internal Drainage Board, (Reed cutting bucket)****1.14 Point 5.25 – Riparian Ownership and Enforcement**

The following passages are taken directly from the Environment Agency – Living on the Edge. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/297423/LI_T_7114_c70612.pdf

Rights and Responsibilities;

If you own land adjoining, above or with a watercourse running through it, you have certain rights and responsibilities. In legal terms you are a ‘riparian owner’. If you rent the land, you should agree with the owner who will manage these rights and responsibilities.

Your rights

- If your land boundary is next to a watercourse it is assumed you own the land up to the centre of the watercourse, unless it is owned by someone else.
- If a watercourse runs alongside your garden wall or hedge you should check your property deeds to see if the wall or hedge marks your boundary. If the watercourse marks the boundary, it is assumed you own the land up to the centre of the watercourse.
- If you own land with a watercourse running through or underneath it, it is assumed you own the stretch of watercourse that runs through your land.

- Occasionally a watercourse, especially an artificial one, will be the responsibility of a third party. This should be noted in your deeds.
- Water should flow onto or under your land in its natural quantity and quality. This means that water should not be taken out of a watercourse if it could lead to a lack of water for those who need it downstream. It also means that a person cannot carry out activities that could lead to pollution of the water and therefore reduce the natural water quality within a watercourse.
- You have the right to protect your property from flooding, and your land from erosion. However, you must get your plans agreed with the risk management authority before you start work.
- You usually have the right to fish in your watercourse using a legal method. Anyone aged 12 or over must have a valid Environment Agency rod licence. It is important to check what your rights are, because fishing rights can be sold or leased.

These rights are affected by your duty to other riparian landowners, the community and the environment.

Your responsibilities

- You must let water flow through your land without any obstruction, pollution or diversion which affects the rights of others. Others also have the right to receive water in its natural quantity and quality as explained in the Your Rights Section. You should be aware that all riparian owners have the same rights and responsibilities.
- You must accept flood flows through your land, even if these are caused by inadequate capacity downstream. A landowner has no duty in common law to improve the drainage capacity of a watercourse he/she owns.
- You should keep the banks clear of anything that could cause an obstruction and increase flood risk, either on your land or downstream if it is washed away. You are responsible for maintaining the bed and banks of the watercourse and the trees and shrubs growing on the banks. You should also clear any litter and animal carcasses from the channel and banks, even if they did not come from your land. You may need your risk management authority's consent for these works (see section 5). Your local authority can advise you on the removal of animal carcasses.
- You should always leave a development-free edge on the banks next to a watercourse. This allows for easy access to the watercourse in case any maintenance or inspection is required. In some areas local byelaws exist which explain what you can and cannot do within certain distances of a watercourse. For more information on works near watercourses you should contact your risk management authority.
- You must keep any structures, such as culverts, trash screens, weirs and mill gates, clear of debris. Discuss the maintenance of flood defences, such as walls and embankments, on your property with your risk management authority. They may be vital for flood protection.
- You should not cause obstructions, temporary or permanent, that would stop fish passing through.
- You have a legal obligation to notify the Environment Agency and the relevant risk management authority if you would like to build or alter a structure that acts as an obstruction to a watercourse. Under the Eel Regulations in some cases it may be an offence if you do not notify the Environment Agency of the above.
- Help to protect water quality. Do not use riverbanks to dispose of garden or other waste, where it could be washed into the river. This includes grass cuttings, which pollute the water.

- You are responsible for protecting your property from water that seeps through natural or artificial banks. Where this damages a flood defence, your risk management authority may require you to pay for repairs. If you are not sure what you have to do and/or are new to living near a watercourse, ask your risk management authority for advice.
- Your property may include a watercourse that runs in a culvert. You have the same responsibilities for the upkeep of the culvert
- You must control invasive alien species such as Japanese knotweed. Your local risk management authority can advise you on how to manage and control these species.
- Make sure any work you do on a watercourse fits with the natural river system. Work must not damage wildlife and wherever possible you should try and improve the habitat. Speak to the relevant risk management authority about wildlife and nature conservation.

If you do not carry out your responsibilities, you could face legal action.

1.15 Enforcement (as defined by the Environment Agency).

The aims of enforcement are to ensure the proper flow of water in a watercourse and over the floodplain; the control of water levels and the security of existing assets. To achieve these aims, enforcement action is used to rectify unlawful and damaging or potentially damaging work, always using a risk based approach.

Enforcement action may be taken where damaging or potentially damaging works have been undertaken without consent or are in contravention to an issued consent.

Some incidents are so serious that immediate action is required to mitigate the risk. Other incidents may only require a letter to the offender so that the requirements are clear. Methods of undertaking enforcement include:

- Site visits and face to face meetings with perpetrator;
- Sending advisory letters
- Sending warning letters;
- Using notices to enforce, prohibit or carry out works;
- Prosecution and reclaiming costs of prosecution;
- Direct remedial action plus recharge of costs of remedial action

1.16 Powers

The powers pertaining to enforcement are contained in the Land Drainage Acts 1991 and 1994, and sections 259 - 265 of the Public Health Act 1936, these are not instantaneous and the process is complicated and can take months to complete; the process can be further exacerbated if the landowner defaults on the notice.

The costs involved in carrying out any such works, plus the administration costs associated with serving the notice are reclaimed from the landowners. The Council will always try to seek an amicable solution to flooding problems.

1.17 The Bellwin Scheme

A brief outline of scheme; The Bellwin scheme was set up under section 155 of the Local Government and Housing Act, 1989. It exists to give special financial assistance to local

authorities which would otherwise be faced with an undue financial burden as a result of providing relief and carrying out immediate work due to large-scale emergencies (usually storms). Where the criteria of the scheme are met, a grant is normally payable to authorities at 85 per cent of the eligible costs incurred above a threshold set for each authority, although occasionally the grant rate is increased to 100%.

A Bellwin scheme may be activated, at the discretion of the Secretary of State, in any case where:

- An emergency or disaster involving destruction of or danger to life or property occurs
- As a result, one or more local authorities incur expenditure on, or in connection with the taking of immediate action to safeguard life or property, or
- To prevent suffering or severe inconvenience in their area or among its inhabitants.
- Councils, police, fire and National park authorities are eligible for Bellwin reimbursement when they have spent more than the usual threshold 0.2 per cent of their calculated annual revenue budget on works which meet the above criteria that have been reported to the Department as eligible for an announced grant scheme.

West Somerset Council applied for assistance following the winter floods of 13/14, receiving £5,175, (please see below table). Monies received did not go back into West Somerset Council's Land Drainage Budget.

West Somerset Council: Bellwin Claim 2013/14

- Estimate of Cost – £13,980.35*
- Less Threshold – £8,805.00
- Net Bellwin Claim – £5,175.35

***Breakdown of costs;**

- Sandbags – £5,139.00
- Tree removal – £2,500.00
- Clearance of debris and unblock watercourses – £5,250.00
- Clearance of debris from highways – £325.00
- Employee costs – £766.35

1.18 The Flood Risk Management Authorities that operate in Somerset

The Environment Agency (EA):

- Manages flooding from main rivers, the sea (including coastal erosion) and reservoirs. The Agency also maintains a strategic overview role for all forms of flooding.

The County Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority for Somerset:

- Manages flooding from sources (surface-water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses). It also has powers to undertake flood risk management work in relation to surface water and groundwater.

The County Council is also the Highway Authority for Somerset:

- Responsibility for managing flooding on the highway. The Highways Agency is not a 'Risk Management Authority' but is responsible for managing flooding on motorways and trunk roads.

Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs):

- Operate in some low lying areas to manage water levels and routine maintenance. IDBs deal with local flooding and drainage issues within their districts.

All District and Borough Councils in Somerset:

- Powers to undertake flood risk management work to ordinary watercourses and those with a shoreline have a responsibility for coastal erosion.
- The County Council and the District and Borough Councils work collectively on Emergency Planning through the Civil Contingencies Partnership.
- Wessex Water and South West Water as sewerage undertakers are responsible for managing sewer flooding across the county.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WORKPLAN 2014/15

2014 13 November	1 December	2015 15 January	12 February	12 March	16 April	May (provisional, date not yet set)	June	July
Notes of key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points	Notes of key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points	Notes of key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points	Notes of key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points	Notes of key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points	Notes of key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points	Notes of key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points	Notes of key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points	Notes of key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points
Cabinet Forward Plan	Cabinet Forward Plan	Cabinet Forward Plan	Cabinet Forward Plan	Cabinet Forward Plan	Cabinet Forward Plan	Cabinet Forward Plan	Cabinet Forward Plan	Cabinet Forward Plan
Proposed Business Case for Shared Legal Service	Discretionary Grants to Voluntary Sector – Update Report	Budget 2015/16 Draft Proposals	JMASS Update (post tier 6)	GP OOH – Update from Somerset NHS Foundation Trust				
Financial Monitoring – April-Sept 2014/15 (6 month review)	Budget 2015/16 Initial Savings Ideas	Service Plans – 2016-2017						
Corporate Performance – April-Sept 2014/15 (6 month review)	Minehead Rhynes and Waterways	Financial Standing and MTFP 2015/16-2017/18						
Scrutiny Committee Workplan Review	Scrutiny Committee Workplan Review	Scrutiny Committee Workplan Review	Scrutiny Committee Workplan Review	Scrutiny Committee Workplan Review	Scrutiny Committee Workplan Review	Scrutiny Committee Workplan Review	Scrutiny Committee Workplan Review	Scrutiny Committee Workplan Review

Items to be scheduled in timetable – GP Out of Hours Provision (New Arrangements) – Somerset CCG available to attend March meeting to update on new arrangements

Note: Members of the Scrutiny Committee and all other Members of West Somerset Council are invited to contribute items for inclusion in the work programme. Please contact Sam Rawle, Scrutiny Officer, who will assist you in submitting your item.

Work Programme – Selection of Items – Progress and Update

Suggested Topic & Issue	Suggested way forward
<p>Secondary Education in West Somerset –</p> <p>Review of the recent process undertaken by SCC to change the secondary education framework in WS.</p>	<p>Discussed at agenda setting meeting 28th July, 2014.</p> <p>Scrutiny Officer to investigate possible invitation to SCC officer to attend a future scrutiny meeting to explain educational framework in WS and review of the recent exercise to change the secondary education age ranges.</p> <p>Update Scrutiny Meeting 7th August 2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggested that local academies should be scrutinised along with exam results benchmarked against national tables and judge whether West Somerset pupils are getting good value in the education sector. • Members requested that the WSCC be invited to scrutiny for discussions as to how they aim to address their funding gap in future years. It was proposed that this item be included on the agenda for the December meeting with College and SCC representatives invited to attend. <p>Update Scrutiny agenda setting meeting – 1st September</p> <p>It was considered that to fully understand the issues surrounding this topic that the best approach would be to set up a scrutiny task and finish review group so that a focused enquiry could be carried out and to ensure that the appropriate witnesses would have the opportunity to contribute to the review.</p> <p>Nominations from interested Scrutiny Members to be part of the review shall be considered at the scrutiny meeting on the 11th September as part of the work plan item.</p> <p><u>Update 11th September</u> <i>At the Scrutiny Committee meeting of 11th September Members agreed to set up a task and finish group to take the topic forward.</i></p> <p><u>Update 16th October</u> <i>The Task & Finish Group have requested information from WSCC & SCC as part of their investigations. A meeting with representatives from SCC provisionally scheduled for the 10th December.</i></p>
<p>Voluntary Sector – Update report from organisations currently receiving a grant from WSC</p>	<p>Members are asked to consider whether they would like an item concerning updates from the remaining voluntary sector organisations that the Council supports. Scrutiny Committee have received an update from the QHAONB and an update is scheduled for Engage WS to attend the October meeting.</p>

	<p>The update would take the form of a written report from officers as opposed to presentations from the individual organisations.</p> <p><u>Update 11th September</u> <i>At the Scrutiny Committee meeting of 11th September Members agreed to receive a report for their November meeting providing an update from the voluntary sector partners currently receiving a grant from the Council.</i></p> <p><u>Update 16th October</u> Report to be considered at 1st December Scrutiny meeting</p>
<p>Minehead Rhynes and Waterways – roles and responsibilities</p>	<p>This item was scheduled for the October meeting. Officers have been unable to complete the necessary investigations concerning the responsibilities that the district council hold in relation to this matter and have requested that the item is carried over to a later meeting. Officers have also requested that the item be considered by the Environment PAG prior to a report to the Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p><u>Update 11th September</u> At the Scrutiny Committee meeting of 11th September, Members agreed that the item be considered by the Environment PAG before being considered by the Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p><u>Update 16th October</u> A report concerning this issue will be considered by Environment PAG on the 12th November and Scrutiny Committee on the 1st December.</p>
<p>Update reports from WSC representatives on outside bodies</p>	<p>Suggestion that Scrutiny Committee could ask for an update report where an annual update has not been previously received by any Committee or PAG.</p> <p>The topic was discussed at the agenda setting meeting on 6 October. It was suggested that the Scrutiny & Performance Officer would bring together a report for the December meeting detailing the current process to enable Members to consider whether this is adequate and whether any improvements could be recommended.</p> <p><u>Update 16th October</u> Scrutiny Officer to identify outside body organisations where an annual report has not been received and report to Scrutiny Committee.</p>
<p>GP Out of Hours Provision – Consideration of new service provision for West Somerset</p>	<p>Discussed at agenda setting meeting 28th July, 2014.</p>

	<p>Scrutiny Officer to write to Somerset CCG with an invitation to future meeting to provide clarification of new arrangements.</p> <p><u>Latest Update</u> Somerset CCG have confirmed that the preferred bidder decision will be made at the December Governing Board meeting. Start date of the new service will be June 2015.</p> <p>Ann Anderson, Director of Clinical Commissioning confirmed attendance at the March Scrutiny meeting to update members of new arrangements.</p>
<p>JMASS update (post Tier 6 implementation)</p>	<p>Suggestion submitted by Shirlene Adam, Director of Operations Discussed at agenda setting meeting 3rd November – proposal that this item to be scheduled for February meeting subject to Committee approval. Agreed at the Scrutiny Committee meeting 13 November that this item to be scheduled for February.</p>
<p>Transformation Award Funding</p>	<p>Suggestion submitted by Cllr K Ross Discussed at agenda setting meeting 3rd November – proposal that this item to be scheduled for February meeting subject to Committee approval. Agreed at the Scrutiny Committee meeting 13 November that this would be incorporated into the item concerning the JMASS update for February.</p>