

## **The Council's Vision:**

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

### **CABINET**

**Meeting to be held on 5 February 2014 at 4.30 pm**

**Council Chamber, Williton**

### **AGENDA**

1. **Apologies for Absence**

2. **Minutes**

Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held on 8 January 2014 to be approved and signed as a correct record – **SEE ATTACHED.**

3. **Declarations of Interest**

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

4. **Public Participation**

The Leader to advise the Cabinet 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. **Forward Plan**

To approve the latest Forward Plan published on 28 January 2014 – **SEE ATTACHED.**

6. **Cabinet Action Plan**

To update the Cabinet on the progress of resolutions and recommendations from previous meetings – **SEE ATTACHED.**

7. **Annual Budget and Council Tax Setting 2014-15**

To consider Report No. WSC 24/14, to be presented by Councillor K V Kravis, Lead Member for Resources and Central Support – **SEE ATTACHED.**

## **The Council's Vision:**

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The purpose of the report is to provide Members with all information required for Cabinet to recommend the proposed revenue budget and capital programme for 2014/15 to Full Council.

### **8. Fees and Charges 2014/15**

To consider Report No. WSC 23/14, to be presented by Councillor K V Kravis, Lead Member for Resources and Central Support – **SEE ATTACHED**.

The purpose of the report is to propose levels of fees and charges for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 (in some cases fee increases will be implemented earlier, this will be stated in the relevant sections of the report).

### **9. 2015/16 Council Tax Rebate Scheme Consultation**

To consider Report No. WSC 5/14, to be presented by Councillor D J Westcott, Lead Member for Community and Customer – **SEE ATTACHED**.

The purpose of the report is to inform Cabinet of the options modelled to incentivise work and encourage people to remain in employment, and seek their recommendations with regards to which should be used as a basis of consultation with the public.

### **10. Allocation of Seaside Strategy Funding**

To consider Report No. WSC 25/14, to be presented by Councillor K M Mills, Lead Member for Regeneration and Economic Growth – **SEE ATTACHED**.

The purpose of the report is to make proposals for the allocation and use of the residue of the Seaside Strategy funding earmarked reserve for schemes in Minehead.

## **COUNCILLORS ARE REMINDED TO CHECK THEIR POST TRAYS**

### **The Council's Corporate Priorities:**

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

### **The Council's Core Values:**

- Integrity
- Respect
- Fairness
- Trust

**CABINET****MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2014****AT 4.30 PM****IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WILLITON****Present:**

Councillor T Taylor ..... Leader

Councillor K V Kravis  
Councillor C Morgan  
Councillor A H Trollope-Bellew  
Councillor D J WestcottCouncillor K M Mills  
Councillor S J Pugsley  
Councillor K H Turner**Members in Attendance:**Councillor G S Dowding  
Councillor B Heywood  
Councillor D D Ross  
Councillor M A SmithCouncillor A P Hadley  
Councillor E May  
Councillor K J Ross**Officers in Attendance:**Director of Operations (S Adam)  
Assistant Chief Executive (B Lang)  
Assistant Director Business Development (I Timms)  
Section 151 Officer (S Campbell)  
Economic Regeneration Manager (C Matthews)  
Director of Housing and Communities (J Barrah)  
Assistant Director Housing and Communities (S Lewis)  
Interim Executive Director (A Dyer)  
Meeting Administrator (K Kowalewska)

The Leader introduced and welcomed to the meeting two of the newly appointed officers on the Joint Management Team who were attending their first meeting of the Cabinet - James Barrah, Director of Housing and Communities and Simon Lewis, Assistant Director of Housing and Communities.

At the start of the meeting Councillor E May, on behalf of the Council, took the opportunity to thank all those concerned who helped to protect people and properties during the recent severe weather in the district. He also congratulated all the local people on the Queen's New Year Honours List.

**CAB81     Apologies for Absence**

No apologies for absence were received.

**CAB82 Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 December 2013**

(Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held on 4 December 2013 - circulated with the Agenda.)

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held on 4 December 2013 be confirmed as a correct record.

**CAB83 Declarations of Interest**

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

Name	Minute No.	Member of	Action Taken
Councillor K H Turner	All	Brompton Ralph	Spoke and voted
Councillor D J Westcott	All	Watchet	Spoke and voted
Councillor K J Ross	All	Dulverton	Spoke

In addition, the following interests were declared:

Name	Minute No.	Description of interest	Personal or Prejudicial	Action Taken
Cllr K V Kravis	CAB88	Private landowner	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr T Taylor	CAB88	Private landowner	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr A H Trollope-Bellew	CAB88	Private landowner	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr K H Turner	CAB88	Private landowner	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr D J Westcott	CAB88	Private landowner	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr A P Hadley	CAB89	Shop owner selling tobacco	Personal	Spoke

Note: Councillor C Morgan also declared that he considered himself to be predetermined in regard to the proposed discussion in relation to Agenda Item 9 Tobacco Declaration and therefore left the Chamber for this item.

**CAB84 Public Participation**

No member of the public had requested to speak.

**CAB85 Forward Plan**

(Copy of latest Forward Plan published 19 December 2013 – circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of this item was to approve the latest Forward Plan published 19 December 2013.<sub>2</sub>

**RESOLVED** that, subject to amending the relevant contact officer details to reflect the new Joint Management Structure, the latest Forward Plan published 19 December 2013 be approved.

**CAB86**      **Cabinet Action Plan**

(Copy of the Action Plan – circulated with the Agenda.)

**RESOLVED** that CAB76 – Review of Financial Regulations be deleted as actioned as it was to be considered at the Council meeting to be held on 22 January 2014.

**CAB87**      **Low Cost Home Ownership Scheme**

(Report No. WSC 2/14, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to outline to Members the proposed amendment to the Council's Low Cost Home Ownership Policy, in particular how it related to the sale of properties at Clanville Grange in Minehead and the circumstances that had led to these proposals being made.

The Lead Member for Housing, Health and Welfare presented the item and advised that the change to the Policy was being proposed due to it becoming impossible for prospective purchasers of properties at Clanville Grange to obtain a mortgage offer as a result of the existence of the Deed of Pre-emption (which imposed a legal requirement for the Council to buy the property back whenever it came onto the market). Following legal advice the Lead Member advised that the Policy would be amended via a Covenant and Legal Charge and confirmed that these properties would then be brought into line with all other low cost homes in the district. He also drew Members' attention to what the Council's involvement would be as a result of this amendment.

The Lead Member proposed the recommendations with an addition to the wording printed in the report so that they were 'subject to recommendation to Council', which were duly seconded by Councillor K V Kravis.

Following a request for clarification regarding the legal implications on how the proposal would affect the properties at Clanville that were not currently in the Council's ownership, the Lead Member explained that the owners of the properties would be notified of the new sales mechanism and it would be down to the homeowner as to whether they proceeded with the new proposal. If the homeowner did not wish to proceed the Council would be obligated to buy the house back at the time when the property was put on the market.

Members discussed in length the possibility of selling the three properties on the open market to develop more affordable houses. The Assistant Director Business Development advised that the prospect of producing a viable amount of money to provide a decent sized development was

limited. He reported that the proposal was valid and had been considered but due to the impracticalities and the current market trends had been put to one side. He confirmed that the report to be presented to Council would be amended to clarify the issue.

**RESOLVED (1)** that it be recommended to Council that the proposal be accepted so that the mechanism for selling properties at Clanville Grange be amended and that a discount of 25% be applied. In line with other Low Cost Home Ownership properties secured across the District, their affordability in perpetuity will be secured by Covenant rather than a Deed of Pre-emption.

**RESOLVED (2)** that it be recommended to Council to amend the Council's Low Cost Home Ownership Policy to take account of these changes.

**CAB88**      **Somerset Strategic Housing Framework and West Somerset Action Plan**

(Report No. WSC 3/14, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to outline to Members the proposed Somerset Strategic Housing Framework 2013 – 2016 and the supporting West Somerset Action Plan.

The report was presented by the Lead Member for Housing, Health and Welfare and it was agreed that the wording of the Outcome for Key Area of Focus 1.7 within the 'Somerset Strategic Housing Framework: West Somerset Action Plan' should be amended and Action No. 1.15 deleted to reflect that the New Homes Bonus would not be ring fenced as capital funding for housing related matters in West Somerset in order to maximise housing supply.

The Lead Member proposed the recommendations contained in the report which were seconded by Councillor D J Westcott.

During the discussion of this item it was noted that the wording of Key Task 2.2 with the Contribution to Corporate Priorities section of the report be amended to read 'Facilitate the delivery of 80 affordable homes within the West Somerset area by 31 March 2014'.

**RESOLVED (1)** that the Somerset Strategic Housing Framework (attached at Appendix A to the report) be endorsed for formal adoption by Council.

**RESOLVED (2)** that the principles of the West Somerset Action Plan (attached at Appendix B to the report) be endorsed and it be noted that further enhancements to delivery may be made prior to submission to Council for adoption.

**CAB89     Tobacco Declaration**

(Report No. WSC 4/14, circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to outline the issues relating to tobacco and health and for Cabinet to consider recommending that Council sign the Tobacco Declaration.

The Lead Member for Housing, Health and Welfare presented the item and advised that this was the first report emanating from the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Members undertook an in-depth discussion and concerns about signing the Declaration at this stage were raised. Members wished to convey the Council's continued support to the Health and Wellbeing Board going forward and its non-smoking initiative, however, although Members were absolutely clear on the serious impacts of smoking they questioned whether the Council should commit to signing up to specific actions before a fully developed action plan and a mechanism to monitor progress was in place.

During the debate there was a request to provide clarification that West Somerset Council did not participate in any of the points raised in paragraph 5.9 of the report and the Assistant Director Business Development confirmed that this would be provided following the meeting.

The Assistant Director Housing and Communities advised that there were concerns about the specific wording of the Declaration when the matter was considered at Taunton Deane Borough Council and following clarification received from the Health and Wellbeing Board at Somerset County Council, Taunton Deane was of the opinion that the Declaration was about intention rather than a commitment. The Assistant Director noted the points of concern and advised that he would obtain further assurance on the issues raised and report back accordingly.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support proposed an amendment to the recommendation in the report to make it clear that the Cabinet wholeheartedly supported the intentions of the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control and would continue working with the Health and Wellbeing Board to clarify detailed expectations and requirements to enable the document to be signed on behalf of the authority. The amended recommendation was seconded by Councillor K H Turner.

**RESOLVED** that Cabinet wholeheartedly support the intentions of the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control and would continue working with the Health and Wellbeing Board to clarify detailed expectations and requirements to enable the document to be signed on behalf of the authority prior to it being recommended to Council for approval.

**CAB90      Non Recovery of Debts in respect of SW Apprenticeship Company and Dunster Holdings Ltd**

(Report No. WSC 6/14, circulated with the Agenda. An Appendix entitled 'Western Somerset – Local Action for Rural Communities' was circulated at the start of the meeting.)

The purpose of the report was to seek Cabinet approval in accordance with the Financial Regulations to authorise individual write offs in excess of £5,000.

The Assistant Director Business Development presented the item and reported that all avenues to recover the debts had been pursued concerning the two write off requests. He drew Members' attention to the circulated appendix and advised that despite the SW Apprenticeship Company debt, the Starting Out and Lifting Off project was still delivered and was very successful. He also highlighted that with regards to the Non Domestic Rates write off, the Council would bear 20% of the actual debt.

Councillor K H Turner proposed the recommendation in the report which was seconded by Councillor K M Mills.

During the discussion there was a request that a report in respect of the Starting Out and Lifting Off project be presented to a future meeting of the Economic Development Policy Advisory Group in order for Members to debate the matter further.

**RESOLVED** that the write off of an unpaid invoice for £13,024 and an unpaid Non Domestic Rates account of £14,542.31 be agreed. The Companies had either gone into administration or were being wound up therefore no further recovery action could be taken and both debts were deemed uncollectable.

The meeting closed at 6.03 pm



7  
Weekly version of Forward Plan published on 28 January 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/14/3/01 1/03/2013	5 March 2014  By Councillor T Taylor – Leader of Council and Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Corporate Performance &amp; Budget Monitoring Report 2013-14 – Quarter 3</b>  Decision: to provide Members with an update on progress in delivering corporate priorities, performance of council services including budgetary information and customer satisfaction.		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/14/3/02 19/03/2013	5 March 2014  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 listing		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/14/3/03 4/07/2013	5 March 2014  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, Planning Manager 01984 635245
FP/14/3/04 18/01/2013	5 March 2014  By Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Draft Capital Programme 2013-14 and Capital Strategy</b>  Decision: to present the draft Capital Programme 2013/14 and draft Capital Strategy for recommendation to Council.		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Section 151 Officer
FP/14/3/05 25/10/12	5 March 2014  By Councillor A	Title: Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-19		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Angela Lamplough, Climate Change & Community Liaison

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
	Trollope-Bellew – Lead Member for Environment - General	Decision: To endorse the Management Plan as a cohesive means to safeguard the unique beauty and distinctive character of the Quantock Hills.			Manager 01984 635318
FP/14/3/06 18/01/2013	5 March 2014 By Councillor T Taylor – Leader of Council	Title: <b>Draft Corporate Plan for 2014-15</b>  Decision: to introduce the draft West Somerset Council Corporate Plan 2014/15 for recommendation to Council.		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Chief Executive
FP/14/4/01 19/03/2013	2 April 2014 By Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Allocation of Section 106 funds held – Quarter 4</b>  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/14/4/02 19/03/2013	2 April 2014 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 listing		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/14/9/03 4/07/2013	2 April 2014 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, Planning 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/14/5/01 23/05/2013	7 May 2014  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 listing		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/14/5/02 4/07/2013	7 May 2014  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, Planning Manager 01984 635245
FP/14/6/01 23/05/2013	June 2014	Title: <b>Cabinet Appointments on Outside Bodies</b>  Decision: to appoint representatives to serve on outside bodies for the period to the Annual Meeting in 2014 (except where specific periods are stated).		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/14/6/02 23/05/2013	June 2014  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 listing		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/14/6/03 4/07/2013	June 2014  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, Planning 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/14/7/01  23/05/2013	July 2014  By Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Allocation of Section 106 funds held – Quarter 1</b>  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/14/7/02  23/05/2013	July 2014  By Councillor T Taylor – Leader of Council and Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Corporate Performance &amp; Budget Monitoring Report 2013-14 – Quarter 4</b>  Decision: to provide Members with an update on progress in delivering corporate priorities, performance of council services including budgetary information and customer satisfaction.		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/14/7/03  23/05/2013	July 2014  By Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Review of Financial Regulations [FR2]</b>  Decision: to offer comment on the Financial Regulations.		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/14/7/04  23/05/2013	July 2014  By Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Medium Term Financial Plan Update</b>  Decision: to present the updated Medium Term Financial Plan.		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Section 151 Officer 01984 635253 01823 355482

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/14/7/05  23/05/2013	July 2014  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 listing		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/14/7/06  4/07/2013	July 2014  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, Planning Manager 01984 635245
FP/13/8/01  25/07/2013	August 2014  By Councillor T Taylor – Leader of Council and Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Corporate Performance &amp; Budget Monitoring Report 2013-14 – Quarter 4</b>  Decision: to provide Members with an update on progress in delivering corporate priorities, performance of council services including budgetary information and customer satisfaction.		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/14/8/02  25/07/2013	August 2014  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 listing		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/14/9/01  24/09/2013	September 2014  By Councillor T Taylor – Leader of Council and Councillor K V Kravis –	Title: <b>Corporate Performance &amp; Budget Monitoring Report 2014-15 – Quarter 1</b>  Decision: to provide Members		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
	Lead Member Resources & Central Support	with an update on progress in delivering corporate priorities, performance of council services including budgetary information and customer satisfaction.			
FP/14/9/02 24/09/2013	September 2014 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 listing		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200
FP/14/10/01 24/09/2013	October 2014 By Councillor K V Kravis – Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Allocation of Section 106 funds held – Quarter 2</b>  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/14/10/02 24/09/2013	October 2014 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 listing		No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive 01984 635200

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

## CABINET ACTION PLAN

Date/Minute Number	Action Required	Action Taken
<p><b>8 JANUARY 2014</b></p> <p>CAB87 – Low Cost Home Ownership Scheme</p>	<p><b><u>RESOLVED (1)</u></b> that it be recommended to Council that the proposal be accepted so that the mechanism for selling properties at Clanville Grange be amended and that a discount of 25% be applied. In line with other Low Cost Home Ownership properties secured across the District, their affordability in perpetuity will be secured by Covenant rather than a Deed of Pre-emption.</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED (2)</u></b> that it be recommended to Council to amend the Council's Low Cost Home Ownership Policy to take account of these changes.</p>	<p>At the Council meeting on 22 January 2014, it was <b><u>RESOLVED</u></b> that the proposed changes to the Low Cost Home Ownership Scheme as detailed in Section 5 of the report be accepted.</p>
<p>CAB88 – Somerset Strategic Housing Framework and West Somerset Action Plan</p>	<p><b><u>RESOLVED</u></b> that the Somerset Strategic Housing Framework be endorsed for formal adoption by Council.</p>	<p>At the Council meeting on 22 January 2014, it was <b><u>RESOLVED(1)</u></b> that that the Somerset Strategic Housing Framework be adopted.</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED (2)</u></b> that Cabinet's endorsement of the principles of the West Somerset Action Plan, which supports the Somerset Strategic Housing Framework, and which will be submitted to a future Council meeting following further consideration, be noted.</p>
<p>CAB89 – Tobacco Declaration</p>	<p><b><u>RESOLVED</u></b> that Cabinet wholeheartedly support the intentions of the Local Government Declaration on Tobacco Control and would continue working with the Health and Wellbeing Board to clarify detailed expectations and requirements to enable the document to be signed on behalf of the authority prior to it being recommended to Council for approval.</p>	





*Report Number:* WSC 24/14  
*Presented by:* Cllr Kate Kravis, Lead Member for Finance & Resources  
*Author of the Report:* Sharon Campbell  
*Contact Details:*

*Tel. No. Direct Line* 01984 635253  
*Email:* scampbell@westsomerset.gov.uk

*Report to a Meeting of:* Cabinet  
*To be Held on:* 5<sup>th</sup> February 2014  
*Date Entered on Executive Forward Plan Or Agreement for Urgency Granted:* 18<sup>th</sup> January 2012

## ANNUAL BUDGET & COUNCIL TAX SETTING 2014/15

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with all information required for Cabinet to recommend the proposed revenue budget and capital programme for 2014/15 to Full Council.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That Cabinet recommends to Full Council:
- 2.2. That Council accepts the Council Tax Freeze Grant and thus does not increase Council Tax unless Government sets the capping referendum rate at more than 2%.
- 2.3. The revenue budget for 2014/15 as presented in **Appendix A**
- 2.4. The schedule of savings as shown in **Appendix B, Table 10** (as recommended by Scrutiny), balancing the remainder of the budget using general reserves
- 2.5. The revised Medium-Term Financial Plan in **Appendix B, Table 2**

### 3. RISK ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

#### Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
The obvious key risk is that the Council suddenly becomes financially unsustainable resulting in it being unable to deliver services.	Likely (4)	Catastrophic (5)	<b>Very High (20)</b>
<i>The mitigation is that a budget is approved that reflects a Medium Term Financial Plan that demonstrates sustainability</i>	Rare (1)	Catastrophic (5)	<b>Low (5)</b>

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 All necessary background information has been provided in the Budget setting paper 2014/15 (**Appendices A and B**), provided with this report
- 4.2 Trying to construct a reliably accurate MTFP and associated budget for 2014/15 continues to be difficult due to continued reductions in government funding and the forecasting needed for NNDR retention figures.
- 4.3 The Financial Settlement for West Somerset, plus further predicted significant future reductions in Government Rate Support Grant Funding, means that the Council needs to make considerable savings over the next few years. The shared working arrangements with Taunton Deane Borough Council will help address some of the shortfall but more still needs to be done.
- 4.4 There have been changes to the MTFP position since Scrutiny and the main variances are as follows
- 4.4.1 An increase in retained National Non-Domestic rates of £236,734 following more clarity about the accounting arrangements for old appeals (and a removal of the transfer from Business Rates Reserve line)
  - 4.4.2 A freeze in Council Tax (from an increase of 3.6%), which accounts for £45,306 after the freeze grant
  - 4.4.3 Loss of income from 3 car parks following transfers (£14,500)
  - 4.4.4 Increase in the general reserve carried forward to allow for 2013/14 forecast underspends (£99,600) and the anticipated surplus on the collection fund (£45,900). Part of this will be used to cover the additional interest (£42,850) due to the delay in paying off the external loan
- 4.5 Following the transfer of the toilet block at Kilve beach Veolia have agreed to clean the Carousel Toilets in Minehead from April to November within the existing contractual payment.
- 4.4 In these times and circumstances, It is very important that the council has clear priorities to ensure that it is able to focus its limited resource on the things that are important for West Somerset. The Corporate Plan 2014-17 identifies just two priorities as described below: -

##### 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 potential development whilst protecting local communities and the environment.

#### **5. FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 These are contained within the appendices to this report.

#### **6. SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTS**

- 6.1 The council's forecast financial position at the end of 2013/14 shows minimum risk-assessed balances of at least £500,000 in place, with earmarked reserves financing a number of one-off projects that feature outside of the ongoing revenue budget.
- 6.2 Whilst the council is able to set a budget for 2014/15, using savings already identified and general reserves, the long term financial forecast shows significant savings are still required to set a balanced budget for 15/16 and from then onwards.

6.3 It is a requirement of the Local Government Act 2003 that the Section 151 Officer advises on the adequacy of reserves and the robustness of the budget.

6.3.1 *Adequacy of Reserves* - An assessment of reserves was made for the 2012/13 budget, the major change since then has been in the way that Local Government is funded and a new earmarked reserve has been created to mitigate the risks of major refunds of NNDR. General Fund and Earmarked Revenue Reserves at 31 March 2014 are forecast to be above minimum risk-assessed levels and I recommend that the current and future Councils maintain them at no less than £500,000.

6.3.2 *Robustness of the Budget* - It is the assessment of the Section 151 Officer that the budget as presented does provide a robust budget based on all the information available at the time of writing.

## **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:

- 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

There are no direct implications associated with the recommendations in this report

## **8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no specific implications from the recommendations in the report.

## **9. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 It is not thought that there are any equalities impacts from the identified savings for 2014/15.

9.2 The Scrutiny Committee received a report in November 2013 to highlight the overall budget position and given the opportunity to scrutinise the proposed savings. The resolutions were as follows:

- That the Scrutiny Committee recommend to Council the savings totalling £121,027 for 2014/15 as set out in the report, to balance the budget (the interest saving has subsequently been delayed until 15/16)
- That the identification of the preferred savings options for 2015/16 and 2016/17 be deferred and that a Members Seminar be arranged in order to identify saving options for 2015/16 and 2016/17.

## **10. ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Maintenance of the council's estate has been included in the capital programme, as informed by the Asset Management Group and Asset Management Plan.

## **11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 There are none directly in respect of this report.

## **12. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 It is a legal requirement that the council sets a balanced budget, i.e. one that does not result in a deficit using available sources of revenue (including reserves). Further legal requirements relating to the setting of Council Tax and the new Business Rate Retention scheme are listed in **Appendix 'A'**.
- 12.2 The Local Government Act 2000 states that it is the responsibility of Full Council, on the recommendation of Cabinet, to approve the budget and related council tax demand. The Act makes it clear that the role of Scrutiny in the financial process is to hold the Executive (Cabinet) to account and to ensure that decision making is efficient, transparent and accountable.

## Appendix A

**West Somerset Council Budget Setting Papers 2014/15**

This paper brings together the background information for the Tax Set for the General Fund for the financial year commencing 1 April 2014.

The Council  
COUNCIL TAX 2014/15  
SECTION 151 OFFICER.  
To be submitted 19th February 2014

**1. Legal Requirement**

The District Council is required to set the Council Tax for the financial year starting 1 April 2014 by no later than 11<sup>th</sup> March each year (3 weeks before the new financial year). West Somerset is the billing authority for the district area and must, therefore, set and collect the Tax on behalf of Somerset County Council, Avon and Somerset Police Authority and Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue. As well as its own expenditure on the provision of services, it must also take account of local precepts issued by the parishes and towns in the District.

Once the Council Tax has been set the process of billing taxpayers can begin. The tax set meeting is arranged for 19<sup>th</sup> February 2014, by which time all the precepts should have been received. Any precepts not received will be assumed at 2013/14 figures. Parish precepts will be advised to Council on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2014

**2. Business Rate Retention Scheme**

As described above all local authorities are required to submit what is called a NNDR1 (National Non Domestic Rates) form by 31<sup>st</sup> January each year. As this paper is written prior to the information being available we have based the figures on the mid-year estimate adjusted for inflation at 2% and assuming 5% for appeals in year.

**Estimate of NNDR1**

Table 1

<b>Net Yield</b>		<b>£11,812,910</b>
Amounts Retained		
Government Share (50%)	£5,906,455	
WSC Share (40%)	£4,725,164	
SCC Share (18% of 50%)	£1,063,162	
Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Share (2% of 50%)	£118,129	<b>£11,812,910</b>
<b>WSC Retained</b>		£4,725,164
Less: Tariff to Government (uprated for inflation)		£2,979,434
Sub Total		£1,745,730
Less: WSC Baseline Funding (uprated for inflation)		£1,071,130
Gross Retention		£674,600
Less: Maximum 50% Levy Payment to Government		£337,300
<b>NET AMOUNT RETAINED BY WSC</b>		<b>£337,300</b>

### 3. Current MTFP

#### WEST SOMERSET MTFP AS AT 21<sup>st</sup> JANUARY 2014

Table 2

Detail	14/15 £	15/16 £	16/17 £
Starting Budget	5,036,645	5,344,124	4,908,477
Inflation & pension deficit	157,218	157,773	193,356
Pressures	228,438	-67,700	26,958
Savings found/to find	-78,177	-525,720	-151,976
<b>Total Spend (b)</b>	<b>5,344,124</b>	<b>4,908,477</b>	<b>4,976,815</b>
<b>Funded By</b>			
Council Tax	1,823,221	1,859,685	1,896,879
Council Tax Freeze Grant	20,547	20,547	
Revenue Support Grant	1,224,425	838,063	754,257
Council Tax Benefit & Housing Benefit Admin Grant	240,683	240,683	240,683
New Homes Bonus	444,109	600,512	699,387
National Non-Domestic Rates Retention	1,408,430	1,429,346	1,457,933
Less parish grant	-87,530	-80,359	-72,323
Welfare Reform	59,659	0	0
<b>Total Income (c)</b>	<b>5,133,544</b>	<b>4,908,477</b>	<b>4,976,815</b>
<b>Movement in Reserves</b>			
General Reserves Brought Forward (a)	1,143,816	825,396	725,396
Transfer from (New Homes Bonus) (d)	-51,820	0	0
Transfer to (safety net and welfare reform) (e)	159,659	100,000	0
<b>Total General Reserves(a-b+c+d-e)</b>	<b>825,396</b>	<b>725,396</b>	<b>725,396</b>

Note pressures - £175,500 for Minimum Revenue Provision in 14/15 reducing by £67,700 in 15/16 then a further £50,100 in 16/17  
£38,438 re loss of Hinkley Point C contribution to permanent West Somerset Council staff costs in 14/15  
£14,500 re reduction in car park income  
£77,058 impact of pension reforms re contracting out in 16/17

Note that the recommended level of general reserves is £500,000

#### 4. The General Fund 2014/15

The proposed budget for 2014/15 is based on levels of funding including, Revenue Support Grant, Various Other Grants, New Homes Bonus, Council Tax, Baseline Funding through National Non-Domestic Rates Retention and Business Rate Retention in excess of its baseline funding.

Of these funding streams the Council has no ability to influence the level of Revenue Support Grant, Various Other Grants and its Baseline Funding through National Non-Domestic Rates Retention. Of the others it has a limited ability to increase Council Tax because of government policies and limited ability to generate significant amounts of New Homes Bonus because of planning policies that cover the majority

of the district. That only leaves the ability to generate Business Rate Retention by encouraging economic growth that generates increased business rate income. But like other funding streams the ability to do this is limited. The exception to this is the proposed future new nuclear development at Hinkley Point. The balance in the equation is the net cost of its services, with contributions from revenue and / or earmarked reserves available as one-off revenue income. This is shown in **table 3** below.

<b>West Somerset Council Budget 2014/15 - Table 3</b>	
<b>Revenue Budget 2014/15</b>	<b>£</b>
Net Expenditure	5,422,301
Less: Savings identified	-78,177
<b>Cost of services</b>	<b>5,344,124</b>
<b>FINANCED BY</b>	
Council Tax	1,823,221
Council Tax Freeze Grant	20,547
Revenue Support Grant	1,224,425
C Tax Support Admin. Grant	240,683
New Homes Bonus	444,109
Business Rate Retention	1,745,730
Business Rate Retention Levy	-337,300
C Tax Support – Grant to Parishes	-87,530
C Tax Support – New Burdens Funding	59,659
Collection Fund	-
<b>Income</b>	<b>5,133,544</b>
<b>DEFICIT / (SURPLUS) IN YEAR</b>	<b>210,581</b>
<b>General Fund Balance</b>	
Year End General Fund 2013/14	1,143,816
Transfer from Earmarked Reserves	51,820
Transfer to Earmarked Reserves	(159,659)
<b>Year End General Fund 2014/15</b>	<b>825,396</b>

##### **5. The District Council's Budget-Setting Process – Principles**

The figures in the budget are calculated based on the following assumptions

- Council Tax is frozen for 2014/15
- A 1% pay award to staff
- Inflation of £85,000
- Pension Deficit Recovery will increase by £50,000
- The total amount of business rate refunds and write-offs does not exceed 5% of the annual yield
- A Minimum Revenue Provision of £195,500 is required (receipts due from asset sales delayed to 2014/15)
- The renewal of an outstanding loan in February 2014
- Following the removal of the parking meter in Parsons Street Car Park, the transfer of Kilve Car Park and the new agreement for the Dulverton Car Parks the car parking income has reduced by £17,800; this means that following some other small budget adjustments the pressure for 2014/15 will be £14,500.
- The delayed saving from the repayment of the external loan will be covered by 2013/14 underspends

## 6. The Council Tax charge for 2014/15

The tax base is calculated by taking the number of chargeable dwellings in the District converted to the equivalent number of band D properties. This figure is then typically reduced to reflect potential losses in collection and the effects of the Council Tax support scheme and then increased to reflect Technical Council Tax Reforms. Details of the calculation for 2014/15 are shown in **table 4** below

<b>Council Tax Base Calculation – Table 4</b>	
Gross Tax Base	15,354.7
Reduction for Council Tax Support	-1,895.3
	13,459.4
Losses in Collection	-230.4
Net Total	13,229.0

The Council Tax charge for the year is simply the District's precept requirement divided by the Tax Base.

$$\frac{\text{Council Tax Requirement 2013/14}}{\text{Tax Base (number of Band Ds) Equivalent}} = \frac{\pounds 1,823,221}{13,229} = \pounds 137.82 \text{ per band D}$$

The Council will continue to receive a government grant equal to a 2.5% increase in council tax in 2014/15 for freezing its Council Tax in 2011/12 (this is now included within Revenue Support Grant). For 2014/15 the government are again encouraging local authorities to freeze their council tax by offering a grant equivalent to a 1% increase.

As far as 'capping' increases in council tax the government last year set a general 2% threshold, any increase exceeding this limit would trigger the requirement for a referendum to be held. However, those District Councils whose average (Band D) level of council tax charge was in the lower quartile nationally could increase their charge by up to £5.00 per annum. Last year West Somerset Council's level of Council Tax was in the lower quartile and we were able to increase by more than 2%. It is anticipated that this will not be permitted this year but confirmation of the capping threshold for 2014/15 is not expected until mid-February. For budgeting purposes it is assumed that the Council Tax Freeze Grant will be accepted. If the government permits an increase before a referendum of more than 2% then Council will be asked to consider whether to freeze or raise Council Tax.

## 7 Grant Settlement

### Spending Power

Government grant is not the only way that councils receive their money. The Government has looked at all funding sources (except fees and charges) in assessing the relevant spending power of each council. It has taken account of council income from council tax (using their assumptions and not ours), start-up funding assessment and grants. It considers, therefore, that it is fairest and most accurate to look at a council's overall 'spending power' rather than simply their grant levels.

Using these figures West Somerset Council's Spending Power has decreased by 5.2% (against an average as calculated by DCLG of 2.9%).



**West Somerset Council's Spending Power – Table 5**

	2013/14	2014/15
Council Tax	£1,773,000	£1,779,000
Start Up Funding Assessment	£2,653,000	£2,296,000
Community Right to Challenge Grant	£9,000	£9,000
Community Right to Bid Grant	£8,000	£8,000
Council Tax Support New Burdens	£33,000	£60,000
CT/HB Admin Subsidy	£273,000	£248,000
New Homes Bonus	£393,000	£448,000
Less Council Tax Support Grant to Parishes	-£110,000	-£110,000
Adjustment for business rate cap		£11,000
Indicative CT Freeze 15/16		£21,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£5,032,000</b>	<b>£4,770,000</b>

**Start-Up Funding**

This is an assessment by government of what the councils need to spend in certain areas and then disaggregated between Revenue Support Grant and Business Rate Retention Baseline Funding. These two figures when added together amount to the total of government funding being made available.

**West Somerset Council's Start-Up Funding – Table 6**

	2014/15
<b>Revenue Support Grant</b>	
Formula Funding	£1,138,811
Council Tax Freeze Grant 2011/12	£28,832
Efficiency Support for Sparse Areas	£25,070
Homelessness Prevention Grant	£28,888
Returned Funding	£2,824
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,224,425</b>
<b>Business Rates Baseline Funding</b>	
Formula Funding	£1,030,804
Council Tax Freeze Grant 2011/12	£19,962
Homelessness Prevention Grant	£20,364
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,071,130</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,295,555</b>

This translates to a reduction in start-up funding of 12.7%.

**9 New Homes Bonus**

The New Homes Bonus (NHB) commenced in April 2011, is intended to reward local authorities by granting them an amount of money for each new Band D equivalent property that is entered onto the valuation list. There is an additional grant for empty properties brought back into use and for new affordable homes.

The concept of this grant is that it will be an accumulative award for six years, in the seventh year the first year's award will be replaced by that in the seventh and so on. Having regard to the Councils financial situation the New Homes Bonus has been used to generally finance the Councils net expenditure rather than being ring-fenced for a specific purpose. Details of the grants awarded in the first three years are shown in **table 8** along with an estimate of ongoing New Homes Bonus.

**Summary of New Homes Bonus to date – Table 7**

<b>Income</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Year one (2011/12)	91,342	91,342	91,342	91,342	91,342	91,342
Year two (2012/13)		147,213	147,213	147,213	147,213	147,213
Year three (2013/14)			145,401	145,401	145,401	145,401
Year four (2014/15)				60,153	60,153	60,153
Year five (2015/16)					156,403	156,403
Year six (2016/17)						98,875
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>91,342</b>	<b>238,555</b>	<b>383,956</b>	<b>444,109</b>	<b>600,512</b>	<b>699,387</b>

It was proposed by government that from 2015/16 a proportion of New Homes Bonus would be top-sliced and passed to the Local Enterprise Partnership but this has been withdrawn pending a review of the funding stream.

### **9 The Medium Term Financial Plan 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018**

The Government has announced the provisional levels of grant funding that the Council can expect to receive in 2015/16. The most worrying aspect concerns the amount of Revenue Support Grant the Council can expect to receive which has been cut by 31.6%, from £1,224,425 to £838,063. Whilst the baseline funding for NNDR retention is forecast to increase this still leaves a reduction in start-up funding of 15.5%.

EDF have lodged an appeal against their NNDR and it was originally assumed that this would be paid in 2013/14 and the budget was set based on that. It has now transpired that the refund will not be made until at least 2014/15 but that we will need to make a provision for any outstanding appeals at the end of 2013/14.

Other key assumptions in future years include: -

- Council Tax Increases 2015/16 & 2016/17 of 2% in each year
- Pay awards of 2.5% in 2015/16 and 2016/17
- Continuing increasing pension deficit payments of £50,000 pa
- Sale of assets and thus reduction in MRP of £67,700 in 15/16 and £50,100 in 16/17 down to a total of £77,700
- Reductions in Revenue Support Grant of £386,362 in 2015/16 and an additional £83,806 (10%) in 2016/17
- 2% year on year increase in NNDR retention
- New Homes Bonus rising from £383,956 to £444,109 in 2014/15 and then to £600,512 in 2015/16
- Continuing levels of government grant regarding the local Council Tax Support Scheme
- Level of Council Tax Support Grant to Parishes to continue to reduce in line with the reduction to the start-up funding
- Capital to be funded from capital receipts during this MTFP period.
- The repayment of the external loan prior to 2015/16

A copy of the current MTFP is shown in **table 2** above.

## Appendix B

### Revenue Budget 2014/15

#### 1. Council Spending - Budget Book

The budget is presented in Service Plan format, to provide information on the resources allocated to each of the Corporate Priorities. A copy is attached here at table 8 below -

### Budget Book 2014/15 - Cost Centre Level

Budget 2013/14	Cost Centre Description	Cost Centre Number	Budget 2014/15
£75	Member Services	4300	£75
£105,075	Legal	4302	£105,075
£22,100	Elections	4303	£22,100
-£48,250	Land Charges	4304	-£48,250
£314,338	CDC	4305	£310,694
£200,380	Human Resources	4306	£250,380
£42,000	Postages	4307	£42,000
£8,185	Information Team	4308	£8,185
£1,370	Corporate Director	4311	£1,370
£500	Executive Support Team	4312	£500
£116,725	Finance	4359	£117,515
£58,300	Internal Audit	4360	£58,300
£52,750	Investment & Interest	4361	£228,250
£70,000	Insurance	4362	£70,000
£20,000	WSC - TDBC Project		£20,000
<b>£963,548</b>			<b>£1,186,194</b>
-£45,891	Economic Development	4322	£4,340
£1,050	Tourism	4323	£1,050
-£83,850	Licensing	4338	-£83,850
£10,000	Housing Bed & Breakfast	4339	£10,000
£18,450	Housing Temporary Accommodation	4340	£18,450
£29,500	Housing Homelessness Admin	4341	£29,500
£8,600	Planning Policy	4342	£8,600
-£9,270	Housing Staff	4343	£1,800
£5,050	Food Safety	4344	£5,050
£14,700	Environmental Health	4345	£14,700
£4,150	Environmental Health Staff	4346	£4,150
-£2,000	GM Housing & Community	4347	£600
-£10,000	CT Benefits	4348	£41,160
£82,095	Housing Benefit Administration	4349	£29,585
-£40,000	HB Rent Allowance	4350	-£40,000
£5,000	HB Non HRA Rent Rebate	4351	£5,000
-£15,200	Benefits Staff	4352	£3,300

-£37,300	CT Collection	4353	-£37,300
-£6,450	NDR Administration	4355	-£6,450
£840	Revenues Staff	4356	£840
£77,530	Housing Private Sector Renewal	4368	£54,820
£12,500	Housing Enabling	4379	£12,500
<b>£19,504</b>			<b>£77,845</b>
£67,500	Design and Print	4301	£67,500
£370	Customer Services	4309	£370
-£19,725	Roughmoor Depot	4313	-£19,725
-£28,462	Estates - Assets	4314	-£1,462
-£62,050	Roughmoor Enterprise Centre	4315	-£62,050
£80,346	West Somerset House	4317	£81,086
£30,900	Contact Centre	4318	£30,900
£16,200	Coast Protection	4319	£19,200
£11,500	Flood Defence	4320	£11,500
£4,700	VIIC	4321	£4,700
-£188,645	Development Control	4324	-£135,190
-£87,645	Building Control	4325	-£87,645
-£366,175	Parking - Off Street	4326	-£348,375
£910	Parking Staff	4326	£910
£116,650	Public Conveniences	4330	£116,650
£67,157	Open Spaces	4331	£62,472
£990,880	Waste	4332	£1,045,880
£433,000	Street Cleansing	4333	£436,000
£640	GM Environment & Services	4334	£640
-£17,900	Community Safety	4336	£3,000
£65,247	Community Links	4337	£65,247
£209,270	IT	4357	£210,620
£79,000	Telephones	4358	£79,000
£37,300	Brunel Way Depot	4374	£38,985
£11,902	Watchet Harbour	4375	£11,902
-£7,300	Barnsclose Units	4376	-£7,300
£2,025	Minehead Harbour	4378	£2,025
-£11,866	Community Development		
<b>£1,435,729</b>			<b>£1,626,840</b>
<b>£2,617,864</b>	<b>Salary Estimates</b>		<b>£2,453,287</b>
<b>£5,036,645</b>	<b>Total Revenue Budget</b>		<b>£5,344,166</b>
	<b>MTFP Total</b>		<b>£5,344,124</b>

### Quarter 2 Performance Report Variances - Table 9

Variance £	
(74,500)	Housing, Licensing and Environmental Health
(101,900)	Development Control
47,900	Waste
28,900	PCs and Street Cleansing
21,600	Building Control
(37,900)	Reduced finance staff
16,300	Other variances
<b>(99,600)</b>	

### 3. Savings Proposed for 2014/15

#### Savings proposals for the 2014/15 Budget - Table 10

Description	Target £120,089 2014/15	Comment
<b>Savings Identified for 2014/15</b>		
Staff - Post 66 Housing Options & Advice Officer	£14,662	Reduction in hours to 3 days per week
Staff - Post 83 Accounting Technician	£26,423	Vacant Post to be deleted (£5,600 to fund additional hours for Post 69 Accountancy Assistant)
Home Improvement Agency Contract	£22,710	Negotiated reduction in contract
External Audit	£2,982	Decrease in Audit Fee
Staff - Shared Senior Management	£11,400	Joint Chief Executive
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£78,177</b>	
<b>Use of General Reserves</b>	<b>£210,581</b>	

Significant further work will be required to enable a balanced budget to be set for 15/16 and onwards. Sharing services with Taunton Deane will help towards the savings target, both in terms of staff savings and savings arising from transformation.

#### Future Potential Savings

Table 11

2015/16	£
Shared management and services business case	295,600
Interest on external loan	42,850
Termination of Home Improvement Agency Contract	39,320
Cessation of Rural Housing Project	12,500
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>390,270</b>
To be identified	135,450
<b>Total</b>	<b>525,720</b>

### Earmarked Reserves

A summary of the 'earmarked' reserves and the forecast position at the year-end is shown in **table 13** below.

**Earmarked Reserves – Table 12**

Description	Balance as at 1/4/13	Adjustments in Year	Grant Received in Year	Applied in Year	Balance as at 31/3/14
Economic Regeneration	27,500.00	(27,500.00)			0.00
Working Neighbourhood Fund	159,747.37	(21,780.37)		(49,967.00)	88,000.00
Community Safety Reserve	7,395.15				7,395.15
Land Charge Reserve	32,897.71				32,897.71
Tourism Reserve	19,138.75				19,138.75
Seaside Town Reserve	96,424.90			(45,000.00)	51,424.90
Corporate Performance Improvement	19,419.46			(19,419.46)	0.00
New Homes Bonus	193,892.14	(19,878.14)	383,964.00	(506,158.00)	51,820.00
Lorry Park Reserve	46,000.00	(37,665.00)		(8,335.00)	0.00
Local Strategic Partnership	1,320.67	(1,201.13)		(119.54)	0.00
Hinkley Point C – DCO	47,902.43	(47,902.43)			0.00
Sustainability Reserve	325,295.85	136,510.40			461,806.25
Mortgage Rescue Programme	34,500.00			(25,000.00)	9,500.00
Minehead Event Reserve	20,000.00				20,000.00
COOL Tourism Reserve	367.65			(367.65)	0.00
Housing Benefit Administration	15,535.51		15,235.00	(24,967.12)	5,803.39
New Burdens	25,541.68	(37,303.10)	32,680.00		20,918.58
Benefit External Processing	4,754.68		106,094.00	(106,096.00)	4,752.68
Discretionary	11,424.00				11,424.00

Housing Payments					
WSC Elections Reserve	10,000.00				10,000.00
Water Bathing Signs	1,266.46				1,266.46
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,100,324.41</b>	<b>(56,719.77)</b>	<b>537,973.00</b>	<b>(785,429.77)</b>	<b>796,147.87</b>





*Report Number:* WSC 23/14  
*Presented by:* Cllr Kate Kravis  
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*Report to a Meeting of:* Cabinet  
*To be Held on:* 5 February 2014  
*Date Entered on Executive Forward Plan*  
*Or Agreement for Urgency Granted:* 18/1/2013

## FEES & CHARGES 2014/15

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To propose levels of fees and charges for the period 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015 (in some cases fee increases will be implemented earlier, this will be stated in the relevant sections of the report).

### 2. CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 2.1 Whilst there is no direct contribution to the delivery of corporate priorities the recommendations in the report are aimed at ensuring full costs of service delivery are recovered where allowed.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Cabinet are asked to recommend the levels of fees and charges to council.

### 4. RISK ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

**Risk Matrix**

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Fees as set are open to challenge as the basis of charge is not defined <i>Fees are set in accordance with the Council approved policy</i>	2 Possible	3 Major	6 High
The council fails to deliver the Medium-Term Financial Plan <i>Fees are set in accordance with the Council approved policy</i>	2 Possible	3 Major	6 High

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

### 5. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Council (24<sup>th</sup> July 2010) approved a Fees and Charges Policy, which governs the setting of all fees and charges by the council for a 3 year period. Fee-setting requires a framework (as identified in the policy) to ensure that reasonable information is taken into consideration when agreeing the level of charges, concessions and acceptability of charges to service users. The policy will be reviewed in 2014 by the new shared management team.

Attached at **Appendix A** is a summary of the sources of fee income generated by the council. In accordance with the policy, this summary shows the considerations applied to each type of fee, notably if it is –

- a statutory fee that the council cannot control
- a discretionary fee that is levied to influence behaviour or recover service costs, or
- a reasonable charge designed to help discharge a council's responsibility.

**Appendix A** also considers other aspects of the fees policy –

- concessions for some service users
- ability to generate surpluses to fund service maintenance or growth, and
- the need to consult with service users over price amendments.

Attached at **Appendix B** is a summary of all fees, current levels and proposed increases.

The following is a summary of the proposals for fee **changes** in 2014/15. **Other fees are not being amended in this report but may be amended later (subject to approval).**

Charging Area	2013/14 Arrangements	2014/15 Proposals
Harbour Fees	Various	Increased by 2.7% RPI and rounded to the nearest 50p
Scrap Metal Dealers Licence	New requirement	As at appendix B
Pre-planning advice	Various but published fees did not say they excluded VAT	Fees to explicitly state that they do not include VAT
Green waste – annual	£45	£46.50

## **NOTES ON PARTICULAR FEES**

### **Harbour Fees**

To be increased in line with RPI – 2.7% and rounded to the nearest 50p. These charges include VAT as it would be difficult to change these in year if VAT changed (the charges have to be displayed at the Harbours).

### **Scrap Metal Dealers Licence**

This is a new requirement, the fees have been calculated in conjunction with Taunton Deane Borough Council to ensure that they cover the cost of the service.

The SMDA came into force on 1 October 2013 and local authorities are required to set their own fee as part of the legislation. The legislation covers both site and mobile operators collectors working in the district. Following the Hemmings decision in the high court local authorities are unable to pass on the costs of enforcement in licence fees. Therefore the fee for the SMDA is only able to cover the cost of administering and granting a 3 year licence including an annual inspection. As a result of our partnership arrangements in licensing with TDBC we have fortunately been able to use a model developed by them to calculate the costs involved in the licensing process from initial receipt of the application to grant of the licence and inspection. Fees across the country do vary widely and as we have so few applications the cost of administering this legislation is spread much more thinly, therefore increasing the costs and fees per applicant. The spread sheet has calculated fee calculator produced a figure of £756.29 for WSC, the WSC fee as £756.29 this compares to the fee at TDBC being at £755.00. The fee of £755.00 has been informally agreed by the chair of licensing committee, the portfolio holder for licensing and Ian Timms, Group Manager, Housing Welfare and Economy. The fee for renewal of licence is calculated as £744 and a variation of licence at £50.

### **Pre-planning Advice**

The fees for pre-application charging in relation to planning applications have been amended following a formal review by both Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet. The charging scheme has been simplified for smaller scale applications and now includes an automatic site visit for all proposals. VAT will be added to the fees at the current rate. Some other minor changes to the scheme have been included following recommendations from Scrutiny which were agreed by Cabinet.

### **Removal of the Multiplier from Butlins Premises Licence - Bars**

The Hemmings decision is based on a European directive which became effective in 2010. The directive states that “charges which a council imposes on applicants/licensees under an authorisation scheme must be proportionate and reasonable in the circumstances to the fees or costs payable under the provisions of the scheme”. The fees must not exceed the costs of administering the process.

The case of Heming made it quite clear that Licensing Authorities are only able to charge the cost of the administration of the authorisation process, i.e., the actual issuing of the Premises Licence each year, in the case of the annual fee. At the present time WSC are unable to justify the addition of the multiplier to the Butlins premises licence annual fee and so this should be removed.

## **6. FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. Fees and charges that the council generates contribute to the overall costs of running the organisation, and help to maintain low tax rises.

## **7. SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTS**

- 7.1. The fees are set according to the policy approved by Council in July 2010. That policy is designed to last a number of years to assist officers and members in approving future fee changes. The framework identified by the policy ensures that decisions are made in the light of all information available, to ensure that councillors can be satisfied and stand by their decisions. The policy will be reviewed in 2014 by the new shared management team.

## **8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1. None in respect of this report.

## **9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. None in respect of this report.

## **10. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1. Work with Minehead harbour users is ongoing with the intention of making services cost neutral by April 2015.

## **11. ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1. None in respect of this report.

## **12. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1. None in respect of this report.

## **13. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1. Building Control fees and Water Sampling charges are set in accordance with relevant guidance.



## **West Somerset Council Fees and Charges Strategy**

## **Appendix A (1)**

The Council is committed to moving towards a sustainable medium-term financial plan, whilst not making services unaffordable to households on limited incomes. In order to ensure fees and charges are being used effectively, the council will ensure its overall charging policy links with its corporate aims and objectives.

This document sets out an overall policy framework to support and guide a practical approach to fees and charges that is consistent with the council's corporate plan.

### **Use of powers to charge**

It is vital that the council looks at all opportunities for reducing costs and increasing income. The Medium Term Financial Plan shows that based on current estimates, savings are required in the medium term.

Councils do not always make the most effective use of their charging powers. In its 2008 study 'Positively Charged', the Audit Commission identified that: -

- Only one in five councils believed they were using charging to its full potential
- Powers introduced in 2003 to charge for discretionary have remained largely unused by councils
- Nearly half of all councils have no agreed policy to guide their decisions on the use of charges
- Decisions on levels of charging are most often driven by corporate income targets, historic charges and by levels in neighbouring councils rather than knowledge of the likely impact on use of services

They recommended that: -

- Councils need to understand better the likely impact of charges on users, and on patterns of service use, and
- they need to communicate better about the purpose of charging, and be accountable for their charging decisions

### **Ability to Charge**

Charges do more than just raise income. They have a role to play in the achievement of council objectives; controlling access; funding investment; responding to competition; and influencing public behaviour.

Charges should be reviewed annually as part of the setting of the revenue budget, but considered in the context of this strategy.

The basis of the powers that councils have to raise income from charging for services is historic, varied and complex. Broadly they fall into three headings;

#### Statutory Fees

This includes services such as planning fees, liquor and entertainment licences, where the maximum permissible fee is prescribed in legislation. In many cases there is scope to provide discretionary services over and above

the statutory service with the introduction of a supplementary charge, for example: -

- pre-application planning advice
- pre-application building control advice

#### Reasonable charges

Services that the council has a duty to provide and can make a 'reasonable' charge (for example commercial waste collection and disposal)

#### Discretionary Fees

Powers conferred by the Local Government Act 2003 allow best value authorities (i.e. Counties, Districts, Town and Parish Councils) to charge for discretionary services. There is a duty to ensure that, taking one year with another, the charges do not exceed the costs of provision.

The budgeted fees to be raised in 2010/11 are shown in **Appendix 1**.

#### **Proposed framework for charging**

The policy framework would apply to any service that the council has a power and discretion to provide to the community, or has a statutory duty to provide, and has discretion to set a charge.

#### **Key principles of the framework**

##### **Recovery of cost**

- Where possible, the cost of providing a discretionary service should be fully recovered through charges except where the council makes a positive decision to the contrary.
- The council could aim to maximise the potential to generate income, for example, through differential charging to tap into the value placed on the service by different users.
- Where a service is 'demand-led' and/or competes with others based on quality and cost the charge should be determined by the maximum that users are prepared to pay and take account of competitor pricing.

##### **Concessions for certain service users**

- Decisions to exempt a particular service from the full cost recovery requirement may be taken by the Council -
  - To support a particular group or group of users in support of achieving its corporate objectives
  - Where it would be impractical (e.g. public access to parks)
  - Where charging would not be cost effective
- Concessionary charges may be available in the following circumstances:
  - To users on low incomes. This will normally be defined as those in receipt of housing or council tax benefit, pension credit or working tax credit
  - Where a business case is made to support a short-term reduction in charges aimed at increasing take-up and the overall income yield for the service in the long-term.

- Where a service is subsidised as a result of a positive decision by the council, the level of subsidy will be made explicit and the decision will be subject to regular review.

### **Information relevant to charging**

- In order to support the decision-making process behind the level of fees and charges and any service concessions, better information is needed. **Appendix 2** contains suggested areas of consideration that could help to make better decisions about the level of charges that should be set.

### **New charges**

- As part of the process of setting new or reviewing existing charges, targets will be established, both qualitative and quantitative.
- Where considered appropriate, after consultation with the Equality Officer, an Equality Impact Assessment should be carried out in order to consider the likelihood of any disproportionate adverse impact on vulnerable groups
- When introducing new charges or making changes to existing charges, the council will have regard to the views of users and other stakeholders. There is a checklist to complete for new charges in **Appendix 3**.

### **Contribution to corporate priorities**

- There may be circumstances where income generation is not the key driver for the way in which prices are set, for example, where the council wishes to manage demand, deter or incentivise certain behaviour, such as encouraging recycling or reducing car use. In this context, the principles of pricing should apply and in particular that any charged activities, enforcement etc. must at least recover cost.

### **Annual review of charges**

- There will be an annual review of fees and charges by officers and elected members as part of the budget setting process. For each service, charging information will be set out in a format that demonstrates that the income stream has been developed in accordance with the principles and approach in this document. There is a checklist to complete in **Appendix 3**.

### **Definition of total cost**

- The council defines total cost as all costs attributable to the service, including allocated overheads and costs of administration and collection.

### **Sources of information for this policy**

- Oxford City Council Fees and Charges Strategy
- Shepway District Council Fees and Charges Strategy
- “Positively charged” – Audit Commission January 2008
- “Is there something I should know?” – Audit Commission July 2009

### Appendix 1 - Sources of Fees

Income from fees and charges is a vital resource for local authorities. West Somerset Council's 2010/11 Budget includes the following income from fees and charges: -

Income Source	(Income)	Net service (surplus) / cost
<b>Statutory Fees</b>		
Development Control	(£170,000)	£91,274
Licensing	(£102,800)	(£47,910)
Environmental Health	(£17,450)	£153,810
<b>Reasonable Charges</b>		
Council Tax court costs	(£40,000)	£205,937
NDR court costs	(£4,500)	(£16,990)
Credit Card Charges	(£1,500)	NIL
Public Conveniences	(£42,800)	£195,706
Harbours	(£8,500)	£46,252
Open Spaces	(£15,750)	£380,305
<b>Discretionary Fees</b>		
Building Control	(£124,000)	£139,452
Land Charges	(£79,000)	(£20,686)
Estates & West Somerset House	(£29,270)	(£16,700)
Enterprise Centre	(£90,000)	(£78,200)
Visitors' centre	(£35,600)	£43,846
Economic Development	(£31,500)	£29,554
Parking	(£633,675)	(£339,355)
<b>Sub-total</b>	<b>(£1,426,345)</b>	<b>£766,295</b>
<b>Reasonable Charges</b>		
Waste & Recycling	(£25,000)	£1,030,174
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>(£1,451,345)</b>	<b>£1,796,469</b>

In comparison, for 2010/11 budgeted Council Tax revenue is £1.951m and Government Grant is £3.300m.



## Appendix 2 - Information that will help to set charges

Clarity on the objectives		
Why is this an issue?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A problem within the service area that charging could influence?</li> <li>• A corporate target that charging could help achieve?</li> <li>• A desire to increase take-up or discourage use?</li> <li>• A need to generate income in order to maintain service levels within the service or elsewhere?</li> </ul>	
What are we hoping to achieve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction in problems in certain service areas?</li> <li>• Generate economic growth?</li> <li>• Encourage access to services by under-represented groups?</li> <li>• Meet costs and raise money for related objectives?</li> </ul>	
What are the constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wider council strategic issues</li> <li>• Service plans</li> <li>• Agreed charging policy framework</li> </ul>	
The impact of different charging options		
Factors to consider	The data that will help	The analysis that is needed
Who is using the service and when?	Data on service use, as applicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By location</li> <li>• By time of day</li> <li>• By day of the week</li> <li>• Seasonal information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use compared to target</li> <li>• Analysis of customers by age, gender, race, disability, socio-economic group, reasons for service use</li> </ul>
The impact of changes to service on service use and other objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical data on the impact on service use when the council made changes to other local charging levels</li> <li>• Impact and evaluation data from similar councils who have implemented changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forecasts of the likely impact of the charging options on user type and location</li> <li>• Analysis of the impact of changed car park charges in previous years</li> <li>• Forecasts of impact of changes on wider objectives</li> </ul>

<b>Understanding costs and income</b>		
<b>Factors to consider</b>	<b>The data that will help</b>	<b>The analysis that is needed</b>
What are your current costs and income?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total costs and total income generated</li> <li>• Income data from similar councils</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of income data to show cost and income by location / type / service level</li> <li>• Analysis of cost and income over time, and by location</li> </ul>
The impact of changed charges on income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income data from similar councils who have made changes to charging levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forecast of the likely impact of the options on income, using forecasts for changes in car park use</li> </ul>
Does the level of income generation / subsidy reflect local priorities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The current level of subsidies</li> <li>• Comparison of subsidies with similar councils, with similar community profiles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of whether income is making desired contribution to the overall income of the council</li> <li>• Analysis of whether any subsidies can be linked to other council priorities (for example reduced charges to promote economic growth)</li> </ul>
Will further cost pressures be faced in the future?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data on the efficiencies that the council has planned to make</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forecast of potential future cost pressures, including changes in service, the impact of regeneration</li> <li>• Analysis of impact of future pressures on income</li> </ul>
<b>What do the public think?</b>		
<b>Factors to consider</b>	<b>The data that will help</b>	<b>The analysis that is needed</b>
How acceptable are the proposals to the public?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A breakdown of public views by customer group, geographical area and type of service user</li> <li>• Historical data on how the public reacted to other changes to charging made in previous years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of complaints, enquiries from focus groups to understand the concerns locally</li> <li>• Analysis of what happened after previous changes to charging levels</li> </ul>
What impact will the proposals have on the public?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparisons of satisfaction levels in similar councils, with similar community profiles, who made similar changes to charging levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis and forecast of the impact that each option may have on public satisfaction levels.</li> <li>• Analysis of the views and the potential impact on other, for example local retailers</li> </ul>

### Appendix 3 – Charging Checklist

#### Revisions to fees and charges or introduction of new fees – toolkit

Background Information										
1.	Charge to be considered:									
2.	Is this a new charge or an amendment to existing?									
3.	Is the charge set by Statute?									
4.	Is the level of charge set by Statute?									
5.	Is the level of charge based on full cost recovery?									
6.	Present level of charges:  <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%;">Service Level A</td> <td style="width: 33%;">Service Level B</td> <td style="width: 33%;">Service Level C</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Service Level D</td> <td>Service Level E</td> <td>Service Level F</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Service Level G</td> <td>Service Level H</td> <td>Service Level I</td> </tr> </table>	Service Level A	Service Level B	Service Level C	Service Level D	Service Level E	Service Level F	Service Level G	Service Level H	Service Level I
Service Level A	Service Level B	Service Level C								
Service Level D	Service Level E	Service Level F								
Service Level G	Service Level H	Service Level I								
The impact of different options										
7.	Who is using the service and when? (breakdown by customer group)									
8.	What impact will changed charges have on service use?									
9.	Is there evidence that there will be a disproportionate impact on some customer groups? If yes a full equality impact assessment will need to be carried out									
10.	What are the projected impacts on other council objectives?									
Costs and Income										
11.	What are the current levels of income generated?									
12.	What impact will changed charges have on income?									
13.	Does the level of income generation reflect local priorities?									
14.	Will further cost pressures be faced by the public?									
Understanding public opinion										
15.	What consultation and involvement has been carried out?									
16.	How acceptable are the proposals to the public?									
17.	What impact will the options have on the public?									



Hackney Carriage / Private Hire – NO CHANGES PROPOSED

## APPENDIX B

<b>DRIVERS</b>		
<b>LICENCE</b>	<b>CURRENT</b>	<b>PROPOSED</b>
3 year	£170.00	£170.00
1 year	£ 80.00	£ 80.00
Replacement Badge	£ 15.00	£ 15.00
<b>VEHICLES</b>		
<b>LICENCE</b>	<b>CURRENT</b>	<b>PROPOSED</b>
1 year	£168.50	£168.50
Change of Vehicle	£50.00	£50.00
Transfer of Interest (Vehicle & plate)	£40.00	£40.00
Temporary Plate (£25 deposit)	No charge	No charge
Plate for Trailer	£15.00	£15.00
Replacement Plate	£15.00	£15.00
<b>PRIVATE HIRE OPERATOR</b>		
<b>LICENCE</b>	<b>CURRENT</b>	<b>PROPOSED</b>
3 year	£150.00	£150.00
1 year	£70.00	£70.00

**West Somerset Council PWS Charges – NO CHANGES PROPOSED**

Activity	Max Charge	WSC Charge	Notes
Risk Assessment	£500	Hourly rate x time plus mileage  Typically £117	Based on time to carry out the risk assessment and sampling combined. It includes time to report, including advice, maintenance of records and time for the preparation of plans & drawings. Time for a simple risk assessment and sampling combined is min. 3.2 hours plus mileage costs (charge £117). Cost for analysis is additional (see below)
Sampling	£100	Hourly rate x time plus mileage.  Typically £54	Based on time taken to carryout the sampling visit. It includes time on site, preparation and reporting time & advice and maintenance of data. For a simple compliance visit time is 1.4 hour plus mileage (charge £54). This charge also applies to any requests for sampling. Cost for analysis is additional (see below)
Investigation	£100	Hourly rate x time plus mileage	Local authority investigation under regulation 15 in the event of a contravention, however if improvements can be secured without the need for an investigation no charge made
Authorisation	£100	Hourly rate x time	Following an application preferably in writing seeking an authorisation (under regulation 17). Costs are related to drafting legal notices and consulting with health authority and other relevant persons (where relevant)
<b>Analysis (currently using Somerset Scientific Services)</b>			
Under Reg. 10	£25	£25	Where supply provides <10m3 per day or, 50 people and is used for domestic purposes. Cost shown is for Conductivity, Enterococci, E.coli, pH and turbidity. Additional parameters added depending on risk.
Check Monitoring	£100	£43	Check monitoring is carried out to ensure that water compiles with minimum standards according to Schedule 2. Cost shown is for Coliforms, E.coli, Colony Counts, pH, Conductivity, Turbidity, Ammonium, Colour, Taste & Odour and any residual disinfectants. Other parameters (at cost) added depending on site visit and meeting any relevant conditions in Schedule 2
Audit Monitoring	£500	Typical price is an additional £16 (arsenic & enterococci)	This includes any additional parameters (based on risk) in addition to check monitoring (above) listed in Schedule 1. Parameters can be excluded depending on risk.

**Acupuncture/Tattooing/Electrolysis/Skin Piercing/Semi-Permanent Skin-Colouring –  
NO CHANGES PROPOSED**

<b>Registration</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Initial application for premises & 1 person	£76.00	£76.00
To register for additional treatment(s) at premises already registered or on initial application	£76.00	£76.00
To register person at premises already registered (each treatment)	£76.00	£76.00

**Scrap Metal Dealers Licencing – NEW CHARGES**

<b>Application Type</b>	<b>Charge</b>
SMD Licence – Grant (3 year duration)	£755.00
SMD Licence – Renew (3 year duration)	£744.00
SMD Licence – Variation	£50.00

**Land Search Fees – NO CHANGES PROPOSED**

<b>LOCAL LAND CHARGES</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
<b>POSTAL / OVER THE COUNTER</b>		
Whole Search	<b>£99.00</b>	<b>£99.00</b>
LLC1	£22.00	£22.00
LLC1 (Additional parcel of land)	£1.00	£1.00
CON 29R	£90.00	£90.00
Additional parcel of land	£10.00	£10.00
CON290 Printed Questions	£7.50	£7.50
Additional Enquiries	£10.00	£10.00
Enquiry on closed search	£20.00	£20.00
Speed Search	£175.00	£175.00
Personal Search	No Charge	No Charge
<b>NLIS SEARCHES</b>		
Whole Search	<b>£95.00</b>	<b>£95.00</b>
LLC1	£22.00	£22.00
CON 29R	£85.00	£85.00
Additional parcel of land	£10.00	£10.00

CON290 Printed Questions	£7.50	£7.50
Additional Enquiries	£10.00	£10.00
Enquiry on closed search	£20.00	£20.00
Speed Search	£170.00	£170.00

### **Animal Welfare – NO CHANGES PROPOSED**

ANIMAL WELFARE	Current	Proposed
Pet Shop	£113.50	<b>No changes proposed</b>
Animal Boarding	£113.50	
Dog Breeding	£113.50	
Dangerous Wild Animals	£173.00	
Riding Establishments		
Up to 10 horses	£106.00	
11 - 25 horses	£132.00	
26 + horses	£165.00	
Zoos (Grant and Renewal)	£408.00	
Zoos - Transfer	£141.50	

### **Street Trading - NO CHANGES PROPOSED**

STREET TRADING CONSENTS	Current	Proposed
A' Roads - Annual	£884.00	<b>No changes proposed</b>
A' Roads - 6 months	£458.00	
A' Roads - 3 months (minimum)	£230.00	
Other Areas - Annual 0800 - 2000 hours	£455.00	
Other Areas - Annual 0800 - 2330 hours	£911.00	
Other Areas - 6 months 0800 - 2000 hours	£247.50	
Other Areas - 6 months 0800 - 2330 hours	£495.00	
Other Areas - 3 months (minimum) 0800 - 2000 hours	£124.00	
Other Areas - 3 months (minimum) 08:00 - 2330 hours	£247.50	

(N.B. Separate consents must be obtained for Minehead or Dunster Areas)

DAILY RATES FOR ONE-OFF EVENTS (ALL AREAS) - Stalls 0900 - 2000	Current	Proposed
Up to 5m2 (50% reduction for charitable organisations)	£16.50	<b>No changes proposed</b>
Up to 7.5m2 (50% reduction for charitable organisations)	£22.50	
Replacement/Additional Assistant Badge Fee	£10.00	



**Environmental Health - NO CHANGES PROPOSED**

FOOD PREMISES - SPECIAL VISIT	Current	Proposed
First 30 minutes	£24.00	<b>No changes proposed</b>
Each additional 15 minutes or part thereof	£10.00	
<b>GENERAL CHARGES</b>		
Written response to enquiries (solicitors, radon, contaminated land etc)	£68.50	<b>First 10 minutes free then hourly charge @ £32 per hour</b>
Copy approvals/certificates/licences /documents/lists (where not set by statute)	£16.00	<b>No changes proposed</b>
H & S - documentation/response relating to accidents	£102.00	<b>First 10 minutes free then hourly charge @ £32 per hour</b>

**Private Sector Housing - NO CHANGES PROPOSED**

HOUSING INSPECTIONS		
Housing Inspections for Immigration Purposes	£63.00	<b>No changes proposed</b>

**Gambling Licenses – NO CHANGES PROPOSED**

Gambling Premises Licence - Bingo	Current	Proposed
New	£3,049.00	<b>No changes proposed</b>
Transfer	£1,045.50	
Variation	£1,537.50	
Re-Instatement	£1,045.50	
Annual Fee	£871.50	
Provisional Statement	£3,049.00	
New, with Provisional Statement	£523.00	

Gambling Premises Licence - Betting (Not on Course)	Current	Proposed
New	£2,614.00	<b>No changes proposed</b>
Transfer	£1,045.50	
Variation	£1,307.00	
Re-Instatement	£1,045.50	
Annual Fee	£523.00	
Provisional Statement	£2,614.00	
New, with Provisional Statement	£523.00	

Gambling Premises Licence - Track Betting (On Course)	Current	Proposed
New	£2,178.00	<b>No changes proposed</b>
Transfer	£840.00	
Variation	£1,127.50	
Re-Instatement	£820.00	
Annual Fee	£871.00	
Provisional Statement	£2,178.00	
New, With Provisional Statement	£410.00	

Gambling Premises Licence - Adult Gaming Centre (AGC)	Current	Proposed
New	£1,742.50	<b>No changes proposed</b>
Transfer	£1,045.50	
Variation	£871.00	
Re-Instatement	£1,045.50	
Annual Fee	£871.00	
Provisional Statement	£1,742.50	
New, With Provisional Statement	£523.00	

Gambling Premises Licence - Family Entertainment Centre (FEC)	Current	Proposed
New	£1,742.50	<b>No changes proposed</b>
Transfer	£820.00	
Variation	£871.00	
Re-Instatement	£820.00	
Annual Fee	£666.50	
Provisional Statement	£1,742.50	
New, With Provisional Statement	£410.00	

Temporary Use Notice (TUN)	£435.50	<b>No changes proposed</b>
Occasional Use Notice (OUN)	No Fee	

Additional Fees - Set by Statute	Current	Proposed
Copy Licence	£25.00	<b>No changes proposed</b>
Change of Circumstances	£50.00	
Copy TUNs Permit	£25.00	

**Harbour Moorings and Pleasure Boats – CHANGES PROPOSED (all charges include VAT)**

Mooring Fees at Watchet Harbour (per metre or part of metre - incl VAT)	Current	Proposed
Annual (Permanent Moorings only)	N/A	<b>No changes proposed</b>
Weekly	N/A	

Daily	N/A
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Slipway Fees at Watchet Harbour	Current	Proposed
Annual	£71.75	£73.50
Weekly	£25.50	26.00
Daily	£11.50	£12.00

Mooring Fees at Minehead Harbour (per metre or part of metre - incl VAT)	Current	Proposed
Annual (Permanent Moorings only)	£34.50	£35.50
Weekly	£7.50	£7.50
Daily	£1.80	£1.80

Slipway Fees at Minehead Harbour	Current	Proposed
Annual	£71.75	£73.50
Weekly	£25.50	£26.00
Daily	£11.50	£12.00

Visit by Pleasure Steamers at Minehead and Watchet Harbours	Current	Proposed
Per visiting day - maximum of two visits (including VAT)	£101.00 per trip	£104.00 per trip

Transfer between moorings and/or new vessel and where a Sailing Club Mooring is transferred to WSC mooring, and the annual fee has already been paid to the Sailing Club	£39.05	£39.05
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No change

**Car Park Fees - NO CHANGES PROPOSED**

Car Park Charges	Current				Proposed				
	up to 1 hr	1 to 2 hrs	2 to 4 hrs	4 + hrs	up to 1 hr	1 to 2 hrs	2 to 4 hrs	4 + hrs	
Dunster Park St	£0.80	£1.50	£2.50	£4.70	<b>No Changes Proposed</b>				
Dunster Dunster Steep	£1.50	£1.50	£2.50	£4.70					
Williton Williton	£0.80	£1.50	£2.50	£4.70					
Porlock Porlock	£0.80	£1.50	£2.50	£4.70					
Porlock Parson St	£0.80	£1.50							
Porlock Doverhay	£0.80	£1.50							
Kilve Kilve	£1.50	£1.50	£2.50	£2.50					

Watchet Swain	£0.80	£1.50	£2.50	£4.70
Watchet Market St	£0.80	£1.50	£2.50	£4.70
Watchet Anchor St	£0.80	£1.50	£2.50	£4.70
Watchet Harbour Road	£0.80	£1.50	£2.50	£4.70
Minehead Warren	£1.50	£2.60	£4.20	£5.70
Minehead Quay W	£1.50	£2.60	£4.20	£5.70
Minehead North Rd	£1.40	£2.00	£2.80	£4.70
Minehead Sea Front	£1.50	£2.60	£4.20	£5.70
Minehead Summerland	£1.00	£1.00		
Minehead Station Alexandra	£1.50	£2.60	£4.20	£5.70
Minehead Road	£0.80	£1.50	£2.50	£4.70
Minehead Clanville	£1.60	£1.60	£4.20	£4.20

	Current				Proposed			
Dulverton	1 Hr	2 Hrs	4 Hrs	10 Hrs	1 Hr	2 Hrs	4 Hrs	10 Hrs
All Car Parks	£0.70	£1.20	£2.20	£4.50	<b>No changes proposed</b>			
Excess Charges	£50.00 (£30.00 if paid within 7 days)				<b>No changes proposed</b>			

Car Park Permits		Current Charges	Proposed Charges
Business District	12 Month	£285.00	<b>No Changes Proposed</b>
Business District	6 Month	£160.00	
District	12 Month	£210.00	
District	6 Month	£120.00	
Named Permits	12 Month	£110.00	
Named Permits	6 Month	£70.00	
Weekly visitor's permit	7 days	£25.00	
1-hour residents' permit	6 Month	£25.00	<b>New permit</b>
2 hour temporary	12 months	£30.00	

Car Park Permits		Current Charge	Proposed Charges
Dulverton	Weekly	£15.00	<b>No Changes Proposed</b>
	12 Month	£75.00	
	6 Month	£40.00	
	Exchange	£3.00	

**Court Summons and Liability Orders for Council Tax and Business Rates  
- NO CHANGES PROPOSED**

	Current Charges		Proposed Charges	
	Summons	Liability Order	Summons	Liability Order
<b>Council Tax</b>	£61.00	£14.00	£61.00	£14.00
<b>Business Rates</b>	£61.00	£14.00	£61.00	£14.00

**Elections**

<b>Election Costs</b>	Recharged to parishes on equitable basis
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**Somerset Waste Partnership charges – CHANGES PROPOSED**

		Current	Proposed
Green Waste		£45	£46.50
Bulky Waste	Up to 3 items	£38.15	£38.15
	Per item	£8.35	£8.35
	Maximum items	5	5

**Building Control Charges – NO CHANGES PROPOSED**

<b>Table A – New Dwellings</b>		
No.	Current Charge (excl VAT)	Proposed Charge (excl VAT)
1	£670.22	£670.22
2	£982.98	£982.98
3	£1,251.06	£1,251.06
4	£1,429.79	£1,429.79
5	£1,608.51	£1,608.51
6	£1,787.24	£1,787.24
7	£1,921.28	£1,921.28
8	£2,055.32	£2,055.32
9	£2,189.37	£2,189.37
10	£2,323.41	£2,323.41
11	£2,457.45	£2,457.45
12	£2,591.49	£2,591.49
13	£2,725.53	£2,725.53
14	£2,859.57	£2,859.57
15	£2,993.61	£2,993.61
16	£3,127.66	£3,127.66
17	£3,261.70	£3,261.70
18	£3,395.74	£3,395.74
19	£3,529.79	£3,529.79

**Notes for Table A**

1. For 20 or more dwellings or if the floor area of any dwelling exceeds 300m<sup>2</sup> the charge is individually determined

2. The Building Notice Charge is the sum of the plan charge and inspection charge + 25%

3. The Regularisation charge is the sum of the plan charge and inspection charge + 50%. Regularisation charges are not subject to VAT.

<b>Schedule B – Domestic Works</b>		
Type of Work	Current Charge (Excluding Vat)	Proposed Charge (Excluding Vat)
Single storey Extension <10m <sup>2</sup> (*)	£312.76	£312.76
Single storey Extension 10m <sup>2</sup> - 40m <sup>2</sup> (*)	£428.94	£428.94
Single storey Extension 40m <sup>2</sup> - 80m <sup>2</sup> (*)	£464.68	£464.68
Multi storey Extension <40m <sup>2</sup> (*)	£491.49	£491.49
Multi storey Extension 40m <sup>2</sup> - 120m <sup>2</sup> (*)	£571.91	£571.91
Multi storey Extension 120m <sup>2</sup> - 200m <sup>2</sup> (*)	£607.66	£607.66
Loft Conversion >40m <sup>2</sup> (*)	£402.13	£402.13
Loft Conversion 40m <sup>2</sup> - 100m <sup>2</sup> (*)	£428.94	£428.94
Garage/carport <100m <sup>2</sup>	£268.09	£268.09
Garage conversion	£245.74	£245.74
Partial glazing (up to 6 windows)	£67.02	£67.02
Total glazing (up to 20 windows)	£134.04	£134.04
Electrical installation	£160.85	£160.85
Renovation of thermal elements, such as wall, floor or roof for work up to £20,000	£160.85	£160.85

(\*) The Building Notice Charge is the sum of the plan charge and inspection charge + 10%

#### **Notes for Table B:**

1. Where part of an extension is single storey and part is two-storey the charge for a two-storey extension will be applied.
2. Where a first floor extension is constructed over an existing single storey structure the charge applied is that for a single storey extension of the same floor area.
3. The Regularisation charge is the sum of the plan charge and inspection charge + 50%. Regularisation charges are not subject to VAT.
4. For domestic work up to £75,000 (but not covered in Table B) refer to Table C

<b>Table C – Domestic work not fall within the above categories</b>		
Estimated Cost £	Current Charge (excluding VAT)	Proposed Charge (excluding VAT)
Up to 2,000	£134.04	£134.04
2,001 – 5,000	£178.72	£178.72
5,001 – 10,000 (*)	£268.09	£268.09
10,001 – 15,000 (*)	£335.11	£335.11
15,001 – 20,000 (*)	£402.13	£402.13
20,001 – 25,000 (*)	£469.15	£469.15
25,001 – 30,000 (*)	£513.83	£513.83
30,001 – 35,000 (*)	£558.51	£558.51
35,001 – 40,000 (*)	£603.19	£603.19
40,001 – 45,000 (*)	£647.87	£647.87
45,001 – 50,000 (*)	£692.55	£692.55
50,001 – 55,000 (*)	£737.24	£737.24
55,001 – 60,000 (*)	£781.91	£781.91
60,001 – 65,000 (*)	£826.59	£826.59
65,001 – 70,000 (*)	£848.94	£848.94
70,001 – 75,000 (*)	£871.28	£871.28

(\*) The Building Notice Charge is the sum of the plan charge and inspection charge + 10%

#### Notes for Table C:

1. Charges are individually determined for the larger and /or more complex schemes where the estimated cost exceeds £75,000

2. The Regularisation charge is the sum of the plan charge and inspection charge + 50%. Regularisation charges are not subject to VAT.

<b>Table D – Other Works</b>		
Estimated Cost £	Current Charge (Excluding VAT)	Proposed Charge (Excluding VAT)
Up to 2,000	£134.04	£134.04
2,001 – 5,000	£223.41	£223.41
5,001 – 10,000	£245.74	£245.74
10,001 – 15,000	£312.76	£312.76
15,001 – 20,000	£402.13	£402.13
20,001 – 25,000	£469.15	£469.15
25,001 – 30,000	£536.17	£536.17
30,001 – 35,000	£580.85	£580.85
35,001 – 40,000	£625.53	£625.53
40,001 – 45,000	£670.22	£670.22

45,001 – 50,000	£714.89	£714.89
50,001 – 55,000	£759.57	£759.57
55,001 – 60,000	£804.26	£804.26
60,001 – 65,000	£848.94	£848.94
65,001 – 70,000	£893.61	£893.61
70,001 – 75,000	£938.30	£938.30

**Notes for Table D**

1. Charges are individually determined for the larger and /or more complex schemes where the estimated cost exceeds £75,000
2. The Regularisation charge is the sum of the plan charge and inspection charge + 50%. Regularisation charges are not subject to VAT.
3. Building Notice applications are not appropriate for non-domestic work.



**Pre-Planning Advice – NEW CHARGES PROPOSED**

<b>Nature of Proposal</b>	<b>Written Response</b>	<b>Further Correspondence or meetings / charge per hour</b>	<b>Further meetings involving management team / charge per hour</b>
<b>Type 1 Other Development:</b> Householder Developments	£50	£30 per hour	£50 per hour
<b>Type 2 Other Developments:</b> Changes of Use / Advertisements / Listed Building Works / Conservation Area Consents / Lawful Development Certificates	£100	£30 per hour	£50 per hour
<b>Type 1 Minor Developments:</b> 1-4 Dwellings / up to 499m <sup>2</sup> of commercial use / sites up to 0.1Ha	£225	£40 per hour	£80 per hour
<b>Type 2 Minor Developments:</b> 5-9 Dwellings / 500-999m <sup>2</sup> of commercial use / isolated homes in the countryside or rural workers dwellings / sites more than 0.1Ha but less than 2.5Ha	£400	£40 per hour	£80 per hour
<b>Type 1 Major Developments:</b> 10-24 Dwellings / 1000-1999m <sup>2</sup> of commercial use / sites more than 2.5Ha but less than 5Ha	£1200	£50 per hour	£100 per hour
<b>Type 2 Major Developments:</b> 25-199 Dwellings / more than 2000m <sup>2</sup> of commercial use / sites more than 5Ha but less than 10Ha	£2000	£50 per hour	£100 per hour
<b>Type 3 Major Developments:</b> 200 Dwellings plus / EIA Development / sites more than 10Ha	Planning Performance Agreement	Planning Performance Agreement	Planning Performance Agreement

Please Note:

- **\*\*\*All prices are exclusive of VAT which will need to be added to the above charges at the current rate**
- A site visit will be carried out in advance of all pre-application advice being provided which will be in writing
- Town or Parish Councils are entitled to a 50% reduction in the respective fee
- Works to provide facilities for a disabled person are exempt from paying a pre-application advice fee
- If different elements of works on one site fall into two of the categories above only the larger of the two fees will be charged



*Report Number:* WSC 5/14  
*Presented by:* Cllr Dave Westcott – Lead Member For Community  
*Author of the Report:* Paul Lamb – Principal Benefits Officer  
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*Report to a Meeting of:* Cabinet Committee  
*To be Held on:* Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2014  
*Date Entered on Executive Forward Plan Or Agreement for Urgency Granted:* 10 December 2013

## 2015/16 COUNCIL TAX REBATE SCHEME CONSULTATION

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Cabinet of the options modelled to incentivise work and encourage people to remain in employment, and seek their recommendations with regards to which should be used as a basis of consultation with the public.

### 2. CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2.1 There are no direct links for this report.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Cabinet recommends to Council that the Authority consult for the period 24 February 2014 to Friday 23 May 2014 on possible change to the 2015/16 Council Tax Rebate scheme.

3.2 Cabinet recommends to Council on which options should be used in any consultation.

### 4. RISK ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

#### Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Council incurs an unacceptably high-level of debt from claims in work because of people's inability to make the extra payments from the proposed scheme	5	3	15
Consider options to amend the 2015/16 scheme. Agree an adopt a new scheme following consultation to reduce the risk	4	3	12

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

## 5. **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 5.1 At the meeting of Council on the 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2013, members expressed concern that debt levels for the current Council Tax Rebate (CTR) claimants who were in work were significantly higher than all other profiles.
- 5.2 There are many contributory factors to this higher level of debt. These include seasonal work, low pay levels, high travel costs etc.
- 5.3 Members requested that *“further work would be undertaken in the coming year to see if any adjustments would need to be made to the Scheme for 2015/16”*.
- 5.4 If any changes were to be made then these could be consulted on with residents when the council tax bills are issued for 2014 / 15.
- 5.5 Members agree that it would be important to ensure that the scheme aims to incentivise work and encourage people to remain in employment. It was suggested that this should be used as one of the principles in carrying out the review.
- 5.6 There are two elements the Authority can change to help working claims. They are earnings disregards, and tapers. These are explained in paragraphs 5.7 to 5.13 below
- 5.7 Earnings disregards

This is an amount of money that is deducted from the claimant or partner's earnings when we calculate entitlement to Council Tax Rebate.

Our scheme currently allows the following earnings disregards:

- Single Person £10 per week
- Couple £20 per week
- Lone parent £37.50 per week
- Disabled or long-term sick £30 per week

The highest disregard that applies is deducted once only from the total earnings of the claimant and partner. So if the claimant has more than one job, or if the claimant and partner both work, the disregard is made to the combined earnings.

5.8 - Example of single claimant in work:

Weekly Gross pay	£130.00
Income tax	-£12.50
National Insurance	-£7.50
Net pay	£110.00
Earnings disregard	-£10.00
Earnings used to calculate CTR	<u>£100.00</u>

**5.9 Increasing earnings disregards will reduce the amount of the claimant's income that we take into consideration and therefore increase entitlement.**

**5.10 Tapers**

Entitlement to Council Tax Rebate is assessed by comparing a claimant's actual income to the money they are allowed to cover their living expenses (called their "applicable amount"). These figures are set by the Department for Work and Pensions

If their income is less than their applicable amount they qualify for maximum eligible rebate. For working age claims this is 85% of their council tax liability less any non dependant deductions. For pension age claims it is 100% of their council tax liability less any non dependant deductions.

If the claimant's income is more than their applicable amount, the difference is called "excess income". The claimant qualifies for maximum eligible rebate (detailed above) less a percentage of their excess income. The percentage is called the taper. It is currently set at 20% for all claims.

5.11 If we follow on from the previous example, a taper would work as follows:

Weekly Council tax liability		£20.00
Single person discount		<u>£5.00</u>
Net weekly council tax liability		£15.00
Total weekly assessable income	£100.00	
Applicable amount	£71.70	
Excess income	£28.30	
Taper (20% of £28.30 )		£5.66
Weekly CTR entitlement		<u>£9.34</u>

5.12 **Reducing the taper will lessen the rate at which benefit is reduced if their actual income exceeds their applicable amount (the amount allocated for the basic living needs for the claimant and their family).**

5.13 If we were to use a 10% taper, entitlement would increase to £ 12.17 per week

Weekly Council tax liability		£20.00
Single person discount		<u>£5.00</u>
Net weekly council tax liability		£15.00
Total weekly assessable income	£100.00	
Applicable amount	£71.70	
Excess income	£28.30	
Taper (10% of £28.30 )		£2.83
Weekly CTR entitlement		<u>£12.17</u>

5.14 On 20<sup>th</sup> January 2014 Scrutiny Committee met and resolved that:

- (1) The Scrutiny Committee recommends to Cabinet and Council that the Authority consult for the period 24 February 2014 to Friday 23 May 2014 on possible change to the 2015/16 Council Tax Rebate Scheme
- (2) The Scrutiny Committee recommends to Cabinet and Council to consult on Options 1 and 5, as set out in the report and attached to the agenda.

**Members are asked to consider the following six options and to select one to form the basis of any consultation bearing in mind the information outlined above**

**Option 1 - £50 disregard for all, tapers unchanged**

This option will increase the earnings disregard to £50 for all claims.  
It will affect our working age caseload entitlement as follows:

			Pension Age - Passported	Pension Age - Non passported	Working Age Employed	Working Age Other	Totals
13/14 Annual Awards	£2,873,654.39	Number of claims	1,220	712	368	1,117	3,417
Estimated 14/15 awards	£2,921,221.24	Total weekly awards	£23,075.13	£9,992.26	£5,424.05	£16,619.74	£55,111.18
Budget	£2,941,702.00						
Estimated 14/15 remaining	£20,480.76	Total annual CTS Awards	£1,203,203.21	£521,024.99	£282,825.46	£866,600.73	£2,873,654.39
Estimated 14/15 average award	£854.91	Estimated Inflation	£10,828.83	£18,756.90	£10,181.72	£7,799.41	£47,566.85
Claims from overspend	24	Estimated 14/15 awards	£1,214,032.04	£539,781.89	£293,007.18	£874,400.14	£2,921,221.24
	<b>Number increased</b>	<b>Average weekly increase</b>	<b>Number with no change</b>				
Single	54	£3.66	545				
Lone parent	110	£2.23	306				
Children	110	£4.66	215				
Couple only	23	£3.84	120				
Disabled	21	£3.48	433				
Employed	259	£3.43	141				
Self employed	38	£4.13	104				

## Option 2 - £40 disregard for single, £50 couple, £60 Lone parent and disabled, tapers unchanged

This will affect our working age caseload entitlement as follows:

			Pension Age - Passported	Pension Age - Non passported	Working Age Employed	Working Age Other	Totals
13/14 Annual Awards	£2,897,643.75	Number of claims	1,220	712	368	1,117	3,417
Estimated 14/15 awards	£2,945,632.18	Total weekly awards	£23,075.13	£9,992.26	£5,570.14	£16,933.72	£55,571.25
Budget	£2,941,702.00						
Estimated 14/15 remaining	<b>-£3,930.18</b>	Total annual CTS Awards	£1,203,203.21	£521,024.99	£290,443.01	£882,972.54	£2,897,643.75
Estimated 14/15 average award	£862.05	Estimated Inflation	£10,828.83	£18,756.90	£10,455.95	£7,946.75	£47,988.43
Claims from overspend	<b>-5</b>	<b>Estimated 14/15 awards</b>	<b>£1,214,032.04</b>	<b>£539,781.89</b>	<b>£300,898.96</b>	<b>£890,919.30</b>	<b>£2,945,632.18</b>
	<b>Number increased</b>	<b>Average weekly increase</b>	<b>Number with no change</b>				
Single	53	£3.38	546				
Lone parent	113	£3.52	303				
Children	110	£4.81	215				
Couple only	23	£4.28	120				
Disabled	21	£4.77	433				
Employed	261	£4.02	139				
Self employed	38	£4.10	104				



### Option 3 - 10% taper and £50 disregard for all

This will affect our working age caseload entitlement as follows

			Pension Age - Passported	Pension Age - Non passported	Working Age Employed	Working Age Other	Totals
13/14 Annual Awards	£2,904,153.79	Number of claims	1,220	712	368	1,117	3,417
Estimated 14/15 awards	£2,952,818.62	Total weekly awards	£23,075.13	£9,992.26	£6,008.97	£16,619.74	£55,696.10
Budget	£2,941,702.00						
Estimated 14/15 remaining	£-11,116.62	Total annual CTS Awards	£1,203,203.21	£521,024.99	£313,324.86	£866,600.73	£2,904,153.79
Estimated 14/15 average award	£864.16	Estimated Inflation	£10,828.83	£18,756.90	£11,279.70	£7,799.41	£48,664.83
Claims from overspend	-13	Estimated 14/15 awards	£1,214,032.04	£539,781.89	£324,604.56	£874,400.14	£2,952,818.62
	<b>Number increased</b>	<b>Average weekly increase</b>	<b>Number with no change</b>				
Single	55	£4.15	544				
Lone parent	119	£4.91	297				
Children	112	£6.30	213				
Couple only	23	£4.83	120				
Disabled	21	£5.07	433				
Employed	267	£5.32	133				
Self employed	42	£4.99	100				

### Option 4 - Increase earnings disregard to £40 for single people, £50 for couples and £60 for lone parents and disabled claims and reduce the taper from 20% to 10%

This will affect our working age caseload entitlement as follows

			Pension Age - Passported	Pension Age - Non passported	Working Age Employed	Working Age Other	Totals
13/14 Annual Awards	£2,923,277.70	Number of claims	1,220	712	368	1,117	3,417
Estimated 14/15 awards	£2,972,188.94	Total weekly awards	£23,075.13	£9,992.26	£6,061.74	£16,933.73	£56,062.86
Budget	£2,941,702.00						0
Estimated 14/15 remaining	-£30,486.94	Total annual CTS Awards	£1,203,203.21	£521,024.99	£316,076.44	£882,973.06	£2,923,277.70
Estimated 14/15 average award	£869.82	Estimated Inflation	£10,828.83	£18,756.90	£11,378.75	£7,946.76	£48,911.24
Claims from overspend	-35	Estimated 14/15 awards	£1,214,032.04	£539,781.89	£327,455.19	£890,919.82	£2,972,188.94
	<b>Number increased</b>	<b>Average weekly increase</b>	<b>Number with no change</b>				
Single	55	£3.99	544				
Lone parent	119	£5.40	297				
Children	112	£6.38	213				
Couple no children	23	£5.22	120				
Disabled	21	£5.92	433				
Employed	267	£5.57	133				
Self employed	42	£5.00	100				

## Option 5 - 7.5% taper and £50 disregard for all

This will affect our working age caseload entitlement as follows

			Pension Age - Passported	Pension Age - Non passported	Working Age Employed	Working Age Other	Totals
13/14 Annual Awards	£2,926,641.96	Number of claims	1,220	712	368	1,117	3,417
Estimated 14/15 awards	£2,975,694.00	Total weekly awards	£23,075.13	£9,992.26	£6,140.25	£16,919.74	£56,127.38
Budget	£2,941,702.00						0
Estimated 14/15 remaining	-£33,992.00	Total annual CTS Awards	£1,203,203.21	£521,024.99	£320,170.18	£882,243.59	£2,926,641.96
Estimated 14/15 average award	£870.85	Estimated Inflation	£10,828.83	£18,756.90	£11,526.13	£7,940.19	£49,052.05
Claims from overspend	-39	Estimated 14/15 awards	£1,214,032.04	£539,781.89	£331,696.31	£890,183.78	£2,975,694.00
	<b>Number increased</b>	<b>Average weekly increase</b>	<b>Number with no change</b>				
Single	55	£4.21	544				
Lone parent	119	£5.53	297				
Children	112	£6.74	213				
Couples only	23	£5.03	120				
Disabled	21	£5.72	433				
Employed	267	£5.78	133				
Self employed	42	£5.20	100				

## Option 6 - Increase earnings disregard to £40 for single people, £50 for couples and £60 for lone parents and disabled claims and reduce the taper from 20% to 7.5%

This will affect our working age caseload entitlement as follows.

			Pension Age - Passported	Pension Age - Non passported	Working Age Employed	Working Age Other	Totals
13/14 Annual Awards	£2,929,006.11	Number of claims	1,220	712	368	1,117	3,417
Estimated 14/15 awards	£2,978,123.58	Total weekly awards	£23,075.13	£9,992.26	£6,171.60	£16,933.73	£56,172.72
Budget	£2,941,702.00						0
Estimated 14/15 remaining	-£36,421.58	Total annual CTS Awards	£1,203,203.21	£521,024.99	£321,804.86	£882,973.06	£2,929,006.11
Estimated 14/15 average award	£871.56	Estimated Inflation	£10,828.83	£18,756.90	£11,584.97	£7,946.76	£49,117.46
Claims from overspend	-42	<b>Estimated 14/15 awards</b>	<b>£1,214,032.04</b>	<b>£539,781.89</b>	<b>£333,389.83</b>	<b>£890,919.82</b>	<b>£2,978,123.58</b>
	<b>Number increased</b>	<b>Average weekly increase</b>	<b>Number with no change</b>				
Single	55	£4.13	544				
Lone parent	119	£5.82	297				
Couples with children	112	£6.80	213				
Couples only	23	£5.41	120				
Disabled	21	£6.10	433				
Employed	267	£5.95	133				
Self employed	42	£5.21	100				

## 6. FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The financial implications for each proposal are as follows:

<b>Caseload analysis</b>						
	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6
Estimated 14/15 awards	£2,921,221.24	£2,945,632.18	£2,952,818.62	£2,972,188.94	£2,975,694.00	£2,978,123.58
Budget	£2,941,702.00	£2,941,702.00	£2,941,702.00	£2,941,702.00	£2,941,702.00	£2,941,702.00
Estimated 14/15 remaining	£20,480.76	-£3,930.18	-£11,116.62	-£30,486.94	-£33,992.00	-£36,421.58
Estimated 14/15 average award	£854.91	£862.05	£864.16	£869.82	£870.85	£871.56
Estimated 14/15 claims from overspend	24	-5	-13	-35	-39	-42

This shows the cost of the scheme increases with each option. Option one results in an estimated underspend of £20,480.76, which means the scheme could have an additional 24 claims at the average entitlement and still be cost neutral. At the other end of the scale, option six would result in an estimated overspend of £36,421.58, meaning the scheme would have to lose 42 claims of average entitlement in order to be cost neutral. Cabinet should be aware that the above figures are a snap shot, and will vary slightly from day to day as changes of circumstance are processed

- 6.2 In January 2013, Council agreed to amend the discounts and exemptions awarded to raise a significant amount of additional council tax income and to use this money to fund the council tax localised support scheme to a more acceptable level of 85%. (Recommendation C93). The 2013/14 scheme is likely to be under budget so will not need the income generated by the council tax technical reform.
- 6.3 Options two to six are likely to be slightly over budget, and would therefore need a small part of the technical income generated by recommendation C93



<b>Estimated Income Generated By Council Tax Technical Reform (Rec C/93)</b>			
<b>Discounts Awarded</b>	<b>Discounts Granted</b>		<b>Additional Income Raised</b>
	<b>2012 (before reforms)</b>	<b>2013 (after reforms)</b>	
Empty & Unfurnished	£268,640	£44,991	£223,649
Second Homes	£142,987	£466	£142,521
Long term empty premium			£36,183
6.4 Total Additional Income			<b>£402,353</b>

6.5 A significant amount of officer time will be required to collate responses to the consultation and analyse the data. This may be an issue that requires addressing as a result of end of temporary contract, maternity leave and annual billing.

6.6 The cost of printing and issuing the consultation documents will be £2,010 This cost will be funded from Government grants provided

## **7 SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTS**

7.1 I agree the scheme can be changed providing the overspend is less than the income generated by Council Tax Technical Reform.

7.2 The most expensive of the options, option six may produce a shortfall of £36,421.58. The estimated technical reform income for 2013/14 is £402,352.76, which will currently fund the expected shortfall.

## **8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

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

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

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

8.1.1 Following a mid year review of the 2013/14 Council Tax Rebate Scheme and following the profiling of the level of council tax arrears, it became apparent that the level of debt for those claiming Council Tax Support was highest amongst the in-work claimants. This suggested that the design of the scheme was impacting most on this customer group.

8.1.2 The options presented in this paper go some way to help mitigate against this consequence and also to support the aim of encouraging people to remain in employment and to incentivise work. A full review of the 2013/14 scheme will be undertaken at the year end and a consultation exercise will be undertaken with customers and stakeholders once a

preferred model for the 2015/16 scheme has been worked up. A full impact assessment will be undertaken prior to the approval of a final scheme for 2015/16.

**9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Regular liaison between the police and this authority is maintained through our Community Safety Officer. At this time, no attributable impacts upon local rates of crime and disorder have been identified.

**10. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The option(s) recommended by cabinet on consideration of this report will require approval by council. Subject to that approval they will be subject to consultation with residents of West Somerset. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for consultation on possible changes to the 2015 /16 Council Tax Scheme.

**11. ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 None Associated with this report

**12. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 None Associated with this report

**13. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1 The 2015 / 16 Council Tax Rebate Scheme must be approved by Council by 31 January 2015 or it will be forced to adopt the Government's default scheme. The default scheme is essentially old Council Tax Benefit scheme allowing a maximum 100% of liability as oppose to the 85% West Somerset scheme. The clear implication being the creation of a significant additional budget deficit



## Appendix A – Summary of the impact of proposals

Impact on scheme - Employed cases only												
	Option 1		Option 2		Option 3		Option 4		Option 5		Option 6	
	Number of people with increased entitlements	Average weekly increase	Number of people with increased entitlements	Average weekly increase	Number of people with increased entitlements	Average weekly increase	Number of people with increased entitlements	Average weekly increase	Number of people with increased entitlements	Average weekly increase	Number of people with increased entitlements	Average weekly increase
Single	55	£3.66	54	£3.38	54	£4.15	56	£3.99	56	£4.21	56	£4.13
Lone parent	110	£2.23	113	£3.52	113	£4.91	119	£5.40	119	£5.53	119	£5.82
Children	110	£4.66	110	£4.81	110	£6.30	112	£6.38	112	£6.74	112	£6.80
Couple only	23	£3.84	23	£4.28	23	£4.83	23	£5.22	23	£5.03	23	£5.41
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>£3.52</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>£4.03</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>£5.28</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>£5.49</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>£5.69</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>£5.84</b>
Of which:												
Employed	260	£3.43	262	£4.02	262	£5.32	268	£5.57	268	£5.78	268	£5.95
Self employed	38	£4.13	38	£4.10	38	£4.99	42	£5.00	42	£5.20	42	£5.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>£3.52</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>£4.03</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>£5.28</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>£5.49</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>£5.69</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>£5.84</b>
Disabled	21	£3.48	21	£4.77	21	5.07	21	£5.92	21	5.72	21	£6.10



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*Report Number:* WSC 25/14  
*Presented by:* Cllr Karen Mills – Portfolio Lead, Economic Regeneration & Tourism  
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*Report to a Meeting of:* Cabinet  
*To be Held on:* 5<sup>th</sup> February 2014  
*Date Entered on Executive Forward Plan Or Agreement for Urgency Granted:*

## ALLOCATION OF SEASIDE STRATEGY FUNDING

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to make proposals for the allocation and use of the residue of the seaside strategy funding earmarked reserve for schemes in Minehead.

### 2. CONTRIBUTION TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 2.1 The initiatives outlined in this report will contribute to the Council's priorities of maximising opportunities for businesses and the working age community.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Cabinet agree the allocation of up to a maximum of £11,600 of the seaside strategy fund for the projects described in paragraph 5 of this report.

### 4. RISK ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

#### Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
No risk identified			

### 5. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 5.1 West Somerset Council was awarded £200,000 of Seaside Strategy Funding in 2010 ring fenced for delivering socio-economic activity in the town of Minehead. To help inform the strategic economic priorities for Minehead, the multi-stakeholder partnership known as the Minehead Vision Group (MVG) was formed. MVG established a Vision, priorities to deliver the vision and an action plan of activities to support this.

- 5.2 To date 8 specific programmes of activity have been funded (see paragraph 6 for full details), three of which are particularly significant in respect of a contribution towards the capital works at the Regal Theatre, the appointment of the Minehead Vision Manager and funding allocated to the Minehead Vision Manager's business plan. The latter project has quite challenging targets to lever in additional funding. All the funded projects are aligned to and have SMART targets in relation to the MVG Action Plan, and these are monitored by that Group.
- 5.3 At their last meeting MVG considered two applications to the residue of SSF that remains un allocated, a sum of £11,600. MVG agreed to support both applications and recommend then to Cabinet.

5.4 **Project One – Creation of Heritage Hub at the Former Steamers Bar, Beach Hotel, Minehead.**

This is a very exciting opportunity to create a new, and much needed indoor tourism attraction, locate a Visitor Centre opposite the West Somerset Railway which carries some 150,000 visitors to Minehead each year, as well as, creating the starting point for a Minehead heritage trail which will seek to link all of Minehead's key heritage assets.

5.5 **Overview**

The Minehead Museum Society is a relatively new constituted Group (Company limited by guarantee), that was formerly part of the Minehead Conservation Society. The Organisation has had a long term ambition to establish a Minehead Museum, and to that end ran a 'pop-up' facility in the former VIIC building last summer. The exhibition was a resounding success and attracted over 500 visitors during its 2 weeks of operation. This pilot has given the museum the impetus and confidence to develop a permanent fixture in the town.

The Minehead Information Centre (operated by Minehead Development Trust) relocated from the former VIIC building, where it was run by WSC, to a shop in the Avenue in 2012. A four year lease was signed with a break clause at 2 years. The annual running costs of using these premises were in the region of £10,000. By relocating this service at Steamers, there will be a considerable cost saving. That reduction in overhead will contribute directly to the on-going sustainability of a Visitor Information Service in Minehead as well as demonstrating co-location models of delivery.

The YMCA are currently in process of creating an Hotel, Hostel accommodation and training facility which will deliver apprenticeships, offer engagement opportunities for young people and provide for tourists both active and traditional at the Beach Hotel.

5.6 **Proposal**

Minehead Development Trust have been offered the opportunity of a 5 year Agreement with a license to occupy of the former Steamers Bar to relocate the Tourism Visitor Centre from the Avenue, co-located with a museum (run by the Minehead Museum Society) and a café that would be run by the YMCA. The lease is offered at a peppercorn rent, however MDT and the Museum Society will be required to contribute towards the fitting out costs.

***The MDT is requesting an allocation of up to a maximum of £10,000 from SSF for this partnership project..***

The Minehead Visioning Group voted to support this proposal as part of the Vision Project delivery plan.

About a third of the space will be taken up by a Café that will be run by the YMCA. In fitting out the space, the YMCA has agreed to contribute two thirds of the cost, with the MIC / Museum contributing one third. The estimated costs are in the region of £31,000 and therefore the two voluntary organisations will be tasked with contributing £11,000 and some additional costs for a small amount of new equipment and signage (road and premises) bringing this to a potential total of £14,000. It should be emphasised that these costs relate

to the basic fitting out and start-up costs that will allow all three operations to open their doors for business by mid -March 2014 to coincide with the opening of the Beach Hotel and the WSR Steam Gala, but certainly in the case of the Museum, more fund raising and bid submissions will be required to further develop the facility as well as other heritage hub activity in relation to the wider visitor experience.

Minehead Museum have identified a number of match funding opportunities

- Heritage Lottery Fund - First World War - Then & Now (£3K to 10k) for planned Minehead at War exhibition
- Heritage Lottery Fund - Sharing Heritage - (£3K to 10K)
- Minehead Town Council
- SW Fed Museum - Small Grant-Big Improvement
- Princes Trust

## 5.7 **Partners**

The key partners in delivering this project are the **YMCA**, Lead partner (Landlord) with extensive track record in this type of development and offering this space for community benefit on a shared basis on a 5 year, minimal cost, flexible licence basis

**MDT (MIC)** who have an established track record in development of Minehead projects for Community, Culture and Commerce. MDT currently host the Vision Project by employing and managing the Minehead Vision Manager and Business Apprentice on behalf of the Minehead Vision Group. This proposal is part of the development of an element of the Vision Action Plan in respect of tourist / community information services and a pilot project in co-location of other services.

**Minehead Museum Group (MM)** – Has been a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG) since 25 November 2013. It currently has funds of circa £1.3K transferred from Minehead Conservation Society (MCS) The MM have an active and growing cohort of volunteers (and 'friends of MM') adequate to operate a museum to the level planned. The current MM team set up a Museum Sub-Committee of MCS from February 2010. MM has taken and implemented advice on governance and policies from Somerset Heritage Centre's Museum Service and needed to be a CLG to attract grant funding, receive acquisitions and borrow items from other museums

**West Somerset Railway** – A supportive and collaborative partner working to promote the Heritage Hub concept and joined up service provision. WSR are not financially involved in this phase of the work but are an active partner for the Heritage Hub development.

## 5.8 **Project Two – Small Business Grants**

The £200K allocation of SSF has been used for a number of different activities, which has provided significant economic impact for Minehead, but there have been no projects to date that specifically and directly support business development and resilience.

It is proposed to develop a discretionary one-off small business grants scheme (up to a maximum of £300 per applicant), which could be bid into for equipment or developmental activity that will help to develop and grow a small business or make it more resilient. An example of the latter, could be where a business has suffered from flooding, and to prevent further incidents needs some financial support towards future small scale flood prevention measures. Other examples to help business development or business attractiveness could be for website development, redecoration costs, new capital equipment to help boost sales etc. Appendix A provides more detail about how this fund would work in terms of eligibility, and other criteria.

The initial grants pot would total £2500. This would comprise an allocation of **£1,600 from SSF**, £400 from the WSC Economic Development Retail Support Budget and £500 that

has been pledged from the Minehead Chamber of Trade. Further contributions to the fund may be requested from national business concerns based in Minehead (Banks, Insurance Companies, Supermarkets and other multiples)

It is intended that the process to apply should be relatively quick and easy (a one page application form) and an award panel that can make a collective decision by email, or quick informal meetings. The Panel to comprise the Lead Member for Economic Regeneration, a Minehead Town Councillor, the Chair of the Chamber of Trade and advised / supported by WSC's Economic Development Team. Details of grants made would be reported back to MVG on a regular basis.

## 6. FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The table below outlines the contributions that have been allocated to specific projects and activity utilising CCF. Not all of the projects required the full amount that was ring fenced them for, therefore a surplus amount had been generated. The total amount left unallocated is £11,641.00

Allocation of SSF	Allocated	Spent	Spent / Committed as at 1 Jan 2014)
Employment of Community Facilitator (May 2010)	300.00	300.00	300
To Minehead Event Reserve	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000
Sign for Minehead Enterprise Centre	8,137.50	6,741.90	6741.9
Refurbishment of Regal Theatre Lift	50,000.00	50,000.00	50,000
Support for MDT in respect of Hospital Project	10,000.00	5,190.00	10,000
Improvement to Minehead Esplanade and Seafront	800.00	763.02	763
Maintenance and Refurbishment of Blenheim Garden Bandstand	10,000.00	4,969.00	4969
Minehead Vision Manager (2 Tranches paid)	70,000.00	52,327.00	70,000
Vision Manager Business Plan (1 Tranche Paid)	35,585.00	20,000.00	35,585
	194,822.50	150,290.92	188358.92
Balance Bought Forward 1st March 2012	(200,000.00)	(200,000.00)	
Unspent Amount		(49,709.08)	
Unallocated Amount	(5,177.50)		-£11,641
Red figures - actual costs, no more drawdown to come.			

## **7. SECTION 151 OFFICER COMMENTS**

- 7.1 The projects detailed within paragraph 5 of this report is appropriate use of the Seaside Towns strategy monies awarded to West Somerset Council, and the proposals have no effect on the core West Somerset finances, with the exception of the retail support allocation of £400 which has already been agreed by a previous Cabinet meeting.

## **8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

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

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

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

- 8.1 There are no implications

## **9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no implications

## **10. CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The proposals contained within this report have been considered by Minehead Vision Group a multi-stakeholder partnership that comprises representatives from West Somerset Council, Minehead Town Council, Somerset County Council and a number of voluntary and community based organisations.

## **11. ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no implications

## **12. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 There are no implications

## **13. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1 There are no implications





## **Business Resilience and Development Grant - Guidance**

### **Scale of Fund**

Currently the grants pot stands at £2,500. Efforts will be made to increase this amount, but once it has been allocated in its entirety then the fund will be closed.

### **Administration of Fund**

The fund would be managed on a day to day basis by the WSC Economic Development Team, with decision making devolved to a small group comprised of WSC Economic Growth Portfolio Lead, Minehead Town Councillor and Chair of Chamber of Trade.

### **Criteria**

The grant will cover a maximum of 50% of the total costs and the maximum grant available is £300.

*Therefore if your total project cost is £500, the maximum we could award is £250. If your total project cost was £1,000 then we would consider awarding the maximum amount of £300.*

The grant can be used towards anything which can be demonstrated to be making the business more resilient.

Examples could include the purchase of equipment to make a business more secure from external (out of your control) influences such as flooding / robbery.

It could include costs towards activities that will enhance your business offer such as new , marketing materials, website development, contribution towards new equipment to support new business activity or in some cases redecoration which might enhance the look of the premises. If in doubt, then call the Economic Development Team to discuss your proposals first.

The grant will **not** cover the basic running costs of the business. Examples of what it will not cover include (but is not exhaustive) business rates, payments of employees, utilities or rent.

If in doubt, then call the Economic Development Team to discuss your proposals first.

The grant will be paid upon provision of evidence that you have implemented the project (in the form of receipted invoices).

Applicants must have a business bank account into which the grant can be paid.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

In order for businesses to qualify for the Grant Scheme they must:

Be an established Minehead business that has been based in the town for more than 1 year.

Be a sole trader, partnership, co-operative or limited company.

Be engaged in retail or customer focussed activity with premises located within the town of Minehead / Alcombe

Employ no more than 10 full-time (or full-time equivalent) employees at the time of application.

**Businesses will NOT be eligible if:**

They have been established for less than 1 year.

They are already receiving government funding.

They are engaged in political activity or lobbying at any level or activity of an exclusively religious nature.

They are engaged in activities where special European Community rules governing State Aid apply e.g. fisheries and aquaculture, agriculture, transport.

**General Conditions**

Only one grant is available per business.

The Grant Scheme is supported and administered by West Somerset Council via the Economic Regeneration team

Employees and Members of Minehead Vision Group and its partner organisations are not eligible for the Scheme.

All proposals and supporting documents must not infringe on any existing patent or copyright and therefore must be the property of the applicant.

All applications will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence.

Decisions on applications will be final and any award may be withheld at the discretion of Minehead Vision Group or West Somerset Council.

Minehead Vision Group / West Somerset Council reserves the right to publicise the details of any award of grant under the Grant Scheme, and will explore opportunities for marketing and promotion of the scheme, which may require recipient businesses being named as part of a media campaign.

**Advice and Guidance**

We are keen to let applicants know that further business support is available from time to time to assist with, business planning, business mentoring or marketing. Applicants will be automatically signed up to the West Somerset Business e-Bulletin in order to keep up-to-date with business support activity available in the area.

**Application Process**

If you want to apply, and are reasonably certain that you are eligible then please progress to the simple next steps:-

Complete the application form to outline your plans and expected costs and email this to [gdwyer@westsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:gdwyer@westsomerset.gov.uk) or post it to Gordon Dwyer, West Somerset Council, Killick Way, Williton, TA4 4QA or pop it into the Customer Contact Centre at Summerland Road.

West Somerset Council will register your interest, consider your application and will get back to you with a response within a maximum of 2 weeks from receipt of your fully completed (all relevant information provided to enable a decision to be made) application.

The Council will reimburse the costs up to the agreed sum upon provision of receipted invoices based on a maximum of 50% of the total costs of the project. When submitting your invoices please provide details of the account into which you would like the grant to be paid.

All applicants should note that the Grant Scheme is subject to availability and funding and applications will be considered on a 'first come, first served' basis.

The decision to award the grant will rest with Minehead Vision Group / West Somerset Council with awards being granted based on applications satisfactorily demonstrating that they meet the outlined criteria, conditions, information requests and priorities. The decision of MVG / WSC is final.