

To:

Members of Scrutiny Committee

(Councillors P H Murphy (Chairman), N Thwaites (Vice Chairman), D Archer, A Behan, R Clifford, G S Dowding, B Maitland-Walker, J Parbrook, and R Woods)

Members of Cabinet

(Councillor A Trollope-Bellew (Leader), M Chilcott (Deputy Leader), M Dewdney, K J Mills, C Morgan, S J Pugsley, K H Turner, D J Westcott)

Our Ref CS

Contact Emily McGuinness emcguinness@westsomerset.gov.uk

Date 08 June 2016

**THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THE MEETING  
THIS DOCUMENT CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE IN LARGE PRINT, BRAILLE, TAPE FORMAT  
OR IN OTHER LANGUAGES ON REQUEST**

Dear Councillor

I hereby give you notice to attend the following meeting:

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Date: Thursday 16 June 2016**

**Time: 3.30 pm**

**Venue: Council Chamber, Council Offices, Williton**

Please note that this meeting may be recorded. At the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act. Data collected during the recording will be retained in accordance with the Council's policy.

Therefore unless you advise otherwise, by entering the Council Chamber and speaking during Public Participation you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of the sound recording for access via the website or for training purposes. If you have any queries regarding this please contact Committee Services on 01643 703704.

Yours sincerely



**BRUCE LANG**  
Proper Officer

## RISK SCORING MATRIX

Report writers score risks in reports uses the scoring matrix below

**Risk Scoring Matrix**

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

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

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

## **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Meeting to be held on Thursday 16 June 2016 at 3.30 pm**

**Council Chamber, Williton**

### **AGENDA**

**1. Apologies for Absence**

**2. Minutes**

Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 21 April 2016, to be approved and signed as a correct record – **SEE ATTACHED.**

**3. Declarations of Interest**

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

**4. Public Participation**

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

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

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

**5. Notes of Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points**

To review the Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points from the Cabinet Meeting held on 18 May, 2016. – **SEE ATTACHED.**

**6. Cabinet Forward Plan**

To review the latest Cabinet Forward Plan for the months of November onwards, published on 7 June 2016. – **SEE ATTACHED.**

**7. Chairman's Announcements.**

An opportunity to update the Committee on any matters of interest or matters arising

**8. Freehold Disposal of Church Street Public Conveniences, Dunster**

To consider Report No. WSC 66/16 to be presented by Councillor Chilcott – **SEE ATTACHED.**

The purpose of the report is to consider the freehold disposal of Church Street Public Conveniences in Dunster, the extent of which is shown on the attached plan attached, (Appendix A).

**9. Revenue and Capital Outturn 2015/16**

To consider Report No. WSC 67/16 to be presented by Councillor Chilcott – **SEE ATTACHED.**

The purpose of the report is to provide Members with details of the Council's financial outturn position for both revenue and capital budgets, together with information regarding end of year reserve balances, for the financial year 2015/16.

**10. Initial Draft Medium Term Financial Plan**

To consider Report No. WSC 68/16 to be presented by Councillor Chilcott – **SEE ATTACHED.**

The purpose of the report is to present Councillors with an initial draft of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) covering the five year period 2017/18 to 2021/22. The MTFP describes the projected financial forecasts for spending and income, and summarises the approach to closing the gap where projected spending requirements exceed projected funding. Elements of this strategy will emerge in the coming months, taking into account proposals to be developed to implement the new Corporate Strategy 2016-2020 and to deliver the transformation plans currently being prepared for Councillors to consider.

**11. Quarter 4 2015/16 Performance Report**

To consider Report No. WSC 69/16 to be presented by The Leader of the Council, Cllr Anthony Trollope-Bellew. – **SEE ATTACHED.**

The purpose of the report is to provide members with key performance management data up to the end of quarter 4 2015/16, to assist in monitoring the Council's performance.

**12. Key policy changes to Common Allocations Policy 2016**

To consider Report No. WSC 70/16 to be presented by Councillor Turner – **SEE ATTACHED.**

The purpose of the report is to provide an update following the Somerset Monitoring Board has reviewing the Common Allocations policy in the light of ongoing changes to welfare payments and changes to the way in which applicants express interest on properties. The review has taken account of issues raised by local authority and landlord partners. The updated draft policy has been reviewed in detail by various local authority and landlord officer groups and has been the subject of a consultation exercise with applicants and stakeholders.

**13. Scrutiny Committee Work Plan**

To receive items and review the Scrutiny Committee Work plan for 2016/17. - **SEE ATTACHED.**

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

**The Council's Vision:**

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

**The Council's Corporate Priorities:**

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

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st April 2016 at 3.30 pm**

**Present:**

Councillor P H Murphy .....Chairman  
Councillor R Lillis .....Vice-Chairman

Councillor A Behan  
Councillor G S Dowding  
Councillor J Parbrook

Councillor R Clifford  
Councillor B Maitland-Walker

**Members in Attendance:**

Councillor M Chilcott

**Officers in Attendance:**

Assistant Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer – (B Lang)  
Tim Childs – Asset Manager  
Democratic Services Coordinator (E McGuinness)  
Democratic Services Officer - Scrutiny (M Prouse)

**SC 172 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Cllrs D Archer and R Woods.

**SC 173 Minutes**

(Minutes of the Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 10 March 2016 – circulated with the Agenda.)

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 10 March 2016 be confirmed as a correct record.

The Chair brought to the attention of Members the South Western Ambulance Service Trust item, and invited Members to raise any outstanding issues they wished to pursue.

Waiting times outside Accident and Emergency across the County was recognised as the most significant challenge facing the service, and that current times shared at the last meeting were unacceptable.

The Scrutiny Co-ordinator briefly gave an overview of the statutory landscape, and the role of Somerset County Council's Health Scrutiny function, and how there is no District Council representation on that Committee.

**RESOLVED:** that a letter be drafted, with the possibility of collaborating with the other District Council's in Somerset, addressed to the County Council requesting a more dynamic approach to Health Scrutiny.

**SC 174 Declarations of Interest**

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

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Personal or Prejudicial or Disclosable Pecuniary	Action Taken
Cllr B Maitland - Walker	All Items	Carhampton	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr P H Murphy	All Items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and voted
Cllr J Parbrook	All items	Minehead	Personal	Spoke and voted

**SC 175 Public Participation**

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

**SC 176 Notes of Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points**

(Copy of Notes of Cabinet Decisions/Action Points, circulated at the meeting.)

**RESOLVED** that the Key Cabinet Decisions/Action Points from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6 April 2016, be noted.

**SC 177 Cabinet Forward Plan**

(Copy of the Cabinet Forward Plan published 5 April 2016, circulated at the meeting)

**RESOLVED** that the Cabinet Forward Plan published on 5 April 2016, be noted.

**SC 178 Chairman's announcements**

- The Chair brought to Member's attention the situation with the Pre-Meetings, which will no longer be taking place before Scrutiny Committee. Even though recommended as best practice, Member feedback from the

recent questionnaires indicated that they were not seen as valuable. The Chair emphasised that the situation will remain fluid, but that it is hoped with the 'less is more' approach more Members may feel able to engage.

- Members were informed that Audit Committee have been invited to attend and participate in this meeting to make the best use of officer and member time in relation to consideration of the Asset Management Update Report.
- As this was the last meeting of the Municipal Year, the Chair thanked Members of the Committee for their commitment and contributions over the past year.

### **SC 179 Asset Management Service - Update**

Councillor Mandy Chilcott – Lead Member Resources presented this item.

The purpose of this report was to update the Committee as requested at Corporate PAG on 16<sup>th</sup> January 2016, in respect of:

- The new Asset Management Group Terms of Reference
- The new operational procedure for dealing with recovery of costs when dealing with low value agreements.
- Land and Property assets Health & Safety statutory compliance works

During discussion, the following points were raised:

- It was raised that if the Agenda and Minutes are not circulated, and the dates of the AMG are not published in the calendar, how could other councillors know what was being discussed and when.
- It was emphasised that AMG was not a formal committee and was used as an opportunity for Officers to brief the Portfolio Holders collectively to make the best use of officer time, no formal minutes are produced.
- Previous quadrennials it was an officer only briefing but some Member engagement was thought necessary.
- In the Report it says 'Minutes' but this is an oversight and should say 'Notes' and the 'Notes' are more like bullet points, with little in the way of detail.
- Officers come out of these briefings with many Action Points.
- Committee was informed that AMG was a portfolio holder briefing for areas of responsibility.
- Terms of Reference were not a necessity but recognised as being helpful and providing some clarity.
- The Scheme of Delegations in the Constitution clarifies the position in regard to individual decisions relating to Assets, AMG is thus a way for check and balance between Officers and Members.
- With the non-publication of notes and dates, if a decision is taken at AMG by a Portfolio Holder that is then circulated, nobody will know where to look if they do not know when the meeting took place?
- It was queried that if any Councillor could request information on any subject, did this include a way to see all the notes from these meetings be requested for viewing?



- It was emphasised again that notes are for briefing, not for publication and any formalization of this would lead to more time and effort required on the part of Officers.
- A clarification was requested and reference was made the Constitution, which states that a Councillor can request all information publically available, and information held by officers which it would be reasonable for them to receive in pursuit of their roles, and these would be considered on a case by case basis.
- Chair clarified thus that he was making a blanket request for all notes on AMG whenever they take place.
- The next part of questioning focused on the relationship between the Asset Project Group and the AMG.
- It was considered that the APG was set up to do a specific job, and was cross party, but as it was coming to the end of its remit it was considered whether it could be incorporated into the AMG? Would it be possible for a member of the Opposition or even a Member of Scrutiny to sit on the AMG?
- It was emphasised that most of the meeting is a briefing on ongoing projects, and the areas that involve decisions are only a small part of the AMG, and any that are taken are published and subject to call-in should that be deemed necessary.
- It was emphasised that hundreds of small items go through AMG, there are no real big ticket items.
- Asset Management Plan could be found on the Internet and copies can be provided to all members upon request
- The Asset Management Strategy is currently being updated, but it has been more than a simple rewrite of the old strategy, as there has been a large amount of change since last written.
- In terms of compliance, there is now a substantial amount of data on the properties in WSC ownership, with a lot of work being done on the new plan and new strategy.
- During the last 12 months work has focused on understanding the property portfolio and the conditions, so as a council the tools are in place to deliver on the strategy and plan.
- Compliance in respect of health and safety took precedence over updating the strategy.
- As regards the operational procedure, questions were asked as to how can something be prescriptive yet flexible? And when does an internal guidance document not become a new policy?
- It was suggested that a lot of other councils recover costs on everything they do.
- This system allows for the fact that some small groups may not have the finances, and gives the opportunity for small groups to engage and for each case to be considered on its merits.
- With Toilet Transfers it has been decided by Cabinet that costs will be covered by WSC and that this is the right thing to do as a Council.
- It was considered whether in all transactions solicitors could act for both sides to save costs. It was suggested this possibility be raised with the SHAPE Partnership.
- Members appreciated the work that has gone on in compliance since the appointment of the Asst. Director.
- It was commented that just under 50% of the 'Red' Category Assets had been completed in 4 months and a reason for this was sought?

- It was offered that priorities were considered against the resources the Council currently has.
- It was asked whether Capital Works Surveys would be done in future before deciding on an Asset being kept.
- All Assets have now been inspected.
- It was acknowledged that the current system of recording the undertaking of work was seen as ineffective.
- Licensing Dept. has improved in this area and was advocated as a possible route to follow.
- At the end of May, we will have a clearer picture on budget requirements, not able to give a guide at this stage, but at the moment on track.
- There was a request to rollover funds in the compliance budget for 2016/17.
- Assets recognised as biggest risk for this Council, there was recognised uncertainty in what the surveys will bring up in terms of further work.
- The Assets Manager Tim Child was thanked for all his hard work and effort.

**RESOLVED** that:-

- The Scrutiny Committee comment and note the:
  - a) Asset Management Group Terms of Reference
  - b) Land and Property assets Health and Safety statutory compliance update

And support the:

- a) Recovery of Costs when dealing with low value agreements – Operational Procedure
- b) Members agreed to support any future budget roll over requests in relation to the successful delivery of this service.

**SC 180** **Scrutiny Committee Work Plan.**

(Copy of the Forward Plan for 2016, circulated with the agenda.)

- Members were reminded that this was their opportunity to suggest items for the Work Programme – all requests will be considered using the process agreed by the Committee in June 2015. In the first instance, all suggestions should be made to the Scrutiny Team.
- It was stated that the practice of Scrutiny receiving Performance and Financial Monitoring Reports in the second and fourth quarters would continue.
- Members were informed that an update from the Economic Development team on the work they are doing to pro-actively engage with West Somerset College will be coming forward to Scrutiny later in the year.
- Committee was informed that Business Plans on future arrangements were currently being prepared and that it is likely that these will be considered by Scrutiny in July.

**RESOLVED** that the Scrutiny Forward Plan published on 21st April be noted.

The meeting closed at 5.30pm.

MEETING: CABINET

DATE: 18 MAY 2016

## NOTES OF KEY DECISIONS

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

AGENDA ITEM	DECISION	CONTACT LEAD OFFICER
Forward Plan (Agenda Item 5)	<b>Agreed</b> that the Forward Plan for the month of July 2016 be approved.	Assistant Chief Executive
Cabinet Appointments to Outside Bodies (Agenda Item 7)	<b>Agreed</b> that the representatives detailed in the report be appointed.	Assistant Chief Executive
Business Rates Write Off Request (Confidential) (Agenda Item 9)	<b>Agreed</b> that the two debts detailed in the report be approved for write off as uncollectable.	Senior Debt and Recovery Officer

For a record of the reasons for the decision; details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the decision-making body at the meeting at which the decision was made; a record of any conflict of interest relating to the matter decided which is declared by any member of the decision-making body which made the decision; and in respect of any declared conflict of interest, a note of dispensation granted by the relevant local authority's head of paid service, please use the attached link below, to the Council's website where the minutes and relevant reports can be viewed: <http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Council---Democracy/Council-Meetings/Cabinet-Meetings/Cabinet---18-May-2016.aspx>

Date: 19 May 2016

**Weekly version of Cabinet Forward Plan published on 7 June 2016**

<b>Forward Plan Ref / Date proposed decision published in Forward Plan</b>	<b>Date when decision due to be taken and by whom</b>	<b>Details of the proposed decision</b>	<b>Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring a resolution for it to be considered in private and what are the reasons for this?</b>	<b>Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision</b>
FP/16/7/01  02/09/2015	13 July 2016  By 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	Tim Burton Assistant Director Planning and Environment 01823 358403
FP/16/7/02  02/09/2015	13 July 2016  By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Allocation of Hinkley Point C Community Impact Mitigation Funding  Decision: to present the recommendations of the HPC Planning Obligations Board for the allocation of monies from the CIM Fund	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Lisa Redston, CIM Fund Manager 01984 635218
FP/16/7/03  9/12/2015	13 July 2016  By Lead Member for Energy Infrastructure	Title: Hinkley Point  Decision: to consider key issues relating to Hinkley Point	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure 01984 635245
FP/16/7/04  17/02/16	13 July 2016  By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Revenue and Capital Outturn 2015/16  Decision: to note the financial position and approve transfers to and from reserves and supplementary estimates	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Paul Fitzgerald, Assistant Director Resources 01823 358680
FP/16/7/06  6/01/2016	13 July 2016  By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Disposal of Church Street Public Conveniences, Dunster  Decision: to approve the disposal of Church Street Public Conveniences, Dunster	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Tim Child, Asset Manager 07760260465

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	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/16/7/07 02/09/2015	13 July 2016 By Leader of Council	Title: <b>Corporate Performance Report Quarter 4</b>  Decision: to provide Members with an update on progress in delivering corporate priorities and performance of council services	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Paul Harding, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager 01823 356309
FP/16/7/08 02/09/2015	13 July 2016 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Budget Monitoring Report Quarter 4</b>  Decision: to provide Members with details of the Council's expected financial outturn position in 2015/16 for both revenue and capital budgets, together with information relating to predicted end of year reserve balances	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Paul Fitzgerald, Assistant Director Resources 01823 358680
FP/16/7/09 15/03/2016	13 July 2016 By Lead Member Housing, Health and Wellbeing	Title: Homefinder Policy Changes  Decision: to provide Members with details of the changes to the Homefinder Policy	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Mark Leeman Strategy & Partnerships Lead 01823 356411
FP/16/7/10 04/06/2015	13 July 2016 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Review of Financial Regulations [FR2]</b>  Decision: to recommend to Council to approve updated Financial Regulations	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Paul Fitzgerald, Assistant Director Resources 01823 358680
FP/16/7/11 17/03/2016	13 July 2016 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Customer Access and Shared Assets (CASA) Project  Decision: to recommend to Council to approve the project		Sue Tomlinson, Transformation Project Manager 07880 179022
FP/16/7/12 21/01/2016	13 July 2016 By Lead Member for Housing, Health and Wellbeing	Title: Homefinder Somerset Common Allocations Policy  Decision: To note the changes to the policy as required by changes in legislation	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Mark Leeman Strategy & Partnerships Lead 01823 356411

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	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/16/7/13 20/05/2016	13 July 2016 By Lead Member for Regeneration and Economic Growth	Title: Plan for spending the second allocation for tourism from the Hinkley Site Prep Section 106 Agreement  Decision: to make proposals for spending the next Hinkley Site Prep Section 106 allocation for tourism	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Robert Downes, Tourism Officer 01984 635249
FP/16/9/03 02/09/2015	7 September 2016 By 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	Paul Fitzgerald, Assistant Director Resources 01823 358680
FP/16/9/04 9/12/2015	7 September 2016 By Lead Member for Energy Infrastructure	Title: Hinkley Point  Decision: to consider key issues relating to Hinkley Point	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure 01984 635245
FP/16/9/05 9/12/2015	7 September 2016 By Leader of Council	Title: <b>Corporate Performance Report 2016-17 Quarter 1</b>  Decision: to provide Members with an update on progress in delivering corporate priorities and performance of council services	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Paul Harding, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager 01823 356309
FP/16/9/06 9/12/2015	7 September 2016 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Budget Monitoring Report Quarter 1</b>  Decision: to provide Members with details of the Council's expected financial outturn position in 2016/17 for both revenue and capital budgets, together with information relating to predicted end of year reserve balances	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Paul Fitzgerald, Assistant Director Resources 01823 358680
FP/16/9/07 9/12/2015	7 September 2016 By Lead Member for Energy Infrastructure	Title: Hinkley Point  Decision: to consider key issues relating to Hinkley Point	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure 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	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/16/9/08 6/05/2016	7 September 2016 By Lead Member for Community and Customer	Title: West Somerset Lottery  Decision: to recommend to Council to explore the possibility of setting up a West Somerset Lottery	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Angela Summers Housing and Community Project Lead 01984 635318
FP/16/11/01 9/12/2015	2 November 2016 By 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	Tim Burton, Assistant Director Planning and Environment 01823 358403
FP/16/11/02 6/01/2016	2 November 2016 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: Allocation of Hinkley Point C Community Impact Mitigation Funding  Decision: to present the recommendations of the HPC Planning Obligations Board for the allocation of monies from the CIM Fund	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Lisa Redston, CIM Fund Manager 01984 635218
FP/16/11/03 9/12/2015	2 November 2016 By Lead Member for Energy Infrastructure	Title: Hinkley Point  Decision: to consider key issues relating to Hinkley Point	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure 01984 635245
FP/16/11/04 05/04/2015	2 November 2016 By Lead Member for Community and Customer	Title: Review of Council Tax Rebate Scheme for 2017/18  Decision: to review the Council Tax Rebate Scheme 2017/18 for recommendation to Council	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Heather Tiso, Revenues and Benefits Manager 01823 356541
FP/17/1/01 6/01/2016	4 January 2017 By Leader of Council	Title: <b>Corporate Performance Report 2016-17 Quarter 2</b>  Decision: to provide Members with an update on progress in delivering corporate priorities and performance of council services	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Paul Harding, Corporate Strategy and Performance Manager 01823 356309



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	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/17/1/02 6/01/2016	4 January 2017 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Budget Monitoring Report Quarter 2</b>  Decision: to provide Members with details of the Council's expected financial outturn position in 2016/17 for both revenue and capital budgets, together with information relating to predicted end of year reserve balances	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Paul Fitzgerald, Assistant Director Resources 01823 358680
FP/17/1/03 6/01/2016	4 January 2017 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Allocation of Section 106 funds held – Quarter 3</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	Tim Burton, Assistant Director Planning and Environment 01823 358403
FP/17/1/04 6/01/2016	4 January 2017 By Lead Member Resources & Central Support	Title: <b>Fees and Charges 2017/18</b>  Decision: to propose levels of fees and charges for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 (in some cases fee increases will be implemented earlier, this will be stated in the relevant sections of the report) for recommendation to Council	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Paul Fitzgerald, Assistant Director Resources 01823 358680
FP/17/1/05 6/01/2016	4 January 2017 By Lead Member for Energy Infrastructure	Title: Hinkley Point  Decision: to consider key issues relating to Hinkley Point	No exempt / confidential information anticipated	Andrew Goodchild, Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure 01984 635245

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

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

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

The Scrutiny Committee comprises: Councillors P H Murphy, N Thwaites, R Clifford, G S Dowding, B Leaker, B Maitland-Walker, J Parbrook, R Woods and I Aldridge.

## West Somerset Council

### Scrutiny Committee – 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016

#### Freehold Disposal of Church Street Public Conveniences, Dunster

This matter is the responsibility of Cllr Mandy Chilcott, Lead Member for Resources & Central Services

Report Author: Adrian Priest, Principle Estates Surveyor

#### 1. Executive Summary/Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To consider the freehold disposal of Church Street Public Conveniences in Dunster, the extent of which is shown on the attached plan, (Appendix A).

#### 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Scrutiny support a recommendation to Cabinet to approve:
- The freehold sale of Church Street public conveniences by auction, subject to a reserve price which is to be agreed by the Assistant Director for Property and Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Central Support.
  - Should the site not be sold at auction, the Council to seek to dispose of the site by alternative methods.

#### 3. Risk Assessment (if appropriate)

##### Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
An expression of interest is received by a community group within 6 weeks of resolving to sell, which has to be treated as a potential bidder.	Possible (3)	Major (4)	Medium (12)
<i>A full 6 month moratorium will apply, providing the community the time to prepare a bid.</i>	Possible (3)	Major (4)	Medium (12)
The reserve price is not reached and therefore the site does not sell at auction	Possible (3)	Moderate (3)	Medium (9)
<i>The reserve price will be set after taking advice from the auctioneer. The site can be advertised locally if the auction is not successful</i>	Unlikely (2)	Moderate (3)	Low (9)

## Risk Scoring Matrix

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

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

## 4. Background and Full details of the Report

- 4.1 This building is situated between the traffic lights in the centre of Church Street, Dunster. It is of stone construction and accessed via steps up from the main road. There is currently no disabled access.
- 4.2 The public conveniences were closed for the winter of 2010/11 and 2011/12 and were then permanently closed from November 2012 following agreement to close this building as part of the Annual Budget Setting Report to Council in February 2013.
- 4.3 It is noted that during all of these closure periods, the public conveniences have always been reopened for the Dunster By Candlelight weekend.
- 4.4 The public conveniences did re-open on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015 under a licence agreement with G A Sully & Sons. This was further to a request received from them to use the building for welfare facilities whilst they were working on a site nearby with the offer for them to manage the facilities for the general public for this period. This agreement expired on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2016 and the public conveniences are now closed.

- 4.5 It is also to be noted that in June 2013 Cabinet approved the nomination of Church Street public conveniences as an Asset of Community Value. This nomination was submitted by Dunster Parish Council. According to the Asset of Community Value regulations the District Council has to advertise the proposed disposal and can only proceed with the sale of the asset after six weeks if no expressions of interest have been received from community groups who have to be treated as potential bidders. If the council receives an expression of interest, then the full six months' moratorium applies, providing the community with time to prepare a bid.
- 4.6 It is proposed to sell this site by public auction through Lambert Smith Hampton. The advantages of selling at auction are that the sale is certain, open and transparent and the best way of demonstrating best value has been achieved.
- 4.7 If approval to sell this site is given, the proposed disposal of the public conveniences will be advertised for a period of six weeks in accordance with the Asset of Community Value procedure.
- 4.8 The site will then go to auction on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2016 on the proviso that no expressions of interest are received from any community groups.

## 5. Links to Corporate Aims/Priorities

- 5.1 The disposal of this facility will assist the Council in establishing a resilient operating model that is financially sustainable as its ongoing maintenance liabilities will be reduced.

## 6. Finance/Resource Implications

- 6.1 At Council in February 2016 as part of the Annual Budget and Council Setting paper Council approved ongoing savings from 2017/18 which included £107,000 through seeking to transfer ownership and / or management of public conveniences facilities to other organisations by April 2017, thus ceasing the cost liability of the council. This decision to progress with the budget savings is therefore reflected in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and budget estimates for 2017/18. Progressing with the disposal of this asset will contribute to the achievement of these savings.
- 6.2 Church Street public conveniences have been closed since 2012 (with exceptions as noted in 4.3 and 4.4) and the Council has been still been liable for the costs associated with this building since then.
- 6.3 The current costs for retaining this building are as set out below. The costs in 2015/16 reflect the temporary use of the facilities as explained in 4.4 above, which were not specifically reflected in the budget. The budget saving in a full year is estimated at £2,000.

Description	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
NNDR	£1,362.90	£1,389.45	£1,416
Sanitation Facilities	£291.44	£305.76	£320.72
Water Charges	£95.58	£93.78	£678.83
Electricity	£147.15	£104.32	£119.92
Compliance Works		£239.00	£80.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,897.07</b>	<b>£2,132.31</b>	<b>£2,615.47</b>

- 6.4 Auction fees for this site are £1,000 plus VAT per page in the auction booklet plus an additional 0.5% of the selling price, subject to a minimum of £800. However these costs can be recovered from the purchaser as part of the terms and conditions of sale.
- 6.5 The auction reserve price will be set the day before the auction after taking advice from the auctioneer and this will be agreed by the Assistant Director for Property and Development in consultation with the Resources and Central Support Portfolio Holder. Under statutory accounting regulations, net disposal proceeds above £10,000 are treated as capital receipts with the income transferred to the Capital Receipts Reserve. This will represent funds available to fund new capital expenditure or debt repayment as determined by future Council decisions through the budget process.
- 6.6 This proposal was put to the Asset Management Group on the 14<sup>th</sup> December 2015 where it was recommended to proceed with the sale of the property as detailed in this report.
- 6.7 The proposed sale is in line with Council policy of generating capital receipts from surplus assets, as well as contributing to the agreed annual budget savings requirement.

## **7. Legal Implications (if any)**

- 7.1 The auction sale pack (including the Land Registry Title certificate and results on various searches) will need to be provided for circulation amongst prospective buyers prior to the auction.

## **8. Environmental Impact Implications (if any)**

- 8.1 None in respect of this report.

## **9. Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications (if any)**

- 9.1 None in respect of this report.

## **10. Equality and Diversity Implications (if any)**

- 10.1 None in respect of this report.

## **11. Social Value Implications (if any)**

- 11.1 None in respect of this report

## **12. Partnership Implications (if any)**

- 12.1 None in respect of this report

## **13. Health and Wellbeing Implications (if any)**

- 13.1 None in respect of this report

**14. Asset Management Implications (if any)**

14.1 The Council's ongoing property maintenance liabilities will be reduced.

**15. Consultation Implications (if any)**

15.1 If approved by Cabinet, the Parish Council will be made aware of the decision to dispose of this site. In accordance with the Asset of Community Value procedure the District Council will also have to advertise locally that the site is being put on the market.

15.2 The Environment Portfolio Holder, Cllr Dewdney, is working with the Parish regarding future toilet provision in Dunster.

**Democratic Path:**

- **Scrutiny/Corporate Governance or Audit Committees – Yes**
- **Cabinet/Executive – Yes**
- **Full Council – No**

Reporting Frequency:  **Once only**       **Ad-hoc**       **Quarterly**  
 **Twice-yearly**       **Annually**

**List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)**

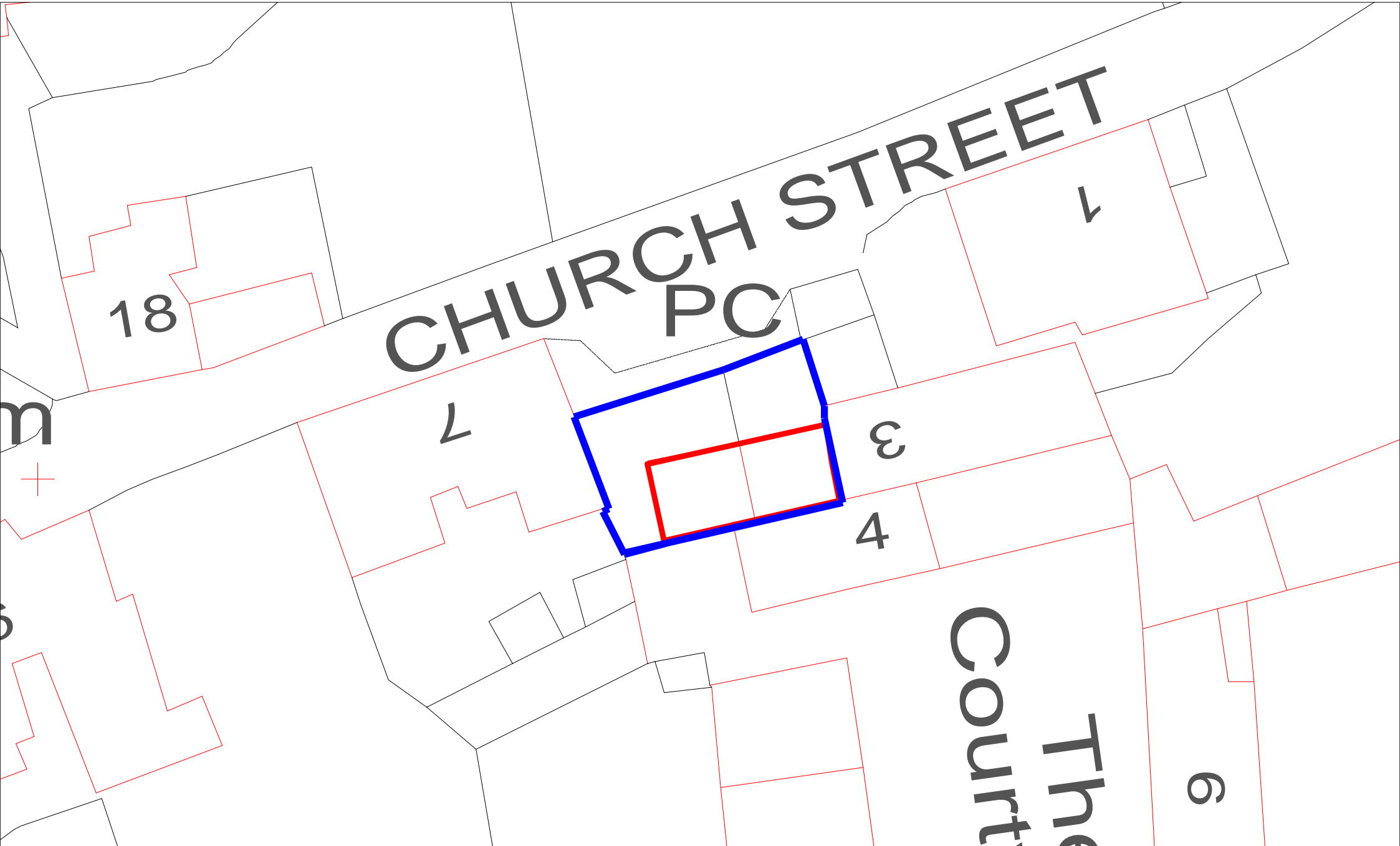
Appendix A	Plan of Church Street Public Conveniences
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**Contact Officers**

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# West Somerset Council

## Scrutiny Committee – 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016

### REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN 2015/16

This matter is the responsibility of Councillor Mrs Mandy Chilcott

Report Author: Steve Plenty, Finance Manager

#### 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with details of the Council's financial outturn position for both revenue and capital budgets, together with information regarding end of year reserve balances, for the financial year 2015/16.
- 1.2 Monitoring the budget is an important part of the Council's performance management framework.
- 1.3 The Revenue Outturn position for 2015/16 is a net underspend of £299,132.
- 1.4 The General Reserves position for 2015/16 shows a closing balance of £1,073,242 including the net underspend for the year. Transfers approved in 2016/17 reduces the current balance to £706,786 which is £106,786 above the recommended minimum of £600,000.
- 1.5 The Earmarked Reserves balance is £4,370,642, of which £3,388,863 relates to business rates funding volatility.
- 1.6 The General Fund Capital Outturn position for 2015/16 is a net underspend of £33,999 against the approved programme, with £1,822,723 being spent during the year and £2,417,412 of the approved Programme planned to be spent in future years.

#### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Scrutiny notes the Council's reported General Fund Revenue Budget underspend of £299,132 for the financial year 2015/16, which takes into account proposed earmarked reserve transfers including budget carry forwards.
- 2.2 That Scrutiny supports a recommendation to Cabinet and Council to approve the net Earmarked Reserve transfers as set out in **Table 4** and **Appendix B** of this report, including recommended Budget Carry Forward of 2015/16 underspends for specific service costs in 2016/17 totalling £212,775 as set out in **Appendix B**.
- 2.3 That Scrutiny supports a recommendation to Cabinet and Council to approve the proposed Capital Programme Budget Carry Forwards totalling £1,535,237 for general schemes to be funded using capital receipts, capital grant and S106 contributions (as set out in **Appendix D** of this report).



- 2.4 That Scrutiny supports a recommendation to Cabinet and Council to approve the proposed Capital Programme Budget Carry Forwards totalling £882,175 for Hinkley S106-funded schemes (as set out in **Appendix D** of this report).
- 2.5 That Scrutiny notes the residual net underspend of £33,999 in relation to the Capital Programme for general schemes in 2015/16.
- 3 Risk Assessment** (if appropriate)

**Risk Matrix**

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
That the Authority overspends against the approved budget	2	4	8
Regular budget monitoring reports are produced and managers actively manage the budgets under their responsibility	1	4	4

**Risk Scoring Matrix**

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

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

**4 Background and Full details of the Report**

- 4.1 Members have received financial performance information throughout the year, with reports submitted to Scrutiny and Cabinet in line with the agreed reporting arrangements. This report provides details of the position at the end of the financial year, and enables Members to compare in year forecasts with the actual outturn (end of year) position. It

also describes how the year end position impacts on the important objective for achieving financial sustainability.

- 4.2 Effective financial management forms an important part of the Council's overall performance management framework. It is also vital that the Council maintains strong financial management and control in the face of continuing and unprecedented financial pressures as funding for council services is squeezed, and our community continues to face up to the effects of wider economic pressures.
- 4.3 The Outturn figures in this report are provisional (pending end of year audit) and have been used as part of the completion of the Unaudited Statement of Accounts, which will be approved by the S151 Officer. Should the External Auditor identify any changes to the Accounts these will be reported to the Audit Committee in September 2016.

### **REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN 2015/16 AND RESERVES**

- 4.4 The Council has reported an overall net underspend of £299,132. This comprises of a £140,204 underspend in respect of net expenditure on services after reserve transfers, plus a further reported underspend in respect of business rates retention funding 'accounting timing differences' of £158,928. The forecast outturn as at Q3 (April to December 2015) was a projected net underspend of £45,267.
- 4.5 Below is a table showing the main variances between Q3 and the final outturn position:

**Table 1 – Main Differences between Q3 and Outturn Variances 2015/16**

	<b>Q3 £000</b>	<b>Change £000</b>	<b>Q4 £000</b>
Member Services	0	-22	-22
Rent Allowances	-87	12	-75
Waste Containers	-24	-35	-59
Garden Waste Collection	-16	-16	-32
Parking Services	0	-48	-48
Environmental Health	0	-20	-20
Street Cleaning	0	-9	-9
Design and Print	0	-30	-30
Corporate and Democratic Core	0	-25	-25
Temporary Accommodation Costs	15	-12	3
Homelessness and Housing Staff	0	-25	-25
Assets - Estates	0	-96	-96
Roughmoor Depot and Enterprise Centre	0	-35	-35
Economic Development	0	12	12
Tourism	0	10	10
Interest and Other Income	0	-10	-10
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)	0	-46	-46
Transfers from Earmarked Reserves	0	-144	-144
Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	100	447	547
Funding Variances – Business Rates	-33	-125	-158
Other Variances	0	-37	-37
<b>TOTAL – over / (under) spend</b>	<b>(45)</b>	<b>(254)</b>	<b>(299)</b>

#### 4.6 The main changes since the Q3 report are explained below:

- **Member Services:** Underspend on budgeted Members Allowances and general expenses, due to some combined roles meaning responsibility allowances not taken. Some councillors also did not claim their entitlement.
- **Rent Allowances:** Underspend on Rent Allowances due to ongoing benefit adjustments that were being recovered from claimants in respect of Housing Benefit overpayments.
- **Waste Containers:** The original 2015/16 budget for waste included a duplicate amount in error for waste containers as it was established that this is included within main monthly service charge from the Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP). SWP set out revised budgets for 2015/16 in January which also reduced the amount charged to West Somerset.
- **Garden Waste Collection:** Additional income received from garden waste collection service. As the price for this service was increased in April 2015 the budget estimates were cautious in terms of service demand however the number of customers has exceed the budget assumption.
- **Parking Services:** Car parking income received exceeded original budget estimates, reflecting usage of the facilities provided. There were also savings made in the year in enforcement contract costs.
- **Environmental Health:** This is due to a change in contract for the outsourced dog warden and kennelling service, which delivers the service at a reduced cost to West Somerset.
- **Street Cleaning:** Street Sweeping and Bin Emptying came in under budget through negotiated contract savings and use of more fuel efficient vehicles.
- **Design and Print:** Saving on printing costs compared to budget estimates.
- **Corporate and Democratic Core:** Budget for Duty Officer Payments no longer required as incorporated into core roles through JMASS, plus savings where subscriptions budget not fully utilised.
- **Temporary Accommodation Costs:** Bed and Breakfast temporary accommodation costs reflects the cost of demand being higher than estimated, although the final overspend has less than forecast in Q3.
- **Homelessness and Housing Staff:** Homeless prevention and Housing staff shared service cost savings due to vacancies in the services.
- **Estates – Assets:** Less Maintenance carried due to compliance works, therefore proposal to transfer underspend to earmarked reserves.
- **Roughmoor Depot and Enterprise Centre:** Additional income received (£11,000), together with vacancies (£7,000) and reduced running costs (£16,000) lead to overall underspend for this cost centre.
- **Economic Development:** Final service delivery costs higher than assumed when the budget was set.
- **Tourism:** Increased tourism delivery costs to Exmoor Park and Tropiquaria.
- **Interest and Other Income:** Higher than budgeted investment income received mainly due to cash balances remaining higher than forecast in the budget estimates.
- **Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO):** Underspend due to timing of spend in the Capital Programme, therefore proposed to be transferred to an earmarked reserve for use in 2016/17 to fund associated Capital Programme carry forwards (see Appendix C).
- **Transfers from Earmarked Reserves:** Funds have been withdrawn from earmarked reserves at the end of the financial year to match with spend incurred in line with the purpose of the reserves. However, the budgets not amended hence a variance is shown which offsets variances in in other budget headings.

- **Transfers to Earmarked Reserves:** Underspends in other budget headings have been set aside to fund spend in 2016/17 due to timing differences between financial years.
- **Funding Variances – Business Rates:** The final total for rating income for the year was less than previously estimated, mainly due to an increase in the provision for appeals and refunds. Perversely, this reduction in income leads to a reported ‘surplus’ in the year as the Levy Payment to government is lower, however this is not a real surplus – it is due to accounting timing differences in the Business Rates Retention calculations. There is a delayed impact of the 2015/16 Business Rates Collection Deficit, and the ‘surplus’ in year has been allocated to the Smoothing Reserve offset the deficit which will hit the 2017/18 budget.

4.7 Table 2 below provides a summary the revenue budget and outturn for the year.

**Table 2 – Summary Revenue Outturn 2015/16**

	Original Budget £	Revised Budget £	Predicted Outturn £	Variance £
Corporate	88,640	563,943	545,262	-18,681
Operations	3,528,383	3,521,986	3,196,749	-325,237
Housing and Communities	573,727	435,434	271,499	-163,935
Growth and Development	449,383	242,202	263,941	21,739
Hinkley		-150,726	-151,712	-986
<b>Subtotal - Net Service Costs</b>	<b>4,640,133</b>	<b>4,612,839</b>	<b>4,125,739</b>	<b>-487,100</b>
Interest costs and income	20,000	-8,800	-18,670	-9,870
Revenue Funding of Capital Costs	76,633	97,633	51,558	-46,075
Capital debt repayment (“MRP”)	225,300	0	0	0
<b>Subtotal – Net Costs</b>	<b>4,962,066</b>	<b>4,701,672</b>	<b>4,158,627</b>	<b>-543,045</b>
Transfers from Earmarked Reserves	-149,928	-433,545	-577,878	-144,333
Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	0	500,000	1,047,174	547,174
Transfers to/from General Reserves	0	244,011	244,011	0
<b>NET BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>4,812,138</b>	<b>5,012,138</b>	<b>4,871,934</b>	<b>-140,204</b>
Business Rates Funding	-1,554,776	-1,754,776	-1,913,411	-158,635
Revenue Support Grant	-880,491	-880,491	-880,491	0
New Homes Bonus	-571,015	-571,015	-574,551	-3,536
Council Tax	-1,885,584	-1,885,584	-1,882,341	3,243
Collection Fund Deficit - Business Rates	149,928	149,928	149,928	0
Collection Fund Surplus - Council Tax	-70,200	-70,200	-70,200	0
<b>TOTAL FUNDING</b>	<b>-4,812,138</b>	<b>-5,012,138</b>	<b>-5,171,066</b>	<b>-158,928</b>
<b>NET UNDER(-)/OVERSPEND FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-299,132</b>	<b>-299,132</b>

4.8 Further analysis and commentary on the main variances reported for the year as a whole is provided in **Appendix A**. The net underspend automatically transfers to General Fund Reserves as part of the financial year end process.

## General Fund Reserves

- 4.9 The following table summarises the movement on the General Reserves Balance during the year.

**Table 3 – General Reserves Balance 31 March 2016**

	£
Balance Brought Forward 1 April 2015	530,099
<i>Supplementary Budget Allocations:</i>	
Wheddon Cross Public Convenience	-12,000
Exford Public Convenience	-9,000
Asset Compliance Costs	-80,000
<i>2015/16 Budget Decisions</i>	
Transfer of In-Year Budget Savings	212,092
Transfer of In-Year Earmarked Reserve Savings	156,119
Transfer of MRP savings in 2015/16 (revised policy)	82,200
Transfer of MRP savings in 2015/16 (funded by capital receipts)	143,100
Transfer of surplus earmarked reserves	51,500
Transfer to Business Rates Smoothing Reserve	-50,000
Transfer to Sustainability Reserve	-50,000
Transfer to Business Rates Smoothing Reserve	-200,000
<b>Approved Balance 31 March 2016</b>	<b>774,110</b>
2015/16 Outturn Variance	299,132
<b>Balance Carried Forward 31 March 2016</b>	<b>1,073,242</b>
<i>2016/17 Approved Budget Decisions</i>	
Transfer to JMASS Reserve 2016/17	-166,456
Transfer to Planning Service Earmarked Reserve 2016/17	-50,000
Supplementary allocation for asset maintenance	-150,000
<b>Budgeted Balance 31 March 2017</b>	<b>706,786</b>
Recommended Minimum Balance	600,000
Projected Balance above recommended minimum	106,786

- 4.10 The balance on 31 March 2016 (subject to audit) is £1,073,242. Approved allocations from General Reserves in 2016/17 reduce the current balance to £706,786. This is £106,786 above the recommended balance of £600,000.
- 4.11 In view of the Council's future financial position the strong advice is maintain reserves above the recommended minimum, to provide some resilience for unknown costs and to provide some flexibility to support measures to address ongoing financial sustainability.

## Earmarked Reserves

- 4.12 Earmarked Reserves are amounts that have been set aside for specific purposes from existing resources, where the expenditure is expected to be incurred in future years. The table below provides a summary of the movement in earmarked reserve balances during 2015/16 financial year, highlighting that earmarked reserve balances have increased by £469,296 to a total of £4,370,642 at 31 March 2016.
- 4.13 It is important to note the significant majority of these reserves are needed to meet the deficit on business rates collection fund.

**Table 4 – Earmarked Reserves Balance 31 March 2016**

	Actual £
Balance Brought Forward 1 April 2015	<b>3,901,346</b>
Transfers From Earmarked Reserves in 2015/16	-577,878
Transfers To Earmarked Reserves in 2015/16	1,047,174
Balance Carried Forward 31 March 2016	<b>4,370,642</b>

- 4.14 The following paragraphs 4.15 - 4.21 provide explanation for the larger items included within the earmarked reserves balances. Further detail for all earmarked reserves is provided in **Appendix B**.
- 4.15 **Business Rates Smoothing Reserve:** The balance in the reserve on 31 March 2016 is £3,388,863 including a transfer of £158,635 at the year end. The Business Rates Collection Fund deficit at 31 March 2016 is £2,935,582, which will be charged to the General Fund in 2016/17 and 2017/18 and be offset by the Smoothing Reserve. This leaves £453,281 in the reserve towards future funding volatility.
- 4.16 **Sustainability Reserve:** Earmarked for initiatives that have a positive impact upon the long term sustainability of the Authority. Including a further budgeted allocation of £22,302 from the 2016/17 Final Settlement, the Sustainability Reserve will hold £40,000 to help support invest to save schemes plus £50,000 to support other measures to help smooth the transition as the Council implements change.
- 4.17 **Housing Options:** Remainder of the homelessness prevention grant received as part of the Revenue Support Grant in 2014/15 and the remainder of the Mortgage Rescue Grant. Right to Move Grant received in 2015/16 to be used to fund changes to Homefinder Somerset (Choice Based Lettings system) in 2016/17.
- 4.18 **Joint Management and Shared Services:** Funding to support transformation costs under JMASS. Includes a 2015/16 underspend and overachievement of JMASS Savings.
- 4.19 **Planning Policy Reserve:** Monies have been set aside to be drawn down to cover additional costs arising and relating to the West Somerset Local Plan preparation through to examination and beyond to adoption.
- 4.20 **Capital Financing Reserve:** Underspend on Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO) budget in 2015/16 earmarked to fund slippage on capital programme.
- 4.21 **Budget Carry Forwards For Specific Services:** Funds have been transferred to earmarked reserves in respect of requests to carry forward budget underspends to support service costs in 2016/17. These are set out in detail within Appendix B.

## **5 HINKLEY FUNDED PROJECTS**

- 5.1 As at 31 March 2016 West Somerset Council has received £14.508m in funding from EDF as part of the s106 agreement to mitigate the construction of Hinkley Point C.
- 5.2 Of this total, the largest contributions received have been in respect of the Community Impact Mitigation Fund (£5.487m), Housing (£4.004m) and a contribution towards the cost of officers dealing with the work generated by this agreement (£2.033m).
- 5.3 During 2015/16, the Council approved a number of capital and revenue funded schemes

totalling £7,029,158. Actual spend during 2015/16 was £4,765,011 and the main capital schemes supported include the following:

- Improvements to Williton Pavilion
- The Boat Museum Project in Watchet
- Improving Otterhampton Play Area
- Enhancing Coronation Park in Bridgwater

5.4 The main revenue schemes supported in 2015/16 include the following:

- A number of leisure, land management and economic development schemes
- Continuing support to the Tourist Information Centres in both West Somerset and Sedgemoor.

5.5 For information, West Somerset Council also received £2,060,000 from EDF in early 2016/17 and this consisted of the second anniversary payment of Phase 2 as well as Development Consent Order (DCO) staff funding that has been brought forward.

5.6 Currently, the Authority is still waiting for EDF to make their financial investment decision ahead of the transition to the DCO agreement, which would follow shortly afterwards.

5.7 Full details of spend against funding can be found in **Appendix C** to the report. A detailed annual review related to Hinkley is underway and will be reported in August. The information in this report is intended only to give a financial position statement.

## **6 BUSINESS RATES RETENTION**

6.1 The Business Rates Retention (BRR) funding system is proving to be both challenging and volatile, with the Council facing significant risks particularly in respect of appeals against rateable values by rate payers. The required accounting arrangements also result in some 'timing differences' which can skew the funding position across financial years.

### **General Fund Retained Business Rates Funding**

6.2 The Council's share of business rates funding is directly linked to the total amount of business rates due and collected in the area. The amounts credited to the General Fund Revenue Budget in 2015/16 are based on business rates yield and BRR figures from different sources – a combination of the 2015/16 NNDR1 (Original Budget Estimate) and the 2015/16 NNDR3 (End of Year position):

#### ***Business Rates Funding Timing Differences***

In Year Funding based on NNDR1 Original Budget Estimates (fixed amount for the year based on budget):
---

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 40% Standard Share of BR Income</li><li>• Tariff to Government</li><li>• Share of Previous Year's Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit</li></ul> |
|---|

In Year Funding based on NNDR3 actual amounts due for the year (variable amount for the year based on actuals):
---

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Section 31 Grant (Government-funded Reliefs/ Discounts)</li><li>• Levy Payment to Government</li><li>• Safety Net Receipt from Government</li></ul> |
|---|

- 6.3 At the end of the financial year there will be a Surplus or Deficit on the Business Rates Collection Fund, and this sum will be distributed in future years based on Standard Shares – so 40% for West Somerset Council.
- 6.4 The following table summarises the net position in respect of retained business rates funding for the Council in 2015/16 based on required accounting entries.

**Table 5 – Business Rates Funding Outturn for West Somerset Council**

	<b>Forecast Sept 2015 £</b>	<b>Forecast Dec 2015 £</b>	<b>Actual For 2015/16 £</b>
40% Share of Business Rates Income	4,607,581	4,607,581	4,607,581
Tariff to Government (fixed amount)	-3,036,366	-3,036,366	-3,036,366
Section 31 Grant Funding for enhanced Small Business Rates Relief / Flooding Relief/Retail Reliefs	407,909	388,858	422,795
Amount Retained By West Somerset Council For Renewable Energy rates	0	26,000	26,745
50% Levy Payment to Government	-203,859	-198,030	-96,207
14/15 Safety Net Accrual Adjustment	0	0	-11,137
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,775,265</b>	<b>1,788,043</b>	<b>1,913,411</b>
Previous Year's Collection Fund Deficit	-149,928	-149,928	-149,928
<b>Total Retained Business Rates Funding 2015/16</b>	<b>1,625,337</b>	<b>1,638,115</b>	<b>1,763,483</b>

- 6.5 As has been previously reported, the introduction of the Business Rates Retention system has introduced new financial risks for the Council. The Council's share of business rates funding is directly linked to the total amount of business rates due and collected in the area. Although the total retained funding accounted for in 2015/16 is above previous forecasts, this is skewed by the timing differences in the required accounting.
- 6.6 The Council will need to pay additional funds into the business rates Collection Fund in 2016/17 and 2017/18 to bring the Fund back into balance, and has set aside funds in the Business Rates Smoothing earmarked reserve during the 2015/16 financial year. As part of the outturn, the net income 'surplus'- due to timing differences - of £158,635 has been transferred to the Business Rates Smoothing earmarked reserve, subject to formal approval by Cabinet and Council. The year-end balance on the Reserve is £3,388,863 (see 4.18 above and Appendix B). The Council's 40% share of the Collection Fund Deficit as at 31 March 2016 is £2,935,582, therefore £453,281 will remain in the reserve to fund any future deficits.

## **7 CAPITAL BUDGET OUTTURN 2015/16**

- 7.1 The final Capital Programme budget for 2015/16 for General Schemes was £2,517,814, with actual spend incurred during the year of £948,578 on these schemes, funded through a combination of capital receipts plus grant funding received for disabled facilities grants. Budget carry forward is requested to complete approved schemes in the Programme totalling £1,535,237 with an actual underspend reported of £33,999 against the approved budget.



- 7.2 The key areas of spend included: Street Cleansing Vehicles (£133,000), Disabled Facilities Grants (£137,946) and the Clanville Grange Low Cost Housing Scheme (£207,084).
- 7.3 During 2015/16 a number of Capital Budget allocations were approved for schemes funded through Hinkley S106 contributions, totalling £1,836,320. The costs for these schemes is expected to be incurred over more than one year, with £874,145 actually spent during 2015/16 and £962,175 carried forward to complete the approved schemes in subsequent years.
- 7.4 The key areas of spend included: Living over the Shop (£204,750), Wembdon Village Hall and Playing Field (£250,000) and Coronation Park Enhancement (£188,500).
- 7.5 The following table summarises the position for both general schemes and Hinkley-funded programmes:

**Table 6 – Summary Capital Programme Outturn 2015/16**

	General Schemes £	Hinkley Funded Schemes £	Total £
Capital Budget including carry forward	1,367,719	684,149	2,051,868
Supplementary Budget Approvals	1,150,095	1,072,171	2,222,266
<b>Revised Capital Budget 2015/16</b>	<b>2,517,814</b>	<b>1,756,320</b>	<b>4,274,134</b>
Actual Spend in 2015/16	948,578	874,145	1,822,723
Carry Forward Requests	1,535,237	882,175	2,417,412
<b>Total Outturn Plus Planned Spend</b>	<b>2,483,815</b>	<b>1,756,320</b>	<b>4,240,135</b>
<b>Net Underspend</b>	<b>33,999</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>33,999</b>

- 7.6 A scheme by scheme analysis summary of the 2015/16 Outturn is set out in **Appendix D**. The net underspend arises from a number of small variances against approved schemes.
- 7.7 There has been no increase in the underlying capital borrowing requirement during the year.

### **Capital Receipts Reserve**

- 7.8 The uncommitted General Fund capital funding balance is £1,278,509 taking into account the current Capital Programme requires funding of £647,428 from the Useable Capital Receipts Reserve and the proposed 2016/17 Capital Programme requires funding of £17,500. The 2016/17 Budget also includes a recommendation to implement a three year MRP “holiday” which will provide a revenue saving of £143,100 in 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18. This relies on a mitigating action of setting aside the equivalent amount in capital receipts reserves (£143,100 x 3 years) thus making a prudent reduction in capital debt whilst relieving some of the pressure on the revenue budget.

**Table 7 – Useable Capital Receipts Reserve Balance 31 March 2016**

	Actual £
Balance Brought Forward 1 April 2015	896,581
Capital Receipts income in 2015/16	2,053,602
Capital Receipts Used in 2015/16 to support capital spend	-577,446
Capital Receipts used in 2015/16 to repay capital debt	-143,100
<b>Balance Carried Forward 31 March 2016</b>	<b>2,229,637</b>
Proposed Funding of Carry Forwards from 2015/16	-647,428
2016/17 Approved Capital Programme (Appendix E)	-17,500
Use of Capital Receipts for debt repayment in 2016/17 and 2017/18	-286,200
Uncommitted Balance	<b>1,278,509</b>

7.9 For information, details of the approved 2016/17 Capital Programme are set out in **Appendix E** of this report.

### Capital Debt Position

- 7.10 The approach in recent years has been to reduce outstanding capital debt significantly by using capital receipts income to repay loans. When the 2015/16 budget was set the intention was to use a further £1.7m of surplus capital receipts to reduce debt. This strategy has been reconsidered by Members through the budget process in recognition of the need to hold adequate capital reserves to meet future capital investment requirements such as for transformation projects that will produce ongoing revenue savings. Instead of using £1.7m of capital reserves, £429,300 of the current capital receipts balance will be used between 2015/16 and 2017/18 to repay capital debt, instead of the annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge to the revenue budget.
- 7.11 The total amount of capital debt held by the Council is represented by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR). The total CFR on 31 March 2016 is £5,489,600.

**Table 8 – Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)**

	2015/16 Actual £	2016/17 Estimate £	2017/18 Estimate £
CFR Balance Brought Forward:			
External borrowing	1,000,000	0	2,000,000
Internal borrowing	4,632,700	5,489,600	3,346,500
<b>Total CFR</b>	<b>5,632,700</b>	<b>5,489,600</b>	<b>5,346,500</b>
Additional borrowing required	0	0	0
Repayment of borrowing using capital receipts in lieu of MRP “holiday”	-143,100	-143,100	-143,100
CFR Balance Carried Forward:			
External borrowing	0	2,000,000	2,000,000
Internal borrowing	5,489,600	3,346,500	3,203,400
<b>Total CFR Balance</b>	<b>5,489,600</b>	<b>5,346,500</b>	<b>5,203,400</b>

- 7.12 The above table shows that the majority of the CFR balance is held as ‘internal borrowing’. This takes advantage of temporary cash flow surpluses that reduced the need to take out physical loans. It is currently projected that there will be a period of 9-12 months spanning the current financial year end where no external borrowing is required, however it is expected that external borrowing will be required again towards

the end of 2016/17 when the full impact of the Hinkley B business rates refund affects underlying cash flow balances.

## **8 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities**

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

## **9 Finance / Resource Implications**

9.1 Contained within the body of the report.

## **10 Legal Implications**

10.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

## **11 Environmental Impact Implications**

11.1 None for the purpose of this report.

## **12 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications**

12.1 None for the purpose of this report.

## **13 Equality and Diversity Implications**

13.1 None for the purpose of this report.

## **14 Social Value Implications**

14.1 None for the purpose of this report.

## **15 Partnership Implications**

15.1 None for the purpose of this report.

## **16 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

16.1 None for the purpose of this report.

## **17 Asset Management Implications**

17.1 None for the purpose of this report.

## **18 Consultation Implications**

18.1 None for the purpose of this report.

## **19 Scrutiny Comments / Recommendation(s)**

19.1 Scrutiny comments and recommendations are invited at this meeting.

## **Democratic Path:**

- Scrutiny – Yes 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016
- Cabinet – Yes 13<sup>th</sup> July 2016
- Full Council – Yes 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016

Reporting Frequency:    Once only    Ad-hoc    x Quarterly  
    Twice-yearly            Annually

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Appendix B	Summary of Proposed Earmarked Reserves
Appendix C	Hinkley Funding Position 2015/16
Appendix D	Capital Programme Outturn 2015/16
Appendix E	Capital Programme 2016/17

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## SUMMARY OF REVENUE VARIANCES TO REVISED BUDGET 2015/16

Group and Detail	Q3 Forecast Variance £	Q4 Actual Variance £	Comments
<b>Corporate</b>			
Member Services		-22,031	Underspend on budgeted Members Allowances and general expenses.
Other minor variances	0	3,350	
<b>Group Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-18,681</b>	
<b>Operations</b>			
Rent Allowances	-87,000	-75,225	Underspend on Rent Allowances due to ongoing benefit adjustments that were being recovered from claimants in respect of Housing Benefit overpayments.
Waste Containers	-24,000	-59,134	The original 2015/16 budget for waste included an amount for waste containers however it has since been established that this is included within Somerset County Council's budget and monthly precept. Somerset Waste Partnership set out revised budgets for 2015/16 in January which reduce the amount charged to West Somerset.
Garden Waste Collection	-16,000	-32,000	Additional income received from garden waste collection bins.
Parking – Off Street	0	-47,925	Additional car parking income received.
Environmental Health	0	-19,717	Dog and Kennelling service savings as a result of a re-negotiated contract.
Street Cleansing	0	-9,070	Street Sweeping and Bin Emptying contract savings as a result of salary savings due to vacancies and use of more fuel efficient vehicles
Design & Print	0	-30,482	Saving on printing costs compared to budget
Corporate and Democratic	0	-24,841	Duty Officer payments and corporate subscription savings.
Other minor variances		-26,843	
<b>Group Total</b>	<b>-127,000</b>	<b>-325,237</b>	

<b><i>Housing and Communities</i></b>			
Temporary Accommodation Costs	15,000	2,834	Bed and Breakfast temporary accommodation costs reflects the cost of demand being higher than estimated, although the overspend has reduced in Q4.
Homelessness & Housing Staff		-24,640	Homeless prevention and shared service cost savings.
Estates - Assets	0	-96,429	Less Maintenance carried due to compliance works - proposed transfers to reserves 2015-16.
Roughmoor Depot and Enterprise Centre	0	-34,586	Additional income received (£11k), vacancies (£7k) and reduced running costs (£16k).
Other minor variances		-11,114	
<b>Group Total</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>-163,935</b>	
<b><i>Growth and Development</i></b>			
Economic Development	0	11,933	Increased shared service costs
Tourism	0	10,214	Increased tourism delivery costs to Exmoor Park and Tropiquaria
Other minor variances	0	-408	
<b>Group Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21,739</b>	
<b><i>Hinkley</i></b>			
Other minor variances		-986	
<b>Group Total</b>		<b>-986</b>	
<b><i>Other Variances</i></b>			
Interest and other income	0	-9,870	Additional investment income received.
RCCO	0	-46,075	Underspend on revenue contribution to capital outlay due to timing differences, therefore proposed to be transferred to an earmarked reserve for use in 2016/17.
Transfers from Earmarked Reserves	0	-144,333	Proposed transfers from earmarked reserves during Q4 2015/16
Transfers to Earmarked Reserves	100,000	547,174	Proposed transfers to earmarked reserves during Q4 2015/16
Funding Variances – Business Rates	-33,267	-158,635	Additional Business Rate Retention income received, therefore proposed to be transferred to the Business Rates Smoothing Reserve.

Other Funding Variances	0	-293	
<b>Total Underspend (-) / Overspend for the Year</b>	<b>-45,267</b>	<b>-299,132</b>	

**APPENDIX B**

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED EARMARKED RESERVES AS AT 31 MARCH 2016**

<b>Earmarked Reserve Account</b>	<b>1 April Balance £</b>	<b>Transfers In</b>	<b>Transfers Out</b>	<b>Transfers Between Accounts</b>	<b>31 March Balance £</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Business Rates Retention Smoothing Account	2,930,156	608,635	-149,928		3,388,863	The balance brought forward of £2,930,156 is required to fund the Council's 40% share of the Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit reported for 2014/15 and forecast for 2015/16. This reflects the impact of total £7.18m refund for Hinkley B. Transfer of £608,635 to the reserve includes £200,000 approved as part of the Q1 report, £50,000 approved as part of the Q3 report, £200,000 approved as part of the 2016/17 budget setting process and £158,635 proposed to be transferred as part of the outturn recommendations. Transfer of £149,928 from the reserve approved as part of the 2015/16 budget setting process. This leaves £453,281 towards future funding volatility.
Area Based Grant	84,384		-84,384		0	Fund 40% of economic regeneration manager. Approved by Full Council on 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2015 that £45,000 be returned to General Reserves and on 24 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2016 recommended balance of £39,384 also be returned to General Reserves.
Community Safety	3,533				3,533	External funding specifically earmarked for community safety initiatives.
Land Charges	25,511		-25,511		0	Government grant specifically earmarked for providing refunds when due. Monies transferred to a provision in 2015/16.
Tourism	12,107		-13,887	1,780	0	Specifically earmarked for tourism and is topped up by Exmoor National Park Authority.



Earmarked Reserve Account	1 April Balance £	Transfers In	Transfers Out	Transfers Between Accounts	31 March Balance £	Comments
Sustainability Reserve	57,698	50,000	-40,000		67,698	Earmarked for initiatives that have a positive impact upon the long term sustainability of the Council. Transfer of £40,000 from the reserve in respect of essential asset maintenance and health and safety works (approved by Full Council 19 August 2015). Transfer of £50,000 to the reserve approved by Full Council on 16 March 2016 as part of the underspend reported in the Q3 financial monitoring report.
Minehead Events	396				396	Mary Portas grant – specifically earmarked.
DHP Reserve	44,861		-44,861		0	Government Grant received 'on account' and unused balance held in reserve pending repayment to Government under regulations. During 2015/16 £44,861 was deducted at source from the Government Grant paid in the current year, therefore balance held returned to General Reserves. Approved by Full Council on 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov 2015.
Water Bathing Signs	1,266				1,266	Environmental grant specifically earmarked.
Other Election Reserve	23,663	19,436	-23,663		19,436	Funds to meet the additional costs of Individual Electoral Registration.
Inspire	7,131		-3,740		3,391	Earmarked for costs under the Inspire Directive.
Transparency Code	2,588	8,100	-2,588		8,100	Earmarked to meet the cost of complying with the Transparency Code. Approved by Full Council on 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov that £2,588 be returned to General Reserves. A further £8,100 received in 2015/16.
Exmoor at your Fingertips	1,780			-1,780	0	LARC Fund to fund the Exmoor at your fingertip project.
Minehead Town Centre Signage	500		-385		115	Contribution from Minehead Chamber of Trade and Morrison s106 to fund the signs.
Our Place	10,934				10,934	Contribution for the Our Place project.
CCTV	1,565				1,565	Monies set aside to fund the purchase of a new CCTV camera.

<b>Earmarked Reserve Account</b>	<b>1 April Balance £</b>	<b>Transfers In</b>	<b>Transfers Out</b>	<b>Transfers Between Accounts</b>	<b>31 March Balance £</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Housing Options	43,620	3,040			46,660	Balance of Homeless Prevention funding plus remainder of Mortgage Rescue Grant.
Morrison's Footpath	6,000				6,000	Earmarked to part fund the footpath upgrade.
JMASS Reserve	275,714	65,960	-39,352		302,322	Funding to support transformation costs under JMASS.
Community Right to Challenge	5,000				5,000	Government Grant set aside to support the administration of applications under regulations.
Assets of Community Value	10,000				10,000	Government Grant set aside to support the administration of applications under regulations.
Planning Policy Reserve	61,725		-40,800		20,925	Monies set aside and to be drawn down to cover additional costs arising and relating to the West Somerset Local Plan preparation through to examination and beyond to adoption.
Cuckoo Meadow Reserve	0	10,010			10,010	Lottery monies earmarked to be used in future years.
Steam Coast Trail Reserve	0	23,218			23,218	Monies received to date set aside in respect of the West Somerset Council is working with Friends of the Steam Coast Trail and Sustrans to deliver the Steam Coast Trail Project - a vision of safe cycling routes linking Minehead and Williton.
Capital Financing Reserve	0	46,000			46,000	Underspend on Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO) earmarked to fund slippage on capital programme.
District Election Reserve	30,000		-30,000		0	Earmarked for costs of 2015 elections.
Customer Service Equipment Reserve	666		0		666	Specialised Chair Required (Health and Safety).
Minehead Harbour Dredging Reserve	5,500		0		5,500	Monies set aside to fund works in future years.
Online DHP Reserve	5,375		0		5,375	Online Software Requirement for Revenues and Benefits.

<b>Earmarked Reserve Account</b>	<b>1 April Balance £</b>	<b>Transfers In</b>	<b>Transfers Out</b>	<b>Transfers Between Accounts</b>	<b>31 March Balance £</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment Reserve	1,000		0		1,000	Contribution towards the Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment.
Planning Reserve	20,000				20,000	Monies set aside to fund specialist technical advice for major planning applications. E.g. Landscape visual impact assessments, retail studies etc.
Somerset Growth Board	957		0		957	Growth Board core costs.
Dulverton Mill Leat	12,195				12,195	Monies set aside to fund works required.
Hinkley Corporate Cost Reserve	50,000		-50,000		0	To Earmark Hinkley Contribution to the Corporate Core (Full Cost as we are still under the SPW Agreement at 31st March) to cover salary cost in the event that the transition to the DCO is significantly delayed or does not happen. Approved by Full Council on 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov that £50,000 be returned to General Reserves.
Licensing Staff Reserve	10,000		-1,909		8,091	Monies set aside to fund extra resource within West Somerset Council.
Car Parking Reserve	15,767		-5,767		10,000	Monies set aside in respect of maintenance and signage required during 2015/16. Approved by Full Council on 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov that £5,767 be returned to General Reserves.
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3,761,592</b>	<b>834,399</b>	<b>-556,775</b>		<b>4,039,216</b>	
<b>Budget Carry Forwards For Specific Services</b>						
Watchet Harbour Dredging	13,200	7,000	-13,200		7,000	Underspend earmarked to fund additional dredging.
Environmental Health Reserve	3,718	363			4,081	Destitute Burial Reserve.

<b>Earmarked Reserve Account</b>	<b>1 April Balance £</b>	<b>Transfers In</b>	<b>Transfers Out</b>	<b>Transfers Between Accounts</b>	<b>31 March Balance £</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Compliance Works – Estates	26,736	121,700			148,436	Asset maintenance compliance works to be completed in 2016/17.
Business Development Reserve	3,195	11,092			14,287	Funding for initiatives to support small businesses.
Revenues and Benefits Reserve	67,905	17,370	-7,903		77,372	Monies set aside to mitigate reduction in New Burdens grant and provide service resilience. Approved by Full Council on 18 <sup>th</sup> Nov that £7,903 be returned to General Reserves. Transfer of £17,370 in 2015/16 relates to an underspend on Universal Credit set aside to cover 2016/17 related costs.
Training Reserve	10,000	4,560			14,560	Monies set aside to meet future training needs across the organisation.
Finance Reserve	15,000	9,000			24,000	Monies set aside to provide service resilience.
Public Relations	0	120			120	West Somerset's contribution to the purchase of an iPhone
Open Spaces	0	10,000			10,000	Funding for tree survey costs in 2016/17.
Street Cleaning	0	17,000			17,000	Cost of procurement for street cleaning contract and driver training.
Housing Projects	0	10,870			10,870	Public Health Grant funding. Monies have been fully allocated, but will be spent in 2016/17.
AD Property & Development	0	3,700			3,700	Funding for additional cost of agency staff in 2016/17.
<b>Total – Budget Carry Forwards For Specific Services</b>	<b>139,754</b>	<b>212,775</b>	<b>-21,103</b>		<b>331,426</b>	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>3,901,346</b>	<b>1,047,174</b>	<b>-577,878</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4,370,642</b>	

## Hinkley Point S106 EDF Funding Position as at 31st March 2016

	Total Funding Received As At 31 March 2016	Approvals As At 31 March 2016		Actual Spend As At 31 March 2016		Approved Expenditure Remaining As At 31 March 2016		Unallocated Funding As At 31 March 2016
		Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	Capital	Revenue	
Housing Strategy	4,004,053	873,346	1,127,640	491,110	1,073,554	382,236	54,086	2,003,067
Community Impact Mitigation	5,487,175	1,542,948	95,369	740,319	37,153	802,629	58,216	3,848,858
Stogursey CIM	533,632	-	2,640	-	2,088	-	552	530,992
Ecology	250,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	250,000
Economic Development	130,641	-	130,641	-	53,918	-	76,723	-
Health	20,000	-	20,000	-	-	-	20,000	-
Landscape Art	80,000	-	77,000	-	77,000	-	-	3,000
Land Management	127,789	-	127,000	-	4,538	-	122,462	789
Leisure	266,816	-	263,000	-	61,667	-	201,333	3,816
Stogursey Leisure	533,632	-	15,000	-	18,475	-	(3,475)	518,632
Community Outreach	15,198	-	10,000	-	8,590	-	1,410	5,198
Fit to Work Programme	30,396	-	30,000	-	12,016	-	17,984	396
Tourism Marketing	342,312	-	170,385	-	50,961	-	119,424	171,927
Tourist Information Centre	210,699	-	150,050	-	141,100	-	8,950	60,649
Stolford Fund	81,631	-	-	-	-	-	-	81,631
Hinkley Officers	2,032,864	-	2,032,864	-	1,907,804	-	125,060	-
Technical Support	361,275	-	361,275	-	84,718	-	276,557	-
	<b>14,508,113</b>	<b>2,416,294</b>	<b>4,612,864</b>	<b>1,231,429</b>	<b>3,533,582</b>	<b>1,184,865</b>	<b>1,079,282</b>	<b>7,478,955</b>
<b>Totals</b>		<b>7,029,158</b>		<b>4,765,011</b>		<b>2,264,147</b>		<b>7,478,955</b>



**Hinkley S106 Funded Revenue Schemes**

Scheme	Previous Year Approval	Previous Year Spend	Carry Forward	Supplementary Estimates	Current Budget	Spend in Year to Date	Total Spend to Date	Funding Remaining	Total Approval
<b>Housing Strategy</b>									
Somerset Homelet	20,790	10,964	9,826	-	9,826	6,090	17,054	3,736	20,790
Flexible Rent Support	107,100	73,500	33,600	-	33,600	-	73,500	33,600	107,100
Furniture Packages	31,500	21,000	10,500	-	10,500	-	21,000	10,500	31,500
Tenant Ready Scheme	47,250	46,500	750	-	750	-	46,500	750	47,250
Sustainable Management Service	168,000	60,000	108,000	-	108,000	105,000	165,000	3,000	168,000
Homes Moves Plus	60,000	-	60,000	-	60,000	60,000	60,000	-	60,000
Minor Improvement Fund	147,000	-	147,000	-	147,000	147,000	147,000	-	147,000
Rent a Room Scheme	126,000	-	126,000	-	126,000	126,000	126,000	-	126,000
Empty Homes Grant	194,250	-	194,250	-	194,250	194,250	194,250	-	194,250
Empty Homes Loan	110,250	-	110,250	-	110,250	110,250	110,250	-	110,250
First Time Buyer Loans	105,000	-	105,000	-	105,000	102,500	102,500	2,500	105,000
Landlord Accreditation	10,500	-	10,500	-	10,500	10,500	10,500	-	10,500
	<b>1,127,640</b>	<b>211,964</b>	<b>915,676</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>915,676</b>	<b>861,590</b>	<b>1,073,554</b>	<b>54,086</b>	<b>1,127,640</b>
<b>Community Impact Mitigation</b>									
Student Employer Mentoring Project	-	-	-	18,295	18,295	18,295	18,295	-	18,295
Victoria Park Community Centre	-	-	-	14,524	14,524	6,308	6,308	8,216	14,524
Sydenham Together	-	-	-	60,000	60,000	10,000	10,000	50,000	60,000
Small Schemes (Under £1k)	800	800	-	1,750	1,750	1,750	2,550	-	2,550
	<b>800</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>94,569</b>	<b>94,569</b>	<b>36,353</b>	<b>37,153</b>	<b>58,216</b>	<b>95,369</b>
<b>Stogursey CIM</b>									
Stogursey Earplug Scheme	2,640	-	2,640	-	2,640	2,088	2,088	552	2,640
	<b>2,640</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,640</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,640</b>	<b>2,088</b>	<b>2,088</b>	<b>552</b>	<b>2,640</b>
<b>Economic Development</b>									
Building a Business Database	15,000	7,268	7,732	-	7,732	989	8,257	6,743	15,000
Food & Drink Sector	4,000	4,000	-	-	-	-	4,000	-	4,000
Business Mentoring	10,000	3,216	6,784	-	6,784	-	3,216	6,784	10,000
Tourism & Hospitality Sector	15,000	14,000	1,000	-	1,000	(500)	13,500	1,500	15,000
Town/Village Centre Support	20,000	12,563	7,437	-	7,437	2,382	14,945	5,055	20,000
Supply Chain Enhancement	-	-	-	20,470	20,470	5,000	5,000	15,470	20,470
Small Business & Enterprise Support	-	-	-	26,171	26,171	5,000	5,000	21,171	26,171
Local Economic Initiatives Support	-	-	-	20,000	20,000	-	-	20,000	20,000
	<b>64,000</b>	<b>41,047</b>	<b>22,953</b>	<b>66,641</b>	<b>89,594</b>	<b>12,871</b>	<b>53,918</b>	<b>76,723</b>	<b>130,641</b>
<b>Health</b>									
Task & Finish Group	20,000	-	20,000	-	20,000	-	-	20,000	20,000
	<b>20,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>
<b>Landscape Art</b>									

**Hinkley S106 Funded Revenue Schemes**

Scheme	Previous Year Approval	Previous Year Spend	Carry Forward	Supplementary Estimates	Current Budget	Spend in Year to Date	Total Spend to Date	Funding Remaining	Total Approval
Artlife	77,000	77,000	-	-	-	-	77,000	-	77,000
	<b>77,000</b>	<b>77,000</b>	-	-	-	-	<b>77,000</b>	-	<b>77,000</b>
<b>Land Management</b>									
LMSS General	-	38	(38)	-	(38)	-	38	(38)	-
Conservation Grazing Skills	-	-	-	6,000	6,000	-	-	6,000	6,000
Landscape Tree Management	-	-	-	6,000	6,000	-	-	6,000	6,000
Building Resilience	-	-	-	15,500	15,500	-	-	15,500	15,500
Historic Hedges	-	-	-	2,500	2,500	-	-	2,500	2,500
Orchards	-	-	-	6,000	6,000	-	-	6,000	6,000
Species Identification & Monitoring	-	-	-	6,000	6,000	-	-	6,000	6,000
Land Management Skills	-	-	-	15,000	15,000	4,500	4,500	10,500	15,000
Landscape Skills Flexible Dev Grant	-	-	-	20,000	20,000	-	-	20,000	20,000
Project Enabling Match Funding Budget	-	-	-	50,000	50,000	-	-	50,000	50,000
	-	<b>38</b>	<b>(38)</b>	<b>127,000</b>	<b>126,962</b>	<b>4,500</b>	<b>4,538</b>	<b>122,462</b>	<b>127,000</b>
<b>Leisure</b>									
Steam Coast Trail Feasibility Studies	4,000	-	4,000	-	4,000	-	-	4,000	4,000
1610 Outreach Work	-	-	-	2,500	2,500	-	-	2,500	2,500
Age UK - Watchet Exercise Class for Elderly	-	-	-	9,500	9,500	-	-	9,500	9,500
Carhampton Rec - New Showers	-	-	-	10,000	10,000	-	-	10,000	10,000
Dunster Marsh Playing Field - Multi Use Gam	-	-	-	10,000	10,000	-	-	10,000	10,000
Minehead EYE Extreme Sport Instructor	-	-	-	2,500	2,500	-	-	2,500	2,500
Minehead Golf Club Indoor Training Facilities	-	-	-	5,000	5,000	-	-	5,000	5,000
Minehead Tennis Club Floodlights	-	-	-	5,000	5,000	-	-	5,000	5,000
Alcombe Activity Area & Green Gym	-	-	-	12,500	12,500	-	-	12,500	12,500
Watchet Bowling Club	-	-	-	50,500	50,500	-	-	50,500	50,500
Watchet PT & ABC Boxing Club	-	-	-	20,000	20,000	-	-	20,000	20,000
Williton Football Club Youth Team Equipmen	-	-	-	1,500	1,500	-	-	1,500	1,500
Williton Pavilion & MUGA Project	-	-	-	70,000	70,000	-	-	70,000	70,000
YMCA - Minehead Silver Gym	-	-	-	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	-	50,000
Steam Coast Trail Feasibility Studies	-	-	-	4,000	4,000	1,917	1,917	2,083	4,000
Leisure Consultancy	10,000	9,750	250	-	250	-	9,750	250	10,000
	<b>10,000</b>	<b>9,750</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>253,000</b>	<b>253,250</b>	<b>51,917</b>	<b>61,667</b>	<b>201,333</b>	<b>263,000</b>
<b>Stogursey Leisure</b>									
Victory Hall Feasibility Study	15,000	-	15,000	-	15,000	18,475	18,475	(3,475)	15,000
	<b>15,000</b>	-	<b>15,000</b>	-	<b>15,000</b>	<b>18,475</b>	<b>18,475</b>	<b>(3,475)</b>	<b>15,000</b>
<b>Community Outreach</b>									
Access to Employment	3,400	2,266	1,134	-	1,134	-	2,266	1,134	3,400
Job & Career Fair	600	325	275	-	275	-	325	275	600
Currach Project	500	500	-	-	-	-	500	-	500



**Hinkley S106 Funded Revenue Schemes**

Scheme	Previous Year Approval	Previous Year Spend	Carry Forward	Supplementary Estimates	Current Budget	Spend in Year to Date	Total Spend to Date	Funding Remaining	Total Approval
Our Place Project	5,000	5,000	-	-	-	-	5,000	-	5,000
Sea Angling Community Learning Project	500	500	-	-	-	-	500	-	500
	<b>10,000</b>	<b>8,591</b>	<b>1,409</b>	-	<b>1,409</b>	-	<b>8,591</b>	<b>1,409</b>	<b>10,000</b>
<b><u>Fit to Work Programme</u></b>									
Pathway to Employment	1,000	283	717	-	717	-	283	717	1,000
Community Learning	5,250	4,600	650	-	650	-	4,600	650	5,250
Intensive Support	16,750	5,600	11,150	-	11,150	-	5,600	11,150	16,750
Digital Skill Project	2,000	-	2,000	-	2,000	-	-	2,000	2,000
Upskilling Flexibility	3,000	1,400	1,600	-	1,600	-	1,400	1,600	3,000
Business Start-up	2,000	94	1,906	-	1,906	38	132	1,868	2,000
	<b>30,000</b>	<b>11,977</b>	<b>18,023</b>	-	<b>18,023</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>12,015</b>	<b>17,985</b>	<b>30,000</b>
<b><u>Tourism Marketing</u></b>									
Visitor & Mon Survey	40,000	1,795	38,205	-	38,205	9,676	11,471	28,529	40,000
Watchet HTAP	5,000	(979)	5,979	-	5,979	349	(630)	5,630	5,000
PR & Social Media Support	20,000		20,000	-	20,000	5,000	5,000	15,000	20,000
Marketing Plan Activity	65,385		65,385	-	65,385	(6,977)	(6,977)	72,362	65,385
Industry Body Capacity Building	20,000		20,000	-	20,000	20,000	20,000	-	20,000
Business Support Tourism & Hospitality	20,000		20,000	-	20,000	22,097	22,097	(2,097)	20,000
	<b>170,385</b>	<b>816</b>	<b>169,569</b>	-	<b>169,569</b>	<b>50,145</b>	<b>50,961</b>	<b>119,424</b>	<b>170,385</b>
<b><u>Tourist Information Centre</u></b>									
Minehead Information Centre	55,950	57,000	(1,050)	15,000	13,950	15,000	72,000	(1,050)	70,950
Porlock Visitor Centre	11,600	11,600	-	4,000	4,000	4,000	15,600	-	15,600
Watchet Tourist Office	2,500	2,500	-	1,000	1,000	1,000	3,500	-	3,500
Contribution to Sedgemoor District Council	15,000	15,000	-	20,000	20,000	20,000	35,000	-	35,000
Contribution to Somerset County Council	15,000	15,000	-	10,000	10,000	-	15,000	10,000	25,000
	<b>100,050</b>	<b>101,100</b>	<b>(1,050)</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>48,950</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>141,100</b>	<b>8,950</b>	<b>150,050</b>
<b><u>Service Level Agreement</u></b>									
Staff Cost	1,895,144	1,555,707	339,437	137,720	477,157	352,097	1,907,804	125,060	2,032,864
Technical Support	103,730	68,518	35,212	257,545	292,757	16,200	84,718	276,557	361,275
	<b>1,998,874</b>	<b>1,624,225</b>	<b>374,649</b>	<b>395,265</b>	<b>769,914</b>	<b>368,297</b>	<b>1,992,522</b>	<b>401,617</b>	<b>2,394,139</b>
<b>REVENUE TOTAL</b>	<b>3,626,389</b>	<b>2,087,308</b>	<b>1,539,081</b>	<b>986,475</b>	<b>2,525,556</b>	<b>1,446,274</b>	<b>3,533,582</b>	<b>1,079,282</b>	<b>4,612,864</b>

## 2015/16 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AS AT 31st March 2016

## APPENDIX D

Scheme	Original Budget	Carry Forward	Supplementary Estimates	Revised Budget	Actual Spend	Variance Against Revised Budget	Proposed Carry Forward	Proposed Funding Of Carry Forward Requests				Total Funding Of Carry Forward Requests
	2015-16	2014-15	2015-16	2015-16	2015-16		2015-16	Capital Receipts	Grants	RCCO	S106	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>												
<b>General Schemes</b>												
Street Cleansing Vehicles	0	138,000	0	138,000	133,000	(5,000)	0					0
Exford Public Conveniences	0	0	9,000	9,000	0	(9,000)	9,000			9,000		9,000
Wheddon Cross Public Conveniences	0	0	12,000	12,000	0	(12,000)	12,000			12,000		12,000
Superfast Broadband	240,000	0	0	240,000	0	(240,000)	240,000	240,000				240,000
JMASS ICT Transformation	221,000	52,915	0	273,915	6,205	(267,710)	267,710	267,710				267,710
Single IT Platform Revenues	0	71,680	0	71,680	64,813	(6,867)	6,867	6,867				6,867
Microsoft Licence	12,000	0	0	12,000	10,832	(1,168)	0					0
IS Annual Projects	61,000	0	0	61,000	40,726	(20,274)	20,274	11,367		8,907		20,274
Dulverton Weir	0	2,191	0	2,191	0	(2,191)	0					0
Disabled Facilities Grants	241,000	50,080	0	291,080	137,946	(153,134)	153,134		153,134			153,134
Decent Homes	0	21,200	0	21,200	5,289	(15,911)	15,911		15,911			15,911
Stair Lift Recycling	0	1,000	0	1,000	240	(760)	760		760			760
Former Visitor Information Centre Disposal Costs	0	4,200	0	4,200	0	(4,200)	0					0
7 The Esplanade, Watchet	15,000	0	0	15,000	0	(15,000)	15,000			15,000		15,000
East Wharf Contingent Disposal Costs	0	64,684	0	64,684	0	(64,684)	64,684	64,684				64,684
Demolition of the Cargo Shed	0	0	50,000	50,000	48,181	(1,819)	0					0
Harbours - Pre Cast Concrete Columns (Watchet)	0	23,574	0	23,574	4,704	(18,870)	18,870	18,870				18,870
Harbours - Pile Bracket Fixings (Watchet)	0	18,330	0	18,330	9,900	(8,430)	8,430	8,430				8,430
Harbours - Replacement Ladder (Watchet)	0	3,000	0	3,000	0	(3,000)	3,000	3,000				3,000
Steam Cost Trail	0	0	557,150	557,150	54,326	(502,824)	502,824		502,824			502,824
Cuckoo Meadow	0	0	40,920	40,920	37,972	(2,948)	2,948		2,948			2,948
Seaward Way Housing Land	0	21,500	88,700	110,200	83,700	(26,500)	26,500	26,500				26,500
Seaward Way Leisure Land	0	7,208	0	7,208	0	(7,208)	0					0
Land Disposal Costs	0	13,900	15,000	28,900	23,800	(5,100)	0					0
Clanville Grange Low Cost Housing Scheme	0	0	210,000	210,000	207,084	(2,916)	0					0
Rural Initiatives Fund	0	0	0	0	(663)	(663)	0					0
Car Parks - All Costs	0	0	0	0	(1,769)	(1,769)	0					0
Infrastructure	0	0	0	0	(720)	(720)	0					0
Public Conveniences	0	0	0	0	(789)	(789)	0					0
												0
<b>Sub-total - General Schemes</b>	<b>790,000</b>	<b>493,462</b>	<b>982,770</b>	<b>2,266,232</b>	<b>864,777</b>	<b>(1,401,455)</b>	<b>1,367,912</b>	<b>647,428</b>	<b>675,577</b>	<b>44,907</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,367,912</b>
<b>S106-Funded General Schemes</b>												
Burgage Road Play Area, Stogursey (s106)	0	2,000	0	2,000	2,000	0	0					0
Heritage Trail Minehead (s106)	0	18,743	0	18,743	18,287	(456)	0					0
Watchet Outdoor Gym Project (s106)	0	24,995	0	24,995	24,995	0	0					0
Illuminations Project (s106)	0	38,519	0	38,519	38,519	0	0					0
Williton Pavilion	0	0	149,500	149,500	0	(149,500)	149,500				149,500	149,500
Huish Champflower Village Hall	0	0	10,000	10,000	0	(10,000)	10,000				10,000	10,000
Land Upgrade - Marshfield Road	0	0	7,825	7,825	0	(7,825)	7,825				7,825	7,825
<b>Sub-total - S106 Schemes</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>84,257</b>	<b>167,325</b>	<b>251,582</b>	<b>83,801</b>	<b>(167,781)</b>	<b>167,325</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>167,325</b>	<b>167,325</b>
<b>General Fund Programme Total</b>	<b>790,000</b>	<b>577,719</b>	<b>1,150,095</b>	<b>2,517,814</b>	<b>948,578</b>	<b>(1,569,236)</b>	<b>1,535,237</b>	<b>647,428</b>	<b>675,577</b>	<b>44,907</b>	<b>167,325</b>	<b>1,535,237</b>
<b>Hinkley-Funded Schemes</b>												
Burgage Road Play Area, Stogursey (CMF)	0	51,128	(454)	50,674	50,674	0	0					0
Tropiquaria Play Equipment (CMF)	0	17,471	0	17,471	17,471	0	0					0
Prospect House (HF)	0	37,800	0	37,800	37,800	0	0					0
Williton Bowling Club (CMF)	0	13,000	0	13,000	13,000	0	0					0
Kilve Cricket Club	0	0	22,000	22,000	0	(22,000)	22,000				22,000	22,000
Williton Pavilion	0	0	250,000	250,000	0	(250,000)	250,000				250,000	250,000
Westfield United Church (CMF)	0	110,000	0	110,000	0	(110,000)	110,000				110,000	110,000

2015/16 CAPITAL PROGRAMME AS AT 31st March 2016

APPENDIX D

Scheme	Original Budget	Carry Forward	Supplementary Estimates	Revised Budget	Actual Spend	Variance Against Revised Budget	Proposed Carry Forward	Proposed Funding Of Carry Forward Requests				Total Funding Of Carry Forward Requests
	2015-16	2014-15	2015-16	2015-16	2015-16	Budget	2015-16	Capital Receipts	Grants	RCCO	S106	Requests
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Living Over The Shop (HF)	0	204,750	0	204,750	204,750	0	0					0
Wemdbon Village Hall and Playing Field (CMF)	0	250,000	0	250,000	250,000	0	0					0
Onion Collective	0	0	243,119	243,119	51,883	(191,236)	191,236				191,236	191,236
North Petherton Playing Field Trust	0	0	46,000	46,000	46,000	0	0					0
Coronation Park Enhancement	0	0	200,000	200,000	188,500	(11,500)	11,500				11,500	11,500
Cannington Village Hall	0	0	186,186	186,186	6,567	(179,619)	179,619				179,619	179,619
Former Withycutter	0	0	80,000	80,000	0	(80,000)	80,000				80,000	80,000
Watchet War Memorial	0	0	7,500	7,500	7,500	0	0					0
Otterhampton Play Area	0	0	37,820	37,820	0	(37,820)	37,820				37,820	37,820
<b>Hinkley Fund Programme Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>684,149</b>	<b>1,072,171</b>	<b>1,756,320</b>	<b>874,145</b>	<b>(882,175)</b>	<b>882,175</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>882,175</b>	<b>882,175</b>
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME ALL SCHEMES</b>	<b>790,000</b>	<b>1,261,868</b>	<b>2,222,266</b>	<b>4,274,134</b>	<b>1,822,723</b>	<b>(2,451,411)</b>	<b>2,417,412</b>	<b>647,428</b>	<b>675,577</b>	<b>44,907</b>	<b>1,049,500</b>	<b>2,417,412</b>

**Approved Capital Programme 2016-17**

<b>Capital Programme 2016-17</b>	<b>Funding</b>			
	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Capital Receipts</b>	<b>Grants</b>	<b>Total Funding</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Offsite Backup Facility</b> This will enable automated offsite backups of the Council's data to be taken every night rather than the weekly manual tape based process at the moment. The solution consists of a hardware back up 'appliance' that would be situated remotely – not at West Somerset House.	15,000	15,000		<b>15,000</b>
<b>IT Hardware Replacement</b> This provides a limited contingency budget for essential desktop and laptop computer replacements over four years old to ensure staff work efficiently and effectively to reduce the number of helpdesk calls regarding the usage of old computers	2,500	2,500		<b>2,500</b>
<b>Disabled Facilities Grants</b> The Council has a statutory duty to provide grants to enable the adaptation of homes to help meet the needs of disabled residents.	358,000		358,000	<b>358,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>375,500</b>	<b>17,500</b>	<b>358,000</b>	<b>375,500</b>

# **West Somerset Council**

## **Scrutiny Committee – 16 June 2016**

### **Initial Draft Medium Term Financial Plan**

**This matter is the responsibility of Cabinet Member Councillor Chilcott**

**Report Author: Paul Fitzgerald, Assistant Director Resources**

#### **1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present Councillors with an initial draft of the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) covering the five year period 2017/18 to 2021/22. The MTFP describes the projected financial forecasts for spending and income, and summarises the approach to closing the gap where projected spending requirements exceed projected funding. Elements of this strategy will emerge in the coming months, taking into account proposals to be developed to implement the new Corporate Strategy 2016-2020 and to deliver the transformation plans currently being prepared for Councillors to consider.
- 1.2 The MTFP has been updated since the annual budget and tax setting reports to Council in February 2016. The Council has a significant Budget Gap over the period of the MTFP, rising from £119,619 in 2017/18 to £1,226,705 by 2021/22. Councillors will continue to face some tough decisions around priorities in order for our services to be affordable. It is clear we cannot afford to deliver services in the same way and/or at the same level as now. Despite managing to address the significant changes to funding since 2010 and balance the budget each year up to 2016/17, the future financial position remains significantly challenging for the Authority.
- 1.3 The General Reserves balance of £706,786 which is £106,786 above the recommended minimum balance of £600,000. This provides only limited financial resilience to unplanned costs, and falling below the minimum would require urgent action to return the balance to an acceptable level.

#### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to note the draft Medium Term Financial Plan, and commit to the challenge of addressing the gap between costs and income in order to produce a sustainable financial position for the foreseeable future.

### 3 Risk Assessment

#### Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
The Council fails to agree and deliver a sustainable Medium Term Financial Plan for the next five years.	Likely 4	Catastrophic 5	Very High 20
<i>The Council is progressing a Transformation business case which aims to deliver significant budget savings, and other savings plans will need to be developed through the annual budget process.</i>	Possible 3	Major 4	Medium 12

#### Risk Scoring Matrix

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

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

### 4 Background and Medium Term Financial Plan Details

- 4.1 The financial history of West Somerset Council has been well documented and is widely understood. The Council has made good progress over recent years in meeting the challenge of 'balancing the books'. Importantly, Councillors recognise and understand that more has to be done as the financial challenges ahead are considerable.
- 4.2 Phase 1 of the Council's partnership with Taunton Deane Borough Council has contributed to the delivery of savings through efficiency in the management and staff

structures. Following the mandate from Councillors in January 2016, a business case in to provide options for Phase 2 of this partnership is currently being developed and will be presented for consideration at a Scrutiny Committee on 12 July 2016 and then Full Council on 26 July.

- 4.3 This refresh of the Medium Term Financial Plan at this stage is important in providing a realistic and up to date assessment of the Council's financial forecasts to underpin the important decisions to be taken in respect of the business case and other potential options needed to secure ongoing financial sustainability.
- 4.4 When the 2016/17 budget was approved by Full Council in February 2016, Members were advised of a projected budget gap – the difference between projected net costs and funding – of £218,000 in 2017/18 rising to an estimated £1,295,000 by 2021/22.
- 4.5 The forecasts have been reviewed and updated since February, reflecting as much as possible what is “known”, and providing “best estimates” on areas of uncertainty. This includes some revised estimates reflecting underspends identified at the end of 2015/16 financial year. The MTFP will continue to be updated as new information emerges and further updates shared with Members at key points in the budget process. In a significant step compared to previous years, the Government have provided indicative four year funding projections in respect of central funding for local authorities.
- 4.6 It is clear that Central Government funding is reducing significantly over this four year period, continuing the trend of the previous five years through the Government's austerity measures. There is also an option for the Council to consider a four year settlement for certain elements of this funding.
- 4.7 Alongside this option, which would provide added certainty for elements of our financial planning, there are some important and significant areas of uncertainty for example:
- The consultation on the future of New Homes Bonus grant funding closed in March 2016, and we await details of the final amended scheme in order to assess the full impact on the Council's funding;
  - The Government is committed to the local authority sector retaining 100% of business rates by end of this Parliament (2020); and although options for achieving this are being developed this year ready for consultation, it is impossible to predict with any certainty how this will affect the Council's funding and associated responsibilities.

### **Medium Term Financial Plan Summary**

- 4.8 The following table sets out a summary of the council's latest forecasts of costs and funding. The estimated Budget Gap for 2017/18 is £120,000 (rounded), rising to approximately £1,227,000 by 2021/22.
- 4.9 This gap of £1,227,000 is equivalent (in cash terms) to 26% of the current 2017/18 Net Expenditure estimates. It will be a major challenge for the Council to address this scale of savings requirement – even with transformation – and places significant risk against the affordability of local services.

Table 1 – MTFP Summary

	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £	2019/20 £	2020/21 £	2021/22 £
Services Costs	4,632,260	4,571,147	4,761,722	4,953,106	5,082,241	5,214,989
Net Financing Costs	-2,000	37,000	182,100	182,100	182,100	182,100
SRA Contribution	23,728	0	0	0	0	0
Earmarked Reserves – Business Rates Deficit	-2,729,063	-206,519	0	0	0	0
Earmarked Reserves – Other	462,184	79,168	0	0	0	0
General Reserves	-216,456	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>2,170,653</b>	<b>4,480,796</b>	<b>4,943,822</b>	<b>5,135,206</b>	<b>5,264,341</b>	<b>5,397,089</b>
Retained Business Rates	-1,420,937	-1,438,545	-1,465,477	-1,478,413	-1,491,358	-1,504,320
Business Rates prior year surplus/deficit	2,729,063	206,519	0	0	0	0
Revenue Support Grant	-550,320	-316,885	-170,193	-6,340	0	0
Rural Services Delivery Grant	-212,433	-171,530	-131,946	-171,530	-171,530	-171,530
New Homes Bonus	-716,060	-621,192	-479,540	-402,169	-309,653	-250,000
Council Tax–WSC	-1,962,438	-2,019,544	-2,078,207	-2,132,245	-2,187,676	-2,244,534
Council Tax–SRA	-23,728	0	0	0	0	0
Council Tax prior year surplus/deficit	-13,800	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Net Funding</b>	<b>-2,170,653</b>	<b>-4,361,177</b>	<b>-4,325,363</b>	<b>-4,190,697</b>	<b>-4,160,217</b>	<b>-4,170,384</b>
<b>Budget Gap</b>		119,619	618,459	944,509	1,104,124	1,226,705
Budget Gap Increase		119,619	498,840	326,050	159,615	122,581

### Key Expenditure and Income Assumptions

4.10 The following key assumptions have been used in refreshing our financial forecasts in respect of Net Expenditure:

- a) Staff Pay award at 1% in 2017 as agreed, then assuming a 2% increase each year thereafter for financial modelling. Government expects civil service pay increases to be limited to 1% per year through this Parliament.
- b) Contract price inflation estimates are included.
- c) RPI inflation applied to business rates settlement funding, changing to CPI from 2019/20. Business rates yield increased by 1.2% inflation assuming growth is offset by appeals and other reductions in rateable values in the area.
- d) General price increases are projected to be absorbed within existing budgets.
- e) Pension Deficit Recovery lump sum payments projected to increase by £50k each year based on last actuarial valuation (total bill £360k in 2017/18 rising to £460k in 2019/20).
- f) Housing Benefit and Council Tax Rebate Admin Grant base estimate updated to reflect final settlement received in March 2016, and assumed to reduce by 10% each year to 2019/20.
- g) JMASS Phase 2: No assumptions included at this stage in respect of costs or savings for transformation of services – this will be determined through the business case.
- h) Net Interest: Projected to remain at -£2,000 in 2017/18 then £nil (interest income offsets interest costs) for foreseeable future, to prudently allow for potential need to maintain loan financing.



- i) Debt repayment: Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) funded by capital receipt in 2017/18 (last year of 3-year funding plan), then reverts to £143,100 charge to Revenue Budget from 2018/19 onwards (subject to any future decisions regarding borrowing and debt repayment).
- j) Revenue Contribution to Capital (RCCO): £39,000 included in annual budget estimates from 2017/18 onwards – to be allocated through the Capital Programme funding plans.
- k) Savings anticipated in 2017/18 in relation to public conveniences decision taken by Full Council in February 2016 are included in the net expenditure forecast.
- l) 2015/16 Outturn Review: A review of the larger underspends at the financial year end has led to ongoing savings totalling £85,000 being built into MTFP estimates in 2017/18, related to: benefit overpayment recovery, garden waste collection income, street cleaning contract costs, parking enforcement costs, dog warden and kennelling contract costs, corporate subscriptions and duty officer payments.
- m) Asset Maintenance: Pending the completion of a new full asset management plan it is considered prudent to add £50,000 as a new cost pressure for asset related costs. This will be reviewed and updated during the year.

### **Key Funding Assumptions**

4.11 The following key assumptions have been used in refreshing our financial forecasts in respect of Net Funding:

- a) Business Rates: RPI inflation applied to business rates settlement funding, changing to CPI from 2019/20. Business rates yield increased by 1.2% inflation assuming growth is offset by appeals and other reductions in rateable values in the area.
- b) General Government Grant: Forecasts in respect of government funding – Revenue Support Grant (RSG), Rural Services Delivery Grant (RSDG) – projected to reduce based on indicative amounts through to 2019/20 that were issued by Government with the 2016/17 Final Settlement Funding Assessment.
- c) New Homes Bonus Grant (NHB): Pending the outcome of Government consultation, the current assumption is that NHB funding will reduce from the current 6-years cumulative grant in 2016/17 to 5-years cumulative grant in 2017/18, then 4-years cumulative grant in subsequent years.
- d) Council Tax: The tax base is assumed to increase by 0.9% per year for next two years, then 0.6% each year thereafter. The tax rate is assumed for financial estimates purposes to increase by 1.99% each year from 2017/18.

### **Four Year Funding Settlement Option**

4.12 Through the Provisional Finance Settlement for 2016/17, and subsequently confirmed by the Secretary of State in March 2016, the Government has given the option for local authorities to voluntarily accept a four year funding settlement for the period 2016/17 to 2019/20. Accepting the offer would give greater certainty for financial planning and provide greater confidence over measures needed to balance the budget over the medium term. Conversely, the Council could continue to work on a year-by-year finance settlement however the Secretary of State has stated he “cannot guarantee future levels of funding to those who prefer not to have a four year settlement”. The inference is that any further funding reductions needed to address the national deficit could see funding reduce further than current indicative funding allocations over the four-year settlement

period suggest.

- 4.13 The funding streams that fall within the scope of this offer are:
- Revenue Support Grant – £550,320 in 2016/17 reducing to £6,340 in 2019/20
  - Rural Services Delivery Grant – ranging from £171,530 to £131,946
  - Transitional Grant – nil for West Somerset Council, therefore not applicable
- 4.14 In addition, business rates baseline tariffs and top-ups in 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 will not be altered for reasons related to the relative needs of local authorities, and in the final year may be subject to the implementation of 100% business rates retention.
- 4.15 The Council must confirm its acceptance of a four year settlement **by 14 October 2016**, and this must be accompanied by an Efficiency Plan. The form and content of the Plan is not prescribed; the expectation of Government is that it will demonstrate how this greater certainty can bring about opportunities for further savings. The Plan should cover the full four year period (2016/17 to 2019/20) and be open and transparent about the benefits to both the Council and the community. Authority to accept such a settlement was delegated by Full Council to the Leader, Lead Member for Resources and the S151 Officer through the budget setting report in February 2016.
- 4.16 It is anticipated the Plan will essentially comprise the JMASS Phase 2 Business Case and the MTFP. It is also an option to include planned 'Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Strategy' within the Efficiency Plan – setting out any proposed use of new capital receipts between 2016/17 and 2018/19 to fund revenue costs of transformation projects.

### General Reserves

- 4.17 General Reserves are “usable reserves” i.e. real funds that the Council can use to support one-off spending. The recommended minimum reserves balance is £600,000 – to provide protection for unforeseen costs/losses and fluctuations in income and expenditure in any given year. The ideal position is to maintain reserves above this minimum level to increase resilience and reduce the risk that urgent action is needed in-year to maintain the level at or above the 'safe' minimum. The current Reserves balance stands at £706,786 (subject to confirmation through the completion of the audit of the 2015/16 Accounts). This provides some flexibility to deal with any financial issues arising in the current financial year.

Table 2 – General Reserves

	£
Budgeted Balance 31 March 2016	774,110
2015/16 Underspend transferred to Reserves at year end	299,132
Balance brought forward 1 April 2016	1,073,242
2016/17 Approved Budget transfers to Earmarked Reserves	-216,456
Supplementary allocation for essential Asset Maintenance (May 2016)	-150,000
<b>Current Balance</b>	<b>706,786</b>
Recommended Minimum Balance	600,000

- 4.18 The initial 2017/18 budget estimates do not include any planned transfers to or from general reserves.

### Earmarked Reserves

- 4.19 Earmarked Reserves are one-off cash funds set aside for specific purposes or specified

contingencies. As with General Reserves, it is advisable to use Earmarked Reserves only for one-off spending to avoid ongoing funding pressures once the reserve has been fully utilised. As detailed in the 2015/16 Financial Outturn Report, the earmarked reserves balance as at 1 April 2016 is £4,370,643. The table below provides a high level summary of the larger reserve balances (refer to the Outturn Report for the detail).

Table 3 – Earmarked Reserves

	Balance 1 April 2016 £
Business Rates Smoothing Reserve	3,388,863
JMASS Reserve	302,323
General Budget Carry Forwards	212,775
Asset Compliance	148,436
Other smaller reserve balances	318,246
<b>Total Balance 1 April 2016</b>	<b>4,370,643</b>

- 4.20 The West Somerset share of the 2015/16 Business Rates Collection Fund Deficit is £2,935,582. The Business Rates Smoothing Reserve will fund £2,729,063 of this deficit in 2016/17 as per the approved budget, with a further £206,519 is to be transferred to the revenue account in 2017/18 for the balance. The MTFP currently includes a projected balance of £672,331 in this reserve to protect against risk of volatility in business rates funding.
- 4.21 The JMASS Reserve provides a source of funding to contribute to costs of transformation, part of which is already committed within the approved Capital Programme in respect of JMASS Phase 1.
- 4.22 Budget Carry Forwards represent commitments against various approved budget headings in 2015/16 where expenditure is now expected to be incurred in 2016/17.
- 4.23 Asset Compliance is for completion of approved works across the two financial years using funding allocated for this purpose in 2015/16.

## **5 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities**

- 5.1 It is important that Councillors recognise the financial position, challenges and risks faced by the Council and fully engage in the corporate and financial planning processes in order to determine an affordable and sustainable set of corporate aims and priorities. This should lead to the Council approving a sustainable final budget and MTFs in February 2017.

## **6 Finance / Resource Implications**

- 6.1 The Council's financial position is set out above within the body of this report.
- 6.2 Councillors will continue to face some tough decisions around priorities in order for our services to be affordable. It is clear we cannot afford to deliver services in the same way and/or at the same level as now. Despite managing to address the significant changes to funding since 2010 and balance the budget each year up to 2016/17, the future financial position remains significantly challenging for the Authority. The long standing priority of achieving financial sustainability remains key, and this will be harder to achieve as funding continues to fall and pressure on service costs increases.

6.3 It is important that Councillors have a good understanding of the financial position and forecasts over the medium term, both to support the key decisions faced in July when Full Council considers the Transformation business case, and subsequently through the annual budget process.

6.4 This report provides a summary of the financial projections for the revenue budget estimates and the Council's revenue reserves, for Scrutiny Committee to review and note. In June, the Assistant Director Resources will also provide an initial draft of a more detailed Medium Term Financial Plan document to all Councillors, providing important information in advance of key decisions to be considered in July.

## **7 Legal Implications**

7.1 The Council is required by law to set a balanced budget and failure to do so would result in serious financial and service implications and lead to Government intervention.

## **8 Environmental Impact Implications**

8.1 None for the purposes of this report.

## **9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications**

9.1 None for the purposes of this report.

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications**

10.1 None for the purposes of this report. The specific proposals that develop through the budgeting and service planning processes will require equalities impact assessments to be completed and, where relevant, action plans to understand impacts and mitigations for the protected characteristic groups.

## **11 Social Value Implications**

11.1 None for the purposes of this report.

## **12 Partnership Implications**

12.1 None for the purposes of this report. The Council budget incorporates costs and income related to the various partnership arrangements, and any changes in relevant forecasts and proposals will be reported for consideration as these emerge.

## **13 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

13.1 None for the purposes of this report. Any relevant information and decisions with regard to health and wellbeing will be reported as these emerge through the financial planning process.

## **14 Asset Management Implications**

14.1 None directly for the purposes of this report. The financial implications associated with asset management will be reflected within the Council's corporate and financial planning arrangements.

## **15 Consultation Implications**

15.1 None for the purposes of this report.

## **16 Scrutiny Comments / Recommendation(s)**

16.1 Scrutiny comments are invited at this meeting, for consideration by Cabinet and in forming recommendations to Members to address the ongoing financial sustainability of the Council.

### **Democratic Path:**

- **Scrutiny Committee – Yes (16 June 2016)**
- **Cabinet/Executive – No**
- **Full Council – No**

**Reporting Frequency: Annually for initial MTFP – supplemented with reports through the budget process**

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# West Somerset District Council

## Scrutiny – 16 June 2016

### Quarter 4 2015/16 Performance Report

This matter is the responsibility of The Leader of the Council, Cllr Anthony Trollope-Bellew

Report Author: Paul Harding, Corporate Strategy & Performance Manager

#### 1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report provides Members with key performance management data up to the end of quarter 4 2015/16, to assist in monitoring the Council's performance.

#### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that:-

- The Scrutiny review the Council's performance and highlight any areas of particular concern;

#### 3 Risk Assessment

##### Risk Matrix




Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
The key risk is that the Council fails to manage its performance and use the subsequent information to inform decisions and produce improved services for customers.	Likely (4)	Major (4)	High (16)
The mitigation for this will be the continued strong leadership from Lead Members and JMT to ensure that performance management remains a priority.	Unlikely (2)	Major (4)	Medium (8)

#### 4 Background and Full details of the Report




- 4.1 Regularly monitoring our performance is a key element of the Council's Performance Management Framework.
- 4.2 There are **62** individual measures which are reported within the Corporate Scorecard.

- 4.3 The WSC Corporate Scorecard at Appendix A contains details of the Quarter 4 2015/16 position against the Council's key priorities, finance and corporate health indicators. It should be stressed that this information is at **31<sup>st</sup> March 2016**.
- 4.4 Each action/measure is given a coloured status to provide the reader with a quick visual way of identifying whether it is on track or whether there might be some issues with performance or delivery or an action.
- 4.5 The key used is provided below:

**KEY:**

	Performance Indicators target achieved.		Performance indicators did not achieve target. Close to target. Not significant issue.		Performance indicators did not achieve target. Significant variance.
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- 4.6 The table below provides an overview of the reported indicators within the Corporate Scorecard.

GREEN 	AMBER 	RED 	NOT DUE	NOT AVAILABLE	TOTAL
<b>37</b> (41)	<b>8</b> (11)	<b>5</b> (3)	<b>3</b> (3)	<b>9</b> (4)	<b>62</b>

(Figs in brackets relate to Q3)

Please refer to Appendix A for full details of each of the reported measures.

- 4.7 Further detail is provided concerning the red measures below:

Reference	AD	Measure	Previous Year Performance	Comments
KPI 160	Richard Sealy	Staff Sickness - Average of 8 days or lower per FTE	7.89 days 2014/15	For the year an average of <b>8.86</b> days per FTE. Significant long term sickness has contributed to this increase. (5.5 days long term 3.36 days short-term)

KPI 5	Paul Fitzgerald	Average processing times for new Housing Benefit claims - 22 days or lower	22.69 days	<p>Q1 = 30.67 days  Q2 = 28.23 days  Q3 = 26.32 days  Q4 = 28.51 days</p> <p>Ave 28.4 days for the year.</p> <p>2015/16 has been an untypical year in so far as processing speed performance has dipped largely due to two one-off factors. Firstly, the diversion of some resource away from day to day processing activity toward helping with the conversion of the benefits system from one platform to another. Secondly, the need for staff to become familiar with the new system.</p>
5.1.2	Andrew Goodchild	Facilitate the delivery of 30 bed spaces by housing associations in priority areas through Implementation of their Downsizing Policies.		<p>Qtr 4 has seen 4 additional bed-spaces delivered.</p> <p>20 bedspaces have been delivered 15/16, 10 less than originally anticipated</p>
5.1.3	Andrew Goodchild	Facilitate the delivery of 50 bed spaces by private developers using the enabling fund within the Hinkley Section 106 agreement		We are currently in discussion with private developers to bring forward suitable schemes, although discussions are proving difficult.



KPI 56a	Chris Hall	Environmental Health % of requests completed within stated service standard (60 days)  Target 75% or higher	66%	For Q4 the target was missed. 62.5% achieved against a target of 75%.  This was largely due to two significant and resource-intensive investigations impacting on the team's ability to service other requests.  However, for the year as a whole the target was met. An average of 78.3% of all requests were completed within the service standard, against a target of 75%. (Q1=95%,Q2=73%, Q3=73%, Q4=62.5%)
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## 5 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities

5.1 This report includes highlights of progress against delivery of the corporate priorities.

## 6 Finance / Resource Implications

6.1 The scorecard references some financial performance measures, a separate more detailed financial performance report for the quarter is listed as a separate item on this agenda.

## 7 Legal Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications associated with this report.

## 8 Environmental Impact Implications

8.1 There are no direct environmental impact implications associated with this report although the scorecard includes measures relating to fly-tipping and parks and open spaces.

## **9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications**

9.1 There are no safeguarding and /or community safety implications associated with this report.

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications**

10.1 There are no equality and diversity implications associated with this report.

## **11 Social Value Implications**

11.1 There are no Social Value implications associated with this report.

## **12 Partnership Implications**

12.1 A number of corporate aims and objectives reported within the corporate scorecard are delivered in partnership with other organisations, in particular through shared services arrangements with Taunton Deane Borough Council. .

## **13 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

13.1 There are no direct health and wellbeing implications associated with this report although the corporate scorecard includes measures relating to disabled facilities grants which enable residents to live independently, for example.

## **14 Asset Management Implications**

14.1 There are no direct asset management implications associated with this report.

## **15 Consultation Implications**

15.1 The performance scorecard has been reviewed by JMT at the performance review day held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2016. This performance report will be published on the Council's website for public scrutiny and information.

### **Democratic Path:**

- **Scrutiny - Yes**
- **Executive – Yes**
- **Full Council – No**

**Reporting Frequency: 6 Monthly.**

**List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)**

Appendix A	Corporate Scorecard
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**Contact Officers**

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# APPENDIX A

Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
1.5.1	Bruce Lang	1. WSC Local Democracy	1. WSC Local democracy and accountability remains within West Somerset by working with Taunton Deane Borough Council to further develop shared service delivery models that deliver effective, efficient services and retain customer satisfaction.	Develop more effective mechanisms for communicating the Council's priorities, performance and key messages to our residents and businesses.	Increase the number of followers of the WSC Twitter account by 20% during 2015/16 (compared to a baseline set in March 2015)	2360 followers at the end of Q4 2014/15.	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Q4 = 3,059 Followers as at 1/4/16 (increase of over 500 followers since 1st April 2015 - Target exceeded)
1.6.1	Richard Sealy	1. WSC Local Democracy	1. WSC Local democracy and accountability remains within West Somerset by working with Taunton Deane Borough Council to further develop shared service delivery models that deliver effective, efficient services and retain customer satisfaction.	Obtain customer feedback regarding overall satisfaction in the Council and Value for Money	The percentage of West Somerset respondents who agree that the Council provides value for money is equal or greater than the 2014/15 level of 82.9% (Reported Q1)	82.9%	GREEN	NOT DUE	NOT DUE	NOT DUE	83% of respondents agree that the Council provides value for money.
1.6.2	Richard Sealy	1. WSC Local Democracy	1. WSC Local democracy and accountability remains within West Somerset by working with Taunton Deane Borough Council to further develop shared service delivery models that deliver effective, efficient services and retain customer satisfaction.	Obtain customer feedback regarding overall satisfaction in the Council and Value for Money.	Overall satisfaction with the way in which WSC runs things is equal or greater than the 2014/15 level of 81.5% (Reported Q1)	81.5%	GREEN	NOT DUE	NOT DUE	NOT DUE	81% of respondents were satisfied with the way in which WSC runs things.
3.1.3	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	3. WSC Communities in West Somerset can access and understand the process for accessing funding opportunities provided for by the development at Hinkley Point and are supported in delivering funded projects and initiatives	To ensure that potential applicants are offered advice within 10 working days of submitting an Expression of Interest Form	90%		GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Q1 8 OF 8 - 100% (3 of which receiving further officer/Engage support) Q2 7 OF 7 - 100% (0 of which receiving further officer/Engage support) Q3 6 OF 6 - 100% (2 of which receiving further officer/Engage support) Q4 10 of 10 - 100% (8 of which received further advice from officers)

Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
3.1.4	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	3. WSC Communities in West Somerset can access and understand the process for accessing funding opportunities provided for by the development at Hinkley Point and are supported in delivering funded projects and initiatives	To ensure that general enquires regarding the CIM Fund are answered within 10 working days	Target - 95%		GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	West Somerset Enquiries only Q1 10 OF 10 - 100% Q2 9 OF 9 - 100% Q3 12 OF 12 - 100% Q4 18 of 18 - 100%
3.4.1	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	3. WSC Communities in West Somerset can access and understand the process for accessing funding opportunities provided for by the development at Hinkley Point and are supported in delivering funded projects and initiatives	By March 2016 to deliver a programme of investment within West Somerset for the leisure funding provided directly to the council from the development at Hinkley Point	Working with SASP and Sport England identify and secure match funding opportunities for the leisure contributions and submit proposals to the WSC Planning Obligations Group	N/A	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Q1 •Report presented and approved by members in July 2015. This included 20 expressions of interest for leisure projects along the coastal strip.  Hinkley Leisure Planning Obligations Group had their inaugural meeting on 14.10.15 and approved: oHL13 Beach Hotel - YMCA – Fitness Suite oHL20 Williton Parish Council – Pavilion Project  Q3 - HL13 Beach Hotel - YMCA - Fitness Suite Project has been completed and the grant paid to the applicant.  Three of the projects have been approved for funding. A further six are in the process of preparing their full application. SASP are working with the remaining three to help progress their projects to application stage. The final project has not been able to meet the funding requirements and SASP are working with them to try and seek other sources of funding.
4.1.1	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	4. WSC The economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximised	Provide bespoke business support activity to build the capacity and capability of businesses to realise the opportunities offered by the Sites Services requirement of the HPC Project. To include encouraging collaboration and upskilling of existing staff.	Number of businesses attended training events of min 2 hours duration - 75  Number of new businesses registered on Supply Chain Portal - 20		GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	30 new Supply Chain registrations this year - total for WSC now 342. Target exceeded  81 businesses have attended a min of 2 hours training this year. Target exceeded.
4.1.2	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	4. WSC The economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximised	Diversify the local economy and build additional resilience by supporting the key sectors of niche specialist manufacturing / creative Industries/ food & drink and retail.	Number of business collaborations - 5		GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Total of 9 initiatives this year. Target exceeded. Networks include Tourism and Retail businesses in Watchet supported through collaboration on social media 'whatsonwatchet' promotion, radio advertisement, leaflet promotion and infographic activity map. Target exceeded. 1 new collaboration Business Start-up networking Group



Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
4.1.4	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	4. WSC The economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximised	Work with key partners and EDF Energy to support businesses to gain economic benefits from the development in terms of contracts awarded to local suppliers, as well as helping to make businesses more resilient in terms of any displacement and leakage of staff.	Continue to build and develop relationship with the Heart of the South West LEP to understand and exploit funding opportunities via Hinkley Strategic Delivery Forum, Senior Economic Development Officers Group and 1:1 opportunities  Target: Funding bids considered and submitted as appropriate		GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Somerset Chamber has been issued the contract for the interim HPC Supply Chain LEP wide Contract to which WSC has contibuted, therefore continuity of provision continues. WS based businesses have received intensive support in respect of supply chain contracts from Hinkly Enabling Team (confidentially commercial information)
4.3.1	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	4. WSC The economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximised	Work with tourism partners to mitigate the negative effects of the development and take advantage of any opportunities created.	Work with Hinkley Tourism Action Partnership to commission and deliver the following requirements of the S106 Agreement (1) Tourism Monitoring Surveys (2) Visitor Management & Travel Plan  Target:  Number of tourism surveys undertaken - 1  Number of businesses directly communicated with visitor management information - 500		GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	*** Both targets achieved by Q2. work ongoing ***
4.3.2	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	4. WSC The economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximised	Work with tourism partners to mitigate the negative effects of the development and take advantage of any opportunities created.	Work with the Hinkley Tourism Action Partnership to deliver the key activity / actions identified within the HTAP Action Plan for 2015/16  Targets:  Number of marketing and promotional initiatives delivered - 5  Number of initiatives delivered promoting day visits - 4  Number of initiatives delivered promoting week-end visits - 4		GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	All targets delivered during 2015/16
4.3.3	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	4. WSC The economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximised	Work with tourism partners to mitigate the negative effects of the development and take advantage of any opportunities created.	Deliver capacity building support for the Tourism Industry (via key Organisational groupings and networks) and identify and bid for external funding streams to add value to this activity.  Target:  Number of business support initiatives delivered - 8  Number of business collaborations - 4		GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	All targets have been met for 2015/16.

Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
4.4.1	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	4. WSC The economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximised	Support, enable and facilitate placed based regeneration projects and initiatives.	Support place based community groupings to achieve their economic development / regeneration aspirations by helping with accessing external funding / making dealing with Local Authority Departments as easy as relevantly possible (single conversation) and influencing other stakeholders.  Target: Number of projects Supported - 4		GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Consultant commissioned to deliver Minehead Economic Plan - consultation events on-going. Contract meeting deadlines and milestones. 3 Coastal revival fund bids with in WS successful levering in over £90K. Steam Coast Trail, Watchet Rope Walk and Minehead Enterprising Esplanade. Managing and commissioning activity for the former. Porlock Oyster Project achieved £85K Power to Change funds. Target of support for 4 externally funded projects exceeded
4.4.2	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	4. WSC The economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximised	Support, enable and facilitate placed based regeneration projects and initiatives.	Support local groups and Parish / Town Councils to achieve public realm and public vitality and vibrancy activity (signage / street furniture / street markets / interpretation / digital infrastructure and events)  Target: Number of projects supported - 4		GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Transfer of assets to allow Minehead Farmers Market to be independant of Council achieved. Funding acheived for renovations of Minehead zig zag Funding acheived for Porlock Oysters website development Tree lights in Avenue achieved
4.4.3	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	4. WSC The economic opportunities that arise from the development and associated activities are maximised	Support, enable and facilitate placed based regeneration projects and initiatives.	Identify appropriate funding streams and programmes to assist in the delivery of schemes.  Assist in formulation of funding application bids to secure funding for projects  Target: Number of applications made / supported – 4		GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Porlock Oyster Project - Power to Change bid successful (£75K) Team provided support to Porlock Futures. 3 successful CRF bids (£90K) - 2 written by WS Team Our Place - further £10K awarded for employment & skills activity DWP award for Minehead employment hub. (Circa £4K) CIM fund bid scoped for Employment Hub expansion Princes Countryside Fund bid scoped for rural transport / employment project
5.1.5	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	5. WSC Increase the availability of housing supply within West Somerset to mitigated the extra demands linked to Hinkley Point workers	Using the Hinkley Point Housing Fund to provide 185 additional bed spaces in the West Somerset area by 31st Mar 2016	Provide 4 first time buyer loans to supplement tenants savings thereby freeing up private/social rented properties		AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	All policies have been agreed and we are now ready to start identifying potential purchasers  No referrals made to date



Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
5.1.4	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	5. WSC Increase the availability of housing supply within West Somerset to mitigated the extra demands linked to Hinkley Point workers	Using the Hinkley Point Housing Fund to provide 185 additional bed spaces in the West Somerset area by 31st Mar 2016	Provide empty property grants and advice to deliver 5 bed spaces through bring properties back into use		AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	GREEN	Q4 - 5 bedspaces
5.1.6	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	5. WSC Increase the availability of housing supply within West Somerset to mitigated the extra demands linked to Hinkley Point workers	Using the Hinkley Point Housing Fund to provide 185 additional bed spaces in the West Somerset area by 31st Mar 2016	Facilitate the delivery of 100 bed spaces through the landlord and tenant services scheme		GREEN	NOT AVAILABLE	GREEN	GREEN	(information from SWELT) – 548 bedspaces advertised on Homelet, 5 grants via YMCA under the lodging scheme; 4 Landlord training provided and 5 Tenant Ready schemes funded
5.3.1	Paul Fitzgerald	2. WSC New Nuclear	5. WSC Increase the availability of housing supply within West Somerset to mitigated the extra demands linked to Hinkley Point workers	To work with landlords and owners of empty properties to reduce the number of long-term empty homes in the District as measured by the 1st October CTB1 return.	At least 5% reduction compared to previous year CTB1 return (October)	New measure	NOT DUE	GREEN	NOT DUE	NOT DUE	This is an annual measure and was reported annually in October 2015. 202 long term empty properties as at 5/10/15 compared to 224 at 6/10/15
5.1.2	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	5. WSC Increase the availability of housing supply within West Somerset to mitigated the extra demands linked to Hinkley Point workers	Using the Hinkley Point Housing Fund to provide 185 additional bed spaces in the West Somerset area by 31st Mar 2016	Facilitate the delivery of 30 bed spaces by housing associations in priority areas through Implementation of their Downsizing Policies.		AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	RED	Qtr 4 has seen 4 additional bed-spaces delivered. 20 bedspaces have been delivered 15/16, 10 less than originally anticipated

Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
5.1.3	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	5. WSC Increase the availability of housing supply within West Somerset to mitigated the extra demands linked to Hinkley Point workers	Using the Hinkley Point Housing Fund to provide 185 additional bed spaces in the West Somerset area by 31st Mar 2016	Facilitate the delivery of 50 bed spaces by private developers using the enabling fund within the Hinkley Section 106 agreement		AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	RED	We are currently in discussion with private developers to bring forward suitable schemes, although discussions are proving difficult.
6.2.3	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	6. WSC The development at Hinkley Point is carried out in accordance with approved plans and ensuring that the Council actively monitors the development and responds to any complaints received in a timely and sound manner	To monitor and publicise Noise and Air Quality Data on the Councils website to enable communities affected to access data and, following the agreed complaints procedure, to respond appropriately to issues which arise from development activity.	Investigate and respond proactively to complaints received in relation to the development being carried out at Hinkley Point within 10 working days		GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	No complaints in Q2, Q3 & Q4 as there is limited activity on site.
7.1.1	Andrew Goodchild	2. WSC New Nuclear	7. WSC Minimise the effects on the environment by working with partners to positively respond to opportunities to enhance the environment in the affected communities using secured funding within Section 106 agreements are mitigated	Develop a programme of investment within West Somerset for the ecology funding provided directly to the council from the development at Hinkley Point	Using data supplied from EDF Energy develop a range of sites suitable for the provision of ecology mitigation  Target: TBC		AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	The Major Projects Manager who was leading this work is no longer in post and this project has not been progressed. An equivalent post of Planning Lead will be appointed as part of the Energy Infrastructure structure in due course. Status is amber as there is no time bound commitment for WSC to progress this project
KBI 132	Paul Fitzgerald	Corporate Health	Corporate Health	% of undisputed invoices for commercial goods and services paid within 30 days of receipt	90% or more	92.26%	GREEN	AMBER	RED	GREEN	In Q4 89.96% were paid within 30 days.

Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
KPI 133	Paul Fitzgerald	Corporate Health	Corporate Health	Number of invoices received	Measure only - no target.	2771 recieved	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	493 Invoices were received in Qtr4
KPI 21	Richard Sealy	Corporate Health	Corporate Health	Number of unique visitors to Council Website	Target - 80,000	162,000 (although a significant number in Q3 were resultant from external testing)	GREEN	GREEN	AMBER	GREEN	Q4 = 30,302
HC5.32	Terry May	Service Measure	Corporate Health	Increase supply of affordable housing within West Somerset	34 homes pa average (102 homes over 3 years) (Based on 35% of the emerging Local Housing Plan annualised new build housing figure of minus 30% to take account of small sites.)	28 homes for 2014/15	AMBER	AMBER	GREEN	GREEN	21 Affordable Homes Completed – 8 x Affordable Rent and 4 x Shared Ownership at Croft Court, Williton (Knightstone Scheme) 9 x social rent at Ellicombe Gardens, Alcombe (Magna scheme)  Development pipeline indicates the target of 102 affordable homes over 3 years should be met during 2016/17
KPI 25	Richard Sealy	Service Measure	Service Measure	Customer Access Abandoned in queue call rate %	Target - <8%	7.86%	GREEN	AMBER	GREEN	AMBER	Q1 = 7.24% Q2 = 8.83% Q3 = 5.22% Q4=11.01%  The reason it is so high in Q4 is the combined impact of staff absence and the significant increase in calls due to the council tax bills hitting the doormats.  However, for the year as a whole the target was met with an average % of abandoned calls at 8.07% against a target of 8% or fewer.

Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
KPI 90B	Tim Burton	Service Measure	Service Measure	% minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks	80%	85.9%	RED	GREEN	RED	AMBER	Q1=48% Q2= 85.1% Q3 = 46% Q4 = 72% Out of 36 minor applications determined, 26 of these were dealt within 8 weeks or an agreed extension of time. The Q3 drop in performance was explained by periods of staff sickness with little resilience to cover that workload. Temporary additional resource was brought in at the start of December to cover and performance has started to improve as a result.
KPI 90C	Tim Burton	Service Measure	Service Measure	% of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks	95%	94.2%	GREEN	GREEN	RED	AMBER	Q1=95% Q2=95.7% Q3=74% Q4 = 92% Out of 47 other applications determined, 43 of these were dealt within 8 weeks or an agreed extension of time.
KPI 123	Richard Sealy	Service Measure	Service Measure	Customer Complaints	95% of complaints responded to with 20 working days	New WSC Measure	AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	Q4 = 0 decisions investigated by the ombudsman requiring a remedy (excludes minor injustices)  82% of customer complaints received and recorded by the Council, have been closed and had a full response with 20 working days . (9 responded within time and closed).  There are however a further 2 recorded complaints where the due date has passed but the response date and copy of the response has not been recorded so it is not clear whether the target response date for those two cases was achieved. The outcome of those complaints could improve the % recorded above.
HC5.15	Simon Lewis	Service Measure	Service Measure	Average overall waiting time for high priority DFGs (once recommendation made by OT) KPI 52a  (The priority is determined by the Occupational Therapist and the assessment is determined on the combined risk and functional independence score. The score puts them into High, Medium or Low. Low = 0 - 8 points, Medium = 9 - 14, High = 15+ points).	Measure Only - no target	New Measure	NOT AVAILABLE	NOT AVAILABLE	RED	AMBER	Q3 - 2 cases in the high priority band were completed in the quarter. Average completion 70 weeks. However it must be noted that due to the budget position, these cases were on the waiting list since 2013 and 2014. Allocated to a Technical Officer at the end of January 2015. Q4 - 1 case high priority, 24 weeks. Picture continuing to improve.

Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
HC5.22	Simon Lewis	Service Measure	Service Measure	% of homeless applications accepted as statutory homeless (lower is better). KPI 46	23% or lower	29.25%	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	AMBER	<p>Q1: 8 accepted cases which was 53% of the overall homeless applications. (last year Q1 where we accepted 8 cases = 24%)</p> <p>Q2 9 accepted cases which is 50% of overall homeless applications. (last year Q2 which shows 11&amp;nbsp;accepted cases = 32%.)</p> <p>Q3: 8 homeless cases accepted</p> <p>Q4: 9 homeless cases accepted (approx. 50% of applications received).</p> <p>total for the year is 34 cases accepted</p> <p>NB we are focusing on prevention so we will expect to see a decrease in application numbers but this will see a rise in acceptances as a percentage due to the majority of failed prevention are acceptable homeless cases. We would have had an increase in the number of applications in the past two quarters however the focus on prevention has caused a marked rise in cases being prevented before becoming homeless applications.</p>
HC5.20	Simon Lewis	Service Measure	Service Measure	Number of Households making homeless applications (lower is better). KPI 45	195 or fewer for the year	124 applications	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	<p>Q1 - 15</p> <p>Q2 - 18</p> <p>Q3 = 13</p> <p>Q4 = 17</p> <p>Total for the year is 63 homeless applications</p>
HC5.14	Simon Lewis	Service Measure	Service Measure	<p>Disabled facilities grants - Average time to complete DFG process once allocated by SWPSHP</p> <p>Measures the time from allocating the case until the work has been completed.</p> <p>KPI 52</p>	<p>Average time to complete DFG process once allocated by SWPSHP</p> <p>Target - 24 Weeks (as per the Home Improvement Agency's target)</p>	<p>New Measure - Introduced for Q3</p>	NOT AVAILABLE	NOT AVAILABLE	GREEN	GREEN	<p>Q3 - Removing exceptions from the report, the time taken was 23 weeks. The exception was a case which was held up considerably by the client. With the exception included, the time taken is 30 weeks.</p> <p>Q4 - 22 weeks. Continuing improvement, close monitoring</p>
KPI 90A	Tim Burton	Service Measure	Service Measure	% major planning applications determined within 13 weeks (or within agreed extension of time)	60%	74%	GREEN	GREEN	AMBER	GREEN	<p>Q3 = 33%</p> <p>Q4 = 67%</p> <p>Out of 3 major applications determined, 2 of these were dealt within 13 weeks or an agreed extension of time.</p>

Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
KBI 3	Paul Fitzgerald	Service Measure	Service Measure	Housing Benefit - % Local Authority error against overall expenditure (lower is better)	<0.48%	0.30%	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Q1 = 0.41% Q2 = 0.3% Q3 = 0.3% EOY = 0.37%
KPI 6	Paul Fitzgerald	Service Measure	Service Measure	Average processing times for changes in circumstances (lower is better).	9 days or lower	6.52 days	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Q1 = 9.25 days Q2 = 7.82 days Q3 = 7.40 days EOY = 8.15 days
KPI 10	Paul Fitzgerald	Service Measure	Service Measure	% Council Tax collected	97.0% by 31st March	97.25%	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Q1 = 32% Q2 = 49% Q3 = 90.96% Q4 = 97.44%
KPI 12	Paul Fitzgerald	Service Measure	Service Measure	% Business Rates collected	98% or more by 31st March	98.73%	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Q1 = 50.06% Q2 = 63.1% Q3 = 91.8% Q4 = 98.99%

Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
KPI 124	Richard Sealy	Service Measure	Service Measure	FOI requests provided with substantive response within 20 days.	Measure: - Number of FOI enquiries received.  Target 75% answered witin 20 working days.	New WSC Measure	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	222 FOI received in Q4  87% responded within 20 working days in quarter  (742 FOI Received in 15/16)
KPI 54	Chris Hall	Service Measure	Service Measure	Environmental Health Average time taken to respond to initial request for service (days)	Average of 4 days or lower	1.5 days	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Q2 perf: 90% of service requests in WSC were responded to within 4 days. Ave 0.5 days (96%) for Q3 Q4 average time taken for a response to EH complaints only is 1.2 days.
KPI 59	Chris Hall	Service Measure	Service Measure	Licensing % of licenses issued on time.	90%	94%	AMBER	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Crystal report shows 98% of licences were issued on time in Q4.
HC5.24	Simon Lewis	Service Measure	Service Measure	Number of homelessness events prevented (higher is better). KPI 47	TBC	76	NOT DUE	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Q1: 7 Q2: 32 Q3: 29 cases where homelessness prevented Q4: 17 cases prevented total is 85 for the year

Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
HC5.27	Simon Lewis	Service Measure	Service Measure	Number of households in B&B accommodation. KPI 48	TBC	New WSC Measure	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Q1: 0 Q2: 1 Q3: 0 Q4: 0
HC5.29	Simon Lewis	Service Measure	Service Measure	Number of households in temporary accommodation (excluding B&B for which there is a separate measure). KPI 49	TBC	New WSC Measure	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	Q1: 5 Q2: 6 Q3: 1 Q4: 2
KPI 103	Chris Hall	Service Measure	Service Measure	Street Cleansing % service requests actioned within 5 working days	85% target	93%	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	NOT AVAILABLE	Q3 = 100% Q4 = data not provided
KCI 81	Chris Hall	Service Measure	Service Measure	Street Cleansing - No. of complaints (lower is better)	Average of 20 or fewer over the year		GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	NOT AVAILABLE	None received in Q3 Q4 = Not provided



Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
KPI 88	Chris Hall	Service Measure	Service Measure	Waste & Recycling Fly-tipping: % removed within 48 hrs	75%	82.5%	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	NOT AVAILABLE	Q4 = not provided
KPI 90	Chris Hall	Service Measure	Service Measure	Waste & Recycling Fly-tipping: No of incidents	No target -measure only	98 Incidents	AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	NOT AVAILABLE	Q3 = 43 (Total to Q3= 136) Q4=not provided
KPI 87	Chris Hall	Service Measure	Service Measure	Waste & Recycling % missed collections collected within 24 hours	100%	98.78%	AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	NOT AVAILABLE	Q4 = not available
KPI 86	Chris Hall	Service Measure	Service Measure	Waste & Recycling % of waste recycled and composted	target - 41%	48.94%	GREEN	NOT AVAILABLE	NOT AVAILABLE	NOT AVAILABLE	Q4 = not available

Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
KPI 94	Chris Hall	Service Measure	Service Measure	Building Control Dangerous structures - % of incidents responded to within 24 hrs.	Target - 95%	100%	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	NOT AVAILABLE	Q1 = 100% (4 Dangerous structures reported. All seen within 24 hours) Q2 = 100% (5 Dangerous structures reported. All seen within 24 hours) Q3 = 100% (3 dangerous structures, all responded to within 24 hours) Q4= not provided
KPI 92	Chris Hall	Service Measure	Service Measure	Building Control % applications registered within agreed timescale (5 days)	Target - 95%	97%	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	NOT AVAILABLE	Q1 = 96.84% Q2 = 95% (which is very good - seeing it was holiday time). Q3 = 95% Q4=not provided
KPI 93	Chris Hall	Service Measure	Service Measure	Building Control % of inspections carried out on day registered	Target - 95%	99.01%	GREEN	GREEN	GREEN	NOT AVAILABLE	Q1 = 100% Q2 = 95% (one inspector during some of this quarter due to holidays – this is an excellent result). Q3 = 100% Q4=not provided
KPI 160	Richard Sealy	Service Measure	Service Measure	Number of days sickness per FTE	Average of 8 days or lower per FTE	7.89 days 2014/15	GREEN	AMBER	AMBER	RED	Q1 = projection of 7.4 days is below the target of 8.1 days for 2015/16. Q2 - 4.13 days/ projection of 8.3 days per FTE for the year. Q3 7.55 days per FTE per annum (projection of 10 days per FTE for the year based on current trends) Q4 average of 8.86 days per FTE for the 2015/16 year (5.5 days long term 3.36 days short-term)

Reference	AD	Corporate Aim/Priority	Corporate Objective	Description	Measure	Previous Year	Q1 (RAG)	Q2 (RAG)	Q3 (RAG)	Q4 (RAG)	Comments
KPI 5	Paul Fitzgerald	Service Measure	Service Measure	Average processing times for new Housing Benefit claims	22 days or lower	22.69 days	AMBER	AMBER	AMBER	RED	Q1 = 30.67 days Q2 = 28.23 days Q3 = 26.32 days Q4 = 28.51 days
KPI 56a	Chris Hall	Service Measure	Service Measure	Environmental Health % of requests completed within stated service standard (60 days)	75% or higher	66%	GREEN	GREEN	AMBER	RED	<p>We are currently in discussion with private developers to bring forward suitable schemes, although discussions are proving difficult. For Q4 the target was missed. 62.5% achieved against a target of 75%.</p> <p>This was largely due to two significant and resource-intensive investigations impacting on the team's ability to service other requests.</p> <p>However, for the year as a whole the target was met. An average of 78.3% of all requests were completed within the service standard, against a target of 75%. (Q1=95%,Q2=73%, Q3=73%, Q4=62.5%)</p>

# **West Somerset Council**

## **Scrutiny Panel 16<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

### **Key policy changes to Common Allocations Policy 2016**

**This matter is the responsibility of Cabinet Member Councillor Turner – Housing, Health and Wellbeing.**

**Report Author: Heather Stewart:- Housing Options, Advice and Homeless Manager**

#### **1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 The Homefinder Somerset Monitoring Board has reviewed the Common Allocations policy in the light of ongoing changes to welfare payments and changes to the way in which applicants express interest on properties. The review has taken account of issues raised by local authority and landlord partners. The updated draft policy has been reviewed in detail by various local authority and landlord officer groups and has been the subject of a consultation exercise with applicants and stakeholders.

#### **2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Homefinder Somerset Monitoring Board has considered the consultation feedback in detail and has recommended that the proposed changes to the allocations policy go ahead.  
Therefore it is recommended that Community Scrutiny consider the changes to the Homefinder Somerset Common Lettings Policy and subject to the approval of the Committee, the Housing Services Lead be authorised to make the final decision in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services.

### 3 Risk Assessment (if appropriate)

#### Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
1. The council does not produce a clear and representative allocations policy.	5	5	25
2. The allocation policy does not meet or deliver the broader housing objectives and priorities.	1	1	1
3. The council has inadequate resources to deliver the common allocations policy.	1	1	1

#### Risk Scoring Matrix

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

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

## **4 Background and Full details of the Report**

- 4.1 The Homefinder Somerset Partnership was formed in 2005. The partnership secured central government funding for the introduction of Choice Based Lettings (CBL) as a method of allocating social housing in the Somerset area. This partnership also sought to maximise the efficiency benefits of a joint procurement exercise for a new computer system and the benefits to the housing register applicants and landlords in Somerset of having one common allocations policy across the county.

This partnership is made up of the five housing authorities within Somerset and their principal social housing landlords. The outcome of the project was to implement CBL using a new computer system. The new CB: scheme together with a common lettings policy and common housing register application form were successfully implemented in December 2008. Two further reviews were carried out during 2011 and 2013. During this time the scheme has been operating effectively.

The Homefinder Somerset Partners have undertaken a further review of the Homefinder Somerset Common Lettings Policy in the light of ongoing changes to welfare payments and changes to the way in which applicants express interest on properties.

Over 1100 applicants (13.6% of the active register) responded to the formal consultation exercise during 2016 with all changes being agreed.

- 4.2 A full summary of the Homefinder Somerset Key Policy Changes and details of amendments made to appendix 2 of the Common Allocations Policy are attached as **Appendix A** .

## **5 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities**

- 5.1 The Implementation of the Homefinder Somerset Common Lettings Policy will assist in the delivery of the Key theme 1 of the current Business Strategy - Helping our communities remain sustainable and vibrant is vital in keeping West Somerset a great place in which to live and work. We aim to influence and improve by Increasing the availability and affordability of homes for local people – to both buy and to rent.

## **6 Finance / Resource Implications**

Comments from the Finance Team as follows:

- 6.1 The proposals included in this report are to be covered by the Homefinder Somerset joint account, held by Sedgemoor District Council. Therefore it is not expected to need any funding from West Somerset Council.
- 6.2 The funding of the joint account is from adverts charges to landlords. Any need to cover additional costs would result in an increase in advert charges, however this is not currently being proposed.

## **7 Legal Implications (if any)**

7.1 Legal advice has already been sought and no comments added.

The Homefinder Somerset Choice Based Lettings IT system is operated in accordance with the Common Lettings Policy.

These amendments will be presented for adoptions to each local authority in Somerset and, as such, describe the legal basis for the allocation of social housing to applications through the lettings system.

## **8 Environmental Impact Implications (if any)**

8.1 Proper consideration and delivery of housing allocations, partnership working and high quality housing services will contribute to reducing the risk of homelessness and the appropriate housing of individuals and families, which will indirectly reduce the fear of crime in our communities.

## **9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications (if any)**

9.1 Proper consideration and delivery of housing allocations, partnership working and high quality housing services will contribute to reducing the risk of homelessness and the appropriate housing of individuals and families, which will indirectly reduce the fear of crime in our communities.

## **10 Equality and Diversity Implications (if any)**

10.1 An Equalities Analysis has been carried out and will be published alongside the policy. The full Equalities Analysis report is attached as **Appendix B**

## **11 Social Value Implications (if any)**

11.1 None

## **12 Partnership Implications (if any)**

12.1 The Homefinder Somerset Common Lettings Policy represents a joint approach by the five district councils and registered providers in Somerset seeking to address the allocation of social housing.

The ongoing success of the policy is dependent on engagement and support from all relevant partners.

## **13 Health and Wellbeing Implications (if any)**

13.1 An effective and efficient choice based lettings scheme is likely to offer a cost-effective mechanism for reducing dependency and promoting independence, health, wellbeing and social inclusion across a range of departmental objectives.

## **14 Asset Management Implications (if any)**

14.1 None

**15 Consultation Implications** (if any)

15.1 Over 1100 applicants (13.6% of the active register) responded to the formal consultation exercise during 2016 with all changes being agreed. Summary of the consultation responses is attached as **Appendix D**

**16 Recommendation(s)** (if any)

16.1 It is recommended that the Community Scrutiny Committee:

- Approve the Homefinder Somerset Common Letting Policy amendments.
- Authorise the Housing Services to make the final decision in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services.

**Democratic Path:**

- **Scrutiny Committees – Yes**
- **Cabinet/Executive – No**
- **Full Council –No (**

**Reporting Frequency :**  Once only  **Ad-hoc**  Quarterly

Twice-yearly  Annually

**List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)**

Appendix A	Summary of the Key Policy Changes and details of amendments to Medical and Welfare Considerations (Appx 2 of Common allocations Policy)
Appendix B	Equality Analysis Form
Appendix C	Allocation Policy Summary of Consultation Feedback
Appendix D	Common Allocation Policy Final Draft for April 2016

**Contact Officers**

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## EQUALITY ANALYSIS FORM

1. Name of policy\*, strategy or project: **Homefinder Somerset Allocations Policy**  
*\* The word policy used throughout the form could refer to a strategy, policy, procedure, project, function, decision or service*
2. Name of person completing the analysis: **CBL Scheme Coordinator**
3. Date: **Ongoing during policy creation – finalised 27/4/16 based on draft allocations policy**
4. Who has been consulted in developing the policy?

Consultation has involved the following groups

Representatives from the following Local Authorities:

- Mendip District Council
- Sedgemoor District Council
- South Somerset District Council
- Taunton Deane Borough Council
- West Somerset Council

Registered Housing Providers via CBL Working group

Ongoing log of issues raised by applicants and other stakeholders

Occupational therapists and adult social care

Leaving care team

Supported housing & Support service providers

5. Sources of information used in this analysis  
(E.g. demographic data, research from websites, results of consultations, results of equality monitoring data, complaints, customer feedback, etc)

Ongoing feedback from applicants and stakeholders

Ongoing discussions with registered housing providers

Consultation feedback from applicants and stakeholders

Customer complaints/comments

Government guidance

HB welfare changes

Court Cases regarding Allocation Policies

6. Identify the effect or potential effect of this policy on each of the diversity groups (Equality Act 2010) by considering the following questions (the list is not exhaustive but an indication of the sort of questions those involved should think about):

- Might some groups find it harder to access the service?
- Do some groups have particular needs that are not well met by the current policy?
- What evidence do you have for your judgement (e.g. monitoring data, information from consultation/research/feedback)?
- Have staff/residents raised concerns/complaints?

Is there local or national research to suggest there could be a problem?

Protected Group	Effect (+ive/-ive/ neutral	Comments/Evidence														
Age	Negative	<p>We are proposing to remove the gold band reason – underoccupation and the silver band reason – children in flats. These changes may impact on certain age groups more than others as set out below:</p> <p>Gold Under Occupation. As at 27.4.16 there were 572 applicants banded in the gold band for under occupation. All of these applicants would be affected by this change with their gold band status being removed.</p> <p>The age profile of these applicants is as follows:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="882 1086 1205 1361"> <thead> <tr> <th>Age Range</th> <th>%age</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>17-21</td> <td>0.3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21-29</td> <td>4.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>30-39</td> <td>7.0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>40-59</td> <td>49.8</td> </tr> <tr> <td>60+</td> <td>38.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>100</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Age Range	%age	17-21	0.3	21-29	4.4	30-39	7.0	40-59	49.8	60+	38.5	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>
Age Range	%age															
17-21	0.3															
21-29	4.4															
30-39	7.0															
40-59	49.8															
60+	38.5															
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>															

Protected Group	Effect (+ive/-ive/ neutral	Comments/Evidence
		<p>We are making this change because these applicants are not expressing an interest in properties proportionate to their priority banding. Of the applicants in this band over 44% have never placed an expression of interest on the system despite over 71.5% of these applicants having been on the register for 6 months or more.</p> <p>Applicants over 60 make up 28.6% of those in gold band, and just under 21% of applicants in any band. They are therefore over represented in the gold under occupation band. This is more than likely because these applicants have been in social housing for some time in family accommodation and their children have now left home leaving them with a larger property.</p> <p>Whilst this change will have a negative impact on the over 60 age group, this age range is not being discriminated against since the change will affect applicants of all age ranges in this band.</p> <p>Applicants that are in this band will be placed into the bronze band and will still be able to express an interest in available properties that they are eligible for. Where applicants have other housing needs that we are aware of, or where they are receiving DHP from the relevant LA towards their rent, and are actively looking to move, these applicants will be banded into the silver band to give them a better chance of being able to move.</p> <p><b>Silver Band – Children in Flats</b></p> <p>We are proposing to remove the silver band reason – children in flats. As at 27.4.16 there were 317 applicants in this band. The majority of these applicants (51.5%) were in the 21-29 age bracket. In silver band as a while this age group makes up only 28% of those in the band, so this change will impact on this age group disproportionately.</p>

Protected Group	Effect (+ive/-ive/ neutral)	Comments/Evidence
		<p>We are making this change because it is felt that a flat is reasonable accommodation for an applicant, even with children under 10 where there is no lift available. The homelessness legislation makes clear that providing such accommodation to a homeless applicant is suitable, and as such the allocation policy needs to be in step with this. If we don't make this change applicants in gold band for homelessness could be placed in this accommodation and then immediately reapply to the register as silver band children in flats (if no lift was available and the children were under 10).</p> <p>Applicants in this band will be reassessed to establish if they have any other housing needs and will be banded accordingly. In addition landlords have agreed that they may give a preference on some property adverts to families living in above ground floor flats with children. This should help to mitigate the impact of the change.</p>
Disability	Neutral	<p>We are making some clarification changes to the policy in terms of the assessment of medical and welfare issues. These changes should not impact in any adverse way on those applicants with disabilities. The policy will further prioritise those with significant medical/welfare issues and no further changes are deemed necessary.</p>
Gender Reassignment	Neutral	<p>Trans gendered people may be particularly at risk of housing crisis and homelessness arising from transphobic reactions, hate crime and harassment by family, neighbours and members of their local community.</p> <p>Trans gendered people may fear disclosing their identity to housing officers for fear that they will not be treated with dignity and respect. The result can be that they do not receive the housing services that they need or receive a service inappropriate to their needs.</p> <p>These issues are addressed to a degree in the Homelessness Strategy which the Common Housing Allocations Policy supports.</p>

Protected Group	Effect (+ive/-ive/ neutral	Comments/Evidence
		<p>We don't believe that any of the changes we are proposing in this round of policy changes will impact on applicants within the protected characteristic group.</p>
Marriage and Civil Partnership	Neutral	<p>There is little evidence at present that marriage/civil partnership impacts upon availability of or access to housing or that housing policy can affect marriage/civil partnership (though not comments in Sexual orientation section below regarding those entering civil partnerships.)</p> <p>Applicants are not disadvantaged by either being married/civilly partnered in a civil partnership or not when accessing affordable housing in terms of the housing register, mutual exchange or homelessness /homeless prevention services.</p> <p>Registered civil partners have the same rights as married heterosexual spouses in relation to property and tenancy rights and access to the housing register.</p> <p>We do not believe that any of our proposed changes will impact on those within this protected characteristic group.</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity	Neutral	<p>Since 1 April 2004 it has been unlawful for local authorities to house families with children and pregnant women in bed and breakfast accommodation for more than six weeks, which has put increased pressure on the housing system. Applicants that are pregnant are prioritised depending on their housing needs and circumstances already within current policy. Vulnerable adults that are pregnant would be provided (depending on their needs) with support services via the various pathway commissioning projects (Pathway for adults and pathway to independence). However single pregnant applicants with no other housing need are banded into bronze band (if sharing facilities) rather than silver band. The band would be amended when the baby is born. Housing benefit would not be paid until the baby was born but it is possible that LA partners may use DHP to ease any hardship that this may cause.</p> <p>We do not believe that any of our proposed changes will impact on those within this</p>

Protected Group	Effect (+ive/-ive/ neutral	Comments/Evidence
		protected characteristic group.
Race	Neutral	<p>A review of the national evidence base on BME housing [Harrison and Phillips, ODPM, 2003] identified some general differences between the <i>average</i> positions of particular ethnic populations as follows.</p> <p>It found that the Indian populations when compared to the White population are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More likely to be owner occupiers;</li> <li>• Less likely to have lower incomes;</li> <li>• More likely to be over crowded;</li> <li>• More likely to live in poor housing and poor living conditions;</li> <li>• More dissatisfied with their home; and</li> <li>• More likely to want to move.</li> </ul> <p>The report found that the Pakistani and Bangladeshi population are particularly disadvantaged and when compared to the White population are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less likely to be owner occupiers;</li> <li>• More likely to have lower incomes;</li> <li>• Particularly likely to be overcrowded, live in poor housing and living conditions; and</li> <li>• Particularly dissatisfied with their home and to want to move.</li> </ul> <p>The review found that the Black population are relatively disadvantaged compared with the White and Indian population, but less disadvantaged than the Pakistani or Bangladeshi population. Compared to Whites the Black population are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Least likely to be owner occupiers;</li> <li>• Have lower average income than non BME;</li> <li>• More likely to be overcrowded, live in poor housing and poor living conditions; and</li> </ul>

Protected Group	Effect (+ive/-ive/ neutral)	Comments/Evidence
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More likely to be dissatisfied with home and to want to move.</li> </ul> <p>In their review Harrison and Phillips argue that “The separation of groups living in different localities in itself is not necessarily a bad thing. It is the continuing association between BME segregation and deprivation that is problematic”. The extent of this association is strongest in respect of the Pakistani and Bangladeshi population. For example, research of Muslim housing experiences [Sellick, Housing Corporation 2004] found that housing stress is much greater in these households, with 42% of all Muslim children (and 56% of Bangladeshi children) living in overcrowded homes compared to 12 % of all children. It is the association of segregation, deprivation and poor housing that can be seen as most likely to damage community cohesion.<sup>1</sup></p> <p>The cost of housing often prohibits multi-generational families from being able to access the type or size of accommodation required; given the larger size of families in some BME communities, overcrowding and poor housing conditions can be a particular problem. Some areas are experiencing population change due to migration (though this isn’t just limited to BME groups). Often these areas have higher fertility rates than the wider community. Both the wide range of planning needs associated with children and young adults, and the significant potential they offer in cultural and economic terms will need to be a key consideration when planning in areas undergoing these population changes.</p> <p>Refugees and asylum seekers have differing housing needs and a range of dwelling sizes and types need to be provided in both the private and social sector. Many refugees and asylum seekers face challenges relating to low or lack of income; lack of capital for a</p>

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<sup>1</sup> Also see Trends in UK black and minority ethnic segregation and housing deprivation box 4 page 6



Protected Group	Effect (+ive/-ive/ neutral)	Comments/Evidence
		<p>deposit; few household possessions and the need to move to specific areas to be near others of the same ethnic grouping/language capability. This can make it difficult to establish a 'local connection' in terms of housing register applications. Our open housing register can help with these issues where applicants are eligible for housing.</p> <p>Some kinds of temporary accommodation currently used by authorities nationally to house refugees and asylum seekers are inappropriate – especially for women and children and young people, many of whom are traumatised by their experiences – and can place them at unacceptable levels of risk on arrival. With many immigrants choosing to share dwellings across generations for cultural or financial reasons, there may be a greater need for larger accommodation. However migration patterns also show that economic migrants are often single, placing yet more demands on limited supply of 1 and 2 bed accommodation in the social housing sector. Current economic migration from abroad from poorer countries is also likely to affect housing tenure by sustaining demand for cheaper, private sector rented accommodation.</p> <p><b>Gypsies and Travellers</b>  Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers are legally recognised as ethnic groups, and protected from discrimination by the Race Relations Act (1976, amended 2000) and the Human Rights Act (1998). In terms of health and education, they are one of the most deprived groups in the Britain.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Life expectancy for Gypsy and Traveller men and women is 10 years lower than the national average.</li> <li>• Gypsy and Traveller mothers are 20 times more likely than the rest of the population</li> </ul>

Protected Group	Effect (+ive/-ive/ neutral)	Comments/Evidence
		<p>to have experienced the death of a child.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In 2003, less than a quarter of Gypsy and Traveller children obtained five GCSEs and A*-C grades, compared to a national average of over half.<sup>2</sup></li> </ul> <p>Gypsies and Travellers experience difficulties in gaining planning permission for caravan use on sites: Nationally 90 per cent of all Gypsy and Traveller planning permission applications are initially rejected compared to 20 per cent overall. As a result, some Gypsies and Travellers, certain that their applications will be initially turned down, set up sites before obtaining or even applying for planning permission. There is a clear need for the demand for permanent and transit site needs to be assessed in areas hosting Gypsy and Traveller communities and for sites to be made available. The lack of suitable, secure accommodation underpins many of the inequalities that Gypsy and Traveller communities experience</p> <p>There are several different races and ethnicities of Gypsy and Traveller Communities within Somerset and they cannot be grouped as one. Gypsy and Traveller Communities have their own culture and therefore careful consideration must be made when allocating sites as well as being mindful of their accommodation needs. Our Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2011 sets out great detail on the needs of this community and the pitch requirements that we have. This framework document supports the delivery of the requirements set out in the GTAA 2011.</p> <p>We do not believe that any of our proposed changes will impact on a particular ethnic group.</p>
Religion or Belief	Neutral	Certain faith groups tend to have larger families <sup>3</sup> and therefore require larger dwellings and increase pressure on social and community facilities. For this reason, areas with high birth

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/key-projects/good-relations/gypsies-and-travellers-simple-solutions-for-living-together/>

Protected Group	Effect (+ive/-ive/ neutral)	Comments/Evidence
		<p>rates (whether as a result of religious practices or not) need careful planning to ensure that housing demand is met by supply, and is of the right type and tenure. The needs of older people from different faith groups also need consideration. For other faith groups, it is important to live within a certain distance of their place of worship. This can have planning implications as communities expand and pressure for space develops within a restricted area.</p> <p>There is no evidence that this is an issue at present across the whole of Somerset there may be specific areas where certain problems may exist and these are kept under review via the Homefinder Somerset Monitoring Board. Although overall numbers in religions other than Christian are relatively small, there have been substantial increases in the number of Buddhist, Muslim and Hindu people in Somerset in the last decade.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>We do not believe that any changes proposed in the new draft Allocations Policy will impact on these groups in a +ve or –ve way.</p>
Sex (Gender)	Neutral	<p>In 2011, 7.7 million people in UK households lived alone, of which 4.3 million were aged 16 to 64. Of those in this age group, the majority (59 per cent) were male. One possible reason for this is that a higher proportion of men than women never marry by each age; 62 per cent of men aged 16 to 64 living alone have never married compared with 50 per cent of women living alone in the same age group.</p> <p>For those aged 65 or over, the pattern is reversed; at this age the majority of people living alone (69 per cent) were female. This is partly because there are more women than men in the total population aged 65 or over due to women’s higher life expectancy. There are 1.7 million widowed women aged 65 or over living alone in the UK, three times the number of men. By the age of 65 over 90 per cent of women have been married, and</p>

<sup>3</sup> [www.sogc.org/jogc/abstracts/full/200802\\_WomensHealth\\_1.pdf](http://www.sogc.org/jogc/abstracts/full/200802_WomensHealth_1.pdf) Religion and attitudes to family planning

<sup>4</sup> JSNA 2011 religion briefing note <http://www.sine.org.uk/easysiteweb/getresource.axd?assetid=54777&type=0&servicetype=1>

Protected Group	Effect (+ive/-ive/ neutral)	Comments/Evidence
		<p>husbands are typically older than their wives, accentuating the gap in life expectancy between husbands and wives<sup>5</sup> Many women have to balance work and domestic responsibilities. To do this, they ideally need to be able to access employment and training opportunities close to home.</p> <p>Older women living alone are more likely to be living in poverty and provision of appropriate shared accommodation might be financially and socially beneficial for some groups.</p> <p>In 2011, women accounted for 92 per cent of lone parents with dependent children and men accounted for 8 per cent of lone parents with dependent children. These percentages have changed little since 2001. Women are more likely to take the main caring responsibilities for any children when relationships break down, and therefore become lone parents.<sup>6</sup> There were nearly 2.0 million lone parents with dependent children in the UK in 2011, a figure which has grown significantly from 1.7 million in 2001. Lone parents with dependent children represented 26 per cent of all families with dependent children in 2011, an increase of two percentage points since 2001. Women-headed households tend to be more reliant on social housing – local authority and housing association accommodation. This applies in particular to lone parent households, 60 per cent of whom live in social housing, compared to 23 per cent of other households with dependent children. (Census data) For these households, larger size dwellings are more appropriate and can reduce the stress of living in overcrowded conditions. The vast majority of homeless and temporary accommodation households are headed by, or include, women. Since 1 April 2004 it has been unlawful for local authorities to house families with children and pregnant women in bed and breakfast accommodation for more than six weeks, which has put increased pressure on the</p>

<sup>5</sup> Families and Households 2001 to 2011 ONS [http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778\\_251357.pdf](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/dcp171778_251357.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

Protected Group	Effect (+ive/-ive/ neutral	Comments/Evidence
		<p>housing system.</p> <p>Single men are overrepresented in the rough sleeper and non priority homeless categories both nationally and locally. <sup>7</sup> The reasons for this are varied but may be linked to the fact that 32% of rough sleepers are prison leavers and 6% have been in the armed forces at some point in their lives.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>The Homeless strategy supports work to reduce single non priority homelessness which should have a positive impact on this gender group together with bolstering existing support for priority homeless applicants.</p> <p>We don't believe that any of the changes we are proposing in this round of policy changes will impact on applicants within the protected characteristic group.</p>
Sexual Orientation	Neutral	<p>An assessment of need may be the most suitable way to determine what types of dwellings are required for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) communities. Advice should be sought from organisations that support LGB people such as Stonewall Housing or the Albert Kennedy Trust. Specialist accommodation may be considered for LGB communities, especially people at risk of also being discriminated against due to age or ethnicity. Provision for sheltered accommodation and emergency hostels should be considered for the more vulnerable members of the LGB community if thought necessary.</p> <p>We do not believe that detailed analysis is required at this stage given that the draft Common Allocations Policy does not make changes that we feel will impact on this group in either a +ve or -ve way.</p>

<sup>7</sup> The truth about the hidden homeless – CRISIS [http://www.crisis.org.uk/data/files/publications/HiddenTruthAboutHomelessness\\_web.pdf](http://www.crisis.org.uk/data/files/publications/HiddenTruthAboutHomelessness_web.pdf) & CLG P1E Homelessness returns & <http://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/Rough%20Sleeping%20Mar%202011.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/Rough%20Sleeping%20Mar%202011.pdf> point 3

Protected Group	Effect (+ive/-ive/ neutral)	Comments/Evidence
Poverty/Disadvantage /location (Not a protected characteristic)	Neutral	<p><b>Poverty</b> Poverty can lead to overcrowded and poor quality housing conditions, placement in temporary accommodation, often in disadvantaged areas where there are insufficient social facilities or public transport levels.</p> <p><b>Gypsy &amp; Traveller Issues</b> The literature specific to the Gypsy and Traveller population indicates that, as a group, their health overall is poorer than that of the general population and also poorer than that of non- Travellers living in socially deprived areas. They have poor health expectations and make limited use of health care provision<sup>9</sup>. Others have identified a number of reasons why Gypsies and Travellers are reluctant to access mainstream services. This reluctance is due in part to practicalities, such as complex procedures for registering and accessing services. Most common problem for Travellers is difficulty in accessing primary care through GPs because of their insistence in having a permanent address.</p> <p><b>Deprivation</b> There are 327 Lower Super Output Areas ( a way of dividing parish wards into smaller areas for monitoring and analysis purposes - LSOAs) within Somerset, 14 of which fall within the 20% most deprived nationally. These 14 LSOAs contain approximately 21,200 people and can be found in Taunton, Bridgwater, Highbridge, Williton, Shepton Mallet and Yeovil.</p> <p>Comparing the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 with the 2007 version shows that in some of the ‘most’ deprived areas of Somerset deprivation has increased:</p>

<sup>9</sup> (Health care needs of Travellers – Van Cleemput, <http://adc.bmj.com/content/82/1/32.full>)

Protected Group	Effect (+ive/-ive/ neutral)	Comments/Evidence
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• five of the 14 most deprived LSOAs also fall into the 10% most deprived nationally, three more than in 2007. Together, these five LSOAs represent around 7,700 people</li> <li>• two of the 14 most deprived LSOAs also fall within the 5% most deprived nationally; there were no LSOAs in this category in 2007. These LSOAs are in Bridgwater Sydenham (1,600 people) and in Taunton Halcon (1,700 people).</li> </ul> <p>Barriers to housing and services are the most prevalent form of deprivation within Somerset. Eighty-seven out of 327 LSOAs in Somerset fall into the 20% most deprived nationally, affecting 147,900 people.</p> <p>We don't believe that our changes to banding will affect those in poverty/deprivation in any negative or positive way.</p>

6. Does the policy in its current format promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it?

We do believe that the draft Common Allocations Policy does promote equality of opportunity and foster good relations between protected characteristics groups.

7. If positive effect has been identified in table 6, how can it be improve upon or maximised, either in this policy or others?

Not applicable

8. **Recommendations and Opportunities**

Are there changes you could reasonably introduce which would make this policy work better?

**None at present but we will keep this under review**

Is further research or consultation required?

<b>DETAIL THE ACTIONS PLANNED</b>				
Consider target dates, resources implications, proportionality, risk, regular monitoring and reviewing and list what the positive outcome will be.				
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Action Needed</b>	<b>Positive Outcome</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Reassess those in gold band under occupation and silver band children in flats to establish if they have other housing needs.	LA partners will reassess applicants at point of band removal.	Re assessment will be undertaken and guidance provided to applicants as how best to ensure they can be rehoused.	Homefinder Somerset LA Partners	Oct/Nov 2016

<b>Review</b> (Date or timeframe)	Review when policy next amended.
Name of person/s completing (and involved in completing) form	CBL Scheme Co-ordinator
Date analysis completed	Finalised on 27.4.16



## APPENDIX C

### **Homefinder Somerset Monitoring Board – Allocation Policy Changes Consultation Feedback**

This reports sets out the results of the two consultation questionnaires that were set up to collect feedback from applicants and stakeholders.

#### **Summary & Task and Finish Group Comments**

Two surveys were created to request feedback on the proposed changes to the Homefinder Somerset Allocations Policy: an applicant survey and a stakeholder survey.

The surveys were made available from the 15<sup>th</sup> February 2016 until the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 – a period of 6 ½ weeks.

All Homefinder Somerset applicants were asked to complete the survey by sending them a web message to their Homefinder Somerset account, in addition those applicants that had email addresses were sent an email. In addition a web link to the survey was placed on the Homefinder Somerset website for applicants to follow.

All landlords were sent a copy of the survey and individual LA partners were asked to share the link to the stakeholder survey with all of their relevant contacts.

The Task & Finish group is made up of members of the Homefinder Somerset Board who scrutinise issues pertaining to the common allocations policy that have raised during board meetings but where further investigation or scrutiny needed.

The Task & Finish group reviewed the consultation feedback report (the summary above and the full results of the survey including respondent comments) at their meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2016. Their comments against each question have been inserted within the applicant survey summary of responses below. A couple of amendments to the policy wording have been suggested.

In addition the Task & Finish group have recommended that we generate some feedback for applicants that we place on the website that makes clear that we have paid attention to the individual comments made, and as part of this try to clarify those areas where applicants comments made clear that they had not understood the nature of the change and/or the reasoning behind it.

## ***Applicant Survey***

1116 responses were received to this survey representing 13.16% of all active applicants (as at 31.3.16).

96% of all responses to the applicant survey stated that they were currently applicants on the housing register. In addition 40% of those that responded to the applicant survey are currently living in private rented accommodation, with Housing Association and Council House tenants making up a further 34%. Only 4.5% were homeowners and a further 9.5% of applicants that responded are living with family/friends.

The majority of applicants that responded were in the 25-44 age range – 49%, with a further 22.7% in the 45 to 59 age range.

### Summary of responses – Applicant Survey

Question	Percentage of Applicants that Strongly Agree/Agree or have No View	Comments from Task & Finish Group
<p><b>Q5 We propose to change the wording in the policy to make it clearer that if a friend is included on the application form, that they are usually expected to be a joint applicant. The current and proposed wording is shown below. Do you agree with this change?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Agree/Agree - 70.7% No view – 24.1%</p>	<p>Q5 Agreed– however it was noted that the free form comments show lack of understanding of some of the issues therefore in feedback, we need to explain the issues more clearly.</p>
<p><b>Q6 We propose to extend the list of applicants who may be exempt from the need for a financial assessment to join the housing register. The current and proposed wording is shown below. Do you agree with this change?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Agree/Agree – 62.2% No view – 33%</p>	<p>Q6 AGREED- this was a policy change made in the applicant's interest.</p>
<p><b>Q7 Removal of gold band under occupation</b></p>	<p>Strongly Agree/Agree – 73.5% No view – 16.9%</p>	<p>General discussion about pros and cons of taking it out or leaving as is. Again a lot of the feedback from applicants seemed to misunderstand the reasons for removing gold band status i.e. didn't understand that people weren't making use of it and that we still want to deal with under occupation where it is causing medical problems or financial hardship Agreed – however need to ensure that customers understand that we are taking it seriously and explain why we are removing it e.g. lack of bidding, wasting time, and band hasn't been effective and to speak to landlord if have concerns about under occupation. In the feedback to applicants, need to stress that Mutual Exchange has drastically improved and had a lot of investment. Need to explain in the feedback that if on Discretionary Housing Payments will move to silver. Otherwise move to bronze and get reassessed.</p>
<p><b>Q8 We propose to add a new sentence to the policy to make it clearer that we would support a social landlord by using gold band to move an applicant who has no</b></p>	<p>Strongly Agree/Agree – 60.1% No view –36%</p>	<p>Q8 Agreed – need to explain what the issues are more clearly in the feedback because again there was some confusion about the issues in applicant feedback.</p>

Question	Percentage of Applicants that Strongly Agree/Agree or have No View	Comments from Task & Finish Group
<p>legal right to succession to help the landlord make best use of their housing. Do you agree with this change?</p>		
<p><b>Q9 We propose to add a new sentence to the policy to make it clear that if a Council Officer finds a hazard in the applicants home, the landlord must be notified in order for the applicant to be placed in gold band for disrepair. Do you agree with this change?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Agree/Agree – 81% No view –15.3%</p>	<p>Agreed- Not at all controversial</p>
<p><b>Q10 We propose to make it clear within the revised policy that silver band other homeless will be awarded to applicants two months in advance of the expiry date of the valid notice to quit Do you agree with this change?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Agree/Agree – 62.3% No view –35.7%</p>	<p>Agreed</p>
<p><b>Q11 Removal of Silver band - children in flats</b></p>	<p>Strongly Agree/Agree – 53.3% No view –27.3%</p>	<p>How do we take account of customer comments/feedback <i>and</i> deal with housing demand <i>and</i> comply with equalities legislation on age? Landlords' concern that there is a conflict between what we build (i.e. 2 bedroom flats, supported by LA), homeless legislation (can discharge a duty into a flat), and the policy, which says a flat is not suitable for a family with children. There is also a risk that putting an age restriction of 10 on children in flats that we are in breach of equalities legislation. The group discussed whether more use could be made by landlords labeling houses e.g. Could we give preference sometimes to applicants with children in flats without any age restrictions? AH commented that this could be done via some form of shortlist filter and a statement on preference in marketing text..</p>

Question	Percentage of Applicants that Strongly Agree/Agree or have No View	Comments from Task & Finish Group
<p><b>Q12 We have added in a new Bronze Band category to make it easier to let Sheltered Housing and Extra Care properties (which can be hard to let) by encouraging applicants without a local connection to join the register for these properties. Do you agree with this change?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Agree/Agree – 59.2% No view –29%</p>	<p>Again a lot of misunderstanding about the rationale for this and concerns that ‘outsiders’ will take priority over local applicants.</p> <p>Agreed – however need to explain the rationale clearly in feedback e.g. the change deals with hard to let properties and local people will still have priority. This hasn't come across. Shortlist for these properties is not always long in some areas making these properties hard to let. If don't fill them, some SH/SUPP Housing may become unviable and local people will lose it anyway.</p>
<p><b>Q13 We propose to remove emergency banding where a surviving tenant needs to move from sheltered/adapted housing because the requirement for the specialist housing no longer exists. They will be placed within gold band for tenancy succession. Do you agree with this change?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Agree/Agree – 63.5% No view –31.4%</p>	<p>Agreed – however, for applicant feedback make it clear that this is a low number of cases and don't as a rule force people out, it is just not really an emergency banding situation.</p>
<p><b>Q14 We propose to change the wording in the policy for applicants currently serving or former members of the armed forces. The current and proposed wording is shown below. Do you agree with this change?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Agree/Agree – 60.4% No view –37%</p>	<p>Agree</p>
<p><b>Q15 We propose to change the wording of the policy to make it clear that backdating for applicants currently serving or former members of the armed forces will only be applied once. Do you agree with this change?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Agree/Agree – 57.2% No view –39.6%</p>	<p>Agreed</p>
<p><b>Q16 We have made a change to make it clear that there is a 28 day time limit for applicants to advise their Local Authority of any change of circumstances. Do you agree with this change?</b></p>	<p>Strongly Agree/Agree – 77.7% No view –16.7%</p>	<p>Agreed</p>

Question	Percentage of Applicants that Strongly Agree/Agree or have No View	Comments from Task & Finish Group
Q17 To help prevent social housing fraud we propose to stop applicants informing their Local Authority of change of circumstances by telephone, and confirmation will need to be either online, by e-mail or by letter. Do you agree with this change?	Strongly Agree/Agree – 78.1% No view –13.5%	Agreed
Q18 We propose to change the wording in the policy to give applicants, who wish to keep rent costs at a minimum, the flexibility to allow more than two children to share a bedroom. Do you agree with this change?	Strongly Agree/Agree – 47.5% No view –29.3%	Agreed – however, we probably got the wording wrong. Need to be clear in the feedback that we are not encouraging overcrowding but want to help people overcrowded by 2 bedrooms to move to a property where e.g. they are only overcrowding by 1. Need to check why we wanted this expressed in terms of rental costs and be clear how we would operate it BUT need to be clear it isn't about rent.
Q19 We propose to change the policy to make it clear that applicants with young adults away from home in full time education during term time will be entitled to an extra bedroom for that child.. Do you agree with this change?	Strongly Agree/Agree – 67.9% No view –23.1%	Agreed- <b>but remove reference to 'young adults'</b> , just “adults” away from home
Q20 We propose to simplify the policy to ensure that applicants with evidence of need for overnight care are given an additional bedroom without having to provide proof of a qualifying benefit. Do you agree with this change?	Strongly Agree/Agree – 60.7% No view –29%	Agreed
Q21 Changes to medical /welfare assessment overall approach.	Yes – 81.6%	Overwhelming support so Agreed, but need to ensure there is strong and proper assessment and banding consistency across LAs.
Q22 Do you agree with the approach we are taking? Regarding medical & welfare changes	Yes - 72.4%	Overwhelming support so Agreed, but need to ensure there is strong and proper assessment and banding consistency across LAs.

Question	Percentage of Applicants that Strongly Agree/Agree or have No View	Comments from Task & Finish Group
<b>Q23 Medical assessment process detail</b>	Yes – 84.1%	Overwhelming support so Agreed, but need to ensure there is strong and proper assessment and banding consistency across LAs. Overwhelming support so Agreed, but need to ensure there is strong and proper assessment and banding consistency across LAs.
<b>Q24 Do you agree with principles of medical/welfare assessment process?</b>	Yes – 77%	Overwhelming support so Agreed, but need to ensure there is strong and proper assessment and banding consistency across LAs.
<b>Q25 Welfare detailed assessment process</b>	Yes – 84.5%	Overwhelming support so Agreed, but need to ensure there is strong and proper assessment and banding consistency across LAs.
<b>Q26 Do you agree with the principles for assessing welfare?</b>	Yes – 76.7%	Overwhelming support so Agreed, but need to ensure there is strong and proper assessment and banding consistency across LAs.
<b>Q27 The Government has changed the law to allow existing tenants the freedom to move for work. Therefore we propose that where an applicant has an offer of permanent work they will be able to join the register immediately Do you agree with this change?</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree - 73.4% No view – 19.9%	Agreed
<b>Q28 Making clear applicants have 48 hours to view and make a decision on property</b>	Yes – 84.1%	Agreed – however, in the feedback, we need to make it clear that we have ways of meeting special needs eg disabled applicants.
<b>Q29 We propose to reduce the timescale from eight to four weeks for when a Local Authority can place an expression of interest on behalf of accepted homeless</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree – 66.4% No view – 28.9%	Agreed

Question	Percentage of Applicants that Strongly Agree/Agree or have No View	Comments from Task & Finish Group
applicants who have not been proactive in seeking a permanent home. Do you agree with this change?		
Q30 When an applicant wishes to be considered for a property we ask them to make an expression of interest on that property. Previously we called this 'making a bid'. Do you prefer 'expression of interest' or 'making a bid'?	Expression of interest 54.2% Making a bid 37.4% Don't Know 8.4%	Agreed

Only question 18 regarding allowing applicants to choose to have two children share a room when the policy wouldn't allow this has a less than 50% figure for strongly agree/agree. All other questions have applicant agreement.



## Stakeholder Survey

87 responses were received to this survey from a variety of organisations including landlord, local authority staff and other agencies staff (including CAB and YMCA) and councillors from both county, district and parish level (see Q2 stakeholder survey for details).

### Summary of responses – Stakeholder Survey

Question	Percentage of Applicants that Strongly Agree/Agree or have No View
<b>Q3 We propose to change the wording in the policy to make it clearer that if a friend is included on the application form, that they are usually expected to be a joint applicant. The current and proposed wording is shown below. Do you agree with this change?</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree – 87.2% No view – 7.7%
<b>Q4 We propose to extend the list of applicants who may be exempt from the need for a financial assessment to join the housing register. The current and proposed wording is shown below. Do you agree with this change?</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree – 80.7% No view – 6.4%
<b>Q5 Removal of gold band under occupation</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree – 59% No view – 10.3%
<b>Q6 We propose to add a new sentence to the policy to make it clearer that we would support a social landlord by using gold band to move an applicant who has no legal right to succession to help the landlord make best use of their housing. Do you agree with this change?</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree – 77.6% No view – 17.1%
<b>Q7 We propose to add a new sentence to the policy to make it clear that if a Council Officer finds a hazard in the applicants home, the landlord must be notified in order for the applicant to be placed in gold band for disrepair. Do you agree with this change?</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree – 80.6% No view – 11.7%

Question	Percentage of Applicants that Strongly Agree/Agree or have No View
<b>Q8 We propose to make it clear within the revised policy that silver band other homeless will be awarded to applicants two months in advance of the expiry date of the valid notice to quit Do you agree with this change?</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree – 83.1% No view –14.3%
<b>Q9 Removal of Silver band - children in flats</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree – 68.4% No view –9.2%
<b>Q10 We have added in a new Bronze Band category to make it easier to let Sheltered Housing and Extra Care properties (which can be hard to let) by encouraging applicants without a local connection to join the register for these properties. Do you agree with this change?</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree – 55.3% No view –22.4%
<b>Q11 We propose to remove emergency banding where a surviving tenant needs to move from sheltered/adapted housing because the requirement for the specialist housing no longer exists. They will be placed within gold band for tenancy succession. Do you agree with this change?</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree – 78.4% No view –12.2%
<b>Q12 We propose to change the wording in the policy for applicants currently serving or former members of the armed forces. The current and proposed wording is shown below. Do you agree with this change?</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree – 67.6% No view –31.1%
<b>Q13 We propose to change the wording of the policy to make it clear that backdating for applicants currently serving or former members of the armed forces will only be applied once. Do you agree with this change?</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree – 81.1% No view –16.2%
<b>Q14 We have made a change to make it clear that there is a 28 day time limit for applicants to advise their Local Authority of any change of circumstances. Do you agree with this change?</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree – 82.4% No view –8.1%

Question	Percentage of Applicants that Strongly Agree/Agree or have No View
Q15 To help prevent social housing fraud we propose to stop applicants informing their Local Authority of change of circumstances by telephone, and confirmation will need to be either online, by e-mail or by letter. Do you agree with this change?	Strongly Agree/Agree – 82.4% No view –5.4%
Q16 We propose to change the wording in the policy to give applicants, who wish to keep rent costs at a minimum, the flexibility to allow more than two children to share a bedroom. Do you agree with this change?	Strongly Agree/Agree – 54.8% No view –18.9%
Q17 We propose to change the policy to make it clear that applicants with young adults away from home in full time education during term time will be entitled to an extra bedroom for that child.. Do you agree with this change?	Strongly Agree/Agree – 75.3% No view –17.8%
Q18 We propose to simplify the policy to ensure that applicants with evidence of need for overnight care are given an additional bedroom without having to provide proof of a qualifying benefit. Do you agree with this change?	Strongly Agree/Agree – 64.4% No view –15.1%
Q19 Changes to medical /welfare assessment overall approach.	Yes – 94.4%
Q20 Do you agree with the approach we are taking? Regarding medical & welfare changes	Yes – 85.7%
Q21 Medical assessment process detail	Yes – 98.6%
Q22 Do you agree with principles of medical/welfare assessment process?	Yes – 94.3%
Q23 Welfare detailed assessment process	Yes - 93%
Q24 Do you agree with the principles for assessing welfare?	Yes – 85.7%

Question	Percentage of Applicants that Strongly Agree/Agree or have No View
<b>Q25 The Government has changed the law to allow existing tenants the freedom to move for work. Therefore we propose that where an applicant has an offer of permanent work they will be able to join the register immediately Do you agree with this change?</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree - 87% No view – 7.2%
<b>Q26 Making clear applicants have 48 hours to view and make a decision on property</b>	Yes – 91.3%
<b>Q27 We propose to reduce the timescale from eight to four weeks for when a Local Authority can place an expression of interest on behalf of accepted homeless applicants who have not been proactive in seeking a permanent home. Do you agree with this change?</b>	Strongly Agree/Agree – 85.5% No view – 10.1%
<b>Q28 When an applicant wishes to be considered for a property we ask them to make an expression of interest on that property. Previously we called this ‘making a bid’. Do you prefer ‘expression of interest’ or ‘making a bid’?</b>	Expression of interest 59.4% Making a bid 30.4% Don’t Know 10.1%

Stakeholders that responded to the survey have on all occasions agreed with the changes being put forward.



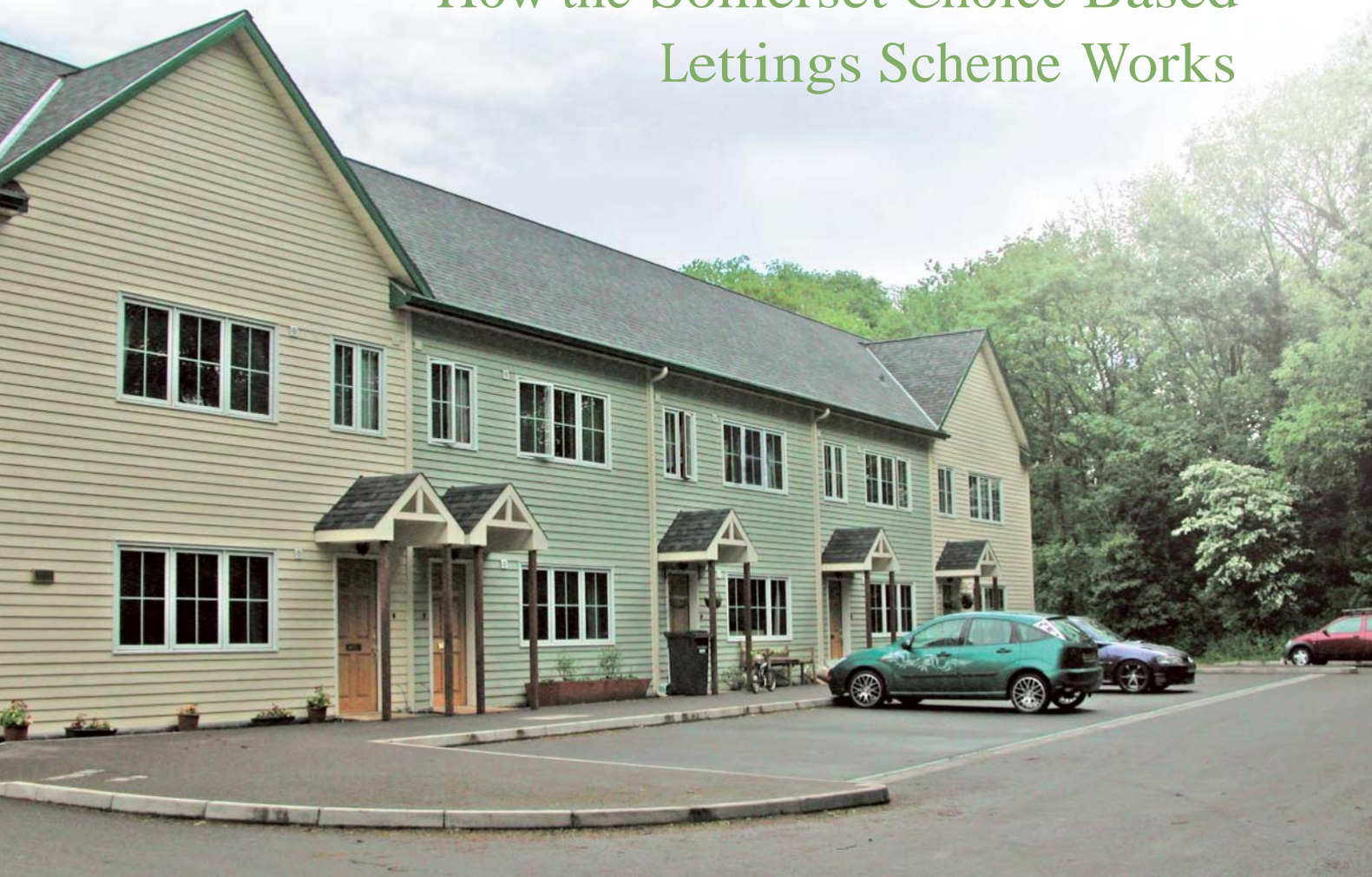
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# Homefinder Somerset Common Lettings Policy

April 2016

How the Somerset Choice Based  
Lettings Scheme Works





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## Homefinder Somerset - Common Lettings & Assessment Policy

### I. Introduction

I.1. This document describes the Homefinder Somerset Choice Based Lettings Scheme (CBL) and Common Housing Allocation Policy run by the five Somerset district councils in partnership with the majority of housing associations operating within Somerset. It has been drawn up with regard to the following documents:

- Somerset Strategic Housing Framework
- Somerset Homelessness Strategy
- Somerset Tenancy Strategy

I.2. We believe that such schemes involving a partnership of housing authorities and registered providers of social housing working together with private landlords wherever possible is the best way to achieve the greatest choice and flexibility meeting applicant's needs.

The scheme's key objectives are:

- To deliver a customer-led choice based lettings system.
- To widen the choice of housing outside traditional local authority boundaries.
- To ensure the scheme is open, fair and accountable to applicants and staff.
- To increase understanding and satisfaction in the lettings system.
- To give new tenants a feeling of ownership of their property.
- To help create 'sustainable' communities.
- To make more efficient use of the available housing stock.
- To help tackle low demand.
- To reduce 'void' turnaround times.
- To reduce the number of refusals on 'hard to let' properties.
- To create a single point of access to all social housing in the County.
- To bring together a larger pool of available housing, giving applicants more choice and helping to ease localised problems of high demand.
- To enable greater regional mobility.
- To meet the legal requirements for the allocation of social housing as set out in the Housing Act (1996) as amended by the Homelessness Act (2002).

### 2. The Scheme in Brief

2.1. All applicants for social housing across Somerset will complete the same application form and will be assessed against the same clear set of criteria laid out in the 'Banding' structure (see section 6). Depending on their circumstances, applicants will be placed into one of four Bands, Gold, Silver, and Bronze or in a very small number of cases an Emergency Priority Band.

2.2. Once the application has been registered, applicants will be advised of their banding, application date, the size of property they are eligible for, together with a personal reference number which will enable them to express an interest for social housing vacancies being





advertised across the whole of Somerset. Affordable housing including shared ownership and accredited private sector vacancies may also be advertised using this same process.

- 2.3. Expressions of interest for properties can be made, by using an automated phone line, the Homefinder Somerset website (via the Internet), or in person by visiting an office of one of the partner landlords. Applicants will be able to monitor the success of their expressions of interest and their history of expressions of interest via the website.
- 2.4. Once the deadline has passed for expressions of interest to be made, the successful applicant will usually be the person in the highest band with the earliest application date. An offer will then be made subject to the potential landlord confirming the details on the original application form and the current circumstances of the applicant. Incorrect information may result in the offer being withdrawn and the band being re-assessed.
- 2.5. Applicants for sheltered or supported housing will also have an assessment of their support needs. Applicants with identified support needs that express an interest for sheltered or supported housing vacancies will have priority over other applicants within the same band irrespective of whether those with no identified support needs have an earlier application date.
- 2.6. The banding and application date of the successful applicant, together with the total number of expressions of interest made for each property will be published. This enables applicants to develop realistic expectations regarding their chances of success and likely waiting period.

### 3. Application Procedure - Who Can Apply?

- 3.1. The Homefinder Somerset Register is open to almost any one. It may include existing tenants looking to transfer to another property, homeless families looking for a permanent home and other applicants who either rent in the private sector, own or are buying a property or lodging with family and friends. Married couples and civil partners will receive equal treatment under the policy. Social landlords normally allocate properties to families in order to make the best use of stock – please refer to section 13 (property size) for more information.
- 3.2. The main applicant is the individual named as such on the Homefinder Somerset application form. The application may include anyone that is reasonably expected to live together as part of the same household; this may include friends of the applicant. If a friend is included on the application then they will normally be expected to be a joint applicant and a joint tenant on any tenancy granted at the discretion of the landlord.
- 3.3. Where the main applicant names a joint applicant on their Homefinder Somerset application they will be treated as joint applicants. Where the policy refers to applicants this includes the main and joint applicants.



- 3.4. To apply for a property, applicants must be registered on the Homefinder Somerset Register and that application must reflect their current circumstances.
- 3.5. Application packs are available from the offices of all the partners within the scheme and include details of how the scheme works and how to find and express an interest for a home
- 3.6. Who Cannot Participate?
- 3.6.1. The Homefinder Somerset Register is open to all applicants except the following:
- 3.6.2. Persons from abroad who fail the 'habitual residence' test, UNLESS they have refugee status, exceptional leave to remain or indefinite leave to remain. Habitual Residency provides details about an applicant's right to stay in the UK and any eligibility for public housing.
- 3.6.3. There are certain regulations laid out by statute that govern the allocation of properties to persons from abroad and these will be referred to when assessing applications.

#### **Persons between 16 and 18 years of age**

- 3.6.4. It should be noted that a tenancy will not usually be given to applicants under the age of 18 years without a 'guarantor' (e.g. Social Services, parent, guardian, litigation friend). Partner organisations may have different policies in dealing with persons under the age of 18. For more details please contact the individual landlord.

#### **Non Qualifying Persons**

- 3.6.5 Applicants who do not have a local connection to one of the five local authority partners within Homefinder Somerset (as defined in section 22.4 below) will not qualify to join the Homefinder Somerset Housing Register.

#### **3.7. What Other Factors Are Taken Into Account?**

- 3.7.1. An application can be affected where there is evidence that an applicant has broken their existing or previous tenancy conditions (including rent arrears and anti-social behaviour) for which there are statutory grounds for possession, or who have committed acts of physical violence against staff or other residents. Grounds will not be used as a 'blanket ban' against all such people, but will be considered alongside each applicant's relative housing need. See Selection Procedure 24.3.
- 3.7.2. Where possible, such grounds will be identified at the initial application stage of the Homefinder Somerset process and the applicant will be informed in writing that any expression of interest for a property may be unsuccessful. All partners of Homefinder Somerset will also be notified of this decision. Applicants will be informed, on request, of decisions about the facts of the case that may affect whether to allocate housing.



3.7.3. Any applicant has the right for a review of the following decisions:

- a) That they are ineligible.
- b) That all priority will be suspended because of unacceptable behaviour.
- c) About the facts of their case: e.g. banding or eligibility for a property.

A Housing Officer who has not been involved in the original decision will carry out such reviews.



#### 4. Protocol for Housing Dangerous Offenders and Potentially Dangerous Offenders

- 4.1. All five District Councils within the scheme have entered into an agreement to use the Somerset Multi-Agency Protocol in dealing with dangerous offenders in order to exchange information on any applicant who has been convicted of a serious offence. Any applicant who confirms on their application form, or who is suspected, or accused, of being a dangerous offender, will be subjected to the provisions set out in the information exchange protocol.
- 4.2. There is not a blanket ban preventing dangerous offenders from being included on the housing register. However, before any known offender is offered housing, full consultation will be undertaken with the relevant support agencies to assess the risks involved. Some dangerous offenders will be given a high priority so that the relevant agencies can continue to monitor them. The Somerset Multi-Agency Protocol is only for specific offender group and only covers referrals from the Public Protection Team and Avon and Somerset Constabulary and does not guarantee the provision of a tenancy.
- 4.3. Re-housing of dangerous offenders will be carried out in consultation with the relevant agencies to minimise the risk to the public and with the long term aim of influencing the successful accommodation and resettlement of the offender, thus minimising the risk of re-offending and protecting the public and victims of offenders. The Local Authorities or Probation will express an interest on behalf of any applicant who falls within this category.
- 4.4. In the interests of public protection, it is essential that the Police and Probation Service are able to control and monitor the behaviour and activities of dangerous offenders. This task is made more difficult if such offenders do not have a fixed address or are housed in circumstances that make it difficult for the agencies to monitor them appropriately.

#### 5. Transfer Policy

- 5.1. All existing tenants of the partners have the right to apply for a transfer, subject to any restrictions that apply to their tenancy. Tenants' housing needs will be assessed and placed in the relevant band on the register together with all other applicants.
- 5.2. Some advertised properties will be labelled giving preference to transfer applicants to ensure that each landlord makes the best use of their housing stock.



## 6. Assessment of Applications

- 6.1. The scheme will assess all applications according to the level of housing need of individual applicants. All applications will be placed into one of four Bands - Gold, Silver or Bronze or in exceptional circumstances placed into Emergency Priority Band (section 7 refers).

### **Applicants financial resources**

- 6.2 Social Housing provided throughout Homefinder Somerset is for people who are considered to have insufficient resources to meet their housing need.
- 6.3 The resources available to each household will be assessed to determine whether they are sufficient to meet their housing need in accordance with this policy.

### **Household Income**

- 6.4 Applicants with a gross household income more than five times higher than the relevant Local Housing Allowance level (or successor) prevailing in the relevant Somerset local authority area at the time will normally be considered to be able to meet their housing need, through either renting privately or owner occupation. Local affordability issues will be taken into account given that some areas of Somerset have especially high property values. Such applicants will therefore be placed in the Bronze housing need band unless the applicant falls within the circumstances set out at 6.8 below.
- 6.5 Further information on the financial assessment and the Local Housing Allowance rates that apply across Somerset are available from local authority housing teams.

The following types of income are fully disregarded:

- Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance

### **Capital, Savings and Equity**

- 6.6 The capital, savings, property, land and equity available to an applicant's household will be assessed. If it is determined that, given:
- The applicant's household capital, savings, property, land and equity;
  - The size and composition of the applicant's household;
  - The local housing market (for example prices to buy or rent privately);

that an applicant can resolve their own housing need within their local housing market, they will be placed in the bronze housing need band.

- 6.7 Applicants can contact their local authority housing teams for details of how this assessment is made.



6.8 The following types of applicants may be exempt from the requirement for a financial assessment:

- a) Applicants who have an overriding medical or support need;
- b) Applicants applying for extra care housing from a Homefinder Somerset partner landlord;
- c) Applicants applying for sheltered housing Homefinder Somerset partner landlord;
- d) Applicants who are under occupying a Homefinder Somerset partner landlord property type that is in high demand in a specific area (excluding private rented tenants);
- e) Applicants that need to be decanted from Homefinder Somerset partner landlord accommodation;
- f) Applicants that are left in a Homefinder Somerset partner landlord property where the tenancy agreement states that the Homefinder Somerset partner landlord will provide the applicant with another property when the tenant dies.

These exemptions will be dealt with on a case by case basis.

6.9 Partner landlords within Homefinder Somerset may have different policies relating to the levels of income and other assets of those households that they will accommodate. Whether an expression of interest for a home is accepted will therefore be subject to the policies of the each partner landlord. More information is available from each Homefinder Somerset partner.

6.10 Applicants may be required to demonstrate that they can afford the rent on any prospective tenancy before being allowed to sign for it.

### **Banding Criteria**

6.11 Note that an applicant who accepts an offer of housing that does not fully meet their housing needs and then subsequently reapplies to the housing register with no change in their circumstances, will normally be placed in the bronze band.

6.12 The criteria for being placed within each band is as follows:

### **Gold Band**

#### **Homeless/Threatened with Homelessness:**

Applicants accepted as homeless by a local authority within the Homefinder Somerset area under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) including Rent (Agricultural) Act Cases.

#### **Lack of bedrooms / Overcrowding:**

Applicants who lack 2 or more bedrooms, (Section 13 refers) or have been confirmed as overcrowded (defined as a category 1 hazard and/or Statutory overcrowded) by a Local Authority officer, UNLESS evidence exists that proves the overcrowding is deliberate. Where an applicant is sharing facilities please also see Silver band Lodger/Shared Accommodation.

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**Harassment:**

The applicant is a victim of harassment or violence (including racial harassment) at their current property within the Homefinder Somerset area, providing evidence exists to substantiate the claim (e.g. from Police/Housing Officers). This band will last for three months and may be extended for a further three months if the harassment or violence is continuing and evidence is provided to confirm this. Applicants must express an interest on properties away from the area where the harassment or violence is or has been occurring.

**Medical/Welfare:**

The applicant is awarded a 'high' medical/welfare priority (see section 14).

Note that where public monies have been committed or works begun to adapt the applicants property to meet the applicants housing needs the applicant may be moved to bronze band.

**Disrepair:**

Based on the conditions identified, the local authority has deemed your home to have the presence of Category 1 hazards, Bands A - C (Housing Health & Safety Rating System) that CANNOT be resolved or reduced to a Category 2 hazard within 6 months. In all cases the landlord must be informed of the hazard for this banding to apply.

**Supported Housing:**

The applicant resides within a short-term Supported Housing project within the Homefinder Somerset area (usually up to a maximum of two years) and is seeking to 'move-on' into independent accommodation. NB: The Project Manager of the scheme must confirm in writing that the applicant is ready for such a move and has acquired reasonable skills to sustain a tenancy. Until this time, the applicant will be placed within the Bronze Band. The effective date will be the date they entered the Supported Housing, or the date a homeless application was made, where the earliest date will apply.

**Care Leavers:**

Where a young person who has been looked after, fostered or accommodated and has had a duty of care accepted under the Children Act in the Homefinder Somerset area, and is ready for independent living, they should be awarded gold band to enable a planned move on to independent suitable accommodation providing a support plan is in place. The application date will be the date of the applicants 16<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**Combined Medical/Welfare:**

The applicant has been awarded a 'medium' medical priority, combined with a 'medium' disrepair award from the Silver Band (See Appendix 1&2).

**Cumulative need**

The applicant is awarded three or more silver band housing needs with the exception of those applicants that are found to be intentionally homeless by the relevant local authority.



### **Decants**

Social Housing Tenants of a Homefinder Somerset landlord whose existing properties are subject to major works for rebuilding/renovation or re-designation and are within the Homefinder Somerset area and need to move to another location, will be placed into the gold band to enable them to move quickly. Applicants will be placed into gold band up to 12 months before the proposed start date of the scheme/works (this date has to be confirmed by the landlord) and will be given an effective date 1 year prior to their actual application date.

### **Tenancy Succession**

Where the Local Authority receives written support from a Homefinder Somerset landlord that an applicant has been living in a social housing property within the Homefinder Somerset area but has no legal right to succession on that property and the landlord confirms that they intend to pursue possession of the property, or the applicant needs to move to a different property in order to make best use of stock, then the applicant may be placed into gold band. The applicant will be subject automatic expressions of interest after a 9 month period. Please refer to section 26.8 for further details.

### **Silver Band**

#### **Medical/Welfare:**

Applicant awarded a 'medium' medical /welfare priority (see section 14).

#### **Disrepair:**

Based on the conditions identified by the local authority, it has been shown that your home has Category 1 hazards, Bands A - C (Housing Health & Safety Rating System) that CAN be resolved or reduced to a Category 2 hazard within 6 months and/or has shown that your home has Category 2 hazards, Band D (Housing Health & Safety Rating System).or at least 4 Category 2 Hazards of any rating. In all cases the landlord must be informed of the hazard in order for this banding to apply.

#### **Lodgers/Shared Facilities:**

Applicants that have dependent children and are lodging with friends or family or in accommodation with shared living facilities. This will take precedence over any lack of bedroom requirements.

#### **Lack of bedrooms:**

Applicants who lack one bedroom in their current home.

#### **Other Homeless:**

Homeless/threatened with homelessness applicants not accepted by the Homefinder Somerset partners under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 or who have nowhere to live (e.g. No Fixed Abode 'NFA'). This band will be awarded 2 months before the expiry date of a valid notice to quit.



## **Split Families:**

Applicants who, not by choice are living in separate households due to the lack of suitable accommodation available, and cannot live together and wish to be re-housed and have not been accepted by the Homefinder Somerset Partners under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002). This includes those who may not have been living as part of the household at the time of the application, but whom it would be reasonable to expect to live with the applicant, as part of his/her household. An application form should be completed by the household living in the worst property out of the households applying, to ensure the application is placed in the correct banding.

## **Work/Support**

Applicants who are able to demonstrate the need to move nearer their place of work within, the Homefinder Somerset area because they have secured or has permanent employment (over 16 hours) in the area (evidence of the employment must be provided). Also applicants who are able to demonstrate the need to move nearer local facilities or relatives, in order to receive, or give, essential and critical medical or other support or care within the Homefinder Somerset area where significant harm would result if this was not provided.

## **Bronze Band**

### **Adequately Housed:**

Applicants who, at the time of their application, live in a property which is adequate for their needs in terms of size and facilities. This applies to applicants who live in social housing, are owner-occupiers or tenants of private landlords. Note an applicant that lives in a self contained bedsit/studio flat or apartment where no facilities are shared will be banded in bronze unless they have other housing needs.

### **Owner occupiers:**

Applicants who are owner-occupiers (this includes shared equity properties), whose home is not suitable for their needs and who have sufficient equity within the property to obtain suitable alternative accommodation. The Local Authority will consider each application on an individual basis. (Note: high medical needs or disrepair problems may over-ride this rule and place the applicant in a higher band).

### **Medical/ welfare:**

Applicants awarded a low medical/welfare assessment. (See Section 14)

### **Disrepair:**

No significant hazards identified justifying enforcement action by the local authority. (See Appendix 1).



**Move-on:**

Applicants who are living in short term supported housing within the Homefinder Somerset area or are care leavers, prior to confirmation received by the Project Manager of the scheme or relevant care leavers protocol arrangements that the applicant is ready to move on, (at which point they will be placed into the Gold Band whilst maintaining their original application date).

**Lodgers/Shared Facilities:**

Applicants with no dependent children that are lodging with friends or family or in accommodation with shared living facilities. This will take precedence over any lack of bedroom requirements.

**Adequate Financial Resources**

Applicants that are deemed to have adequate financial resources that can meet their own housing needs.

**Accepted An Offer That Doesn't Meet Needs**

The applicant has accepted a tenancy and moved into accommodation that does not meet their housing needs.

**Previous use of Under Occupation**

The applicant has previously made use of the underoccupation banding and has reapplied to the register with no other change in circumstances.

**No Housing Need**

The applicant has no identifiable housing need.

**Deliberately Worsened Circumstances**

Households that have been assessed as having deliberately worsened their housing circumstances by moving into accommodation that is unsuitable for their needs and /or by taking no action to improve their circumstances which can be evidenced may be placed into bronze band.

**Sheltered Housing/Extra Care No Local Connection**

Applicants applying for sheltered housing or extra care housing that have no local connection and no other housing needs.



## 7. Emergency Priority Band

- 7.1. An 'Emergency Priority Band' will only be issued to any applicant who requires an 'urgent' move to ensure the applicant's safety and welfare for whatever reason. Substantial evidence must exist before such a priority is awarded. This priority may be awarded where circumstances could include:
- a) The award of an 'urgent' medical assessment as defined in appendix 2 or
  - b) The award of an 'urgent' disrepair inspection by a Housing Standard Officer or Environmental Health Officer (EHO), or
  - c) In extreme cases where the Police or other relevant agency recommend an urgent move to escape violence or threats of violence. Applicants must express an interest on properties away from the area where the violence or threat is or has been occurring) , or
  - d) Where the applicant, or a member of their household, has suffered a sudden 'traumatic event' which is linked to their home and living within their home will cause considerable distress (e.g. serious sexual assault), or
  - e) Where there are extreme cases of cumulative need and where it is unacceptable for the applicant to remain in the current banding (subject to the discretion of the Assessment Panel).
- 7.2. Please note that awarding of 'Emergency Priority Band' can only be made by the Assessment Panel except where confirmation has been received from a hospital that an applicant is bed blocking and they are unable return to their home due to its unsuitability or where the circumstances referred to 7.3 below apply. Where an immediate decision is required, the Senior Manager within the respective local authority administering the housing register will consult two other members of the Assessment Panel, one of which must be from another partner organisation in order for a decision to be made. The case, and subsequent decision, must be reported to the next Assessment Panel meeting.
- 7.3. Emergency Priority Band is time limited and will last for 28 calendar days. If the applicant has not applied for a property suitable for their needs within that time their Emergency Priority Band will be reviewed by the Assessment Panel and if not renewed the applicant will be placed in the appropriate band for their needs. If no suitable vacancy has arisen within this time then the Emergency Priority Band will be renewed automatically.



## 8. Application Date & Effective Date

- 8.1. All applications will be given an 'Application Date', this is the date the application is **treated** as being received. This date determines how long an individual has been on the housing register and is usually the date the application is made.

All applications will also be given an 'Effective Date' this is the critical date for allocation purposes. The Effective date is the date the applicant was placed in their current band, for most applicants this will be the same as their application date (see 8.1 (a) to (c) and 8.2(a) to (d) for exceptions). If an applicant's circumstances alter resulting in a change of banding their Effective date would be amended (see 9.2 for details).

a) Applicants in short term supported housing will be given an effective date of the date they moved into the scheme.

b) Homeless applicants accepted under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002) will be given an effective date of the date the formal homeless application is taken by the Local Authority, unless they are already in Gold band for other needs.

c) Care leavers with a care plan in place and confirmation they are ready to move on will be given an effective date of the date they reach their 16th birthday.

- 8.2 In order to give additional priority to the following groups:

- (a) Serving members of the armed forces or those that have served in the last 5 years.
- (b) serving members of the Armed Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
- (c) bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service
- (d) serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service

In these cases the effective date will be backdated two years from the date of application. The backdating can only be used once by any applicant.



## 9. Change of Circumstances

- 9.1. A change to the information supplied on the initial application could result in a change of banding and, or bedroom eligibility. Once registered for housing the applicant has a responsibility to promptly report any change of circumstance to the local authority in writing or by completing a paper or online change of circumstance form.

Examples of changes in circumstances that an applicant must report are:

- Change in household members
- Change in medical condition of any household member
- Changes/alterations to the condition of the property they live in
- Changes in income of any household member
- Changes in capital including the inheritance of any capital or property of any household member
- The inclusion or exclusion of domestic pets
- They no longer wish to remain on the housing register
- Where a landlord has carried out improvements to remove previously identified hazards

If an applicant **changes address** and wishes to remain on the register a new housing register application must be completed within 28 days of the date of the change of address occurring.

- 9.2. After the initial banding of an application where the application and effective date are usually the same. If there is a change in the applicants' circumstances resulting in a move to a higher band; the effective date will be amended to the date the change is reported. If an application is moved into a lower band the effective date will be amended to the application date.
- 9.3. In circumstances where registered 'Joint' applicants subsequently separate, the Homefinder Somerset scheme reserves the right to apply the original registration date to the household affected.

## 10. Application Renewals

### 10.1. Annual Renewal

Within 12 months from their initial registration date, all applicants may be sent a renewal letter. If the renewal information is not returned within 28 calendar days a cancellation letter will be sent.

If the applicant has been identified as potentially disadvantaged, including prison leavers, a letter will be also be sent to the carer/agency specified. Failure to respond may result in a cancellation of application. Applications that are cancelled are subject to the review process.



## 10.2. No Expression of Interest Renewals

Where an applicant has not expressed an interest in any available properties for one year, from their date of application, they may be contacted to see if they still wish to remain on the Homefinder Somerset Register. If there is no response within the required time limit of 28 calendar days from the letter being sent, the application may be cancelled. The applicant will be notified of the cancellation in writing. If the applicant contacts the Local Authority within 28 calendar days of their application being cancelled and indicates that they still wish to be considered for housing the application will be reinstated from their last application date in band.

## 11. Cancelling Applications

### 11.1. An application will be cancelled from the Homefinder Somerset Register in the following circumstances:

- At the request of an applicant,
- Where an applicant does not respond to an application review, within the specified time limit,
- Where a Local Authority or a Registered Social Landlord has housed the applicant,
- When a tenant completes a mutual exchange,
- Where an applicant does not maintain their application through the review process, or where the applicant moves and does not provide a contact address,
- Where the applicant has not supplied the relevant information requested within 28 calendar days.

### 11.2. When an application has been cancelled (except where an applicant is housed by a Homefinder Somerset partner landlord) , the applicant or their representative will be notified in writing. Where an applicant has been highlighted as potentially disadvantaged, the Local Authority will contact the applicant to check their circumstances before cancelling the application.

### 11.3. Any applicant whose application has been cancelled has the right to ask for a review of the decision.

## 12. Rejoining the Homefinder Somerset Housing Register

### 12.1. Where an applicant wishes to re-join the housing register at a later date their new date of registration will be the date they re-apply. Their date in band will be the date that they are placed in the housing needs band following assessment of the new application. This will apply to all applicants unless the applicant falls within the provisions of section 8.2 in which case those provisions will apply.



## 13. Size of Property

- 13.1 Applicants will be able to express an interest for selected properties that match the needs of their household. A maximum of two people can share a bedroom. Household members living together as a couple will be assessed as requiring one bedroom unless there are exceptional circumstances.

To calculate the bedroom eligibility we normally allow one bedroom for:

- A single applicant or couple (married or unmarried)

We normally allow one additional bedroom for:

- Any two children of the same sex under the age of 16
- Any two children under 10 irrespective of sex
- Any other person aged 16 or over
- Any other child, (other than a child whose main home is elsewhere)
- A carer who does not live in the household but provides a household member with long term overnight care

The bedroom calculation awards a separate bedroom for any other person over the age of sixteen. If the household has two same sex household members that wish to share a bedroom the applicant must sign a 'bedroom reduction declaration form' to confirm this. This would allow applicants to express interest on properties smaller than the standard bedroom calculation. The applicant will be made aware that their current banding could be affected and should they need to reapply for social housing this declaration will be taken into account when calculating the bedroom requirement.

When letting houses, priority will normally be given to households with children under the age of 16. Individual landlord's letting policies or local planning policies can affect the size of the households that may apply for particular properties. Any such restrictions will be included in the property advert.

- 13.2 Because of the very high demand for properties within Somerset, additional bedrooms cannot be given to applicants who do not have children who normally live permanently with them as their full time principle home. Partner landlords may choose to allow applicants to express an interest for properties that are larger than their needs but this will be on a property by property basis and is at the landlord's discretion.
- 13.3 For any current tenant of a partner landlord downsizing to smaller accommodation there are restrictions on the size of property they can move in order to prevent overcrowding. The new property has to have at least one bedroom less than their current home. However in certain circumstances, where an applicant for example is moving from a house to a flat with the same number of bedrooms, then the number of bedrooms in the new property maybe disregarded.
- 13.4 Where tenants of a partner landlord are overcrowded within their accommodation account should be taken of the room sizes in determining an applicant's banding. For example, where a tenant is living in 2 bedroom, 3 bed space unit, if there is a couple and 2 children living within the property, these applicants should be viewed as one bedroom overcrowded, Silver Band, eligible



to apply for a 2 bedroom property, as they are one bed space overcrowded. The bedroom eligibility is not changed.

- 13.5 Applicants who are overcrowded by 2 bedroom spaces or more should be 'Gold Banded'. See section 6.1 – gold band for further information.
- 13.5.1 When calculating bedroom entitlement **members of the main or joint applicants household not currently living** as part of the household can be taken into consideration if any of the criteria detailed in sections 13.5.2 to 13.5.4 below are met:
- 13.5.2 The main or joint applicant has **adult child/children in the armed forces** and the child/children's main and principle home is with the main or joint applicant. Evidence for this will be required (e.g. Forces paperwork).
- 13.5.3 The main or joint applicant has **adult child/children in full time education** and their main and principle home is with the main or joint applicant. Except where the child /children is in rented accommodation for the purposes of attending their full time education course where an additional bedroom cannot be granted (except where this accommodation is for term time only). Evidence for this will be required (e.g. halls of residence letter, tenancy agreement).
- 13.5.4 The main or joint applicant has been given the **custody of a child/children currently in care, a foster placement or living with another family member** and the child/children will be returning to the main or joint applicants household on a permanent basis. Evidence will be required for this (e.g. a court order or confirmation in writing from Social Services).
- 13.5.5 The main or joint applicant is **pregnant**. If the expected baby would mean a change to the existing bedroom need of the household an additional bedroom can be granted on receipt of evidence of expected delivery date. If the award of an additional bedroom would affect the banding of the application this will not take effect until confirmation of the birth is received.. Evidence will be required for this (e.g. the main or joint applicant adding new child's details to the application by completing an online change of circumstances or receipt of a birth certificate.).
- 13.6 An **additional bedroom** over and above the calculated bedroom need of an applicants' existing household as detailed in 13.1 may be granted if one of the criteria detailed in 13.6.1 to 13.6.6 are met. Evidence of the need for an additional bedroom must be provided by or on behalf of the main or joint applicant. For the purposes of points 13.6.2 and 13.6.3 a medical professional is considered to be a General Practitioner, Consultant, Specialist, District or Specialist Nurse.
- 13.6.1 The main or joint applicant is an approved **foster carer/adopter** or is in the process of gaining approval. Only one additional bedroom may be granted under this criterion. Evidence will be required for this (e.g. a letter from the relevant adoption or foster agency).
- 13.6.2 There is evidence that a member of the main or joint applicant's household has the need for **regular overnight care**. Under normal circumstances an additional bedroom will not be given for short periods of incapacity or for recovery periods from serious operations /illness. Only one additional bedroom may be granted under this criterion. Evidence for this could include a care plan, occupational therapist report/letter, medical professional report/letter.





- 13.6.3 There is evidence from a medical professional that there is a **medical or safety reason** for a member of the household to have their own bedroom. Under normal circumstances an additional bedroom will not be given for short periods of incapacity or for recovery periods from serious operations /illness. The receipt of a qualifying benefit may be taken into account. When undertaking this assessment each case will be looked at on its merit. Evidence for this may include occupational Therapist report/letter, medical professional report/letter.
- 13.6.4 There is evidence that a member of the household is dependent on **large or essential medical equipment** that cannot be kept elsewhere in the property. This does not include the storage of mobility scooters or wheelchairs. Only one additional bedroom may be granted under this criterion. Evidence for this may include occupational therapist report/letter.
- 13.6.5 There is evidence that a substantial **Disabled Facilities Grant** will be made to adapt the property for a member of the household and awarding an additional bedroom would prevent a future move due to the age change of a household member resulting in a change in bedroom eligibility. Evidence for this may include occupational therapist report/letter.
- 13.7 Applicants who have adult children in the armed forces where the child's main and principle home is with the applicant may be granted an additional bedroom.
- 13.8 Applicants who have adult children that are in full time education where the child/children's main and principle home is with the applicant may be granted additional bedroom(s) except where the child is in rented accommodation for the purposes of attending their full time education course. Any such additional bedrooms would not qualify for Housing Benefit.

## 14. Medical & Welfare Assessments

(For the purposes of the medical and welfare assessments the applicant or the member of the household affected will be referred to as the individual).

- 14.1 The approach when banding under medical and welfare is to focus on how the individual's medical and welfare issues and their general well-being could be improved by a move to alternative accommodation. Account will be taken of:
- (i) The individual's medical or welfare condition;
  - (ii) The affect the current property / environment has on the individuals medical or welfare condition; and
  - (iii) How moving to an alternative property would help the individual's medical or welfare issues or improve their general well-being.
- 14.2. The Homefinder Somerset schemes reserves the right to request supporting evidence when banding under the medical or welfare criteria. Evidence from a third party is mandatory when considering the award of Gold or Emergency band. Any evidence submitted should be from a professional person who has first-hand knowledge of the individual and the environment they live in. The professional should advise of the individual's medical or welfare condition and give their professional opinion on the affect the current property / environment has on the individuals medical or welfare condition.



14.3 A medical professional could include an Occupational Therapist, a Doctor, a Community Psychiatric Nurse or a Consultant. A professional worker could include a Social Worker, Environmental Health Officer, Health Visitor or Housing Officer. The Homefinder Somerset scheme is aware that professional time is at a premium and do not expect applicants to specifically request medical professionals to write letters. Reports and letters from the applicant's consultant to the applicant's Doctor for example may be sufficient. It should be noted that any fees that applicant's incur to provide this information cannot be reimbursed. and do not expect applicants to specifically request medical professionals to write letters. Reports and letters from the applicant's consultant to the applicant's Doctor for example may be sufficient. It should be noted that any fees that applicant's incur to provide this information cannot be reimbursed. The final decision on applicable banding will be made by housing officers from the relevant local authority.

14.4. The medical and, or welfare issues of any individual can be assessed as follows:

### **Medical**

#### ***(i)Physical condition/illness:***

An assessment will be made taking account of the information provided by the applicant and any medical professional who has knowledge of the individual, their conditions and the effect the current property is having on their conditions.

#### ***(ii)Mental Health***

An assessment will be made taking into account the information provided by the applicant and any professional worker who has knowledge of the individual, their mental health conditions and the effect the current property or local environment is having on their mental health.

### **Welfare**

#### ***(i)General Welfare***

An assessment of the property and the local environment the individual is currently living in will be made to establish whether the individual has access to reasonably comfortable, affordable and secure living standard based on the information provided by the applicant and any professional worker who has knowledge of the individual and the environment the individual is living in. Consideration of the general housing circumstances in the district, the availability of facilities, resources and services in the property and the local environment where the individual lives in will be taken into account as well as the ability of the individual to access them.

#### ***(ii)Financial hardship***

A full assessment of the household's income and expenditure will be undertaken to determine if the cost of the current accommodation is affordable or if it is creating financial hardship that cannot be resolved within a reasonable period of time.

14.5. All medical or welfare applications will initially be assessed by an appropriate member of the Housing Team based on the medical & welfare assessment notes in Appendix 2.

14.6. Following a medical or welfare assessment, the applicant will be informed in writing of the outcome. If the applicant does not agree with the assessment a senior officer will review the



banding. If the applicant still disagrees with their banding their case will be considered by the Choice Based Letting Operational Group at the next monthly meeting.

14.7. Where an individual's medical or welfare circumstances changes, these details should be submitted in writing together with any supporting evidence as soon as the change occurs.

## 15. Disrepair Assessments

15.1. The application form asks applicants about the condition of their current home this information will be used by other officers to assess any hazards and an additional inspection of the property may be carried out. If the applicant resides outside of the Homefinder Somerset area, then the Homefinder Somerset Partnership will contact the respective Local Authority to arrange an inspection, if required.

15.2. Following the inspection, and depending on the condition of the property, a level of priority will be allocated - either nil, low, medium, high or urgent, which will determine the band in which the applicant is placed. If the applicant is an existing social housing tenant the relevant landlord will be notified of the problem.

## 16. Notification

16.1. Once you have been verified as eligible to join the register, your fully completed application form will then be assessed. We aim to undertake this assessment within 15 working days. You will then receive a letter confirming your application details. This letter will notify you of the following ;

- a) The Band in which the applicant has been placed (bronze, silver or gold or emergency)
- b) The reason for their banding
- c) The size of property the applicant is eligible for,
- d) The Application Date,
- e) A reminder about informing us of any change in circumstances,
- f) The Homefinder Somerset review procedure (see section 17),
- g) A personal reference number to allow expressions of interest for properties.

16.2. Applicants will also receive notification of their application details within 15 working days if they have submitted a Change of Circumstances' form.



## 17. Review Procedure

- 17.1. Once an applicant has been notified in writing of the band in which they have been placed or their ineligibility, they will have a right to request a review against the assessment. Reviews must be submitted in writing, to the local authority housing office within 28 calendar days of the date on the notification letter and include the reason why the applicant believes their banding or ineligibility is wrong, together with any additional information that the applicant believes is relevant.
- 17.2. The request for a review will be acknowledged by the Local Authority within 7 calendar days of its receipt. An officer who played no part in the original assessment will carry out the review and respond in writing to the applicant within 28 calendar days of the receipt of the review letter. Following the review, the applicant will be informed of the outcome in writing.
- 17.3. If the applicant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the review then they can request a further review through the relevant local authorities reviews procedure.

## 18. Finding a Home

- 18.1. Once applicants have been entered on the Homefinder Somerset Register and notified of banding and reference number, they can start to look for a property of their choice.

## 19. Advertising

- 19.1. All partner landlords are committed to advertising their available properties as widely as possible. Properties can be advertised on a weekly/fortnightly basis and may be advertised in one or more of the following ways:

### a) Newsletters

Adverts may also be placed into free Homefinder Somerset newsletters, which will be available in a number of localities across Somerset.

### b) Website

A dedicated Homefinder Somerset website is available ([www.homefindersomerset.co.uk](http://www.homefindersomerset.co.uk)) and is accessible to anyone with Internet access. The website will allow applicants to view all available properties across the whole of Somerset and apply 'on-line' for properties of their choice.

### c) Local Offices

Computers will be placed in some landlords' offices for applicants to view and express an interest for available properties. Other sites may also be considered.



## d) Hotline

A local number is available for applicants to call to hear what properties are available. Applicants will hear an options menu where different size properties can be selected and heard. This service is important to the Homefinder Somerset service and our efforts to assist disabled applicants, particularly those who are blind or partially sighted to access the service. The Hotline service will also benefit those applicants who are unable to read.

## 20. Advertisement Deadlines

20.1. All advertisements will carry a deadline by which time expressions of interest for particular properties must be received. This will normally be one week from the date of the advert. Any applications received after the deadline has been reached will not be considered for the property.

## 21. Property Descriptions

21.1. Properties advertised will carry (where possible) a photograph of the property and a full description. As a minimum the description will include:

- a) Type of property
- b) Number of bedrooms
- c) Location of property
- d) Any adaptations (e.g. disabled facilities)
- e) Services provided (e.g. support, caretaker, cleaning)
- f) Heating type
- g) Rent charged/service charges

## 22. Labelling Properties

22.1. Adverts will also give information on who will be eligible to apply for the property. For example, an adapted property suitable for someone in a wheelchair may be labelled to say that applicants must require such a property.

22.2. Properties will only be available to applicants in certain 'Bands' according to the size and type of the property, the number of annual vacancies and level of demand. For example, a three-bedroom property in a high demand area may only be advertised to 'Gold' Band applicants, areas where there is low demand may be offered to both Gold and Silver Band applicants, or in some cases, all bands. In addition certain properties may only be available to applicants that meet specific eligibility criteria (e.g. eligible for supported housing, or having certain age requirements for household members).



### 22.3. Supported Accommodation (e.g. sheltered)

In addition to the banding system, all partner landlords may wish to ensure that supported accommodation is allocated to those who have not only a housing need but also a 'support' need (as detailed in the application form). Landlords will therefore be looking to accept expressions of interest from applicants in the highest band and who may have an identifiable

support need in addition to the earliest application date. This support need will be verified at the time of the home visit.

### 22.4. Local Connection

The Homefinder Somerset housing authorities usually only accept applications to join their housing register where the main or joint applicant has a local connection to the Homefinder Somerset area (with some exceptions). Local connection can only be established by the main or joint applicant. Where applicants feel that their circumstances are so exceptional that they should be allowed to join the housing register with no local connection to the area, such applications will be assessed by the Local Authority Operational Group on a monthly basis.

The Homefinder Somerset policy defines Local Connection as:

- The main or joint applicants are normally resident in the Homefinder Somerset area. Local Government Association guidelines define this as having resided in the relevant area for six of the last twelve months, or three out of the last five years, where residence has been out of choice.

The main or joint applicant has work in the Homefinder Somerset area. The Local Government Association guidelines define this as employment other than of a casual nature. For the purposes of this policy this will be defined as having had permanent work with a minimum of a 16 hour contract per week, and without a break in the period of employment for more than three months.

- Note that residency in a property where treatment or rehabilitation of any kind whilst working will not count towards establishing a local connection.
- The main or joint applicant needs to move to take up an offer of permanent employment (over 16 hours and evidence will be required) within the Homefinder Somerset area and commuting to their new place of work from their existing home would be unreasonable.
- The main or joint applicant have family connections in the Homefinder Somerset area. The Local Government Association guidelines define this as immediate family members (parents, siblings and non-dependent children) who have themselves lived in the area for five years and with whom there has been frequent contact, commitment or dependency.



- The main or joint applicant can demonstrate a need to move to the Homefinder Somerset area to give or receive essential and critical medical or other support where significant harm would result if this was not provided.

Main or joint applicants that fall within the following categories will be deemed to have a local connection to Somerset.

- (a) Serving members of the armed forces or those that have served in the last 5 years.
- (b) serving members of the Armed Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
- (c) bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of Defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service
- (d) serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
- (e) Applicants applying for extra care properties only (note that in the absence of any other housing need these applicants will be placed in bronze band and will only be able to bid on extra care vacancies.)
- (f) Applicants applying for sheltered housing only (note that in the absence of any other housing need these applicants will be placed in bronze band and will only be able to bid on sheltered housing vacancies.)

Preference may be given to local residents who may be economically or socially driven from their community due to a lack of affordable housing. This may be due to planning restrictions (Section 106 Agreements) or to ensure sustainability of the parish where there is a clearly proven local housing need.

## 22.5. Transfer Applications

All the partner landlords are keen to ensure that they make the best use of their own stock. To achieve this, it is likely that a certain proportion of properties advertised will be labelled giving preference to transfer applicants or transfer applicants in a specific band, for example the silver band and in some cases preference will also be given to existing tenants of that landlord. The number of properties labelled as such will be monitored on a regular basis.



## 22.6. Accepted Duty Homeless Cases

In order to fulfil its statutory duties towards the homeless and to create a through flow of temporary accommodation a Local Authority may label properties allowing only households who have been accepted by that Authority as unintentionally homeless and in priority need, to express a preference or give preference to this group.

## 22.7 Sensitive Letting – individual properties

Occasionally there may be a requirement to assist in dealing with issues that impact on a small, specific location that may be only 1 dwelling on an estate or within a block. This may be to:

- Reduce the concentration of certain needs groups which are impacting on housing management
- Promote a mixed and sustainable community by seeking to select/not select households with particular characteristics

On these occasions certain property labels (e.g. minimum age of household members) may be used following a discussion between the local authority and the relevant landlord (where the local authority is not the landlord itself). The decision to apply particular requirements will be made by the relevant Homefinder Somerset local authority.

## 22.8. Labelling Caution

The general effect of labelling can be seen to compromise the extent to which vacancies will be let to the highest priority applicant as described under the banding system. It is therefore important for each landlord to minimise such labelling in order to maintain transparency to the allocation system.

## 22.9. Complaints

Any complaints about the applicant's banding should be directed to the Local Authority. Complaints regarding the labelling of the property e.g. size, amenities, should be referred to the individual landlord of the property. If a successful applicant is not offered the accommodation for any reason then any complaints regarding this should be directed to the landlord making this decision.

## 23. Expressing an interest in a Property

23.1. Where an applicant meets the eligibility criteria, and is placed within the stated band or bands given in the advert, they may express an interest for that property within the deadline given.





23.2. Applicants are limited to three expressions of interest per advert cycle, however, this will be monitored by the Homefinder Somerset Scheme on each advert cycle. Where an applicant expresses an interest for more than one property successfully, they will be given a time period (normally 48 hours) in which to decide which property they will accept.

23.3. Applicants may apply for properties via [www.homefindersomerset.co.uk](http://www.homefindersomerset.co.uk) or via the telephone. Computer facilities for expressing an interest in properties are available at the local authority offices shown below:

a) Mendip District Council, Cannards Grave Rd, Shepton Mallet  
BA4 5BT  
Tel: 0300 303 8588 web:- [www.mendip.gov.uk](http://www.mendip.gov.uk)

b) Sedgemoor District Council  
Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater, Somerset  
TA6 3AR  
Tel: 0845 4082540 web:- [www.sedgemoor.gov.uk](http://www.sedgemoor.gov.uk)

c) South Somerset District Council  
Housing Advice Centre, Petters House,  
Petters Way, Yeovil, Somerset  
BA20 1EA  
Tel: 01935 462462 web:- [www.southsomerset.gov.uk](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk)

d) Taunton Deane Borough Council  
The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton,  
Somerset, TA1 1HE  
Tel: 01823 356356 web:- [www.tauntondeane.gov.uk](http://www.tauntondeane.gov.uk)

e) West Somerset Council  
West Somerset House,  
Killick Way,  
Williton  
TA4 4QA

And:

1 Summerland Road, Minehead  
TA24 5BP  
Tel 01643 703704  
web:- [www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk](http://www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk)



## 24. Selection Procedure

- 24.1. Once the advert deadline has passed, landlords will review the prioritised list of applicants (the shortlist) that have expressed an interest in each property. The successful applicant(s) will normally be the applicant(s) who is in the highest band with the longest effective date. In the situation where there are two households with the same band and effective date the landlord will contact both households to assess who is in the greatest housing need and will take into account cumulative preferences and who is most suited to the property. Where an advert has been placed with more than one preference setting and no applicant meets all the preference criteria the shortlist will be ordered in accordance with the remaining preferences set for the property. The landlords will only offer the property to those applicants who meet the stated criteria and pass verification of their application.
- 24.2. Each individual landlord is responsible for the verification of the successful applicant and discrepancies in your application will be referred back to the local authority and this may result in a change to your banding. Each applicant will be given the opportunity to view the property before making a final decision on whether to accept or refuse. Applicants will be expected to view a property within 48 hours (following contact from the landlord) and will be expected to make a decision on any offer within 48 hours of receiving the offer.
- 24.3. If an applicant has been identified as being unsuitable to be a tenant due to the grounds described in section 3.7, and has made no attempt to rectify the situation then the applicant may not be allocated the property despite a successful expression of interest. The applicant can make an application if they consider that they should no longer be treated as ineligible for an allocation of social housing, e.g. because the rent arrears have been cleared or an agreement has been reached and maintained over a reasonable period of time or because the person who had been guilty of anti-social behaviour is no longer part of their household.
- 24.4. If a property is subsequently withdrawn after an applicant has successfully expressed an interest, because for example the tenant of that particular property has failed to vacate the property or the property has been incorrectly labelled, the landlord will inform the successful applicant that the property is no longer available. If the property is not ready for occupation following a successful expression of interest and the applicant is likely to wait some considerable time before moving in, the landlord will inform the applicant and give them the option to express an interest for any other suitable properties.
- 24.5. If an applicant is banded in the Emergency band under 7.1 (c) where a relevant agency has recommended an urgent move to escape violence or threats of violence or are in the Gold band due to harassment in a specific area and expresses an interest on a property in the same general area. The landlord or the Local Authority may choose not to offer that property to the applicant if they are top of the shortlist if in their opinion it is unlikely to address the issues.
- 24.6. When offering properties landlords should have regard to the housing needs of the applicant as per their banding reason.



- 24.7 A small number of properties advertised through the partnership are excluded from the selection procedure as described in section 24.1. These properties will be allocated using the criteria within the landlord's own individual allocation policy that will be detailed in the property advert.
- 24.8 It is the landlord's responsibility to explain their reasons for not offering properties to applicants including any landlord allocations policies
25. Feedback
- 25.1. An important part of the scheme is giving applicants feedback on who has recently been allocated properties. Accompanying each advert will be a feedback section giving details of the properties allocated.
- 25.2. Applicant's personal details will not be included. However, it is envisaged that the feedback form will include:
- a) Property size and type
  - b) Property location
  - c) Number of applicants who applied for each property
  - d) Band of successful applicant
  - e) Application date of successful applicant
- 25.3. An overview of this information will be regularly monitored.
- 25.4. Using this information, applicants will be able to see where properties are more likely to become available and where they may have the best chances of making a successful 'expression of interest'. It is essential that with any choice-based lettings scheme, applicants have as much information as possible in order to help them make an informed evaluation of their housing options.



## 26. Refusals

26.1. If an applicant decides to refuse an offer of accommodation, either at the accompanied viewing, or when an initial verbal offer is made, the property will be offered to the next eligible applicant.

26.2. If a homeless applicant refuses an offer of suitable accommodation, the Local Authority may decide to discharge its duty under the Homeless Legislation.

26.3. Homeless applicants have the right to request a review of certain decisions made by the

local authority in respect of their homeless application. Within the Homefinder Somerset Common Lettings Policy this includes the decision to discharge the main homeless duty to secure accommodation by providing suitable accommodation for the applicant.

26.4. If a homeless applicant wishes to request a review of the suitability of accommodation offered, this should be requested before the end of the period of 21 calendar days beginning with the day on which they are notified of the housing authority's decision to discharge its main homeless duty.

26.5. A homeless applicant who is requesting a review about the suitability of accommodation will be advised to accept and move into the accommodation pending the outcome of their review request. The Local Authority's Homeless Section will inform the appropriate officer as soon as a decision has been made, normally within 7 calendar days as to whether or not the property will remain available through the review process. It should be noted the property will only be held open in exceptional circumstances. If a non statutory review is conducted and the offer withdrawn by the Homeless Officer on grounds of suitability then the second placed applicant will be made an offer of the property. If the outcome of a review is overturned in favour of the homeless applicant, the alternative accommodation will be provided as quickly as possible. However if the review of suitability of the offer is upheld the applicant will still have accommodation to live in whilst they consider their further options.

26.6. Applicants approved as being, or threatened with being homeless are placed in the gold band; and are expected to use their three weekly expressions of interest against any suitable properties advertised through the Homefinder Somerset scheme. If an applicant has been unsuccessful in securing a property within four weeks of the date the applicant was accepted as being, or threatened with being homeless; the Local Authority may decide to place expressions of interest on the applicant's behalf. The Local Authority will ensure the properties are suitable for the household in line with the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012. If the homeless applicant refuses a suitable offer of accommodation; the Local Authority will consider its duty towards them as a homeless household discharged, subject to the statutory review process. The Local Authority may decide to use its power to discharge the homeless duty with a suitable Private Rented Sector Offer. In either case the gold band status for accepted as being, or threatened with being homeless will end.



- 26.7. Records will be maintained on the number of refusals for each property and the reason why the applicant decided to refuse. With the exception of applicants who are in gold band because they are homeless or threatened with homelessness, applicants who refuse three formal offers for suitable accommodation will have their case reviewed by the local authority managing their case. They will be offered advice and assistance regarding the Homefinder Somerset scheme. If they subsequently refuse one further offer they will be suspended from bidding for a period of 3 months from the date of the last refusal. After 3 months the applicant will be reassessed and placed in the appropriate band and may lose their original effective date.
- 26.8 Where an applicant is placed in gold band for tenancy succession, if after a period of 9 months applicants are not actively expressing an interest for suitable accommodation then automatic expressions of interest may be placed on their behalf. Before automatic expressions of interest are placed the relevant local authority will carry out an assessment as to what type of property would be suitable and in what location. Automatic expressions of interests will be limited to the areas where the applicant has expressed a preference to move to.
27. Difficult to Let
- 27.1. If a vacancy cannot be filled via the CBL scheme, the property can be re-advertised on a wider basis in conjunction with the Local Authority.
28. Excluded Properties
- 28.1. All the partner landlords are committed to advertising as many of their vacant properties as possible through the CBL system. There will be occasions when certain properties will not be advertised and the reasons for these exclusions will be monitored. An example would be extra care vacancies which are allocated jointly with Somerset County's Community Directorate (Social Services).
29. False Information and Deliberately Worsening Circumstances
- 29.1. Applicants who are found to have deliberately given false information on their Homefinder Somerset Register application form will have their application reviewed immediately. This may result in the 'Band' awarded being changed as a result. If an applicant is re-housed through false information, steps may be taken to end the tenancy and court action may be taken which could result in the applicant receiving a fine up to a maximum of £5,000 and/or a prison sentence.



29.2. An immediate review of an application may also be undertaken if an applicant is found to have deliberately changed or worsened their housing situation in order to be placed into a band higher than they would normally have been awarded. Households that have been assessed as having deliberately worsened their housing circumstances by moving into accommodation that is unsuitable for their needs and /or by taking no action to improve their circumstances which can be evidenced may be placed into bronze band.

29.3. All landlords in this agreement are committed to taking legal action against any applicant found to have gained a tenancy based on false information in their application form. (Section 171 of the Housing Act 1996).

### 30. Access to Personal Information

30.1. Individuals are entitled under the Data Protection Act (1998) to request details of their personal data held by the five Local Authorities. A charge may be made for providing this information.

30.2. The information received, in conjunction with housing applications, may also be used for housing management and research purposes.



## 31. Monitoring

31.1. A number of areas within the CBL system will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure that the system is operating in the most effective way. Areas to be monitored may include:-

- Number of registrations received
- Percentage of applicants registered and notified within 15 working days
- Number and percentage of applicants registered within each band
- Number of properties advertised by type, area, landlord
- Number of properties advertised with local connection label
- Number of properties, with reasons, excluded from CBL system, by landlord (e.g. decants)
- Number of expressions of interest and method of expressing
- Number of expressions of interest for each property by band
- Profile of those expressing an interest (e.g. waiting list, transfer, homeless, disabled, ethnic background)
- Number of applicants bypassed for breach of tenancy conditions
- Number of accepted offers by band
- Number of tenancies refused at sign up
- Number of properties re-advertised due to difficulty in letting
- Number of review requests
- Number of complaints
- Number of applicants in short term supported housing awaiting active re-housing (following confirmation by scheme of readiness to move)
- Number of homeless applicants in 'Gold Band' awaiting re-housing (not expressing an interest)
- Number of 'Gold Band' applicants who have not expressed an interest in a property for more than 6 months
- Number of Emergency Priority applicants awaiting re-housing
- Number of applicants from outside the Homefinder Somerset area being re-housed
- Banding the property is advertised in
- The use of labelling
- Number of people housed by band

## 32. Equal Opportunities

32.1. All partners of Homefinder Somerset are committed to a fair and equitable housing policy and to providing equal opportunities for all when allocating available properties. All housing applicants will be assessed according to their housing need and in accordance with the published lettings policy.

32.2. All partners of Homefinder Somerset are opposed to direct and indirect discrimination and recognise the need for systems to actively prevent discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/private-and-public-sector-guidance/guidance-all/protected-characteristics> Any allegations or concerns that an organisation



has not acted appropriately should be made directly to that organisation. All partner landlords are publicly accountable and must have a complaints policy and an independent Ombudsman.

### 33. Social Inclusion

33.1 All partners of Homefinder Somerset believe that applicants should be given every assistance to access the housing register and search for suitable properties. For example, the provision of the Homefinder Somerset 'Hotline' number will assist those applicants who experience literacy problems or who are blind or partially sighted and unable to read the adverts.

33.2. Applicants that lack capacity in decision making, particularly around changes in accommodation or who have learning difficulties may be assisted in the following ways:

- If the applicant agrees, staff may contact any professional or voluntary workers from health or Social Services with whom the applicant is involved to ensure they understand the procedures and that necessary support is provided. All agencies funded via Local Government should be in a position to provide their clients with help on housing issues.
- Disadvantaged applicants are able to nominate a person (including family members, friends or professional worker) to express an interest on their behalf or to help them express an interest for suitable properties..
- In the small number of cases where the applicant has no support Homefinder Somerset staff could set auto bidding up so the computer system would automatically place expressions of interest for suitable vacancies.

33.3. All partners of home finder will make sure that the system is as accessible as possible. This will be achieved through the usability of the system, its interaction with accessibility software and the language used in Homefinder being in clear plain English. The system will be reviewed annual to make sure these standards are kept and improved where possible..

### 34. Policy Review

34.1. The Homefinder Somerset Scheme is regularly reviewed to ensure that the policy meets its stated objectives and complies with legislative changes. Any changes to the Common Lettings Policy are implemented only after prior notice to members and the majority agreement amongst the partner landlords.

### 35. Complaints

35.1. Any complaints regarding the scheme should be directed initially to the organisation processing an applicant's claim.





## 36 The Housing Ombudsman

- 36.1. If an applicant is not satisfied with the action taken by either the Local Authority or a Registered Provider of social housing and has exhausted the complaints procedure available, they can send a written complaint to the ombudsman.

For complaints relating to landlords:

The Housing Ombudsman Service can be contacted at:

Housing Ombudsman Service  
81 Aldwych London WC2B 4HN

Tel: 0300 111 3000  
Minicom 020 7404 7092  
Fax 020 7831 1942

Email [info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk)

Web address [www.ihos.org.uk](http://www.ihos.org.uk)

For complaints relating to local authorities:

The Local Government Ombudsman  
PO Box 4771 Coventry CV4 DEH

LGO Advice Team on 0300 061 0614  
[www.lgo.org.uk](http://www.lgo.org.uk)



## APPENDIX I

### Disrepair Guidance

#### Gold: High

Based on the conditions identified the Private Sector Housing Team has deemed your home to have the presence of Category 1 hazards, Bands A - C (Housing Health & Safety Rating System) that CANNOT be resolved or reduced to a Category 2 hazard within 6 months.

#### Silver: Medium

Based on the conditions identified the Private Sector Housing Team has shown that your home has Category 1 hazards, Bands A - C (Housing Health & Safety Rating System) that CAN be resolved or reduced to a Category 2 hazard within 6 months and/or has shown that your home has Category 2 hazards, Band D (Housing Health & Safety Rating System).

#### Bronze: Low

No significant hazards identified justifying enforcement action by the local authority.

Please note that with regard to Category 2 rated hazards Environmental Health staff are under no obligation to take any action with regard to these issues.



## APPENDIX 2

### Medical & Welfare Considerations

When ill health, disability or welfare is aggravated by housing conditions' including the location of the property; and the ill health, disability or welfare would improve if other accommodation were offered; the banding awarded will be dependent on two crucial factors:

- The link between the identified medical or welfare issue(s) and the individual's current housing situation.
- The realistic expectation that the identified medical or welfare issue(s) would improve if alternative, more suitable accommodation was made available.

When determining what banding to award, staff will assess what degree of need exists and, what adverse effect this need has on the lifestyle of the household as a whole. To achieve consistency in the allocation of banding under this heading a schedule is detailed below in tables 2A & 2B that sets out the different levels of need:

**Table 2A – Medical considerations**

<b>Medical Considerations</b>	<b>Impact current property has on medical issues</b>	<b>Band</b>
<b>Low</b>	Minor impact, where the existing housing circumstances have a low impact on an individual's medical issues.	Bronze
<b>Moderate</b>	Moderate impact where there is a clear relationship to an individual's medical issues and the existing housing circumstances.	Silver
<b>Significant</b>	Significant impact where the individuals medical issues makes it unreasonable to remain in the current accommodation; or where the property cannot be adapted to meet the applicant's needs or funds are not available for such adaptations or landlord permission cannot be obtained.	Gold
<b>Severe</b>	Severe impact where the individuals medical issue is life threatening or which is causing bed blocking with hospital / care facility	Emergency



Examples of circumstances that may fall into each banding category are shown below but please note that this is not an exhaustive list and each case will be reviewed on its merits. Supporting evidence would be expected in order to award Gold or Emergency band.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Severe</b></p> <p>Medical specialists will not allow the individual to be discharged from hospital to their current property.</p> <p>All other cases need referral to the medical/emergency assessment panel.</p> <p>Individual lives alone and has chronic mobility and, or medical issues; or is living with another frail individual who has serious mobility or medical issues and with virtually no support or contact with family or neighbours.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is reliant on walking aids or a wheelchair and the property necessitates the climbing of steps/stairs to gain access to the property and, or steps/stairs within the property itself and is effectively housebound.</li> <li>• Is reliant on walking aids or a wheelchair but cannot manage in the property due to the lay out not being compatible with the aids required.</li> <li>• Is reliant on oxygen and has to manoeuvre oxygen cylinders up and down the stairs to access the building or within the property.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Significant</b></p> <p>Individual has serious mobility or medical issues and has no access to a lift/stair lift and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is reliant on walking aids or a wheelchair but has difficulty in the property due to the lay out not being compatible with the aids required (unable to access bedroom or bathroom).</li> <li>• Has difficulty in managing the layout or size of property (toilet, bathing facilities).</li> <li>• Is confined to the existing property as dependant on assistance to leave/return to the property.</li> <li>• Lives in a property which necessitates the climbing of stairs to gain access to the property and, or steps within the property itself and has medical issues which make it difficult to managing this.</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Moderate</b></p> <p>Individual has moderate mobility or medical issues and has access to a lift/stair lift and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is reliant on walking aids or a wheelchair and has some difficulty in the property due to the lay out not being compatible with the aids required.</li> <li>• Has some difficulty in managing the layout or size of property (toilet, bathing facilities).</li> <li>• Lives in a property which necessitates the climbing of stairs to gain access to the property and, or steps within the property itself and has medical issues which means there us some difficulty to manage this.</li> <li>• Is not confined to the existing property and does not need assistance to leave/return to the property but would benefit from living on a ground floor/level access property.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Low</b></p> <p>Individual has low mobility or medical issues who do not require a lift/stair lift or are already living in a level access, ground floor property.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An individual suffering from generalised symptoms of asthma and eczema aggravated by the cold.</li> <li>• Minor problems relating to recurring colds/asthma or regular depression or unusual allergies could be pointed under this heading providing a link to the existing accommodation could be demonstrated.</li> </ul>



**Table 2B – Welfare considerations**

Social welfare is concerned with the [quality of life](#) that includes [factors](#) such as the [quality](#) of the [environment](#), [services available \(gas, electric, water, public transport\)](#), level of [crime](#), extent of [drug abuse](#), [availability and distance](#) of essential [social services](#), individuals place of work, education as well as religious and spiritual aspects of life. The age, physical or learning disability, behavioural difficulties and threats to the individual should be considered as well as the impact on the rest of the household.

<b>Welfare Considerations</b>	<b>Impact current property has on welfare condition</b>	<b>Band</b>
<b>Low</b>	Minor impact, where an individual’s welfare issues has a low impact on the existing housing circumstances.	Bronze
<b>Moderate</b>	Moderate impact, where there is a clear relationship to an individual’s welfare issues and the existing housing circumstances.	Silver
<b>Significant</b>	Significant impact, where the individuals welfare issues makes it unreasonable to remain in the current accommodation	Gold
<b>Severe</b>	Severe impact, where the individuals welfare issue could be life threatening	Emergency

**Examples of circumstances that may fall into each banding category are shown below please note that this is not an exhaustive list and each case will be reviewed on its merits. Supporting evidence would be expected in order to award Gold or Emergency band.**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Severe</b></p> <p><b><i>For cases where an individual’s welfare could be life threatening</i></b></p> <p>All cases need referral to the medical/emergency assessment panel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual suffers dizzy spells and arthritis lives alone in old caravan in grounds of a house in rural area. Only mains service is electricity. Fetches water from an outside cold water tap and uses an Elsan bucket toilet situated some distance from the caravan. Dangers include cold during the winter and potential falls when collecting water or using the outside toilet.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Significant</b></p> <p><b><i>For cases where an individual’s welfare has a serious impact on their housing need making it unreasonable to remain in their current property</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The existing home seriously limits the care and support that can be provided to the individual</li> <li>• The environment in and around the home has a serious detrimental effect on the quality of life of the household</li> <li>• Remote location of property resulting in isolation and it can be demonstrated a move to an area with greater facilities will significantly improve quality of life, health &amp; wellbeing</li> <li>• High financial hardship created by the cost of the current property which is unsustainable and cannot be resolved</li> <li>• Significant cumulative need to move due to several welfare factors for one or all members of the household that are not be covered elsewhere in the policy.</li> </ul>
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**Moderate**

**For cases where an individual's welfare has a moderate impact and a clear relationship to existing housing circumstances.**

- The existing home moderately limits the care and support that can be provided to the individual
- The environment in and around the home has a moderate detrimental effect on the quality of life of the household
- Moderate isolation whereby it can be demonstrated a move to an area with more facilities will greatly improve quality of life, health & wellbeing
- Moderate financial hardship created by the cost of the current property which may be resolved within 6 months with debt intervention.
- Moderate cumulative welfare need to move due to some welfare factors for one or all members of the household are not covered elsewhere in the policy.

**Low**

**For cases where an individual's welfare has a low impact on the existing housing circumstances**

- The existing home has little impact in the care and support that can be provided to the individual
- The environment in and around the home has a low detrimental effect on the quality of life of the household
- Low isolation whereby it can be demonstrated a move to an area with more facilities will greatly improve quality of life, health & wellbeing
- Low financial hardship created by the cost of the current property which can be resolved within 6 months.
- Low cumulative welfare need to move due to some welfare factors for one or all members of the household are not covered elsewhere in the policy.

**Referrals by the housing team for advice / information to third parties**

In the rare event that information contained within the application makes the assessment of an applicant's medical priority for re-housing unclear the applicant's circumstances and available medical information may be referred to an independent third party for advice to be given to officer's in relation to the applicant's medical issues and thus the applicant's need for re-housing. Upon receipt of a response officers will consider this information in order to assist them in making a decision as to the applicant's priority for re-housing.

**Referrals to the Councils assessment panel.**

In limited often complex cases officers may be undecided about which band (priority) to award the applicant for re-housing on medical grounds. In such cases the matter can be referred by officer's to the Council's assessment panel. The panel will form a view considering all information available from the application (which may include information from relevant third parties) and reach a decision as to the client's banding priority for re-housing on medical grounds.

## APPENDIX 3

### Glossary of Terms about Choice Based Lettings

Advertising Period - The number of days in which a applicant has the opportunity to express an interest' in a home once it is advertised.

Cancellation of applications – this will mean the closing of an application on the system.  
Choice Based Lettings (CBL) - A new system being introduced for the allocation of social housing. CBL is designed to offer more choice and involvement for applicants in selecting a new home. It is a much more open, transparent and customer-based approach in the allocation of properties.

Consultation Period - A period of 6 weeks in which Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, South Somerset District Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset District Council consulted with all interested parties and stakeholders about its plans to introduce Choice Based Lettings. The initial consultation period was from May 2007 to August 2007. A subsequent consultation took place between October 2010 and December 2010 with a further period in June and July 2013.

Express an Interest - - To be considered for an available home, applicants are required to contact us to 'express an interest' or 'bid' for a property. No money is involved in 'making a bid' or 'expressing an interest' in a property.

The Housing Health and Safety Rating System is a way of assessing properties to calculate the level of hazard (category 1, 2 etc.) or risk to health of a vulnerable household living or residing in that property. <http://www.communities.gov.uk/housing/rentingandletting/housinghealth/> and <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/hhrsoperatingguidance>

Housing Register - A list of applicants for housing accommodation.

Banding Scheme - The system currently used by the Homefinder Somerset Scheme to determine the priority of a applicants housing need. Banding is allocated to the applicant to reflect their current circumstances and future housing need. The banding allocated determines the applicant's position in the waiting list for a particular type/size/location of a home.

Property Label - A description of the property being advertised as available to let. The label will generally include a photograph, location, type of property, number of bedrooms, type of heating, any disabled adaptations, whether there is a garden or not, if pets are accepted and other features. The label will indicate who may be eligible to express an interest for the property. This could include, for example, where a local connection may be required, if there is an age restriction or the property has adaptations.

Registered Provider – This is a term introduced by the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 applying to housing associations registered with the Homes and Communities Agency. Registered Providers have access to Social Housing Grant public funding for the capital costs of providing housing.



Shortlist - Once the deadline has passed for registering an interest in a property, a list of those that have expressed an interest, who have met the advertising criteria for each individual property is generated by the computer system. Generally, the applicant offered the property will be the person who has been in the highest housing needs band for the longest period of time.

Social Rented Housing - Housing of a high standard, which is provided at below market cost for households in housing need by local Authorities and Registered Providers. It operates on a basis of accepted and regulated standards of good practice in relation to physical conditions, management, allocation, equal opportunities and accountability. The Homes and Communities Agency sets the maximum rent levels.

Supported Housing – Each partner Local Housing Authority will decide on the criteria that defines supported housing within their own area for the purposes of this policy.





## APPENDIX 4 – Eligibility Guidance

The Homefinder Somerset partnership will exclude from the scheme people who are not resident in the United Kingdom at the date of their application. In line with Government legislation the HFS partnership will also exclude people who are subject to immigration control or who are not habitually resident in the Common Travel Area or who only have limited rights of residence in the Common Travel Area under European Union law, unless they have been prescribed as eligible by regulations, or unless they are already secure, introductory or in certain cases assured tenants. The Homefinder Somerset partnership will have due regard to any future changes to European Union law / Rights to Reside legislation.

Please see [http://england.shelter.org.uk/get\\_advice/homelessness/eu\\_and\\_eea\\_nationals](http://england.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/homelessness/eu_and_eea_nationals) and annex 2-4 of <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/2171391.pdf> for further guidance.



## Appendix 5 – Statement on Decision Making Process

All applications are banded and given a bedroom eligibility by a member of the Registration Team based on the information provided at the time of registration by the applicant or applicant's representative and the applicant's household make-up. The applicant is notified in writing of the Registration Teams decision.

If an applicant wants the band or bedroom eligibility awarded by the Registration Team reviewed a written request they must be made within 28 days of being advised of the decision. The decision will be reviewed by another Officer who was not involved in making the original decision.

If additional information is received with the review request a review may not be required as the new information will be treated as a change in circumstances and in the first instance the banding/bedroom allocation will be reconsidered by the Registration Team.

If the applicant is not satisfied with the other Officers decision the Local Authorities complaints procedure may be followed.

Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme 2016/17

16 <sup>th</sup> June	4 <sup>th</sup> August	13 <sup>th</sup> October	Possible November Budget?	15 <sup>th</sup> December	February?	TBC
Notes of any Key Cabinet Decisions / Action Points.	Notes of any Key Cabinet Decisions / Action Points.	Relationship between WSC and West Somerset College – ED Corinne Matthews				Williton Hospital Stroke Unit Business Case Consultation – (Provisional date)
Financial Out-turn Report						
Approval of changes to Home Finder Somerset Policy – Mark Leeman						
Homefinder Somerset Report – Steve Plenty						
Disposal of Church Street Public Conveniences, Dunster						
MTFP Report – Paul Fitzgerald						

Performance Report – Paul Harding						
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