Executive – 6 February 2013

Present: Councillor Williams (Chairman)
Councillors Mrs Adkins, Cavill, Edwards, Mrs Herbert, Hayward, Mrs Stock-Williams and Mrs Warmington

Officers: Penny James (Chief Executive), James Barrah (Health and Housing Theme Manager), Stephen Boland (Housing Services Lead), Lesley Webb-Crookes (Housing Enabling Lead), Rosie Reed (Tenant Services Development Officer), Richard Sealy (Corporate and Client Services Manager), Maggie Hammond (Strategic Finance Officer), Paul Fitzgerald (Financial Services Manager, Southwest One) and Richard Bryant (Democratic Services Manager and Corporate Support Lead)

Also present: Councillors Coles, Horsley and A Wedderkopp.
Cathy Osborne (Savills Plc) and Wendy Lewis (Knightstone Housing Association)

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm.)

9. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 16 January 2013, copies of which had been circulated, were taken as read and were signed.

10. **Halcon North Regeneration, Taunton – Creechbarrow Road Project**

Considered report previously circulated, which outlined a proposed re-development scheme in the Creeechbarrow Road Area of Taunton.

For several years, the Council had been considering the Halcon North area in terms of what action could be taken to tackle the high levels of deprivation in the area and to provide a greater level of support to this community. The previous regeneration project considered a preferred option of demolition of approximately 200 Council dwellings and a mixed tenure development, with significantly increased density.

Members last considered this issue in the Autumn of 2012 (Minute No 78/2012 refers) when it was accepted that smaller scale regeneration in Halcon North was preferred by local residents. It was therefore agreed that options should be explored with partners to access funding for smaller scale development whilst maintaining and improving retained Housing Revenue Account stock.

At the outset of the previous project, a competitive process was undertaken to appoint partners to work alongside the Council on the Halcon North project, and Knightstone Housing Association (KHA) were subsequently appointed. As part of the early design of the former project, KHA had appointed Boon Brown Architects to assist them with this task. As a result, both parties had built up a considerable knowledge of the area.

Throughout this process and in order to secure future funding KHA had bid for, and had been awarded, Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) subsidy funding for 30

Affordable Rented Homes (80% of Market rent). The investment in these new homes would be in the region of £4,000,000. Despite the larger project for the area not progressing, the allocated HCA funding remained and this had created an opportunity to consider a smaller regeneration project.

Key features of the HCA funding were:-

- It was allocated to the Halcon area. However, KHA could request for it to be transferred to any other site in Somerset if they wished, if it appeared that the HCA funding was not going to be spent within the prescribed timetable;
- The new housing to which it related had to be completed and the money spent by the end of March 2015;
- The timescale available to achieve construction and therefore HCA spend in this timescale was very challenging. Consequently KHA required a decision on this matter as soon as possible;
- The HCA would like to see developments to which funding related, on site by September 2013; and
- For a scheme to progress, land would need to be transferred with vacant possession to KHA for £1, being a HCA requirement.

Following discussions with partners, the potential for a much smaller redevelopment scheme had emerged that would secure the £4,000,000 KHA/HCA investment in the area, rather than it being lost to the Halcon Ward.

Attention was now focussed on a scheme on Creechbarrow Road, which was one of the four streets in the original project. Full details of the proposed redevelopment were submitted for the information of Members.

The scheme would involve all current residents being found alternative accommodation. All the current flats would then be demolished. One end of the site would be transferred to KHA upon which 30 affordable rented houses would be constructed. The remainder of the site would remain in Taunton Deane ownership, on which 57 new homes for Social rent would be built. In addition, the scheme would see the creation of a central green/play area and Community Hub building.

Whilst the project was housing driven, it was also designed to help tackle the deprivation in the area. In total, there was the potential for 87 new homes which represented a significant increase on the current situation in terms of better quality affordable housing and a potential investment of over £11,000,000 in this area.

The play/communal area would provide a new central focus and help integration of the new and the existing properties and provide a quality open space. The Community Hub building could house a multi-agency team working in the Ward and provide facilities for the community that would seek to address the serious issues of deprivation in the locality.

Whilst the increase in homes was significant, the potential increase in bed numbers was huge with 339 bed spaces likely with the new development compared with the 172 spaces which currently existed.

Reported that the new Housing Revenue Account (HRA) 30 Year Business Plan included priorities in relation to the provision of more affordable housing, investment and support to vulnerable communities and sustainable development.

The HRA also had available to it additional borrowing headroom of £16,000,000. With the availability of very low interest rates and resources available in the Business Plan to fund such borrowing, the current climate and context were right to consider a scheme such as the one proposed.

The existing flats on the Creechbarrow Road site had been constructed in 1975/1976. Whilst they varied in condition, there were no significant issues of disrepair. The tenants of these properties comprised a broad age range and varied family compositions.

Submitted details of the KHA outline development of 30 dwellings which would consist of the following:-

- 9 x 1 Bed Flats;
- 8 x 2 Bed Flats;
- 2 x 2 Bed Houses;
- 8 x 3 Bed Houses; and
- 3 x 4 Bed Houses.

For regeneration projects it was usual for the Council to underwrite 50% of the "at risk" costs - the costs incurred in A scheme design prior to planning consent being obtained. In this case 50% of the at risk costs for the KHA portion of the site would be £32,000 if planning permission was not granted. It was recommended that Full Council should agree to underwrite these costs, which would be funded by the HRA as a revenue cost, if incurred.

The outline of the Taunton Deane part of the development consisted of 57 new properties in accordance with the mix below:-

- 19 x 1 Bed Flats;
- 19 x 2 Bed Flats;
- 4 x 2 Bed Houses;
- 9 x 3 Bed Houses;
- 4 x 4 Bed Houses;
- 1 X 5 Bed House; and
- 1 x 6 Bed House.

In addition at the end of Moorland Road, where two semi-detached houses were currently situated, there would be an additional eight, 2 bedroom flats, with a Community Hub building on the ground floor.

Finally, the scheme could be enhanced by additional new housing frontage being provided on the opposite side of this end of Moorland Road. The proposal therefore included three additional family homes on the site of Nos 2 and 4 Moorland Road.

The "at risk" costs for the Taunton Deane portion of the site were estimated to be £120,000. It was recommended that Full Council should agree to underwrite these costs, which would need to be funded by the HRA as a revenue cost, if incurred.

The estimated project costs for 57 new dwellings and the Community Hub building was £7,667,000.

Further reported that Savills Consultancy had been engaged to provide a report and initial views on the Taunton Deane part of the development. The company's report had been circulated to the Executive and the key conclusions were set out in the report. Savills felt that the benefits of having more homes (57), including large family houses and the Community Hub, available in place of the 42 smaller flats and four houses justified the slight additional net costs and the loss of net income from existing units.

The consultation discussions with the residents of Creechbarrow Road had included the following key points:-

- The Creechbarrow Road site was to be redeveloped;
- The existing dwellings would be replaced by a mixture of flats for the elderly, general needs flats and family homes;
- Taunton Deane and a Housing Association would be involved in the development;
- Taunton Deane would increase slightly the number of Council properties;
- Residents would be able to return to the area once development had finished if they wished to; and
- Assistance and support would be provided to residents throughout the process.

The responses from the residents were as follows:-

Response to Proposed Creechbarrow Redevelopment			
Yes	No	Undecided	Unresponsive
22 (including 5 leaseholders)	10	2	8

During the consultation exercise residents provided a large amount of feedback on the proposed scheme which was reported together with the responses that had been received from leaseholders, the Ward Councillors, the Halcon Multi-Agency Group, Avon and Somerset Police, Halcon Primary School/Somerset County Council, ASDA, Lidl, Somerset Care (Lavender Court), the Tenant Services Management Board and the Halcon North Residents' Association.

Reported that there were some procurement issues to consider in relation to the proposal. Although the site would ultimately be in two parts in terms of ownership, in terms of development it would be desirable from a practical point of view to redevelop it as one. It was also worth noting that the Council's experience of managing its own new housing developments was very much in its infancy.

At the outset of the previous project, a competitive process was undertaken amongst partner Housing Associations, to appoint organisation(s) to work alongside the Council. One of the main issues was, whether any of the partners had access to grant money that they could bring forward. As time evolved, all partner Housing Associations apart from KHA had withdrawn from the process.

KHA had remained positive with encouragement and had indicated the likelihood of grant from the HCA being allocated in the new programme.

The use of existing framework agreements where competitive pre-selection activities had already been undertaken, presented the most efficient method to procure and give reassurance in terms of established arrangements.

There were four key requirements to consider for the scheme to progress:-

Development Agent – The Council did not have all the necessary skills, capacity and experience to undertake this project. A third party organisation to undertake development services on Taunton Deane's behalf was therefore required. A quote had been received from KHA to undertake this work which would enable them to project mange the whole site on behalf of both parties. Although the fee quoted was at a level where a procurement exercise would normally be required, it was recommended that Contract Procedure Rules should be waived to allow KHA to be appointed as Development Agents.

Architect – Boon Brown Architects had already been working on various schemes in this area with KHA. From a planning perspective there was an urgency to submit a planning application for the KHA part of the site to ensure the HCA funding was not lost. However, in order for this application to be considered in time, it was felt advisable to submit an application for the whole site using one architect. In order to achieve this, the Council would need to waive Contract Procedure Rules to enable Boon Brown to continue to act on the Council's behalf as the fee for this service would exceed procurement thresholds that would usually require an open procurement process.

Employers Agent – No agent had been appointed for either party in relation to the scheme. However, one would need to be appointed as soon as possible. KHA had undertaken a procurement exercise to pre-select on a framework agreement five firms who could undertake the role of Employers Agent. Under normal circumstances, the level of fee for this service would again exceed the relevant services aspect of Contract Procedure Rules. However, it was proposed to waive Contract Procedure Rules and undertake a mini competition from the KHA framework and appoint a joint Employers Agent.

Contractor – The estimated costs of building contractor works were likely to exceed EU procurement thresholds. In order for the Council to undertake EU compliant procurement and make the most efficient route to the market, the Council was proposing to access framework agreements established by the HCA which had been designed with Local Authority housing projects specifically in mind. It was proposed that Taunton Deane and KHA would jointly procure contractors for the project from a framework agreement set up and managed by the HCA.

Reported that the Council's Treasury Management advisors Arlingclose had been consulted on the potential additional borrowing the Council would be required to undertake in order to support this proposal. The company's advice was set out in the report.

If the recommendations in the report were accepted, much activity would be required to take the scheme forward. This included:-

- For the KHA area, the timetable included in the report outlined the tasks required to meet the HCA completion timetable requirement;

- For the Taunton Deane area, a more detailed feasibility report would be provided for Members to consider, with final approval for the scheme to progress;

- For the project as a whole, a detailed project plan would be established with appropriate Governance arrangements in place; and

- One of the key activities would be supporting existing residents through the changes and arranging decanting at the appropriate time and that information would always be available on progress.

As far as financing of the project was concerned, Members would need to:-

(i) Approve capital expenditure of around £7,700,000;
(ii) Underwrite “at risk” costs of £152,000 from revenue resources; and
(iii) Agree the preferred basis of funding – in a later report – but support the principle of borrowing £7,700,000.

Noted that as a proportion of the costs would be incurred in the current financial year, the sum of £200,000 should be added to the 2012/2013 Capital Budget to be funded from HRA reserves.

The proposed redevelopment at Creechbarrow Road had been considered by the Community Scrutiny Committee on 5 February 2013. Members had been supportive of the proposal.

Resolved that Full Council be recommended:-

(a) In relation to the proposed Knightstone Housing Association portion of the site:-

(1) To agree the transfer the southern part of the Creechbarrow Road site, Taunton to Knightstone Housing Association for £1, in order to enable the development of 30 new affordable homes;

(2) To approve the decant of the tenants currently occupying the southern end of the site (current property Nos 2-20) and transfer these properties with vacant possession to Knightstone Housing Association;

(3) To accept to underwrite 50% of Knightstone Housing Association’s “at risk costs” of approximately £32,000, to be funded by existing Housing Revenue Account resources if required.

(b) In relation to the proposed Taunton Deane portion of the site:-

(4) Subject to satisfactory detailed scheme appraisal, to approve the redevelopment of the Taunton Deane portion of the site broadly in

accordance with the sketch plan included within the report, and for that purpose to:-

- Progress the actions necessary to achieve vacant possession of the current properties including decanting, buy back of former right to buy properties or agreement of exchange of alternate property, the decommissioning of properties and securing the site;
- Progress the detailed design and site evaluation; and
- Preparation of a planning application;

(5) To approve in principle borrowing of £7,700,000 to fund the scheme within the Housing Revenue Account and identify any additional funding for the community hub and play aspects of the development;

(6) To agree to commit Taunton Deane to “at risk” costs of approximately £120,000, to be funded by Housing Revenue Account resources;

(7) To waive Contract Procedure Rules and:-

- Appoint Knightstone Housing Association as Development Agents to act on behalf of the Council in relation to this project;
- Appoint Boon Brown Architects to continue to act on the Council’s behalf in relation to this scheme; and
- Undertake a joint mini competition amongst the five Employers Agent firms on the Knightstone Housing Association framework and appoint, as appropriate, one company to act on the Council’s behalf in relation to this scheme;

(c) In relation to the project as whole:-

(8) To approve a supplementary estimate from the Housing Revenue Account reserves of £200,000, which would be added to the 2012/2013 capital budget, as a proportion of the costs would be incurred in the current financial year.

11. **Somerset Waste Partnership Draft Business Plan 2013-2018**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the Somerset Waste Partnership’s (SWP) Draft Business Plan for the period 2013-2018. The draft Plan had been made available to Members.

The Draft Business Plan and associated Action Plan were the means by which the partnership described its business, evaluated changes to the operating environment, identified strategic risks and set out its priorities. The plan had a five year horizon with particular focus on the next 12 months. It was the primary means to seek approval for and to secure the necessary resources to implement its proposals from the partner authorities.

Comments on the Business Plan were requested by mid-February, to enable the Somerset Waste Board (SWB) to adopt both the Plan and its budget at its meeting on 22 February 2013.

The Draft Business Plan had been brought together against the background of a continuing difficult economic situation. Subject to the actual settlement from Government, partners had not required the Board to deliver levels of savings for 2013/2014 that would impact on the public, but the outlook for 2014/2015 and beyond looked increasingly difficult.

The previous plan had assumed that levels of residual waste would continue to fall in accordance with the trend in recent years. This assumption was closely monitored in the first two quarters of 2012/2013 and had not been born out in practice across the County as a whole. This was causing a predicted overspend for the Somerset County Council in the region of £800,000. Around half of this increase was accounted for by high levels of garden waste due to the extended growing season. Reasons for the other half were being investigated.

The figures had indicated that Taunton Deane still had the lowest overall tonnage per household across the County. However, the tonnage Taunton Deane was recycling had dropped slightly, which would have detrimental implications for the level of recycling credits the Council received.

The reasons for this drop off in recycling were not clear and this was also being investigated with the Waste Partnership. Although reducing overall tonnage would help to achieve one of the Partnership's key objectives of waste minimisation, elements of the Cost Sharing Mechanism (CSM) did not incentivise Taunton Deane's reducing tonnage for certain types of waste. As a result, it was considered sensible for the benefit of all partners for elements of the CSM to be reviewed.

The Contract extension with May Gurney had been signed on 19 October 2012 and for the first time SWP was able to more closely predict the actual contract collection costs prior to December. The cost to the contractor of delivering the service was significantly higher than the payments made by SWP; the difference – and any profit – being made up from the sale of materials. As in previous years the threshold for sharing profit had not been reached.

Noted that the scope for significant further savings from the collection contract was limited unless major changes were made to the service design and/or frequency.

Reported that SWP had made one of 130 bids to the Department for Communities and Local Government's £250 million Weekly Collection Support Scheme fund. The Secretary of State's intention in setting up the fund was to encourage Councils to restore weekly refuse collection or not to move to fortnightly collection.

The Somerset Waste Board's view was that such a move was not necessary in Somerset for a number of reasons which were reported. However a bid was still submitted to collect Absorbent Hygiene Products (AHP) on a weekly cycle and, as a consequence, permitting a wider range of other dry recyclables to also be collected.

The Waste Board had been notified during November 2012 that its application had been unsuccessful. This bid funding would have been the sole source of funding for the project and it could not now be set up and delivered as hoped. SWP would however consider including AHP collection as part of smaller scale "high diversion" trials where new materials would be added and collection frequencies possibly reviewed.

Further reported that SWP had carried out a Service Review which had resulted in a number of key areas for attention in 2013/2014. These areas had been reflected in the Draft Business plan and were summarised below:-

Waste Minimisation
- Encourage thinking – the Green Routine;
- Educative, positive engagement with communities where recycling was lower than average; and
- Reviewing households which had multiple refuse bins without apparent reason.

Viridor Contract Review – To undertake a wide scale review of the Strategic Partnering Arrangement with Viridor to:-
- Benchmark with other waste disposal authorities;
- Evaluate whether the current contract was fit for purpose over the remaining term to 2022;
- Evaluate options of non-landfill waste disposal options and how these might form part of a future plan; and
- Evaluate options for best value over the remaining term of the contract with an option to extend by up to nine further years.

Anaerobic Digestion (AD) – In 2011 SWP made significant progress on the development of an AD facility for food waste, culminating in the Board approving Head of Terms with Viridor. Construction had started and the facility was on schedule to start commissioning in Spring 2013 with a view to full operation by the autumn.

May Gurney Contract Review **-** With the collection system well established, the cost of collecting additional kerbside material was low while the benefits in terms of reduced landfill were high. SWP would continue to promote the basic "recycle for all its worth" message – particularly in low performing areas. In addition SWP would be seeking savings and service improvements from better integration of business processes between client and contractor.

Improved solutions for communal properties - SWP had for some time aspired to provide better solutions for communal properties and other properties that were not served or only partially served by Sort It Plus. Progress on this had been challenging and hampered by an unplanned lack of staff capacity during the autumn of 2012. This remained a key work stream.

Restructure of the Single Client Group - The service review had also led to an action to restructure the Single Client Unit to ensure the structure was well aligned to changing objectives and to promote better public service and clearer lines of accountability.

The Draft Business Plan had been considered by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 24 January 2013 and the detailed comments raised by Members were submitted for consideration by the Executive.

Resolved that:-

(1) The contents of the Draft Business Plan be approved; and

(2) The Somerset Waste Board be requested to add the following further action to the Draft Business Plan:- "Investigate modification of the Cost Sharing Mechanism with particular regard to the way in which recycling credits were calculated. The aim being to further incentivise landfill avoidance ahead of dry recycling, for the benefit of all partners".

12. **Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy**

Considered report previously circulated, which detailed the Treasury Management and Investment Strategies for the 2013/2014 financial year.

It was noted that Council debt was currently £94,999,000 which included the Housing Revenue Account self-financing debt of £85,200,000. Short-term interest rates were currently at 0.5% and this rate was expected to be at this level for the next financial year.

The Strategy had the preservation of capital as the most important factor in investing taxpayer's money. Also noted that borrowing rates were currently low but the cost of carry had to be considered before taking on any debt.

Reported that the purpose of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and investment Strategy (TMSS) was to approve:-

- The Treasury Management Strategy for 2013/2014 (Borrowing and Debt Rescheduling);
- The use of Specified and Non-Specified Investments; and
- The Prudential Indicators for 2013/2014, 2014/2015 and 2015/2016.

A full copy of the TMSS, which had been prepared by the Council's Investment Consultants Arlingclose, was submitted for the information of Members.

The Treasury Management service was an important part of the overall financial management of the Council's affairs.

The bank base rate had fallen to 0.5% in March 2009 and had remained at that level ever since. Arlingclose had suggested that the interest rates would remain low for even longer, until at least 2016 given the extension of austerity measures announced in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement.

During 2012/2013, the ratings agencies had downgraded several sovereign ratings and individual institutions. The Council had responded by listening to and following advice from Arlingclose.

The TMSS had been written in continuing challenging and uncertain economic times. The current economic outlook had several key treasury management implications:-

- Investment returns were likely to remain relatively low during 2013/2014;
- Borrowing interest rates were currently attractive, but might remain low for some time; and
- The timing of any borrowing would need to be monitored carefully. There would remain a cost of carry – any borrowing undertaken that resulted in an increase in investments would incur a revenue loss between borrowing costs and investment returns.

As a result, the strategy looked to reduce exposure to risk and volatility by:-

(1) Considering security, liquidity and yield, in that order;

(2) Considering alternative assessments of credit strength;

(3) Spreading investments over a range of approved counterparties; and

(4) Only investing for longer periods to gain higher rates of return where there were acceptable levels of counterparty risk.

Further reported that the historically low interest rate situation had led to significant reductions in investment income in the past years which impacted directly on the Council's budget.

The Council's General Fund Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) for 2013/2014 was £7,688,000 which was currently funded through internal borrowing. The Council was able to borrow funds in excess of the current CFR up to the projected level in 2015/2016 of £7,086,000.

Resolved that Full Council be recommended:-

(1) To approve the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy; and

(2) To approve the Prudential Indicators, set out in Appendix B of the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy – a copy of which is attached to these Minutes.

13. **Draft General Fund Revenue Estimates 2013/2014**

Considered report previously circulated, regarding the Executive's 2013/2014 Draft Budget proposals, prior to submission to Full Council on 26 February 2013 for approval.

Each year the Council set an annual budget which detailed the resources needed to meet operational requirements. It was prepared within the context of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which included the 2013/2014 proposals within a five-year rolling forecast.

Full Council had approved a Budget Strategy at its meeting on 5 October 2010. This had described the need to set a four year balanced budget for the period 2012/2013 to 2015/2016 in the face of unprecedented financial challenges and funding uncertainty for local government. The savings target over this period was in the region of 40%.

An update on the Budget Strategy had been reported to Members and this had confirmed that the Strategy, which contained updated financial projections, remained relevant.

Updates on the Medium Term Financial Plan and latest Budget Gap estimates had been reported to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee this year on a regular basis. The latest report in November had confirmed that the estimated budget gap had reduced to £500,000 for 2013/2014.

Building on the Budget Review undertaken in 2011, the Corporate Management Team had prepared a range of Service Options for Members to consider in order to reduce the Budget Gap further.

In order to allow for consultation and consideration of budget options, the 'traditional' Budget Consultation Pack had been issued to all Members just before Christmas. This included the Initial Service Options and other updated information related to 2013/2014 budget requirements. The Budget Gap at that stage had reduced to £44,000, although the pack made it clear that there were still some details to be finalised for the final budget proposals.

The Draft Budget had been presented to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 24 January 2013 where Members proposed one specific amendment in relation to the Unparished Area Fund, where it was suggested that the fund should not be split into specific ring-fenced 'pots' and that all expenditure should be subject to the bidding process through the Unparished Area Panel.

The Committee also recognised the continuing financial challenge faced beyond the next financial year and the need for the strategic review of services that would be driven through the implementation of the new Corporate Business Plan.

The General Fund Revenue Account was the Council's main fund and showed the income and expenditure relating to the provision of services. The Council charged for some of its services which meant that less had to be funded from local taxpayers and Central Government. The expenditure that remained was funded by Central Government via the Revenue Support Grant and Business Rates, other non-ringfenced grants and the Council Taxpayer.

As reported previously, the last Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) headlines announced on 20 October 2010, indicated real term reductions of 28% (26% in real terms) across local authority "spending powers" over the four year period starting in 2011/2012.

The funding settlement for the past two years had seen the Council's formula grant reduce by £1,580,000 in cash terms (22.9%) cumulatively. The historic formula grant income for 2012/2013 was £5,310,000. The formula grant for 2013/2014 was

£5,024,000, which was a reduction of 5.4%.

A number of grants including the Council Tax Freeze 2011/2012 Grant and the Homelessness Prevention Grant, had been ‘rolled in’ to the main funding formula to provide an updated ‘base’ position. In addition, grant funding towards the cost of Council Tax Support had been incorporated into the funding formula allocation from 2013/2014.

From 2013/2014, funding for local authorities would be changing with the introduction of a new Business Rates Retention system. General grant funding from Government would be received in the form of Retained Business Rates and Revenue Support Grant.

Details of the provisional Finance Settlement had been issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on 19 December 2012. This settlement information had been used for the draft budget. Reported that the final settlement had very recently been received which revealed that Taunton Deane would receive £55 less than that initially reported by the DCLG.

The provisional settlement included a two-year ‘funding baseline’ which was effectively the grant settlement before local adjustments for Business Rates Retention, as summarised below:-

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>2012/13
£k</th><th>2013/14
£k</th><th>2014/15
£k</th></tr>
<tr><td>Formula Funding</td><td>5,310</td><td>5,024</td><td rowspan="2">4,910</td></tr>
<tr><td>Council Tax Support Funding</td><td>n/a</td><td>638</td></tr>
<tr><td>Council Tax Freeze 2011/12 Grant</td><td>138</td><td>138</td><td>138</td></tr>
<tr><td>Homelessness Prevention Grant</td><td>141</td><td>122</td><td>122</td></tr>
<tr><td>Total Funding Baseline</td><td>5,589</td><td>5,922</td><td>5,170</td></tr>
</table>

The Funding Baseline provided the ‘pot’ for Taunton Deane’s funding, which was then split into two distinct headings:-

	2013/14 £k	2014/15 £k	Change
Revenue Support Grant	3,556	2,731	-23.2%
Business Rates Funding Baseline	2,366	2,439	3.1%
Total Funding Baseline	5,922	5,170	-12.7%

The National Non Domestic Rates 1 (NNDR1) for 2013/2014 had been approved by Full Council on 24 January 2013. The projected Business Rates income from the NNDR1 had to be used alongside the “Total Funding Baseline” in the above table to produce the net funding position for budgeting purposes. Taking the NNDR1 into account the Council’s funding under Business Rates Retention was projected to be £102,000 below the Baseline for 2013/2014:-

	2013/14 £k	2014/15 £k
Net Business Rates Yield per NNDR1	38,395	39,890
Share passed to Government, County and Fire authorities	-22,917	- 23,934
Share retained by TDBC	15,478	15,956
Tariff paid to Government	-13,214	- 13,619
2013/14 Budget - Retained Business Rates Income	**2,264**	**2,337**
TDBC Business Rates Baseline (see previous table)	2,366	2,438
Impact of forecast Business Rates Yield on Funding	-102	-101

Unlike the current grant system, where the Council's formula grant was fixed for the year, retained income from Business Rates funding would ultimately be based on the Business Rates outturn for the year. This introduced a new financial risk to the Council's budget. The figures as set out above would be used for budgeting purposes, and Business Rates funding would need to be incorporated into budget monitoring arrangements from 2013/2014 onwards.

The Budget for Funding was therefore proposed as follows:-

	2013/14 £k	2014/15 £k	Change %
Revenue Support Grant	3,556	2,731	-23.2%
Business Rates Retained Income	2,264	2,337	3.2%
Total Funding Estimate	**5,820**	**5,068**	**-12.9%**

New Homes Bonus Grant (NHB)

The New Homes Bonus (NHB) Grant had been in place since 2011/2012. It was funding allocated by the Government which incentivised or rewarded housing growth. The NHB grant was non-ringfenced which meant the Council would be free to decide how to use it.

Each year's Grant allocation would be payable for a six year period, so that from the sixth year of the scheme (2016/2017) onwards the Council should receive total annual NHB grant funding based on six years' grant allocations. This would provide an incentive to continue supporting housing growth to maintain and increase this funding stream.

In December 2012 the Government had announced the Provisional NHB Grant allocation of £1,726,671 for 2013/2014. Of this sum, £391,980 had been included in the draft budget for 2013/2014, allowing the Council to continue to support service delivery and ensure that the benefits of growth were maximized.

Within the Executive's final budget proposals, it was recommended that £2,375,000 of New Homes Bonus funding should be allocated to infrastructure projects to support economic growth and regeneration. Types of scheme were likely to fall into the following categories:-

- Additional flood prevention to enable the future growth of Taunton;
- Improvements to transport infrastructure and access; and
- Investment in key sites to improve their readiness for development for business, retail and leisure.

This allocation would commit the totality of NHB Grant received up to 2013/2014, and would include the use of the £1,040,000 currently held in the NHB Reserve.

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Administration Grant

Reported that this Grant was separate to the general funding provided through Revenue Support Grant and Business Rates. The provisional grant allocation for 2013/2014 was £692,000 which was £41,000 (5.6%) less than the grant for 2012/2013. This reduction had been taken into account within the MTFP.

Council Tax Base

The Government had recently issued new legislation, The Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, effective from 30 November 2012. These regulations updated the rules for calculating the tax base for the district as a whole, and for each town/parish area within it, reflecting:-

- technical changes in Council Tax charges; and
- the introduction of the localised Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme (replacing the subsidised Council Tax Benefit system from April 2013)

The Council Tax Base of 37,280.60 Band D Equivalents, including the adjustment for Council Tax Support, had been approved at Full Council on 24 January 2013.

Council Tax for 2013/2014

Reported that a Council Tax Freeze for 2013/2014 had again been proposed.

Noted that the Council Tax calculation and formal tax setting resolution was to be considered separately. However, a Council Tax Freeze would mean that the Band D Council Tax would remain at £135.19. The Band D taxpayer would therefore receive all the services provided by the Council in 2012/2013 at a cost of £2.59 per week.

The Council Tax Base for 2013/2014 was 37,280.60 Band D Equivalents. The draft budget estimate for Council Tax income was therefore 37,280.60 x £135.19 = £5,039,960 (excluding Parishes and Special Expenses).

Council Tax Freeze Grant

The Council Tax Freeze Grant related to 2011/2012 of £137,000 per year had been rolled into the main Finance Settlement. The Council Tax Freeze Grant related to 2012/2013 was £140,000 based on the additional income a 2.5% Tax Increase would have generated for the Council, and was receivable for one year only.

Within the provisional Finance Settlement, the Government had confirmed its intention to offer a further Tax Freeze incentive scheme for 2013/2014, by offering Councils a grant equivalent to a 1% tax increase in lieu of a tax freeze. As a tax freeze was being recommended, the estimated Council Tax Freeze grant of £57,000 had been included within the Draft Budget. The Grant would be paid for two years only.

The Government had confirmed that Parish Councils would continue to be excluded from the Council Tax Freeze scheme, but any increase in Special Expenses levied by Taunton Deane for the unparished area of Taunton would count against an option to claim the Council Tax Freeze Grant for the Council.

Special Expenses / Unparished Area Budget

Special Expenses represented costs specifically arising in the Unparished area of Taunton. The Special Expenses budget in 2012/2013 was £47,380, which was a Band D Equivalent charge per year of £2.92.

The Draft Budget for 2013/2014 included a Tax Freeze for the Unparished area – the same as the Council's basic tax rate. The Band D charge for the Unparished area was therefore proposed to remain at £2.92 per year.

The tax base for the Unparished area of Taunton in 2013/2014 was 14,115.83 Band D Equivalents. The draft budget for Special Expenses was therefore 14,115.83 x £2.92 = £41,220.

Reported that the estimated funding raised from tax payers for Special Expenses had reduced in 2013/2014 as a result of the Council Tax Support scheme and related reduction in the tax base. At its last meeting, Full Council had approved an allocation of £6,500 as a share of the Council Tax Support Grant Funding included in the Finance Settlement.

The total draft budget and funding for the Unparished Area was therefore as follows:-

	2013/14 £
Expenditure: Various Projects and Works, subject to bids to Unparished Area Panel	47,720
Total	**47,720**
Funded By: Special Expenses (Council tax) TDBC Budget (notional share of CTS Grant Funding)	 41,220 6,500

Total	**47,720**

Access to the Fund was subject to a bid process during the year. The previous ring-fence of a sum of £15,000 for Youth Grants had been removed. It was proposed that the Unparished Area Panel should continue to receive bids (which could include bids related to youth initiatives) and consider these against the total budget.

Council Tax Support (CTS) Grant and Funding for Parishes

As referred to above, the Government had included grant funding towards the cost of Council Tax Support (CTS) within the provisional Finance Settlement. There was an expectation, albeit non-statutory, that a proportion of this funding would be passed down to parishes to reflect their reduction in Council Tax income as a result of the CTS Adjustment to their tax bases.

The timing of the announcement from Government in respect of this tax base adjustment and funding position had resulted in a grant amount being notified to each Parish to enable them to 'safely' set their precepts.

The total 'funding' for CTS to be passed on to Parishes, including the Unparished area, had been included in the draft budget as follows:-

	£k
Total Funding within Provisional Settlement	638.3
Allocation to Parish and Town Councils	42.3
Allocation to Unparished Area Budget	6.5
Amount retained by TDBC to offset Council Tax reduction	589.5

Further reported that the draft Budget Proposals for 2013/2014 incorporated the provisional Settlement information and the measures that were proposed to address the overall budget gap in line with the approved Budget Strategy.

The draft Budget had closed the Budget Gap in full as shown in the following table. It included the implementation of a range of Service Options that reduced the underlying Base Budget position. The final adjustments to the draft Budget included one-off spending proposals in recognition of the short term nature of the Freeze Grant for 2013/2014 and the need to address the Budget Gap for 2014/2015 and beyond.

Updated 2013/2014 Budget Gap

Ref			£k
2013/14 Budget Gap (Corporate Scrutiny 29 November 2012)			**496**
	Less: Initial Risk Allowance (29 Nov 2012) removed		-160
	Add:		
1	Land Charges net budget update	40	
2	DLO Net Direct Costs – inflation and base updates	56	
			96
	Less:		
3	Provisional Finance Settlement	-184	
4	Revenues and Benefits	-100	
5	DLO Transformation Savings	-90	
6	Other minor changes	-14	
			-388
	2013/14 Budget Gap as at 21 December 2012 Per Members' Budget Consultation Pack		**44**
7	Support Service Recharges	-65	
8	Final move to detailed estimates	65	
9	Updated Business Rates NNDR1 forecast	33	
10	Service Options	-197	
			-164
	2013/14 Budget Gap at 24 January 2013 Corporate Scrutiny		**-120**
11	Council Tax Freeze	101	
12	Council Tax Freeze Grant (for 2 years only)	-57	
13	Welfare support (one-of in 2013/14)	25	
14	Weed control	35	
15	Extreme Weather contingency (one-off in 2013/14)	16	
	Budget Gap/Surplus		**Nil**

Noted that a detailed explanation for all of the proposals listed above were included in the report.

Reported that the Executive was minded to implement savings from a range of Service Options totalling £197,000, as summarised in the table below.

	£
Retained Finance Training	3,000
ICT Client and System Costs	11,000
Parking Services Staffing	30,000
Strategy Unit - Operating Costs	6,500
Public Relations - Operating Costs	5,500
Nature Reserves funding	2,000
Christmas Lights funding	10,000

	£
Grounds Maintenance Budget not required	47,600
Public Conveniences	4,500
Open Spaces - Hanging Baskets	4,000
Housing Options funded by Homelessness Prevention Grant	43,760
External Audit fee savings	25,000
CEO/Directors - Operating Costs	3,810
SUBTOTAL	**196,670**

Noted that Fees and Charges for 2013/2014 had been approved by Full Council on 11 December 2012, and the impact of these had been included in the draft Budget.

DLO Trading Account

As part of the DLO transformation, a number of proposed financial simplifications had been completed for the street cleansing and public toilet services during 2012/2013. This, in conjunction with the removal of fleet maintenance as an in house function, and the movement of some employees and functions within the DLO, had led to a reduction in the number of individual DLO trading accounts.

The changes to the normal week pattern, with a planned reduction of working hours from 39 to 37 per week, had created financial savings estimated at £170,000 (£90,000 General Fund, £80,000 Housing Revenue Account).

Taking these factors into account, the DLO Trading Account continued to budget for a net surplus of £101,000 as follows:-.

DLO Trading Account 2013/14	**Costs £k**	**Income £k**	**Net £k**
Grounds	2,371	(2,488)	(117)
Building	3,521	(3,490)	31
Nursery	100	(115)	(15)
Grand Totals	**5,992**	**(6,093)**	**(101)**

The forecast reserves position for 2013/2014 remained positive and provided some resilience to volatility in trading performance and future investment needs.

Deane Helpline Trading Account

The Deane Helpline was a stand-alone trading account service. In 2013/2014 the estimated deficit was £65,000, a reduction of £12,000 compared to the budget for 2012/2013. This deficit would need to be funded by the General Fund.

The draft budget was based on charges increasing by 2.6%, as previously approved by Full Council, and which was in line with the increases applied to service charges under the direction of the Government. This increased the weekly charges for existing clients by 25p to £4.40. Weekly charges for new clients would be increased by 11p to £4.54.

The price increase for new clients introduced in November 2010 would continue to adjust the financial position and correct the loss making problems in the service over the next few years as the ratio of customers on the old charges was reduced and those on the new charges increased.

The summary trading account was as follows:-

Deane Helpline Trading Unit Estimates	**2012/13 £k**	**2013/14 £k**
Direct Operating Costs	915	972
Recharges	94	77
Income	(932)	(984)
Estimated Deficit	**77**	**65**

Minimum Revenue Provision Policy

Before the start of each financial year, the Council was required to determine the basis on which it would provide for the repayment of borrowing undertaken for the purpose of financing capital expenditure. This annual provision, known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), was designed to ensure that authorities made prudent provision to cover the continuing costs of their borrowing.

In 2008, the Government became less prescriptive offering Councils a number of options for calculating MRP. For the current financial year, the Council had determined to calculate MRP as follows:-

- for supported borrowing, 4% on outstanding debt;
- for unsupported borrowing, the debt associated with asset divided by the estimated useful life of the asset; and
- for capital grants and contributions to third parties, 4% (or 1/25th) per year on a straight line basis.

It was proposed the above policy remained in place for 2013/2014.

Draft General Fund Budget Summary 2013/2014

The following table compared the draft proposed budget with the original budget for the current year. The table provided a reconciliation to the Council's Basic Council Tax Requirement of £5,039,960:-

	Original Estimate 2012/13 £	Draft Estimate 2013/14 £
Total Spending on Services	13,276,860	13,372,730
Capital Charges Credit	(2,434,180)	(2,537,430)
Revenue Contribution to Capital	330,410	524,590
Interest payable on Loans	264,430	0
Minimum Revenue Provision	663,970	452,950
Interest Income	(67,440)	(317,750)
Transfers to/from Earmarked Reserves	309,480	1,171,220
Transfer to General Reserves – Previous Years commitments	39,900	0
AUTHORITY EXPENDITURE	**12,383,430**	**12,666,310**
Less: New Homes Bonus	(1,039,720)	(1,726,670)
Less: Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	(103,600)	(3,556,140)
Less: Retained Business Rates (RBR)	(5,206,870)	(2,263,980)
Less: Council Tax Freeze Grant*	(277,000)	(57,000)
(Surplus)/Deficit on Collection Fund	(184,200)	(22,560)
Expenditure to be financed by District Council Tax	**5,572,040**	**5,039,960**
Divided by Council Tax Base	41,216.39	37,280.60
Council Tax @ Band D	**£135.19**	**£135.19**
Cost per week per Band D equivalent	**£2. 59**	**£2.59**

As stated above, the Council prepared its annual budget within the context of the MTFP. This provided estimates of the budget requirement and budget gap into future years. The following table provided a summary of the current indicative MTFP:-

	2013/14 £k	2014/15 £k	2015/16 £k	2016/17 £k	2017/18 £k
Net Expenditure	11,464	11,994	12,724	13,237	13,594
Financed By:					
Retained Business Rates	(2,264)	(2,337)	(2,396)	(2,457)	(2,519)
Revenue Support Grant	(3,556)	(2,731)	(2,047)	(1,610)	(1,260)
Tax Freeze Grant	(57)	(57)	0	0	0
Council Tax	(5,587)	(5,676)	(5,791)	(5,908)	(6,027)
Predicted Budget Gap	**0**	**1,193**	**2,490**	**3,262**	**3,788**

Noted that the above estimates included the following main assumptions related to funding:-

- Revenue Support Grant for 2013/2014 and 2014/2015 were as set out in the provisional Finance Settlement. Retained Business Rates for 2013/2014 was based on the NNDR1 for the year. Estimated funding in subsequent years was projected to increase in line with inflation. Net funding from the two elements combined was estimated to reduce by c.10% year-on-year for the subsequent three years. In addition it was assumed that the £137,000 Freeze Grant related to 2011/2012 would be removed in 2015/2016; and

- Council Tax would increase by 0% in 2013/2014, then by 2% per year thereafter.

Beyond 2013/2014, the MTFP included anticipated inflationary pressures related to staffing pay awards, price inflation on services and major contracts, as well as the estimated funding position over the next five years. The MTFP also assumed a number of fees and charges would increase each year in line with inflation.

General Reserves

Further reported that the reserves position was part of the overall financial framework that underpinned the Budget Strategy. The Section 151 Officer had reviewed the acceptable minimum reserves position in light of the prospective changes to Local Government funding reform, welfare reform and other risks which were likely to require a higher minimum reserves balance be maintained in future.

As a result, it was being recommended that the minimum acceptable reserves position should be increased to £1,500,000 (from £1,250,000), or £1,250,000 if funds were allocated to ‘invest to save’ initiatives. The Draft Budget for 2013/2014 would maintain reserves well above this minimum, but the MTFP showed that the Council was expected to face significant financial pressures in the medium term as shown in the following table:-

General Reserves Forecast

	2013/14 £k	2014/15 £k	2015/16 £k	2016/17 £k	2017/18 £k
Estimated Balance B/F	3,079	3,079	1,886	(604)	(3,866)
Predicted Budget Gap	0	(1,193)	(2,490)	(3,262)	(3,788)
Estimated Balance C/F	**3,079**	**1,886**	**(604)**	**(3,866)**	**(7,654)**

Clearly the Council would not end up with the financial deficit as shown in this forecast, but this exemplified the scale of the financial challenge over the medium term. The Council would need to plan to deliver a sustainable financial position as part of the Corporate Business Plan and supporting financial strategy.

The Council’s Section 151 Officer also had a duty in accordance with The Local Government Act 2003 to comment, as part of the budget setting process, on the robustness of the budget plans. In her response, Shirlene Adam had stated that she believed the Council’s reserves to be adequate and the budget estimates used in preparing the 2013/2014 budget to be robust.

Noted that Equalities Impact Assessments had been undertaken on proposed budget savings items in line with the Council’s statutory obligations. Copies of the assessments were submitted to enable them to be taken fully into account by Members in confirming the recommended budget proposals for 2013/2014.

Resolved that Full Council be recommended to agree the Draft General Fund Revenue Budget for 2013/2014 and that:-

(a) the Section 151 Officer's Statement of Robustness, which applied to the whole budget including General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Budget proposals be noted and that the recommended increase to minimum acceptable level of reserves to £1,500,000, or £1,250,000 if funds were allocated to invest to save initiatives, be approved;

(b) the Draft General Fund Revenue Budget 2013/2014, including a Basic Council Tax Requirement budget of £5,039,960 and Special Expenses of £41,220 be approved;

(c) the transfer of any under/overspend in the 2012/2013 General Revenue Account Outturn to/from the General Fund Reserves be approved;

(d) The Service Options set out in the report be approved and the Equalities Impact Assessments provided in the report and appendices be considered as part of the budget decision process;

(e) the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy with MRP calculated as follows, be approved:-

- for supported borrowing, 4% on outstanding debt; and
- for unsupported borrowing, the debt associated with the asset divided by the estimated useful life of the asset; and
- for capital grants and contributions to third parties, 4% (or 1/25th) per year on a straight line basis; and

(f) The General Reserves position and Medium Term Financial Plan projections, and the continuing financial challenge to address the Budget Gap for future years be noted.

14. **Draft Capital Programme Budget Estimates 2013/2014**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the proposed General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programmes for 2013/2014.

2012/2013 General Fund Capital Programme

In December 2012 the Government had provided a further allocation of £95,850 Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) funding to the Council for the current financial year. It was recommended that this sum should be allocated as a Supplementary Estimate, increasing the approved 2012/2013 Capital Budget for DFGs from £696,880 to £792,730.

2013/2014 General Fund Capital Programme

The Draft General Fund Five-Year Capital Programme 2013/2014 to 2017/2018 totalled £7,337,000. This included future schemes that had already been approved during this year, plus further funded schemes as identified in the Members' Budget

Consultation Pack. The following table showed the schemes included in the 2013/2014 Draft Programme:-

Draft General Fund Capital Programme 2013/2014 to 2017/2018

Project	Budget Approval £k	13/14 £k	14/15 £k	15/16 £k	16/17 £k	17/18 £k	Total £k
Schemes Approved During 2012/13							
Orchard Car Park (Paul Street Multi Storey) Major Repairs	503	126	126	126	125	0	503
Swimming Pool Refurbishment	1,270	1,270	0	0	0	0	1,270
Loan to Somerset County Cricket Club	1,000	1,000	0	0	0	0	1,000
Subtotal	**2,773**	**2,396**	**126**	**126**	**125**	**0**	**2,773**
Schemes Submitted for Approval:							
Annual RCCO Funded Schemes							
PC Refresh	60	60	60	60	60	60	300
Members IT Equipment	4	4	4	4	4	4	20
DLO Vehicles	180	180	180	180	180	180	900
DLO Plant	23	23	23	23	23	22	114
Waste Containers (until 2016/17)	50	50	50	50	50	0	200
Play Equipment – Grants to Clubs	46	46	46	46	46	46	230
Play Equipment – Grants to Parishes	20	20	20	20	20	20	100
Play Equipment – Replacement	20	20	20	20	20	20	100
Subtotal	403	403	403	403	403	352	1,964
Grant Funded Schemes							
Disabled Facilities Grant	287	287	300	310	320	310	1,527
Affordable Housing Funded Schemes							
Grants to Registered Providers (Affordable Housing)	349	349	425	171	0	0	945
Capital Receipt Funded Schemes							
Taunton/Bridgwater Canal Grant	10	10	10	0	0	0	20
Revenue Reserve Funded Schemes							
Gypsy Site (site to be confirmed)	108	108	0	0	0	0	108
Sub-total	**1,157**	**1,157**	**1,138**	**884**	**723**	**662**	**4,564**
Total Funded Schemes	**3,930**	**3,553**	**1,264**	**1,010**	**848**	**662**	**7,337**

Reported that approval was sought for budget allocations of £3,930,000 of capital expenditure. £3,553,000 of this sum was currently estimated to be required in 2013/2014. The shaded area in the table identified expenditure requirements from capital bids provided by services that would be subject to approval within future budget reports.

Noted that a detailed explanation for all of the proposals listed above were included in the report.

Funding for capital investment by the Council could come from a variety of sources including:-

- Capital Receipts;
- Grant Funding;
- Capital Contributions (for example from another Local Authority or Section 106 Agreement funding);
- Revenue budgets/reserves (often referred as RCCO – Revenue Contributions to Capital Outlay); and
- Borrowing.

The estimated balance of uncommitted funds as at March 2013 would be £3,465,000. This included the allocation of New Homes Bonus funding to date as capital resources. In addition, further resources were projected to be available during the five-year term of the Programme.

The table below summarised the proposed funding of the five-year Initial Capital Programme:-

Draft Capital Programme 5-Year Funding Summary

Funding Type	**Total Funding Estimate (Table 3) £k**	**Draft Programme Expenditure (Table 1) £k**	**Total Uncommitted Funding £k**
Housing RTB Capital Receipts	560	0	560
Affordable Housing Capital Receipts	945	945	0
General Capital Receipts	1,138	790	348
Growth Point Funding	128	0	128
Planning Delivery Grant	46	0	46
Capital Grant Reserves	2,027	2,027	0
RCCO – Annual Revenue Budget	2,467	2,467	0
RCCO – Earmarked Reserves	108	108	0
Borrowing (SCCC Loan)	1,000	1,000	0
Total	**8,419**	**7,337**	**1,082**

A detailed explanation as to where the sources of the above funding originated was supplied for the information of Members.

Further reported that in addition to the proposed Initial Capital Programme a number of services had identified projects that had yet to be prioritised. There were also a number of projects that might come out of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Property Services review which would need to be considered as part of an updated five-year programme. Such proposals would be presented for consideration as soon as possible during 2013/2014.

The following table detailed the bids that had been received but were not included in the Initial Capital Programme:-

Capital Bids Not Included in Initial Capital Programme

Project	13/14 £k	14/15 £k	15/16 £k	16/17 £k	17/18 £k	Total £k
Environmental Services						
Taunton Crematorium – Book of Remembrance	15	0	0	0	0	15
Taunton Cemetery Extension	50	50	0	0	0	100
Wellington Cemetery Extension	0	0	50	0	0	50
Crematorium Chapel Roof	0	90	90	0	0	180
Housing Services						
Grants to Registered Providers	0	0	254	425	425	1,104
Disabled Facilities Grants	163	170	180	190	220	923
Private Sector Health and Safety	22	24	26	28	30	130
Energy Efficiency	25	140	160	180	180	685
Landlord Accreditation Scheme	60	60	60	60	60	300
Wessex Home Improvement Loans	90	120	180	180	180	750
Deane Helpline Lifeline	30	31	31	31	32	155
Total Unfunded Bids 2013/14 – 2017/18	**455**	**685**	**1,031**	**1,094**	**1,127**	**4,392**

Reported that the total for unfunded bids was £4,392,000 over the five-year period. Compared with the £1,082,000 available resources balance, there was a funding gap of £3,310,000 which was expected to grow significantly once all bids were received.

There was an option to consider using future New Homes Bonus Grant allocations for 2014/2015 onwards. The projected annual grant was between £2-£3,000,000 from 2014/2015 onwards and currently £392,000 of the grant was committed each year for the annual revenue budget.

Other funding options included the Community Infrastructure Levy (for certain prescribed projects), borrowing or using general reserves, as well as seeking external sources of finance.

2013/14 Draft Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme

The proposed Draft HRA Capital Programme 2013/2014 totalled £19,600,000. This was part of a Five-Year Capital Expenditure Estimate of some indicative

£50,200,000 for the period 2013/2014 to 2017/2018. The programme reflected the priorities set out in the updated 30-Year HRA Business Plan which Full Council agreed last year.

The following table detailed the Draft Five-Year Programme for the schemes included in the 2013/2014 proposed Programme. As well as expenditure on continuing capital maintenance and improvements, the programme this year included expenditure on new Council housing.

Draft HRA Capital Programme 2013/2014 to 2017/2018

Project	**Budget Approval £k**	**13/14 £k**	**14/15 £k**	**15/16 £k**	**16/17 £k**	**17/18 £k**	**5-Year Total £k**
Capital Maintenance and Improvements							
Major Works	5,701.4	5,701.4	5,701.4	5,701.5	5,735.5	5,735.4	28,575.2
Improvements	735.6	735.6	735.6	735.6	701.6	701.6	3,610.0
Related Assets	124.2	124.2	124.2	124.2	124.2	124.2	621.0
Exceptional Extensive Works	258.8	258.8	258.8	258.8	258.8	258.8	1,294.0
Disabled Adaptations	525.0	525.0	551.3	578.8	607.8	638.1	2,901.0
IT Improvements	200.0	200.0	200.0	100.0	0	0	500.0
Extensions	160.0	160.0	160.0	160.0	160.0	160.0	800.0
Subtotal	**7,705.0**	**7,705.0**	**7,731.3**	**7,658.9**	**7,587.9**	**7,618.1**	**38,301.2**
Social Housing Development Programme	4,200.0	2,100.0	2,100.0	?	?	?	4,200.0
Creechbarrow Road Project	7,667.0	5,000.0	2,667.0	0	0	0	7,667.0
TOTALS	**19,572.0**	**14,805.0**	**12,498.3**	**7,658.9**	**7,587.9**	**7,618.1**	**50,168.2**

Reported that approval was sought for Capital Expenditure of £19,572,000. This comprised the Capital Maintenance and Improvement Works Programme budget for 2013/2014 at £7,705,000, plus £4,200,000 for Social Housing Development Phase 1 sites, and £7,667,000 for the Creechbarrow Road, Taunton Project. The shaded amounts for 2014/2015 – 2017/2018 were indicative only at this stage.

Noted that a detailed explanation of all of the proposals listed above were included in the report.

Reported that it was proposed that the HRA Capital Programme would effectively be funded in two parts.

The continuing capital maintenance and improvement would be fully funded from the Major Repairs Reserve and it was proposed that this Social Housing Development Programme (SHDP) Capital Budget would be funded through a combination of:-

- Revenue Contribution – from the Social Housing Development Fund;
- Capital Receipts – from Right to Buy and other HRA asset sales; and

- Borrowing.

HRA Capital Debt Position

In March 2012 the Council had to borrow £85,200,000 to 'buy-out' of the old HRA Subsidy system and move to self-financing. This sum was added to the £14,500,000 residual debt within the HRA from the previous system. The overall capital debt position for the HRA was summarised as follows:-

	£k
Historic Capital Financing Requirement (HRA CFR)	14.5
Self financing debt	85.2
Current HRA Capital Financing Requirement (capital debt balance)	99.7
Borrowing "headroom"	16.1
Capital Borrowing/Debt Limit	115.8

The HRA Business Plan had been set on the basis that the total existing HRA debt balance of £99,700,000 would be repaid by 2030. The HRA Revenue budget included provision for the related principal and interest costs and the Business Plan indicated this repayment model remained affordable.

There was sufficient borrowing headroom to permit the potential additional borrowing of £2,400,000 from the SHDP Phase 1 developments and £7,600,000 for the Creechbarrow Road scheme. This headroom was projected to increase as the self financing settlement debt was redeemed.

Further reported that the Draft General Fund and HRA Capital Programmes were presented to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 24 January 2013 for review and comment. No specific amendments to the Draft Budget were formally recommended by the Committee.

Noted that Equalities Impact Assessments had been undertaken on proposed budget savings items in line with the Council's statutory obligations. Copies of the assessments were submitted to enable them to be taken fully into account by Members in confirming the recommended budget proposals for 2013/2014.

Resolved that Full Council be recommended to approve:-

(a) a Supplementary Estimate of £95,850 in the 2012/2013 Capital Programme for Disabled Facilities Grants, to be funded by additional Government grant received in December 2012;

(b) the General Fund Capital Programme Budget of £3,930,000. Of this amount, £3,553,000 be budgeted to be spent in 2013/2014 with the remainder in the following three years; and

(c) the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme of £19,572,000. Of this amount, £14,805,000 be budgeted to be spent in 2013/2014 with the remainder in the following two years.

15. **Draft Housing Revenue Account Estimates 2013/2014**

Considered report previously circulated, which set out in detail the proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Estimates for 2013/2014.

2013/14 would be the second year of operating the HRA under self-financing arrangements. The Council remained on course to repay the settlement debt of £85,200,000 by 2030. The lower cost of borrowing this sum was reflected in the Draft Budget and had enabled the Council to fund the updated proposals in the HRA Business Plan and increase funding for housing development.

The Proposed Budget was based on assumptions and estimates on expenditure requirements and income projections, in order to deliver the updated Business Plan that was approved by Full Council in December 2012.

Dwelling rents for more than 6,000 properties provided annual income of over £23,000,000 for the HRA.

Local authorities had both the power and duty to set their own rent. However, in December 2000 Central Government had set out a policy for social rents in England to be fair, affordable and less confusing for tenants. Local Authorities and Housing Associations had been requested to bring rents into line over several years, using a national formula to set a target rent (also called 'formula rent') based on property values and average manual earnings in each area.

The previous subsidy system required Local Authorities to raise their 'average weekly rent' to meet the 'target' or 'formula' rent by the convergence date of 2015/2016, with a 'guideline rent' being the amount the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) assumed should be charged, but to avoid unaffordable increases in any one year must not exceed the 'limit rent'. The Council continued to work towards the convergence date of 2015/2016 and had taken this into account in the draft rent calculations.

With the Retail Price Index for 2012 at 2.60%, increasing the actual average weekly rent paid by tenants to the target rent would make the rent paid higher than the guideline rent.

It was therefore proposed that the average weekly rent for dwellings for 2013/2014 should be set at the guideline rent of £77.21, an increase of 4.9% or £3.61 per week (and the amount used by DCLG when calculating Taunton Deane's debt settlement under HRA self-financing).

This would provide Taunton Deane with the funds expected to repay its settlement debt and keep rents charged within self-financing principles. It also met the Rent Policy as approved in the HRA Business Plan.

Noted that the various rents for 2013/2014 calculated from the formulae were as follows:-

	2012/13	2013/14	% increase

Average weekly rent	*actually paid by tenants*	£73.60		
Formula (target) rent	*'fair rent' charged by all social housing providers*		£79.93	8.60%
Guideline rent	*an affordable step towards formula (target) rent*		£77.21	4.90%
Limit rent	*maximum acceptable step towards formula (target) rent*		£78.18	5.82%
Proposed average weekly rent		£73.60	£77.21	
Total increase over previous year £p Total increase over previous year %		£5.11 7.45%	£3.61 4.90%	

Reported that Members could choose not to increase rents to the guideline amount. However, each 0.5% rent change would cost (or save) tenants an average of 37p per week (£19.14 per year) and would bring in (or reduce) HRA income by around £114,600 per year.

The £85,200,000 self-financing debt settlement in March 2012, was predicated on the assumption that Local Authority landlords would reach rent convergence by 2015/2016. Therefore if the rent increase for 2013/2014 was lower, then either savings in HRA costs would need to be made or dwelling-rent increases in future years would need to be higher.

Around 8% of HRA income came from non-dwelling rents, charges for services and facilities and contributions to HRA costs from leaseholders and others. It was proposed to increase these budget lines generally by 2.6% although garages rented by private tenants and owner occupiers were proposed to increase by 5%.

The HRA expenditure budgets were reported and significant changes included the following:-

- Management Expenses – These included the costs of the teams administering tenancies, collecting rents and arranging or planning maintenance work as well as a share of the Council's other relevant costs. Key points for 2013/2014 were:-

  (a) The budget included standard corporate inflation assumptions;
  (b) The cost of the Development Team had been included in line with the HRA Business Plan; and
  (c) The budget for Transfer Removal Grants had been increased from £30,000 to £60,000 for two years.

- Maintenance – The cost for 2013/2014 was around £960 per property, based on the service's best estimate of work that could realistically be carried out and rising from 2012/13 by inflation only (2.6%).

- Provision for bad debts – This matched the Business Plan rise from 0.5% to 3% of income for three years from 2013/2014 due to the expected effects of

Welfare Reform. The increase in provision was £80,000 in 2013/2014.

- Depreciation – Cash reserved in the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA), had increased in line with expected national accounting rules and had been used towards £7,700,000 capital work that maintained housing stock in good condition.

- Debt Management Expenses – These related to bank charges and the costs of managing cash flow, borrowing and investments. No significant changes had been included in the budget proposals.

- Payment of Interest – The 2013/2014 budget for interest costs had reduced significantly compared to 2012/2013, reflecting the actual (discounted) rates applied to the self-financing debt settlement in March 2012. The Interest Payable budget had reduced by some £936,000, to £2,937,000 in 2013/2014. This cost was projected to reduce over the medium term as loans were repaid. This budget included a payment of £174,000 to the General Fund for "internal" borrowing by the HRA from the General Fund.

- Interest receivable – Interest income was based on average interest rates projected on to be receivable in relation to HRA balances during the year.

Also reported on appropriations, in the form of Revenue Contributions to Capital, Transfers to General Fund, Social Housing Development Fund and Provision for Repayment of Borrowing.

Further reported that as set out in the HRA Business Plan the recommended minimum unearmarked reserve balance for the HRA was £1,800,000 (approx £300 per property). There were no budgeted transfers to or from this balance in 2013/2014. The current projected balance in the current financial year was approximately £2,000,000, and this would provide some flexibility to fund additional one off costs, if required.

Further reported that the Draft Housing Revenue Account Budget was presented to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 24 January 2013 for review and comment. No specific amendments to the Draft Budget were formally recommended by the Committee.

Noted that an Equalities Impact Assessment had been included with the approved HRA Business Plan, upon which the Draft Housing Revenue Account Budget was based. A copy of the assessment was submitted to enable it to be taken fully into account by Members in confirming the recommended budget proposals for 2013/2014.

Resolved that Full Council be recommended to:-

(1) approve the average rent increase of 4.9% for 2013/2014; and

(2) agree the Draft Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2013/2014.

16. **Council Tax Setting 2013/2014**

Considered report previously circulated, which made recommendations on the level of Council Tax for 2013/2014.

The Localism Act 2011 had made significant changes to the Local Government Finance Act 1992, and now required the billing authority to calculate a Council Tax requirement for the year.

Submitted details of the Town and Parish Council Precepts (that had been received to date) for 2013/2014 which totalled £520,812.

This year, due to changes in the calculation of the Tax Base as a result of Council Tax Support, Parishes had been given an extended deadline for notifying the Council of their precept demands. Those that had not been received at the time of the meeting would be included in the Council Tax Setting report to Full Council on 26 February 2013.

The increase in the average Band D Council Tax for Town and Parish Councils was 8.7% which resulted in an average Band D Council Tax figure of £13.97 (subject to final precepts being received) (£12.85 for 2012/2013).

Under the new governance arrangements for the Police, the new Police and Crime Commissioner had announced last November the intention to freeze Council Tax for 2013/2014. The formal approval of the 2013/2014 precept was due shortly.

The provisional estimate for the precept would be £6,264,259 which resulted in a Band D Council Tax of £168.03. The precept would be adjusted by a Collection Fund contribution of £25,600.

Noted that at this stage, the precept figures for the Somerset County Council and the Devon and Somerset Fire Authority were shown as provisional amounts, assuming a 0% increase, pending their respective approval processes. It was likely this element of the total Council Tax determination would also be included in the report to Full Council on 26 February 2013.

The estimated balance on the Council Tax Collection Fund was forecast on 15 January each year. Any surplus or deficit was shared between the County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Fire Authority and ourselves, in shares relative to our precept levels.

The estimated balance on the Council Tax Collection Fund was a surplus of £215,940. Taunton Deane's share of this amounted to £22,560, and this had been reflected in the General Fund Revenue Estimates.

Resolved that Full Council be recommended to:-

(a) Approve the following formal Council Tax Resolution, amended to reflect the proposed Council Tax Freeze in 2013/2014:-

(1) That it be noted that on 24 January 2013 the Council calculated the Council Tax Base for 2013/2014:-

(i) for the whole Council area as 37,280.60 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, as amended (the "Act"); and,

(ii) for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept related as in the attached Appendix B to these Minutes;

(2) That the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2013/2014 (excluding Parish precepts) be calculated as £5,039,960;

(3) That the following amounts be calculated for the year 2013/2014 in accordance with Sections 31 to 36 of the Act:-

(i)	£86,044,042	being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(2) of the Act taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils. *(Gross Expenditure including amount required for working balance)*
(ii)	£80,483,270	being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A(3) of the Act. *(Gross Income including reserves to be used to meet Gross Expenditure)*
(iii)	£5,560,772	being the amount by which the aggregate at 3(a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3(b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act). *(Total Demand on Collection Fund.).*
(iv)	£149.16	being the amount at 3(c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts). *(Council Tax at Band D for Borough Including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses)*
(v)	£520,812	being the aggregate amount of all special items (Parish precepts) referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act (as per the attached Appendix B). *(Parish Precepts and Special Expenses).*

(vi) £135.19 being the amount at 3(d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3(e) above by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates. *(Council Tax at Band D for Borough Excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses);*

(4) To note that Somerset County Council, Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner and Devon and Somerset Fire Authority would issue precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwellings in the Council's area;

(5) That the Council, in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, hereby sets the aggregate provisional amounts shown in the table in Appendix A to these Minutes as the amounts of Council Tax for 2013/2014 for each part of its area and for each categories of dwellings;

(6) Determine that the Council's basic amount of Council Tax for 2013/2014 was not excessive in accordance with principles approved under Section 52ZB Local Government Finance Act 1992; and

(b) Note that if the above formal Council Tax Resolution was approved the total Band D Council Tax would be as follows:-

	2012/13	2013/14	Increase
	£	£	%
Taunton Deane Borough Council	135.19	135.19	0.00%
Somerset County Council	1,027.30	1,027.30*	0.00%
Avon and Somerset Police Authority / Police and Crime Commissioner	168.03	168.03*	0.00%
Devon and Somerset Fire Authority	73.92	73.92*	0.00%
Sub-Total	**1,404.44**	**1,404.44***	0.00%
Town and Parish Council (average)	12.85	13.97*	TBC%
Total	1,417.29	1418.41*	TBC%

* provisional figures

17. **Executive Forward Plan**

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

Resolved that the Forward Plan be noted.

(The meeting ended at 8.11 pm.)

APPENDIX A

Council Tax Schedule 2013/14	Band A £	Band B £	Band C £	Band D £	Band E £	Band F £	Band G £	Band H £
	Valuation Bands							
Taunton Deane Borough Council*	90.13	105.15	120.17	135.19	165.23	195.27	225.32	270.38
Somerset County Council *	684.87	799.01	913.16	1,027.30	1,255.59	1,483.88	1,712.17	2,054.60
Avon & Somerset Police Authority *	112.02	130.69	149.36	168.03	205.37	242.71	280.05	336.06
Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Authority *	49.28	57.49	65.71	73.92	90.35	106.77	123.20	147.84
Parish / Town only (a)	9.31	10.87	12.42	13.97	17.07	20.18	23.28	27.94
Parish / Town & District (b)	99.44	116.01	132.59	149.16	182.31	215.45	248.60	298.32
Total (c)	**945.61**	**1,103.21**	**1,260.81**	**1,418.41**	**1,733.61**	**2,048.81**	**2,364.02**	**2,836.82**
Parish:								
Ash Priors	936.29	1,092.34	1,248.39	1,404.44	1,716.54	2,028.64	2,340.73	2,808.88
Ashbrittle	951.66	1,110.28	1,268.89	1,427.50	1,744.72	2,061.94	2,379.16	2,854.99
Bathealton	940.22	1,096.93	1,253.63	1,410.33	1,723.74	2,037.15	2,350.56	2,820.67
Bishops Hull	949.44	1,107.68	1,265.92	1,424.16	1,740.65	2,057.13	2,373.61	2,848.33
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone								2,864.64

	954.88	1,114.03	1,273.17	1,432.32	1,750.61	2,068.90	2,387.20	
Bradford on Tone	949.16	1,107.35	1,265.54	1,423.74	1,740.12	2,056.51	2,372.90	2,847.48
Burrowbridge	952.26	1,110.97	1,269.68	1,428.39	1,745.81	2,063.24	2,380.66	2,856.79
Cheddon Fitzpaine	947.25	1,105.13	1,263.00	1,420.88	1,736.63	2,052.38	2,368.13	2,841.76
Chipstable	947.34	1,105.22	1,263.11	1,421.00	1,736.78	2,052.56	2,368.34	2,842.01
Churchstanton*	950.48	1,108.89	1,267.31	1,425.72	1,742.55	2,059.37	2,376.20	2,851.44
Combe Florey	949.17	1,107.36	1,265.56	1,423.75	1,740.14	2,056.53	2,372.92	2,847.51
Comeytrowe	944.19	1,101.55	1,258.92	1,416.28	1,731.01	2,045.74	2,360.47	2,832.56
Corfe	943.87	1,101.18	1,258.49	1,415.80	1,730.42	2,045.05	2,359.67	2,831.60
Cotford St Luke	949.85	1,108.15	1,266.46	1,424.77	1,741.38	2,058.00	2,374.61	2,849.54
Creech St Michael	955.16	1,114.35	1,273.55	1,432.74	1,751.13	2,069.51	2,387.90	2,865.48
Durston	943.20	1,100.40	1,257.60	1,414.80	1,729.20	2,043.60	2,358.00	2,829.60
Fitzhead	953.88	1,112.86	1,271.84	1,430.82	1,748.78	2,066.73	2,384.69	2,861.63
Halse	944.92	1,102.41	1,259.90	1,417.39	1,732.36	2,047.34	2,362.31	2,834.77
Hatch Beauchamp	947.00	1,104.83	1,262.66	1,420.49	1,736.16	2,051.82	2,367.49	2,840.99
Kingston St Mary	944.92	1,102.41	1,259.89	1,417.38	1,732.35	2,047.33	2,362.30	2,834.76
Langford Budville	949.59	1,107.86	1,266.13	1,424.39	1,740.92	2,057.46	2,373.99	2,848.78
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	949.15	1,107.35	1,265.54	1,423.73	1,740.11	2,056.50	2,372.88	2,847.46

Milverton	951.29	1,109.83	1,268.38	1,426.93	1,744.02	2,061.12	2,378.21	2,853.86
Neroche	948.69	1,106.80	1,264.92	1,423.03	1,739.26	2,055.49	2,371.72	2,846.06
North Curry	951.09	1,109.61	1,268.12	1,426.64	1,743.67	2,060.70	2,377.73	2,853.28
Norton Fitzwarren	955.39	1,114.62	1,273.85	1,433.08	1,751.55	2,070.01	2,388.47	2,866.17
Nynehead	953.43	1,112.33	1,271.24	1,430.14	1,747.95	2,065.76	2,383.57	2,860.29
Oake	946.80	1,104.60	1,262.40	1,420.20	1,735.80	2,051.39	2,366.99	2,840.39
Otterford	936.29	1,092.34	1,248.39	1,404.44	1,716.54	2,028.64	2,340.73	2,808.88
Pitminster*	950.85	1,109.33	1,267.80	1,426.28	1,743.23	2,060.18	2,377.13	2,852.55
Ruishton/Thornfalcon	952.54	1,111.29	1,270.05	1,428.80	1,746.32	2,063.83	2,381.34	2,857.61
Sampford Arundel	962.54	1,122.96	1,283.38	1,443.80	1,764.65	2,085.49	2,406.34	2,887.61
Staplegrove	945.70	1,103.32	1,260.94	1,418.55	1,733.79	2,049.02	2,364.25	2,837.11
Stawley	948.70	1,106.82	1,264.94	1,423.05	1,739.29	2,055.52	2,371.75	2,846.10
Stoke St Gregory	955.01	1,114.18	1,273.35	1,432.52	1,750.86	2,069.19	2,387.53	2,865.04
Stoke St Mary	946.41	1,104.14	1,261.88	1,419.61	1,735.08	2,050.55	2,366.02	2,839.23
Taunton	938.24	1,094.61	1,250.99	1,407.36	1,720.11	2,032.85	2,345.60	2,814.72
Trull	948.39	1,106.45	1,264.52	1,422.58	1,738.71	2,054.84	2,370.97	2,845.17
Wellington	951.43	1,110.00	1,268.57	1,427.14	1,744.28	2,061.42	2,378.57	2,854.28
Wellington Without								2,846.34

	948.78	1,106.91	1,265.04	1,423.17	1,739.43	2,055.69	2,371.95	
West Bagborough	947.06	1,104.90	1,262.75	1,420.59	1,736.28	2,051.97	2,367.65	2,841.18
West Buckland*	948.85	1,106.99	1,265.13	1,423.27	1,739.56	2,055.84	2,372.12	2,846.55
West Hatch*	947.71	1,105.66	1,263.61	1,421.56	1,737.46	2,053.36	2,369.26	2,843.12
West Monkton	953.41	1,112.31	1,271.21	1,430.11	1,747.91	2,065.71	2,383.51	2,860.22
Wiveliscombe	951.53	1,110.12	1,268.71	1,427.30	1,744.48	2,061.66	2,378.84	2,854.60

(* provisional figures)

APPENDIX B

TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPTS

	2012/13			2013/14			
Parish/Town Council	**Tax Base**	**Precept Levied £**	**Council Tax Band D (£)**	**Tax Base**	**Precept Levied £**	**Council Tax Band D (£)**	**Council Tax Increase**
Ash Priors	84.83	-	-	81.46	-	-	0.00%
Ashbrittle	95.72	1,800	18.80	86.74	2,000	23.06	22.62%
Bathealton	89.28	500	5.60	84.83	500	5.89	5.25%
Bishops Hull	1,114.92	22,000	19.73	1,052.00	20,750	19.72	-0.04%

Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	1,120.81	25,185	22.47	1,021.90	28,489	27.88	24.07%	
Bradford on Tone	293.94	5,500	18.71	285.01	5,500	19.30	3.13%	
Burrowbridge	205.99	4,200	20.39	196.21	4,700	23.95	17.48%	
Cheddon Fitzpaine	643.53	10,203	15.85	598.80	9,843	16.44	3.68%	
Chipstable	133.31	1,950	14.63	129.81	2,150	16.56	13.23%	
Churchstanton	337.87	7,299	21.60	342.98	7,299	21.28	-1.49%	TBC
Combe Florey	122.05	2,250	18.44	116.50	2,250	19.31	4.76%	
Comeytrowe	2,111.95	25,000	11.84	1,967.11	23,290	11.84	0.02%	
Corfe	133.48	2,500	18.73	132.02	1,500	11.36	-39.34%	
Cotford St Luke	821.67	16,000	19.47	752.62	15,300	20.33	4.40%	
Creech St Michael	999.23	28,275	28.30	937.95	26,543.99	28.30	0.01%	
Durston	59.10	600	10.15	58.64	607.37	10.36	2.02%	
Fitzhead	122.29	2,995	24.49	113.55	2,995	26.38	7.69%	
Halse	142.58	1,800	12.62	139.03	1,800	12.95	2.55%	
Hatch Beauchamp	268.82	4,500	16.74	249.16	4,000	16.05	-4.10%	
Kingston St Mary	463.52	6,000	12.94	424.73	5,496	12.94	-0.03%	
Langford Budville	238.94	5,000	20.93	225.54	4,500	19.95	-4.65%	
Lydeard St							12.47%	

Lawrence/Tolland	208.84	3,582	17.15	199.03	3,839.23	19.29		
Milverton	624.11	12,650	20.27	562.51	12,650	22.49	10.95%	
Neroche	255.27	4,500	17.63	239.15	4,446	18.59	5.46%	
North Curry	741.43	16,500	22.25	692.23	15,366	22.20	-0.25%	
Norton Fitzwarren	931.94	25,060	26.89	903.16	25,871	28.64	6.53%	
Nynehead	164.15	4,250	25.89	165.34	4,250	25.70	-0.72%	
Oake	333.34	5,000	15.00	317.34	5,000	15.76	5.04%	
Otterford	174.06	-	-	165.11	-	-	0.00%	
Pitminster	464.42	9,500	20.46	435.08	9,500	21.84	6.74%	TBC
Ruishton/Thornfalcon	624.94	12,000	19.20	574.63	14,000	24.36	26.88%	
Sampford Arundel	127.60	4,600	36.05	121.94	4,800	39.36	9.19%	
Staplegrove	748.42	10,710	14.31	708.57	10,000	14.11	-1.38%	
Stawley	128.82	2,400	18.63	132.17	2,460	18.61	-0.10%	
Stoke St Gregory	384.63	7,000	18.20	356.14	10,000	28.08	54.28%	
Stoke St Mary	210.86	3,008	14.27	198.25	3,008	15.17	6.36%	
Taunton	16,226.62	47,380	2.92	14,115.83	41,218	2.92	0.00%	
Trull	1,032.39	14,000	13.56	992.02	18,000	18.14	33.80%	
Wellington	4,852.37	104,798	21.60	4,290.56	97,396	22.70	5.11%	

Wellington Without	304.54	5,200	17.08	293.61	5,500	18.73	9.70%	
West Bagborough	169.77	2,500	14.73	154.78	2,500	16.15	9.68%	
West Buckland	448.31	8,000	17.84	424.77	8,000	18.83	5.54%	TBC
West Hatch	143.00	2,330	16.29	136.11	2,330	17.12	5.06%	TBC
West Monkton	1,184.22	27,664	23.36	1,077.78	27,664	25.67	9.88%	
Wiveliscombe	1,128.51	23,500	20.82	1,027.90	23,500	22.86	9.79%	
Totals	41,216.39	**529,689**	12.85	37,280.60	**520,812**	13.97	8.70%	