

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Council to be held in The Shire Hall, Shuttern, Taunton on 10 July 2018 at 18:30.

Agenda

The meeting will be preceded by a Prayer to be offered by the Mayor's Chaplain.

1 Appointment of Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Simon Coles to move and Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts will second the appointment of Councillor Francesca Teresa Christine Smith as Deputy Mayor of the Borough for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

If the appointment is confirmed, the Deputy Mayor will sign the Declaration of Acceptance of Office. The Mayor will then adjourn the meeting whilst the Deputy Mayor retires to be robed. On the return of the Deputy Mayor the meeting will be resumed.

2 Minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 10 April 2018 and 23 April 2018 (attached).

3 To report any apologies for absence.

4 To receive any communications.

5 Declaration of Interests

To receive declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or personal or prejudicial interests, in accordance with the Code of Conduct, in relation to items on the agenda. Such interests need to be declared even if they have already been recorded in the Register of Interests. The personal interests of Councillors who are County Councillors or Town or Parish Councillors will automatically be recorded in the minutes.

6 To receive questions from Taunton Deane Electors under Standing Order 15.

7 Receipt of petition with well over 1100 signatures from Taunton Deane Tax Payers, calling on the Council to stop wasting taxpayers' money on a bad idea in Firepool, Taunton and drive inward investment first. Further, to work with the business community to underpin the long term prosperity of the County Town we love. A copy of the full details of the petition is attached. The petitioners have formally requested that a debate takes place at the Full Council meeting.

Once the debate has taken place the Council will decide how to respond to the petition which may include (1) to take the action requested; (2) not to take the action requested for the reasons given in the debate; (3) refer the matter for further investigation; or (4) refer the matter to the Council's Executive for final decision.

- 8 To receive any further petitions or deputations under Standing Orders 16 and 17.
- 9 Viability Assessment through Section 106 Agreements. To consider a Motion proposed by Councillor Habib Farbahi, seconded by Councillor Simon Coles (attached). An assessment of the implications for the Council should the Motion be carried is also attached.
- 10 Inter Authority Agreement and Constitutional Matters. Report of the Assistant Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer (attached), to be presented by Councillor John Williams (attached).
- 11 Capital Loan to Somerset Coast YMCA by Taunton Deane Borough Council. Report of the Assistant Director - Business Development (attached), to be presented by Councillor Mark Edwards.

Also see Confidential Appendix A at agenda item No.15.

- 12 Approval of Redundancies (Transformation) and Technical Change to Pension Discretions Policy. Report of the Transformation HR Lead (attached), to be presented by Councillor John Williams.

Also see Confidential Appendices A-C at agenda item No. 17.

- 13 Part I - To deal with written questions to, and receive recommendations from, the Executive:-

Councillor John Williams - Recommendation relating to Financial Monitoring – Outturn 2017/2018 (attached).

- 14 Part II - To receive reports from the following Members of the Executive (attached):-

- (a) Councillor John Williams - Leader of the Council;
- (b) Councillor Jane Warmington - Community Leadership;
- (c) Councillor Terry Beale - Housing Services;
- (d) Councillor Patrick Berry - Environmental Services and Climate Change;
- (e) Councillor Mark Edwards - Economic Development, Asset Management, Arts and Culture, Tourism and Communications;
- (f) Councillor Roger Habgood - Planning and Transportation;
- (g) Councillor Vivienne Stock-Williams - Sports, Parks and Leisure; and
- (h) Councillor Andrew Sully - Corporate Resources.

The following items are likely to be considered after the exclusion of the press and public because of the likelihood that exempt information would otherwise be disclosed relating to the Clause set out below of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 15 Confidential Appendix A - Capital Loan to Somerset Coast YMCA by Taunton Deane Borough Council (attached), See also agenda item No. 11. Paragraph 3 - Financial or business affairs of any particular person.
- 16 A Proposed Commercial Loan relating to premises in Taunton. Report of the Assistant Director - Resources (attached), to be presented by Councillor Mark Edwards. Paragraph 3 - Financial or business affairs of any particular person.
- 17 Approval of Redundancies (Transformation) - Confidential Appendices A-C (attached). See also agenda item No. 12. Paragraph 2 - Information which would reveal the identity of an individual.

Bruce Lang
Assistant Chief Executive

16 July 2018

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussions.

There is time set aside at the beginning of most meetings to allow the public to ask questions.

Speaking under “Public Question Time” is limited to 4 minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes. The Committee Administrator will keep a close watch on the time and the Chairman will be responsible for ensuring the time permitted does not overrun. The speaker will be allowed to address the Committee once only and will not be allowed to participate further in any debate.

Except at meetings of Full Council, where public participation will be restricted to Public Question Time only, if a member of the public wishes to address the Committee on any matter appearing on the agenda, the Chairman will normally permit this to occur when that item is reached and before the Councillors begin to debate the item.

This is more usual at meetings of the Council’s Planning Committee and details of the “rules” which apply at these meetings can be found in the leaflet “Having Your Say on Planning Applications”. A copy can be obtained free of charge from the Planning Reception Desk at The Deane House or by contacting the telephone number or e-mail address below.

If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

These arrangements do not apply to exempt (confidential) items on the agenda where any members of the press or public present will be asked to leave the Committee Room.

Full Council, Executive, Committees and Task and Finish Review agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk



The meeting rooms at both the Brittons Ash Community Centre and West Monkton Primary School are on the ground floor and are fully accessible. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are available.

Lift access to the Council Chamber on the first floor of Shire Hall, is available from the main ground floor entrance. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are available through the door to the right hand side of the dais.



An induction loop operates at Shire Hall to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter.

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Council Members:-

Councillor H Prior-Sankey (Chairman and Mayor of Taunton Deane)
Councillor J Adkins
Councillor M Adkins
Councillor T Aldridge
Councillor T Beale
Councillor P Berry
Councillor J Blatchford
Councillor C Booth
Councillor R Bowrah, BEM
Councillor W Brown
Councillor N Cavill
Councillor S Coles
Councillor W Coombes
Councillor D Cossey
Councillor T Davies
Councillor D Durdan
Councillor K Durdan
Councillor M Edwards
Councillor H Farbahi
Councillor M Floyd
Councillor J Gage
Councillor E Gaines
Councillor A Govier
Councillor A Gunner
Councillor R Habgood
Councillor T Hall
Councillor R Henley
Councillor C Herbert
Councillor C Hill
Councillor M Hill
Councillor J Horsley
Councillor J Hunt
Councillor G James
Councillor R Lees
Councillor S Lees
Councillor L Lisgo, MBE
Councillor D Mansell
Councillor S Martin-Scott
Councillor I Morrell, BA LLB
Councillor S Nicholls
Councillor R Parrish
Councillor J Reed
Councillor R Ryan
Councillor F Smith
Councillor F Smith-Roberts
Councillor V Stock-Williams
Councillor P Stone
Councillor A Sully
Councillor N Townsend

Councillor C Tucker
Councillor J Warmington
Councillor P Watson
Councillor D Webber
Councillor D Wedderkopp
Councillor J Williams - Leader of the Council
Councillor G Wren

Taunton Deane Borough Council

At a meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held at Oake Manor Golf Club, Oake, Taunton on 10 April 2018 at 6.30 p.m.

Present The Mayor (Councillor Prior-Sankey)
 The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Mrs Herbert)
 Councillors Mrs Adkins, M Adkins, Aldridge, Beale, Berry,
 Mrs Blatchford, Booth, Bowrah, Cavill, Coles, Coombes, Davies,
 D Durdan, Edwards, Farbahi, Gage, Gaines, Govier, Mrs Gunner,
 Habgood, Hall, Henley, C Hill, Mrs Hill, Horsley, James, R Lees,
 Mrs Lees, Ms Lisgo, Mansell, Martin-Scott, Morrell, Nicholls, Parrish,
 Mrs Reed, Ryan, Mrs Smith, Mrs Smith-Roberts, Mrs Stock-Williams,
 Townsend, Watson, Ms Webber, Wedderkopp, Williams and Wren

Mrs A Elder – Chairman of the Standards Advisory Committee

1. **Welcome**

The Mayor welcomed Councillor David Mansell to his first meeting of Full Council following his recent success at the recent Wiveliscombe and West Deane Ward by-election.

2. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held on 22 February 2018, copies having been sent to each Member, were signed by the Mayor.

3. **Apologies**

Councillors Ms K Durdan, Mrs Floyd, Hunt, Stone, Sully, Mrs Tucker and Mrs Warmington.

4. **Communications**

- (i) The Mayor thanked all those Members who had pledged sponsorship to the recent Swimathon. In the region of £500 had been collected which was an excellent result.

The Mayor also thanked those Members who had supported the Taunton Deane Male Voice Choir concert last weekend.

- (ii) The Deputy Mayor made reference to her Celebration Party which was scheduled to take place on Friday, 4 May 2018 (the night after the Annual Council meeting) and hoped as many Councillors as possible would purchase tickets.

The Deputy Mayor also mentioned that she had been persuaded to participate in the 50:50 Cycle Ride on 6 May 2018 where she would be sharing a tandem with Councillor Habgood. Sponsorship from Members would again be welcomed.

- (iii) Councillor Mrs Hill expressed concern that agenda papers, including confidential information, had been sent to her in an envelope that had become unsealed during transit. The envelope had also been stamped 'confidential' which, in her view, was an open invitation for someone not entitled to view the 'pink papers' to do just that! She understood that other Councillors had also received their papers in this condition.

She hoped the necessary action would be taken to ensure a similar situation would not arise in the future.

- (iv) Councillor Williams stated that he was in receipt of a copy the minutes of Taunton Bowling Club's recent Annual General Meeting which referred to the appointment of Councillor Bob Bowrah to the Club as Taunton Deane's representative on this 'outside body'.

It had been almost ten years since a Councillor had undertaken this role and the minutes recorded that Councillor Bowrah had been a 'valuable asset' to the club and that the link between the two organisations was working well. Councillor Williams felt that this was very commendable.

5. Declaration of Interests

Councillors Coles, Govier and Prior-Sankey declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillors Bowrah, Cavill, Coombes, Govier, Henley, James, Nicholls, Mrs Reed, Mrs Stock-Williams, Townsend and Watson all declared personal interests as Members of Town or Parish Councils.

6. Public Question Time

Alan Debenham asked the following questions:-

- (i) Taunton Deane residents were already dismayed at the takeover of our Further Education College and Police Station by Bridgwater and how their wishes had been ignored in relation to outlandish urban sprawl housing developments being forced through. And now the merger with West Somerset Council!

How on earth was it right for the new merged District Council to be named "Somerset West and Taunton" rather than the obvious "Taunton Deane and West Somerset"?

- (ii) Our so-called 'housing crisis' locally was recognised as more one of inadequate supply of affordable, secured tenancy, properly maintained, good quality properties to rent than it was regarding the purchase of new costly houses.

The Chancellor's recent Spring Statement had talked of £44 billion to be invested in local social and affordable housing provision and an implied potential for Councils, not only to borrow sufficient funds to build directly but also for these homes to be 100% Council owned.

Where did the Council now stand regarding these latest Government funding proposals, especially in terms of new Council homes planned and to be completed in the present year and beyond?

And, if the Council had insufficient land within its current ownership to embark on such a potential big uplift in new Council housing, should the housing crisis be considered severe enough to warrant compulsory purchase of land at a price which took building site costs and profits out of making present new houses so unaffordable?

In response, Councillor Williams stated that there had been no takeover of the College. Bridgwater College had sought partners with the real aspiration of a university being established in Taunton. Works to The Deane House were currently being undertaken to accommodate the Police from its current premises at Shuttern. This would ensure a significant Police presence in the town into the future.

As to the name of the proposed new Council, the current name would be reviewed if Members wanted this.

Regarding Mr Debenham's second question, Councillor Beale confirmed that the implications of the Government's Spring Statement were still being considered, particularly the funding opportunities. He agreed that more affordable housing was required in Taunton Deane but conceded that there was an issue over land availability to provide such housing. Nevertheless, all aspects were being looked at including working in partnership with our local housing associations.

7. The 50th Anniversary of the founding of the Taunton and Somerset Branch of The Samaritans

The Mayor introduced Mr Geoff Rickson to the meeting.

Mr Rickson explained that The Samaritans had been formed by Reverend Chad Varah in London during 1953 when he became aware that there were often three suicides a day in the city. He identified a real need to provide those contemplating suicide 'somewhere to turn to and someone to talk to'.

Despite its founder and the name of the organisation which the Daily Mirror provided, The Samaritans were not a religious body. They talked to anyone.

The Taunton Branch was established in April 1968. It was one of a network of 201 branches and there were currently over 18,000 volunteers. That meant there was always someone available on the end of the telephone actively listening to those who had made contact. All calls were treated on a confidential basis and no-one was judged from what was said. There were in the region of 5,000,000 contacts made every year.

The Samaritans in Taunton were based in a property in Wood Street which was open for people to 'drop in' between 9 am and 9 pm even though the telephones were answered 24 hours a day. The branch had 80 trained volunteers and a number of support volunteers. Between 60 and 80 calls per

day were received from around the country.

Mr Rickson went on to explain that the Taunton Samaritans had to raise £30,000 each year to run the office. Much of this amount was raised by way of donations.

Outreach work was also important and talks were regularly given to local schools and community based organisations. The Taunton Branch also provided a service called 'Step by Step' where specially trained staff went into schools, colleges and universities to provide support following the death of a student or teacher/lecturer.

Each branch of the Samaritans was subject to an 'OFSTED' type inspection every three years and Taunton had recently been categorised as outstanding.

Mr Rickson concluded by stating that he was proud and privileged to be part of the Samaritans and hoped that it pleased the Council that Taunton had a flourishing and successful branch which was 50 years old.

On behalf of the Council, the Mayor thanked Mr Rickson for his very interesting and informative presentation.

8. **Motion - Consulting with Hoteliers, room providers, Airbnb and the public to ensure business and public support for tens of millions of Pounds for a proposed hotel investment at Firepool, Taunton with public funds**

Proposed by Councillor Habib Farbahi, seconded by Councillor Jefferson Horsley.

"The idea of an international hotel brand coming to Taunton was really interesting and exciting to us all. We were all for commercial investment and a healthy return on our capital. In fact we had been vocal in the last nine years, calling for more commerciality on a win-win basis, especially now that we were at the mercy of the financially challenged authority of West Somerset. As custodians of public funds, we had to ensure there were no risks attached to the Business Case.

Some Members witnessed at the Corporate Scrutiny Committee meeting on 22 March 2018 that no consultation with local businesses had occurred to assess the impact such a development might have on them, some of whose Business Rates would go directly to pay towards a proposal that could potentially push them out of the market.

No evidence was produced as to how many established hotels and other related hospitality facilities were currently in the market within a five-mile radius of the proposed development, to indicate current capacity in this market.

If you did not know your market how did you go about investing in it?

According to Visit England figures for 2017, the reported occupancy for the

South West was 69%. This was much lower than reported to us on the night. Furthermore officers confirmed that the bedroom demand has been steady in the last year and was going to be so in the next year.....but according to a PwC key finding...

'While the full impact of the UK vote to leave the EU will not be known for some time, economic growth is expected to slow. A weak pound should provide a boost to inbound leisure travel, but security concerns, tight corporate travel budgets, above average supply growth (especially in London) and consumer and corporate uncertainty will create an unfavourable backdrop. The industry is also tackling on going disruption via the Sharing Economy. We retain a cautious outlook.'

Officers could not confirm whether more supply into the Taunton market would help or just dilute the market share of the current operators.

No one was aware of the number of Airbnb beds and the impact on this market. Furthermore the new Hotel Mercure in Bridgwater would take the majority of the Hinkley Point business, who currently stayed in Taunton. This would apply to other corporate clients with business in Bridgwater.

There was no idea as to how many white-collar jobs had been created in Taunton Deane in the last five years, so that we could justify demand.

In the related restaurant sector we had, over the last 24 months witnessed extra seats locally and the additional supply had put pressure on the operators, which had resulted in unsustainable outlets. None of the officers or the Portfolio Holder were aware of this despite national discussion and known closures within a number of chains. We had learned only this week Prezzo was going to close its Taunton restaurant.

At present there were financial pressures on hotels and the hospitality industry from minimum/living wage increases, Business Rate increases, utility and insurance cost increases and general cost inflation, an additional supply into this market might depress average rates for all hotels.

Interest rates on loans are due to be raised in May - the days of "cheap money" is rapidly disappearing. How would this affect the potential Business Plan?

There was no clear Business Case to justify the use of public money, as the risk and the return had not been properly assessed. There was a real risk that millions of Pounds of public money and a long term debt carried by Council Tax and Business Rate payers would merely facilitate an external operator to make money with no investment and no risk.

We are being asked to pay tens of millions of Pounds to build a hotel so that they could put their brand name on it for a disproportionately large fee.

It was therefore recommended that:-

(1) The decision for the taxpayer's to invest in a hotel venture be delayed

until a consultation had taken place with the hoteliers, Airbnb and room providers as well as Taunton Deane taxpayers;

- (2) Should the Council decide to invest and operate a hotel business, the authority should ensure that the Business Plan was solid and not based on assumptions;
- (3) The option of not to pay the franchise fee and have our own distinct name should be on the table, saving taxpayers millions of Pounds over the period;
- (4) Future investment strategy should be open, transparent and open to public scrutiny; and
- (5) The decision should only be taken after the new Council was established, as Taunton Deane should not commit a successor organisation to such a financial commitment.”

The motion was put and was lost.

9. **Acquisition of land near Nerrols Farm, Taunton as a Country Park**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the proposed establishment of a Country Park near Nerrols Farm, Taunton.

Such a park had been an aspiration of the Council for some time having been included as part of the adopted Core Strategy in 2012. The proposed site was currently owned by the Crown Estate and leased to a local farmer.

West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Councils had recently produced a joint Neighbourhood Plan which included an intention to oversee the establishment and management of the Country Park. This plan would go to referendum shortly.

The establishment of a Country Park formed an important component of the Council's Garden Town status and adopted Green Infrastructure Strategy. The finished project would consist of a Community Woodland/Country Park which could be utilised as an asset for a new community forest school being established as part of the wider Monkton Heathfield development.

The location of the park was important in the continuing development of Monkton Heathfield as it provided links east to west to the development currently being developed at Nerrols Farm and the allocated development site to the west of Greenway.

Once built, the Western Relief Road and re-alignment of the A3259 would provide much safer crossing points and allow easier pedestrian links north and south. A Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) link could follow along the southern boundary of the site. This could also make provision for a cycle lane.

Further reported that the Community Scrutiny Committee had resolved to support the purchase of the land and development of the Country Park in

October 2017. A planning application (08/17/0044) made by the Council for the change of use of the land from agricultural to recreational uses had been approved on 11 January 2018.

Since these meetings officers, the Project Champion, and our retained consultant had been working with the Valuation Office Agency, other stakeholders and the Crown to take forward proposals, including negotiating a purchase price for the land.

Funding of the project would need to come from a variety of sources. The majority of the funding was likely to come from the New Homes Bonus and West Monkton Parish Council had agreed in principle to a contribution towards the project costs. It was hoped that the remaining cost would be met from a combination of grant funding although Taunton Deane would need to underwrite the funding gap in the event these bids were unsuccessful.

Subject to Member approval, the Council's consultant would continue to lead on project delivery with input from the Planning Policy Team, colleagues in Finance, Asset Management, Legal Services provided through Shape and Leisure and Recreation.

Councillor Cavill as a local Member and key stakeholder had agreed to act as Member Champion for the project. An important aspect was the involvement of the local community from an early stage. Such engagement would be undertaken through a 'planning for real' type approach with input from landscape and biodiversity specialists. Negotiations with the Crown would be progressed with a view to planting being carried out in 2019.

Resolved that:-

- (a) A supplementary estimate to the Capital Programme of £479,000 be approved for the acquisition of land near Nerrols Farm, Taunton, tree planting and other associated costs, for the purposes of the creation of a Country Park (subject to the total cost of the land acquisition not exceeding the anticipated amount as outlined in the confidential Appendix to the report). To be funded from the Garden Town Reserve less any contributions from West Monkton Parish Council and any successful grant applications; and
- (b) It be agreed in principle that responsibility for the future maintenance of the Country Park be passed on completion to the West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Councils.

10. **Approval of the Annual Pay Policy Statement 2018/2019**

Considered report previously circulated, which sought approval of the Annual Pay Policy Statement for 2018/2019.

Section 38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 required local authorities to prepare and publish a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year.

The statement described the pay arrangements and policies that related to the pay of the workforce which served the Joint Management and Shared

Services Partnership between Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council.

The changes in the data detailed in the latest Pay Policy Statement were minimal. The amendments to senior pay reflected the 1% pay award, awarded to all employees on 1 April 2017.

The ratios between senior pay and the lowest paid employee had been updated and there had been one change to the pension discretions of both Councils' which related to the definition of an actual week's pay. This was used to calculate the compensatory payment for employees being made redundant.

Resolved that the Pay Policy Statement 2018/2019 be approved for publication.

11. **Comprehensive Compulsory Purchase of Third Party Land and Interests at Firepool, Taunton**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the proposed comprehensive compulsory purchase of third party land and interests at Firepool, Taunton.

Support from Members was sought to enable the Council's legal representatives (Ashfords working together with the Shape Partnership) to proceed with the compulsory acquisition of the remaining third party land and interests that were required to enable delivery of the next phases of the Firepool Development and the comprehensive mixed use scheme approved earlier in the year by the Council's Planning Committee.

In December 2014, Full Council had approved in principle the acquisition of land and interests, by agreement, alongside preparations for the making of a future Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO), subject to a future planning approval.

The agents, Bruton Knowles, acting on behalf of the Council had successfully negotiated and acquired through agreements the majority of land and interests required to deliver a comprehensive scheme. However some land remained in third party ownerships, primarily situated between the Old Cattle Market and the Northern Inner Distributor Road (NIDR).

The CPO proposals were consistent with the recent resolution to grant outline planning consent and acquisition of the remaining interests were a priority and precursor to development aligned with the Taunton Garden Town programme and would contribute to a thriving and sustainable town centre.

Further discussions were currently underway with agents and owners of affected interests, and the Council was in communication with occupiers. However, if we are unable to agree acquisition by agreement then the Council would need to use its CPO powers.

Resolved that:-

- (1) Authority be granted to proceed with the final stages required to make a Compulsory Purchase Order for the acquisition of all relevant property interests required to facilitate the implementation of the proposed comprehensive Firepool development, which were unable to be acquired by agreement, comprising the land edged in red on confidential Appendix A to the report.
- (2) Authority be delegated to the Director of Growth and Development in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Business Development, Asset Management, Arts and Culture, Tourism and Communications and the Leader of the Council, under legal advice (from Ashfords and Shape Partnership) to:-
 - a. Make a CPO and to progress through the appropriate procedures to secure the confirmation of the CPO once made;
 - b. Negotiate with parties affected by the CPO with a view to acquiring their interests by agreement;
 - c. Make any necessary steps and applications in relation to the stopping up or diversion of highways under powers contained in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as relevant to the comprehensive Firepool Compulsory Purchase Order;
 - d. Ensure the Equalities Impact Assessment and any relevant action plan are completed, identify any potentially adverse effects of CPO and clarify mitigation through an appropriate plan of action to protect any persons involved.

12. Development of an Hotel at Firepool, Taunton

Considered report previously circulated, which introduced a proposal for Council investment in the development of a new high quality, mid-market hotel at Firepool, Taunton.

The proposal was consistent with the outline planning consent for Firepool which had recently been approved. Subject to specific requirements such as reserved matters, Council approval of the Business Case, exchange of contracts with the hotel brand and management operator, appointment of professional services advisors and a construction company, preparatory work on the site was anticipated to start next year (2019).

The proposal aligned well with the vision for Taunton as a Garden Town, contributed to a thriving and sustainable town centre and would generate a healthy commercial return to the Council.

Market testing and specialist advice had also confirmed high trading confidence in the Taunton area as a visitor and business destination. A well-recognised brand of hotel would improve the range and quality of mid-market accommodation in the town centre, encourage more businesses and visitors into the heart of the town and boost the wider daytime and evening economy.

It was the result of an initial feasibility, marketing and procurement exercise that had yielded strong interest from potential occupiers and operators of the hotel. A Business Case for Council investment in the development and continuing ownership of the hotel had subsequently been developed, taking account of key risks (financial and non-financial).

The above steps, including selection of hotel brand, operator and construction project management team, had been subject to the necessary Council approvals and consents and formal exchange of contract. Council approval of the proposal was now needed to enable the project to move forward to delivery of the hotel development programme.

To allow Members to discuss the contents of the Confidential Appendices A-F, it was **resolved** that the press and public be excluded from the meeting because of the likelihood that exempt information would otherwise be disclosed relating to Clause 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

The project cost estimates had been provided by cost management professionals and advisors who had experience of successfully delivering similar hotel schemes.

The Business Case showed a satisfactory level of return on investment. It was based on an established trading model of the Council developing and retaining the asset (the hotel) and leasing the building to a newly created Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) (a trading company), which the Council would own. The Council would nominate directors to the company to manage the SPV's operations, contracts and bank accounts.

The new hotel business, through the SPV, would be managed by a professional operating company, to ensure hotel brand compliance, maximising efficiencies and returns for the Council and limiting potential liabilities.

Construction cost management would be a major element of the scheme and, as such, processes would be put into place to address any cost overrun risks through both design and the form of contract management.

The Business Case had been developed by the Council's Finance Team, informed and verified by hotel specialists and professionals, including our Treasury Management advisors, Arlingclose. The estimated capital cost of the project would be financed by external borrowing through the Public Works Loan Board.

Further reported that both the Corporate Scrutiny Committee and the Executive had previously considered this matter and had resolved to support the proposal.

In accordance with Standing Order 18(2)(b), the Mayor called for a formal roll call of votes to be taken and recorded in the Minutes.

The substantive Motion, which is detailed below, was put and was carried with twenty eight Councillors in favour and twenty voting against:-

Resolved that:-

- (i) A Council investment in the development and ownership of a hotel at Firepool, Taunton based on the detailed information contained in the Confidential Appendices be supported;
- (ii) A supplementary estimate to the Council's Capital Programme (detailed in Confidential Appendix B) for the planning, design and engineering, construction and fit out of the hotel be supported, to be funded as set out in the report;
- (iii) To enable the hotel project to progress within the programme timescales indicated and approved budget, that the relevant delegated authorities be provided to the Director – Growth and Development and the Section 151 Officer, in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder and the Leader of Council to:-
 - (a) Appoint specialist and professional services to support officers and the Hotel Project Team to complete the planning, design and engineering of a new mid-market hotel on a suitable site identified at Firepool, Taunton (on the south-side of the River Tone);
 - (b) Finalise legal agreements with the preferred brand and operator;
 - (c) To create a Council owned Special Purpose Vehicle, to lease the asset and manage commercial arrangements of the new hotel (on behalf of the Council); and
 - (d) Arrange the procurement and appointment of a main building and fit-out contractor to complete the hotel building to specification and standards within the budget approved.

Yes	No
Councillor M Adkins	Councillor Mrs Adkins
Councillor Beale	Councillor Aldridge
Councillor Berry	Councillor Booth
Councillor Mrs Blatchford	Councillor Coles
Councillor Bowrah	Councillor Farbahi
Councillor Brown	Councillor Gaines
Councillor Cavill	Councillor Govier
Councillor Coombes	Councillor Henley
Councillor Davies	Councillor Mrs Hill
Councillor D Durdan	Councillor Horsley
Councillor Edwards	Councillor R Lees
Councillor Gage	Councillor Mrs Lees
Councillor Mrs Gunner	Councillor Ms Lisgo

Councillor Habgood	Councillor Mansell
Councillor Hall	Councillor Morrell
Councillor Mrs Herbert	Councillor Nicholls
Councillor C Hill	Councillor Prior-Sankey
Councillor James	Councillor Mrs Smith
Councillor Martin-Scott	Councillor Wedderkopp
Councillor Parrish	Councillor Wren
Councillor Mrs Reed	
Councillor Ryan	
Councillor Mrs Smith-Roberts	
Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams	
Councillor Townsend	
Councillor Watson	
Councillor Ms Webber	
Councillor Williams	

13. **Suspension of Standing Order**

Resolved that Standing Order 28, Time limits for all meetings be suspended to enable the meeting to continue for a further half an hour.

14. **Recommendation to Council from the Executive**

Financial Monitoring – 2017/2018 as at 31 December 2017

The Corporate Scrutiny Committee considered a report at its meeting on 22 March 2018 which provided an update on the projected outturn financial position of the Council for the financial year 2017/2018 (as at 31 December 2017).

The current revenue forecast outturn for the financial year 2017/2018 was reported as follows:-

- The General Fund (GF) Revenue Outturn was forecasting a gross underspend of £318,000 (2.14% of Net Revenue Budget) before proposed transfers of £30,000 for Tonedale Mill urgent repairs and £288,000 to the Transformation Reserve.
- The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was forecasting an underspend of £334,000 before a proposed transfer of £144,000 to the Transformation Reserve.

The current capital forecast position for 2017/2018 was as follows:-

- The GF capital account was forecasting spend of £4,477,000 against a budget of £33,032,000 with £28,494,000 forecast to be spent in future years;

- The HRA capital account was forecasting spend of £12,658,000 against a budget of £20,029,000 with £7,371,000 forecast to be spent in future years.

The GF Reserves forecast balance as at 31 March 2018 was projected to be £2,278,000 which was above the recommended minimum reserves level.

The HRA Reserves forecast balance as at 31 March 2018 was £2,824,000, which also was above the recommended minimum level.

Following careful consideration, the Corporate Scrutiny Committee had supported proposals to transfer parts of the GF Revenue and HRA underspends to the Transformation Reserve.

An amendment proposed by Councillor Farbahi, seconded by Councillor Mrs Smith requiring some of the underspend to be used to support people in priority housing need was put to the vote and was lost.

Resolved that:-

- £258,000 of the General Fund underspend be transferred to the Transformation Reserve with the balance of £30,000 being used towards tackling the problem of homelessness by making the Streetwise Co-ordinator post full time rather than part time; and
- £144,000 of the Housing Revenue Account underspend be also transferred to the Transformation Reserve.

15. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

Resolved that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item as it included exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, and that the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information to the public.

16. **Proposed Acquisition of Land at Norton Fitzwarren**

Considered report previously circulated, relating to the proposed acquisition of an area of land at Norton Fitzwarren.

The Council had been working with the South West Heritage Trust (SWHT), Norton Fitzwarren Parish Council (NFPC) and Historic England (HE) to secure the site which was a Scheduled Ancient Monument, currently on the HE Risk Register.

The site had important archaeological remains which were at risk due to the legal invasive farming techniques that had occurred in the past and was likely to take place again in the near future. The Council's aim was to acquire the site and remove it from intensive farming.

Further reported that the site also formed part of the Green Infrastructure Strategy and would provide open space to the community. There would also

be education opportunities taking account of the ecological and archaeological interests on the site.

The total cost of site acquisition would be in the region of the figure included within the report. The funding for the purchase would largely be met by HE (80%) with the SWHT and the NFPC each making a small contribution. It was proposed that the remainder should be funded from the Council's general reserves.

The SWHT had indicated that they would be prepared to take on a 30-year lease on the site and help to find funding for a Conservation and Management Plan with applications to the Heritage Lottery Fund, Viridor Credits and other such bodies.

The Council would need to work with HE, SWHT and NFPC to work up an agreed management plan for the site. This would mean that the continuing maintenance of the site would not be the responsibility of the Council, thereby removing any continuing impact on Taunton Deane's Revenue Budget.

Resolved that a supplementary estimate to the value of the sum identified in the report to the capital programme be approved for the acquisition of the land at Norton Fitzwarren, including the use of the required sum from the Council's General Reserves.

Due to the lateness of the hour, the Mayor suggested that rather than further extend the duration of the meeting, questions for the Executive Councillors in respect of their reports (details follow) could be dealt with via e-mail. This was agreed.

17. **Reports of the Leader of the Council and Executive Councillors**

(i) **Leader of the Council (Councillor Williams)**

Councillor Williams's report covered the following topics:-

- Formation of a Single Council;
- Firepool, Taunton;
- Staplegrove;
- Housing Infrastructure Funding; and
- The Deane House.

(ii) **Housing Services (Councillor Beale)**

Councillor Beale submitted his report which drew attention to the following:-

- Deane Housing Development – North Taunton; Weavers Arms, Rockwell Green, Wellington; 12 Moorland Close, Taunton; Laxton Road, Taunton; Completions; Parmin Close, Taunton and Future site opportunities;
- Deane Housing Repairs and Maintenance;
- Welfare Reform – Discretionary Housing Payment;
- Deane Helpline;

- Anti-Social Behaviour Service; and
- The draft Strategic Housing Framework for Somerset and the forthcoming Affordable Housing Open Day.

(iii) **Environmental Services and Climate Change (Councillor Berry)**

The report from Councillor Berry drew attention to developments in the following areas:-

- Environmental Health (Food Safety; Food Hygiene; Private Water Supply sampling; Noise investigations; Safety Advisory Groups; and Food – New Registrations – Feasibility Study);
- Licensing (Review of Policies; Working with HM Revenues and Customs; A re-vamped knowledge test and a practical driving test for taxi drivers);
- Street Sweeping and Toilet Cleaning;
- Somerset Waste Partnership; and
- Cemeteries and Crematorium.

(iv) **Economic Development, Asset Management, Arts and Culture, Tourism and Communications (Councillor Edwards)**

The report from Councillor Edwards covered:-

- Communications;
- Business Development - Productivity Strategy; Taunton Deane Business Awards; Heathrow Business Summit; Growth Communications and Marketing – Business Envoy Programme;
- Events, Place, Retail Marketing and Visitor Centre – Events; Place and Retail Marketing; and Visitor Centre;
- Growth Strategy and Specific Projects – Coal Orchard Redevelopment, Taunton; and
- Asset Management Service Update – Asset Management System (Open Assets by Capita); Leisure Procurement – Facilities Lease Heads of Terms; The Deane House Accommodation Project; Flook House; Annual Asset Valuation; and Blackdown Business Park, Wellington.

(v) **Planning Policy and Transportation (Councillor Habgood)**

The report from Councillor Habgood provided information on the following areas within his portfolio:-

- Planning Policy;
- Garden Town Strategy and Plan;
- Nexus 25 – Local Development Order;
- Junction 25 Upgrade – Somerset County Council Highways Authority;

- Highways England Consultation – Taunton to Southfields Dualling Scheme;
- Taunton Urban Realm;
- Car Park Pay on Foot and Variable Message Signage;
- Neighbourhood Plans;
- Major Planning – Staplegrove; Firepool, Taunton; and Comeytrowe;
- Heritage at Risk – Tonedale Mill, Wellington; and
- A different approach to unlawful encampments?

(vi) **Sport, Parks and Leisure (Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams)**

The report from Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams` dealt with activities taking place in the following areas:-

- Community Leisure – Play and Recreation; Summer Sunday Bandstand Concerts; Carols around the Bandstand; the Council's Capital Grant Scheme; Cuckoo Meadow, Minehead; Section 106 Funding for Play, Sport, Allotments and Community Halls; and Victoria Park, Taunton;
- GLL (Taunton Deane) – Community Sport and Health; and Facilities;
- Parks and Open Spaces – Adverse Weather; Grass Cutting; Vivary Park, Taunton; Wellington Park; and Green Flag Judging;
- Property – Blackbrook Pavilion Site, Taunton; Leisure Facilities; Station Road Pool, Taunton; Wellington Sports Centre; Wellsprings Leisure Centre, Taunton; and Wilton Lands, Taunton; and
- Leisure Provider Procurement.

(vii) **Corporate Resources (Councillor Parrish)**

The report from Councillor Parrish provided information on the following areas within his portfolio:-

- Corporate Services;
- Corporate Performance;
- Customer Services;
- Facilities Management;
- ICT/Technology;
- Member Case Management;
- HR and Organisational Development;
- Procurement Team;
- Finance; and
- Revenues and Benefits.

(viii) **Community Leadership (Councillor Mrs Jane Warmington)**

Councillor Mrs Warmington presented the Community Leadership report which focused on the following areas within that portfolio:-

- Somerset One Team Toolkit;
- A different approach to unlawful encampments?
- Update on Preventing Radicalisation in Partnership (PREVENT);
- Resettled Refugees; and
- Rough Sleepers One Team.

(The meeting ended at 10.09 p.m.)

Taunton Deane Borough Council

At a meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held at Oake Manor Golf Club, Oake, Taunton on 23 April 2018 at 6.30 p.m.

Present The Mayor (Councillor Prior-Sankey)
 The Deputy Mayor (Councillor Mrs Herbert)
 Councillors Aldridge, Beale, Berry, Mrs Blatchford, Booth, Bowrah,
 Cavill, Coles, Coombes, Davies, Ms K Durdan, Edwards, Mrs Floyd,
 Gage, Gaines, Govier, Habgood, Hall, Henley, C Hill, Mrs Hill, Horsley,
 James, R Lees, Mrs Lees, Ms Lisgo, Martin-Scott, Nicholls, Mrs Reed,
 Ryan, Mrs Smith, Mrs Smith-Roberts, Mrs Stock-Williams, Stone, Sully,
 Townsend, Mrs Tucker, Mrs Warmington, Watson, Ms Webber and
 Williams

Mrs A Elder – Chairman of the Standards Advisory Committee

1. **Minutes**

The Minutes of the special meeting of Taunton Deane Borough Council held on 19 March 2018, copies having been sent to each Member, were signed by the Mayor.

2. **Apologies**

Councillors Mrs Adkins, M Adkins, Brown, D Durdan, Farbahi, Mrs Gunner, Hunt, Mansell, Morrell, Parrish, Wedderkopp and Wren.

3. **Declaration of Interests**

Councillors Coles, Govier, and Prior-Sankey declared personal interests as Members of Somerset County Council. Councillors Bowrah, Cavill, Coombes, Gaines, Govier, Henley, James, Nicholls, Mrs Reed, Mrs Stock-Williams, Stone, Townsend, Mrs Warmington and Watson all declared personal interests as Members of Town or Parish Councils.

3. **Public Question Time**

(1) Mr T Sutcliffe stated that at its last meeting on 10 April 2018, Full Council had agreed to undertake a project for the erection and running of a 120 bedroomed hotel with an unspecified national and international branded hotel chain.

He asked if the Leader and the Portfolio Holder for Asset Management were aware of two similar projects, one in Bournemouth, the other in Leeds both of which were going to be funded by tax-payers money.

In Bournemouth, the Borough Council had agreed to borrow up to £70,000,000 to support a hotel complex near the Bournemouth International Centre in a contract with the Hilton Hotel chain.

However, following a two year delay, building had failed to start and the

project could be shelved altogether.

Mr Sutcliffe went on to say that there appeared to be an uncanny resemblance between the situation where Bournemouth was merging with Poole in the same way as Taunton Deane and West Somerset.

Bournemouth Borough Council did not consult with Poole about the hotel contract it had entered into and therefore had pledged the new merged Council to fulfill its obligations and share its risk. Had Taunton Deane fully consulted on its hotel proposal with West Somerset?

In Leeds, the City Council had sold the site of its similarly planned Hilton Hotel project to an organisation known as Oxford GB Two in 2011 and Leeds City Regional Local Enterprise Partnership had lent it £4,800,000.

However, the GB Group, of which Oxford GB Two had been a subsidiary, had subsequently gone into administration causing the hotel project to come to a complete halt. The site had since been sold by administrators and was set to be redeveloped as student flats.

In light of this, should the dangers of such commercial ventures here in Taunton not be re-examined, especially the Risk Factor included in the report considered by Members on 10 April 2018?

Would the Leader and Portfolio agree that with the acknowledged lack of expertise that the Council had in the field of commercial hotels that enormous pressure was being placed upon senior staff to perform a job which could possibly lead to a mismanagement of tax-payers funds? Had the risks attached to the proposal been underestimated? Had due diligence been undertaken with regard to those involved in the contract to ensure they were fit and proper persons? He hoped that suitable assurance could be given with regard to these matters.

Councillor Edwards stated that he would not be able to provide a full reply as he had only just received a copy of Mr Sutcliffe's questions. He promised him a full written reply.

However Councillor Edwards stated that he would pass on the details of the cases highlighted to the officers for reference purposes and confirmed that West Somerset Council had been consulted on the Taunton Hotel proposal before it was considered at the last Full Council meeting.

- (2) Mrs Tricia Cavill, Clerk to West Monkton Parish Council, referred to the item on the agenda relating to the West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Neighbourhood Plan.

She thanked the Council's Policy Officer, Ann Rhodes, for her guidance over the past three years together with Ken Toothill, the Chairman of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group who had skillfully carried both Parish Councils forward in putting the Plan together.

All the effort had been borne out by the comments of the Independent Examiner who had described the Plan as being both 'ambitious and innovative'.

The Mayor thanked Mrs Cavill for her comments.

4. **West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Neighbourhood Development Plan - Formal adoption as a Development Plan Document for Taunton Deane Borough Council**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Neighbourhood Plan.

Through the introduction of the Localism Act, Neighbourhood Development Plans had been introduced into the Planning system. The intention was to give communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape a locally distinctive development plan which reflected growth needs and priorities.

From inception, Taunton Deane Neighbourhood Plans were community led development plan documents with the Local Planning Authority providing advice and assistance, and taking regulatory decisions at key legislative stages set out in the Acts and Regulations.

A Neighbourhood Plan was required to be predominantly land-use based. It could not be contrary to National and Local Planning Policy, nor could it conflict with European Legislation. A Neighbourhood Plan could not restrict development but it could shape development that had been allocated through local Planning Policy and allocate land for development.

The West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Councils began the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan in 2014 and an application was subsequently received to produce a Neighbourhood Plan and the designation of the Parish as a Neighbourhood Plan Area. As required by the Regulations, the application was published for statutory consultation for a six week period.

Following this consultation exercise, Taunton Deane formally designated the entirety of the Parishes of West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine as a Neighbourhood Planning Area on 24 November 2015.

The Neighbourhood Plan and its supporting documents were submitted to the Council in November 2016 and, in accordance with the regulations, it was subjected to regulatory consultation, also for a six week period. A total of 19 representations were received during the period of consultation.

These representations were submitted to an Independent Examiner who was jointly appointed by Taunton Deane and the Parish Councils, in accordance with the Regulations, to carry out an independent examination of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Independent Examiner's report was received on 15 January 2018 and stated that the Neighbourhood Plan was compliant and compatible, subject to a number of modifications being incorporated.

Having considered the recommendations made in the Examiner's report, The Council in consultation with West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Parish Councils and the Local Development Framework Steering Group, decided through an Executive Decision of the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transport to accept the Independent Examiner's recommendations in full.

The West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Neighbourhood Development Plan, post examination, contained 15 policies:-

- Housing Suitable for Older Persons;
- External Materials for Residential Development;
- Refuse Bin Storage for Residential Development;
- Affordable Housing;
- Developing a Comprehensive and High Quality and Footpath Network;
- Starter Workshop Units;
- Sustainable Diversification of Rural Buildings for Other Employment Uses;
- Retain Existing Employment Land/Buildings for Employment Usage;
- Social Care Employment Opportunities;
- Wider Roll Out of Broadband Connectivity;
- Dark Skies;
- Green Space and Wildlife;
- Flood Attenuation;
- Recreation and Community Facilities; and
- Local Green Spaces.

There was also one Community Action relating to the development of high quality bus infrastructure.

Further reported that to comply with the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendum) Regulations and Neighbourhood Planning (Prescribed Dates) Regulations, the Neighbourhood Plan had to be subjected to a referendum. This had taken place on 5 April 2018. Those persons on the Electoral Register eligible to vote were asked whether they wanted Taunton Deane to use the Neighbourhood Plan for West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area.

From the 4,731 electorate in the Neighbourhood Plan Area, 1,086 persons voted and 94% (1,021) of those eligible to vote voted in support of the neighbourhood plan, 5.8% (63) voted against and two ballot papers were rejected.

Noted that the Planning Guidance stated that as soon as it was reasonably practical following a referendum, the Council – as the Local Planning Authority – was required to decide whether the Neighbourhood Plan should be adopted.

Resolved that the West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Neighbourhood Plan be formally adopted (“made”) as a Taunton Deane Borough Council Development Plan Document.

5. **Proposed Warding Pattern for the New Council**

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the proposed warding pattern for the new Council.

Following the decision of the Secretary of State to confirm his 'minded to' decision to create a new Council, it would be necessary for the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) to establish the electoral arrangements in time for the May 2019 local elections.

The Structural Change Order (SCO) that had been laid before Parliament made provision for the size of the new Council to be 58 Councillors. The focus was therefore to establish warding arrangements for the distribution of these Councillors across the new Council area. The output from this process would be to determine the number of wards, the ward boundaries, the number of Councillors to be elected to each ward and the names of each ward.

Before undertaking their formal process, the LGBCE would normally invite interested parties to submit any proposals for them to consider prior to making their initial formal recommendations.

However, whilst the LGBCE would not be commencing their work until the SCO was approved, the Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) would ensure that the process was not held up by requesting the receipt of any initial proposals to be submitted to him by 4 May, 2018.

This was therefore an important opportunity for the Council to influence the recommendations that the LGBCE would make with regard to the warding arrangements.

Once the SCO had been approved, all representations received by the MHCLG would be forwarded to the LGBCE to formally commence their review. The LGBCE would then formally adopt the size of 58 Councillors for the new Council and publish their initial recommendations for the warding arrangements which would be the subject of public consultation from 3 July, until 27 August, 2018. The LGBCE would then publish their final recommendations in October 2018 with the Electoral Arrangements Order being made in early 2019.

As part of the formal LGBCE review process, the Council was required to prepare electorate forecasts for five years hence taking into account possible new developments and inward and outward migration.

This has been done and the LGBCE was in the process of validating these forecasts. If the current figures were signed off, then in respect of the new Council it was estimated that there should be an average electorate of 2,063 per Councillor.

In order for a credible proposal to be put forward, regard needed to be given to the three statutory criteria as set out in the LGBCE statutory guidance. These criteria were:-

- (1) Electoral Equality for Voters;

- (2) Reflecting Community identities and interests; and
- (3) Providing for convenient and effective local government.

Reported that a New Council Working Group, had been established to help co-ordinate Member activity in respect of arrangements to establish the new Council.

It had been agreed that in order to facilitate discussions to assist in the formulation of any proposal(s) at this stage, an indicative plan should be prepared demonstrating one option for how 58 Councillors could be warded across the new Council area.

This plan had used existing Parish Council boundaries and had initially allocated the urban areas of Taunton, Minehead and Wellington a number of Councillors each that did not prejudice electoral equality across the whole area. The plan had been circulated to all Councillors and Parish and Town Councils and community groups in the unparished area of Taunton seeking views on the warding arrangements for the new Council area by early April 2018. Noted that meetings with the various political groups had also taken place.

Given that the current number of Members was 84 and this figure was to be reduced to 58, it was recognised that there were likely to be changes required in any new warding arrangements with the majority of district wards covering larger areas than they did at present.

Further reported that copies of all comments received from Parish and Town Councils, organisations and individuals received in response to the request for views would be submitted in full to the LGBCE.

After full consideration, the Working Group had agreed to put forward the option set out on the plans forming Appendix A to the report for consideration at special meetings of the Taunton Deane and West Somerset Full Councils.

This preferred option had been modified from that originally circulated to accommodate where possible at least some of the representations that had been received.

Appendix A included a map showing a geographical distribution of the proposed single and multi-Member wards which were cross referenced in the supporting table that set out a proposed ward name, the number of Councillors for the ward, the estimated electorate as at 2023 and the forecast electoral variance for the ward together with any explanatory text providing evidence and rationale that the proposals met the three statutory criteria.

If the preferred option as drafted in respect of Minehead and Wellington was approved for consideration by both the MHCLG and LGBCE, it would result in some of the existing Town Council Wards being split across the proposed district wards for the new Council. Therefore if the MHCLG/LGBCE agreed to take these proposals forward they would be requested to make consequential parish warding arrangements within these towns so that each Parish Ward wholly aligned with the new district ward.

Reported that whilst it would be ideal if the two Councils agreed to support the same or similar option for submission to the MHCLG, there was no requirement for this to happen and the Councils could agree to submit different representations or make no representations at all at this stage.

It was also open for political groups, organisations and individuals to submit any representations at his stage direct to the MHCLG. With a further public consultation period planned over July and August 2018, provisional dates for potential special meetings of the two Councils would be scheduled in August to provide the opportunity for further formal representations to be made at that stage should this be considered appropriate by either/both Councils.

During the discussion of this item, various points were made about the proposed names of some of the wards, the potential to split Wellington West away from Rockwell Green and what appeared to be a 'democratic deficit' in the proposed number of Councillors who would represent the unparished area of Taunton. Members were encouraged to make their representations on these points to the MCLHG.

In accordance with Standing Order 18(2)(b), the Mayor called for a formal roll call of votes to be taken and recorded in the Minutes in relation to the recommendation, which is detailed below, was put and was carried with 28 Councillors in favour, 14 against and 1 abstention as follows:-

Resolved that the proposed warding arrangement for the new Council area as set out in Appendix A to the report as the preferred proposal put forward by the New Council Working Group with or without amendments be submitted to the Minister of Housing, Communities and Local Government for consideration.

Yes	No	Abstain
Councillor Beale	Councillor Booth	Councillor Aldridge
Councillor Berry	Councillor Coles	
Councillor Mrs Blatchford	Councillor Mrs Floyd	
Councillor Bowrah	Councillor Govier	
Councillor Cavill	Councillor Henley	
Councillor Coombes	Councillor Mrs Hill	
Councillor Davies	Councillor Horsley	
Councillor Ms Durdan	Councillor R Lees	
Councillor Edwards	Councillor Mrs Lees	
Councillor Gage	Councillor Ms Lisgo	
Councillor Gaines	Councillor Nicholls	
Councillor Habgood	Councillor Mrs Smith	
Councillor Hall	Councillor Mrs Smith-Roberts	
Councillor Mrs Herbert	Councillor Stone	
Councillor C Hill		
Councillor James		
Councillor Martin-Scott		
Councillor Prior-Sankey		

Councillor Mrs Reed		
Councillor Ryan		
Councillor Mrs Stock-Williams		
Councillor Sully		
Councillor Townsend		
Councillor Mrs Tucker		
Councillor Mrs Warmington		
Councillor Watson		
Councillor Ms Webber		
Councillor Williams		

(The meeting ended at 7.31 p.m.)

Agenda Item No. 7 - Receipt of a Petition

Stop wasting taxpayers' money on a bad idea in Firepool, Taunton and drive inward investment first

We call on Taunton Deane Borough Council to reconsider its speculative hotel investment in Firepool and engage in consulting local businesses and the community to transform this prize site into a unique destination for high-value inward investment.

Taunton Deane Borough Council is borrowing £16,000,000 of taxpayers' money to build a 120-bed hotel on Firepool.

We believe this decision by the Council to be a high-risk, speculative and irresponsible taxpayer-backed scheme.

There has been NO transparency to justify the Council's decision-making process.

We can see NO obvious commercial demand for this investment as there is nothing in the Firepool Redevelopment Plan that will attract new business-led investment into the centre of Taunton and nothing that will attract visiting tourists.

If the Council intends to borrow £16,000,000 of taxpayers' money, we would expect to see the funds FIRST deployed in a manner that will drive new business into the centre of Taunton, a plan geared to attract visiting tourists to Somerset's County Town, and a scheme that will enhance the lives, health and well-being of its inhabitants.

With the high street retail sector in crisis, it is now vital that Taunton develops forward-looking, imaginative and innovative plans which capitalise on emerging business opportunities. Firepool must now be transformed into a social, cultural, sporting and leisure destination. Ideas already put into the public domain by Tauntonians include:-

- A large, highly flexible space capable of hosting popular concerts, conferences, awards dinners and much more
- A visitor centre (think Eden Project) celebrating the biodiversity and natural habitats of Taunton's unique hinterland (The Levels, Quantocks, Blackdowns, Exmoor)
- High-tech business start-up units – a centre of innovation for R&D
- A sports franchise/sporting facilities, eg. Snow dome/skating rink
- Low-rent artist studios to create a vibrant arts community
- Trampoline park/soft play area

It is our firm opinion that Taunton Deane Borough Council is not only risking ratepayers' and council taxpayers' money in a highly speculative investment, but also risking its ability to fund the services the public have come to rely on.

We the undersigned call on the Council to stop wasting taxpayers' money. Engage with us and reconsider Council plans and investments to transform Somerset's

County Town into a unique destination for high-value new business.

We urge the Council not to put “the cart before the horse”. Work with us to establish a secure base that serves the best interests of Taunton. Create the demand by attracting inward investment and visiting tourists to Firepool FIRST.

Full Council – 10 July 2018

Viability Assessment through Section 106 Agreements

Motion proposed by Councillor Habib Farbahi, seconded by Councillor Simon Coles

The Council notes:-

Viability assessment is a process of assessing whether a site is financially viable, by looking at whether the value generated by a development is more than the cost of developing it, with an acceptable level of financial return to a willing landowner.

This problem is exacerbated if the assessment is treated as confidential and detailed information is not available to the public and cannot be discussed by the Planning Committee.

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) in recent months has received viability assessments as part of the application submission with the Staplegrove development in October 2017 and has recently accepted a reduction of 7.5% in the levels of affordable housing for 2,000 homes at Comeytrove and Trull after the developer's submission and the original resolution to the grant of permission in Jan 2016.

Reducing the levels of affordable housing from 25% to 17.5% has provided the developers with an extra 150 open market homes at the expense of our struggling younger generation families in Taunton Deane who cannot get onto the housing ladder.

There were now more than 2,000 people on the housing waiting list and urgent action is needed to reduce these numbers, instead of allowing them to grow.

More than 70% of Councils do not believe the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) will meet the need for low-cost homes in their local area, according to a recent survey⁴).

The Council should take note of Shelter's Chief Executive Officer's (Polly Neate) warning that the lack of affordable housing is the main cause of homelessness. The figures from the Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government show an increase of 16% of homeless people over the previous year. Indeed latest figures demonstrate that Taunton holds the record in the County for homelessness.

We have no doubt that the planning process has to be transparent with all the parameters and policies clear to both developers and this authority, to ensure that our Planning Committee can make an informed decision. Clarification of process and methodology during determination of the application is required.

At the moment important issues, for example the number / type / tenure and location of affordable units, are often not adequately considered at an early stage.

The local information requirements list, also known as the local validation list, needs to set out clearly the information that the Council will require to be able to register, assess and determine planning applications. The amount of information required will vary, depending upon the type and complexity of the proposed development, including any specific site constraints.

Any viability assessment should be supported by evidence informed by engagement with developers, landowners, infrastructure and affordable housing providers. Any viability assessment should follow the Government's recommended approach to assessing key factors as set out in the recently published draft National Planning Policy Guidance and be proportionate, simple, transparent and publicly available¹). This information should be available for public scrutiny and comment.³).

Applicants should also provide a summary of the financial viability assessment which outlines key findings, inputs, and conclusions to assist review by the LPA, and members of the public³).

It is important that developers are accountable to communities and that communities are able to easily see where contributions towards infrastructure and affordable housing have been secured and spent. Any taxpayers contributions towards enabling developments should be clawed back plus interest.

According to Shelter, "The damage being done by viability assessments is clear to see. Fortunately, there is a simple solution. By following through on plans to amend national planning rules in the planning for the right homes in the right places consultation, the Government can deliver thousands more affordable homes every year, increase overall housing supply and make sure communities get more of what they want from new housing schemes²).

We therefore recommend that:-

Generally the viability should be assessed through the plan-making process as set out in the new draft National Planning Policy Framework, and

- 1) Where viability factors in to development, viability assessments should be submitted at the validation stage. This will make for more complete and considered applications and will help streamline and speed up the decision making process;
- 2) All the facts and figures should be publically available wherever possible to enable an informed debate and decision to be made;

- 3) Wherever possible, the Council will seek to recover any taxpayer contribution to enable development such as Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) with interest at 3%; and
- 4) Where viability remains an issue, the Council will apply principles set out in the new draft National Planning Policy Guidance. Under these circumstances the council will insist on:-
 - (a) An open book procedure to ensure delivery of much needed housing; and
 - (b) The levels of contributions to be assessed during and after completion of developments. The Council must insist on the potential use of a claw back mechanism to maximize affordable housing contributions.

References:

- 1) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/687239/Draft_planning_practice_guidance.pdf
- 2) https://england.shelter.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/1434439/2017.11.01_Slipping_through_the_loophole.pdf
- 3) https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/ah_viability_spg_20170816.pdf
- 4) [https://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1466133/councils-cool-revised-nppf-affordable-housing-definition?bulletin=planning-daily&utm_medium=EMAIL&utm_campaign=eNews%20Bulletin&utm_source=20180530&utm_content=Planning%20Resource%20Daily%20\(247\)::www_planningresource_co_u_6&email_hash=](https://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1466133/councils-cool-revised-nppf-affordable-housing-definition?bulletin=planning-daily&utm_medium=EMAIL&utm_campaign=eNews%20Bulletin&utm_source=20180530&utm_content=Planning%20Resource%20Daily%20(247)::www_planningresource_co_u_6&email_hash=)

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Motions to Council – Assessment Form

On receipt of a Motion from a Councillor, the Democratic Services Manager will carry out an assessment as to its contents to establish whether there are likely to be significant consequences to the Council should the Motion be carried at the subsequent Full Council meeting.

The first question to be addressed will be:-

“Can the Motion, if approved, be implemented without the need for any resource (financial and otherwise) to be identified outside existing budgets or staffing capacity?”

If the answer is ‘yes’, then the Motion can proceed towards discussion and resolution.

An example of a Motion which would fall into the above category would be where the Council is being asked to lobby the Government, Somerset County Council or other body on a particular issue. If the motion is carried, the action required will usually involve no more than a letter being prepared and sent to the intended recipient.

However, as in the case of the recent Motion on ‘Legal Hights’, the answer to the above question would clearly be ‘no’.

In such circumstances, detailed analysis of the wording of the Motion will be required to identify what will be needed if the Motion – when it comes before Full Council – is carried.

Such analysis will include:-

- What additional resource would be required to ensure the Motion (if approved) could be implemented?
- What needs to be done to identify the level of resource necessary both in financial and staff terms?
- Are any approvals needed to provide these resources?
- Will this require reports to be submitted through Scrutiny and the Executive?
If a Supplementary Estimate is required, Full Council approval will be required too.

If such analysis is required, the Democratic Services Manager will arrange for the attached pro-forma to be completed and this will accompany the relevant Motion onto the agenda of the Full Council meeting so all Members are aware that further investigation will be required before the Motion – even if it is carried – can be implemented.

Motions to Council – Assessment Proforma

(To be used in circumstances where it appears the wording of a proposed Motion will commit the Council to providing further financial or staffing resources which cannot be met from existing budgets)

Brief Details of the Motion -

Motion

Recommending that:-

Generally the viability should be assessed through the plan-making process as set out in the new draft National Planning Policy Framework, and

- 1) Where viability factors in to development, viability assessments should be submitted at the validation stage. This will make for more complete and considered applications and will help streamline and speed up the decision making process;
- 2) All the facts and figures should be publically available wherever possible to enable an informed debate and decision to be made;
- 3) Wherever possible, the Council will seek to recover any taxpayer contribution to enable development such as Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) with interest at 3%; and
- 4) Where viability remains an issue, the Council will apply principles set out in the new draft National Planning Policy Guidance. Under these circumstances the council will insist on:-
 - (a) An open book procedure to ensure delivery of much needed housing; and
 - (b) The levels of contributions to be assessed during and after completion of developments. The Council must insist on the potential use of a claw back mechanism to maximize affordable housing contributions.

Questions to be addressed

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>What additional resource would be required to ensure the Motion (if approved) could be implemented?</i> |
| |
| Answer – The motion (if approved) would require additional staff resource to prepare revised guidance and amendment to existing Affordable Housing SPD. |
| |
| |
| |

<i>What needs to be done to identify the level of resource necessary both in financial and staff terms?</i>
Answer – The work would need to be scoped and considered against the current workload of the Planning Policy team
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Are any approvals needed to provide these resources?</i>
Answer –No specific approvals required
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Will this require reports to be submitted through Scrutiny and the Executive? If a Supplementary Estimate is required, Full Council approval will be required too.</i>
Answer – Revised policy would need to be approved by Council

Likely timescale involved – N/A

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Full Council - 10 July 2018

Inter Authority Agreement and Constitutional Matters

This matter is the responsibility of the Monitoring Officer

Report Author: Bruce Lang, Assistant Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer

1 Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To amend the terms of the Inter Authority Agreement between Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset by the dissolution of the Joint Partnership Advisory Group (JPAG) following the establishment of the Shadow Council arrangements.
- 1.2 In recognition of the change of circumstances following the establishment of the Shadow Council arrangements and in particular to the establishment of a Shadow Scrutiny Committee, to consider amending Article 9 of the Constitution to facilitate the dissolution of the existing two Scrutiny Committees and constitute one Scrutiny committee to undertake the overview and scrutiny function on behalf of the Council for the period until 31 March 2019.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Inter Authority Agreement between TDBC and WSC be amended by the dissolution of JPAG with the review and monitoring of the Implementation Plan being undertaken through the Shadow Council Governance arrangements.
- 2.2 That Article 9 and other relevant provisions of the Constitution be amended to facilitate the dissolution of the existing two existing Scrutiny Committees and the establishment of one Scrutiny committee to undertake the overview and scrutiny function on behalf of the Council for the period until 31 March 2019.

3 Risk Assessment

Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Risk: There will be a deficit in the monitoring and review of progress on the implementation plan and transformation programme in the absence of JPAG.	4	4	16

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
<i>Mitigation: The Implementation Plan and Transformation Programme will be monitored and reviewed through the Shadow Council Governance arrangements.</i>	1	4	4

Risk Scoring Matrix

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

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

4 Background and Full details of the Report

- 4.1 The Inter Authority Agreement entered into between TDBC and WSC in November 2013 included the establishment of JPAG to oversee the partnership arrangements and in 2016 its terms of reference were amended to cover the overseeing of the approved Transformation Programme and the creation of a new council.
- 4.2 Matters have now moved on and following the making of the Somerset West and Taunton (Modification of Boundary Change Enactments) Regulations 2018 and

the Somerset West and Taunton (Local Government Changes) Order 2018 on 25 May, 2018, the Somerset West and Taunton Somerset Council came into being on 26 May 2018.

- 4.3 The Order requires the Shadow Council to prepare and keep under review an Implementation Plan to ensure that the new council is properly established on 1 April 2019. The Shadow Council at its first meeting held on 7 June 2018 duly agreed a governance structure, including a Shadow Executive, a Shadow Scrutiny Committee and New Council Working Group to ensure that mechanisms are in place for member engagement and decision making in this process going forward.
- 4.4 As members will be aware, the creation of the new council is one work stream within the wider transformation programme which has been running for approximately 18 months with progress having been reported to JPAG. Now that the Shadow Council governance arrangements are in place which can cover the overseeing of Transformation and the creation of the new council, JPAG has become surplus to requirements. The rationale to this was explained to Group Leaders via a briefing note on 4 May 2018, subsequently available to all members, and included as part of a presentation at a Making a Difference event (open to all Members of both Taunton Deane and West Somerset Councils) held on 30 May 2018.
- 4.5 The Inter Authority Agreement may be varied at any time by the written agreement of the authorities and therefore both TDBC and WSC are recommended to amend the Inter Authority Agreement by the dissolution of JPAG, with the Shadow Executive assuming the role of facilitating member oversight of Transformation activity.
- 4.6 As members will appreciate, with the establishment of the Shadow Council and its committees this will place further pressures of time on members and officers. In particular, there are now currently four (including the West Somerset Scrutiny Committee) scrutiny committees for the one team of officers to support and there is not capacity within the current structure to do this. Equally, elements of Scrutiny activity that is currently undertaken by the individual authorities – for example reviewing and commenting on emerging budget plans – will be the responsibility of the Shadow Scrutiny Committee thus reducing the need for ‘routine’ reports to existing Scrutiny meetings. The proposal to reduce the number of TDBC Scrutiny Committees from two to one was shared with the TDBC Scrutiny Chairs on 2 May 2018, and via a briefing note to all Group Leaders on 4 May 2018, which was subsequently available to all members and presented to the Making a Difference event on 30 May 2018.
- 4.7 It is therefore recommended that the Constitution is amended to facilitate the dissolution of the existing two Scrutiny Committees and the establishment of one Scrutiny committee, consisting of 15 seats allocated on a politically proportional basis (9 Conservatives, 4 Liberal democrats, 1 Independent and 1 Labour) to undertake the overview and scrutiny function on behalf of the Council for the period

until 31 March 2019. In the event of this proposal being agreed, Group Leaders will be requested to put forward their nominations to sit on the Scrutiny Committee

5 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities

- 5.1 The successful implementation of the new Council will ensure the delivery of all Corporate Aims and Objectives and will support the process for creating a fresh set of priorities to meet the needs of the new council area.

6 Finance / Resource Implications

- 6.1 None in respect of this report with the intention being to support the work of the Shadow Council from existing resources with a shifting focus as the creation of the new Council approaches on 1 April 2019.
- 6.2 If it is decided not to reduce the number of Scrutiny Committees then consideration will need to be given to funding additional support to sustain four scrutiny committees across the three councils and to consider scheduling meetings during normal office hours to assist with availability of officers and deputies to meet the additional demand.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The proposed recommendations will ensure that the proposed actions are in line with the Inter Authority Agreement and TDBC Constitution respectively.

8 Environmental Impact Implications

- 8.1 None in respect of this report.

9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications

- 9.1 None in respect of this report.

10 Equality and Diversity Implications

- 10.1 None in respect of this report.

11 Social Value Implications

- 11.1 None in respect of this report

12 Partnership Implications

- 12.1 The Inter Authority Agreement between TDBC and WSC will remain in place as amended (should Recommendation 2.1 be adopted) until 31 March 2019.

13 Health and Wellbeing Implications

13.1 None in respect of this report.

14 Asset Management Implications

14.1 None in respect of this report

15 Consultation Implications

15.1 Members have had prior notice and discussion of the proposal as set out in paragraphs 4.4 and 4.6 of the report.

Democratic Path:

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

Reporting Frequency: Once Only

Contact Officer

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Taunton Deane Borough Council

Full Council - 10 July 2018

Capital Loan to Somerset Coast YMCA by Taunton Deane Borough Council

This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Mark Edwards, Taunton Deane's Portfolio Holder for Business Development and Asset Management

Report of the Assistant Director Business Development – Ian Timms

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek endorsement from the Shadow Executive for Taunton Deane Borough Council to invest in the redevelopment of the Great Western Hotel, Taunton. This investment will be delivered through provision of a capital loan to Somerset Coast YMCA (YMCA-SC) of £675,000. The loan will complete the funding package of £1.7 million to enable the redevelopment of the Great Western Hotel, Taunton.
- 1.2 The redevelopment of this key building which is situated in an important gateway to Taunton is part of the overall plans to redevelop the area around the station. This will be in two key elements:
 - Business hub, incubator space, collaboration space and meeting rooms
 - Training and skills partnership utilising 15 bed boutique style hotel accommodation.
- 1.3 These will combine to directly deliver 10 new jobs, 12 apprenticeships, 10 traineeships and a range of volunteering opportunities.
- 1.4 As with any investment this is not risk free, however risks are considered to be acceptable. There are financial benefits for the Council, particularly through increased investment income. In a wider sense the loan creates leverage with other organisations which has enabled a funding package to be created through the use of a number of funding sources. The proposed scheme will therefore have a number of benefits creating wider economic benefit for Taunton Deane. It will support small businesses and enable greater collaborative working. These broader benefits are outlined in the body of this report.
- 1.5 Taunton Deane's (TDBC) Scrutiny Committee has previously considered this proposal and supported its referral for approval to TDBC's Full Council on 10 July 2018.

2 Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that:-

- (a) The principle of a 25 year, secured capital loan to Somerset Coast YMCA of up to £675,000 at beneficial terms to the Council be agreed – with detailed terms to be determined through delegated authority to the S151 Officer and Leader of the Council.
- (b) A £675,000 Supplementary Budget in the Council’s 2018/2019 Capital Programme in respect of the capital loan which is to be treated as capital expenditure be approved, with the understanding that the principal payments will be treated as capital receipts and will offset the up-front expenditure.
- (c) Delegated authority be granted to the Leader and S151 Officer authority to agree the final detailed terms and conditions of the loan following the principles agreed by Full Council.

3 Risk Assessment

Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
As with any loan agreement there is a risk that the borrower fails to make repayments on a timely basis. The Council’s capital is at risk which could include a risk of non-recovery or delayed recovery.	3	4	12
<i>Mitigated by – Due diligence has been undertaken by Council’s senior management and qualified finance professionals, including review and testing of Somerset COAST YMCA’s business plan and financial appraisal of the borrower including credit checks and appraisal of their financial status. The loan is supported by an appropriate agreement and the terms include a clear repayment schedule with terms to deal with default and delay. The loan will be secured against the asset value which the Council can ultimately pursue in the case of default by the borrower.</i>	2	4	8

Risk Scoring Matrix

Likelihood	5	Very Likely	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	Feasible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
	2	Slight	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Very Unlikely	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
			1	2	3	4	5
			Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Impact							

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

4 Background Information

- 4.1 As members will be aware the council (All future references to council mean TDBC) has identified a number of areas of focus within it's growth programme. This proposition will contribute to the delivery of the employment sites and innovation theme providing start up or incubation space for businesses, co-working space and collaboration spaces. The hotel element of the proposition provides a live training environment for the development of individuals.
- 4.2 The redevelopment of the building in this visible location is in itself important for the regeneration of Taunton. The revitalisation of this building will also make a major contribution to the redevelopment of the station forecourt. It will assist in the creation of a new gateway welcoming businesses and travellers to the town.
- 4.3 The proposition is based on the experience that Somerset Coast YMCA have in operating similar ventures. They are developing a portfolio of sites to support operation of their business which has some resonance with the Council's own approach. The two flagship projects of comparable undertaking are the Beach Hotel in Minehead (www.thebeachhotel.org) and Barley Wood House in Wrington (www.barleywood.org / www.barleywoodnursery.org). Both of these social enterprises are financially self-sustaining.

- 4.4 In common with other local authorities the Growth and Development team are developing a framework for future investment opportunities. This would enable decision making in future to be based on an agreed set of parameters. This opportunity for the Council to invest is being developed against the background of that thinking which is built on range of parameters. This development itself works well as a local investment which has regenerative benefit. The Council would be providing a commercially based loan to this premises to deliver on a range of its priorities.
- 4.5 The YMCA has put together a mixed funding package for the purchase and renovation of the premises. The start-up costs will be funded by the YMCA's revenue streams with the aim of achieving a break even position by the end of year one. It is anticipated that the Hotel and Restaurant function will be fully operational by the middle of 2019. The council will be providing a short term enabling loan of £75,000 to enable exchange to occur on the building. This loan is repayable after one year of awarding and has been provided through the use of Growth Reserve (formed with accumulated New Homes Bonus income) at a commercial rate.
- 4.6 The key components of the building and projected outcomes are:
- Creation of a premises hosting a training and skills partnership delivering 10 new jobs, 12 apprenticeships, 10 traineeships and many volunteering opportunities.
 - The Hotel will be transferred from a currently vacant office space to a modern hotel attracting new customers to Taunton and its surrounds, and specifically supporting the business community.
 - Creation of 15 Hotel rooms serving the market at an entry level price point
 - Café/Restaurant, Conference space which can accommodate 125 and broader Meeting Space. This element will be based in the ground floor being branded as the exchange.
 - Business Hub, Co-working spaces and Incubator units situated in the basement and ground floor areas. These spaces will be let flexibly and allow for short term and long term arrangements. The space will offer superfast broadband, a hosted reception and a series of weekly events for those using the spaces be branded as the Platform

This investment will provide a building and operation which complements the station redevelopment. We also expect this proposal will complement the council's recent decision to invest in a mid-market hotel providing entry point rooms in a boutique style setting.

5 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities

- 5.1 The proposition supports Taunton Deane's Key Theme 2 within the Corporate Strategy – business and enterprise. It supports the goal of enabling employment and innovation sites and assisting growth through innovation that

is embedded into the Council's allocated funding areas for use of the Growth Reserve (New Homes Bonus).

- 5.2 The Great Western Hotel is in a key gateway position at the entrance to Taunton railway station. The new station entrance will open out opposite the building. The Great Western Hotel will therefore be a highly visible presence when entering Taunton. The redevelopment of this building is therefore also linked to the Council's overall Taunton regeneration plans.
- 5.3 The request for a capital loan also provides the Council with the opportunity to issue funding on beneficial terms that both covers its costs and provide an acceptable financial return, making a positive contribution to the Council's own General Fund financial performance.

6 Finance / Resource Implications

- 6.1 Due diligence has been undertaken by senior officers by the Council's qualified finance professional with a focus on the robustness of the business plan for the YMCA's proposition together with the creditworthiness and financial status of the YMCA as a prospective borrower/debtor of the Council. No loan investment is risk free, however the S151 is satisfied that the process provides sufficient confidence to provide the loan advance underpinned with security against the asset. There is sufficient value in the asset to provide the necessary security required for the full value of the loan.
- 6.2 This loan is being offered to YMCA-SC on a commercial basis to ensure that it is not classed as "State Aid". The interest rate chargeable on the loan will ensure that the Council makes a return on its investment, and more than cover the cost of the external borrowing required from the PWLB. It is recommended final terms are to be agreed by the S151 Officer and the Council Leader. However, current planning is based on an assumption of applying a rate based on PWLB rates concurrent at the time of the advance plus a risk premium of approximately 2.4%.
- 6.3 The proposal is to provide the loan at a fixed interest rate for the first five years, after which it would revert to a variable rate loan thus protecting the Council against long term interest rate risk.
- 6.4 The loan to YMCA-SC makes a positive contribution to the Councils' budget position. The eventual gain will be determined by future interest rates but as a guide it is estimated the risk premium will contribute approximately £182,000 in net interest income to the General Fund.
- 6.5 The Council will account for the loan as capital expenditure within its own accounts, and as such the principal repayments received from YMCA when the loan is repaid will be treated as capital receipts. It is proposed utilise these capital receipts to cover the financing of the upfront capital loan investment, thus mitigating the requirement for a Minimum Revenue Provision cost to the General Fund.

- 6.6 Loans of this type are regarded as investments under the new MHCLG guidance on investments and details of which will be included in the new requirement for the Council to produce a Capital Strategy, this will come before Members later in the year.
- 6.7 The loan will be drawn down on completion of the purchase, which is expected to be in the summer 2018.
- 6.8 The loan will be provided on the basis that YMCA-SC cover the arrangement costs and cover all associated financing costs.
- 6.9 The loan will be secured over the building. A valuation by a RICS qualified surveyor dated 28th March 2018 has been provided which values the building currently at £1,000,000.
- 6.10 The total cost of Refurbishment and Conversion has been estimated by YMCA-SC management at £1.684m. This will be done using their own internal Project Management resources, Termed Service contractors that are already in place and in-house decorators. This is the model that was used for the refurbishments of The Beach Hotel in Minehead and Barley Wood in Wrington.
- 6.11 The overall funding package is outlined below for reference

Purchase and initial capital:	£	
TDBC Enabling Loan	75,000	
TDBC Capital Loan	675,000	
Renovation and refurbishment:		
Hinkley CIM fund	500,000	(General renovation costs)
Architectural Heritage Fund	25,000	(Awarded for pre-project development)
Rail Heritage Trust	106,000	(40% of identified heritage elements – funding ring fenced)
Heritage Lottery Fund	135,000	(60% of identified heritage elements – in progress)
Nisbet Trust	25,000	(Awarded – Kitchen Infrastructure)
Torbay Development Trust	25,000	(In progress – Co-working and start-up offices)
(Somerset Enterprise Agency)		
YMCA – SC Reserves	28,000	(ring fenced)
Garfield Weston	90,300	(application in progress)
TOTAL	1,684,300	

- 6.12 The overall total of loan finance provided by TDBC of £750,000 (including both the enabling and capital loans) represents approximately 45% of the total funding package.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The detail of the proposal will be referred to SHAPE Legal partnership for advice who will also assist with drawing up a suitable loan agreement. This agreement will be modelled on previous loan agreements that have been delivered by the authority.
- 7.2 The loan is offered at a commercial rate to ensure compliance with current state aid requirements. The loan would become part of the new authorities lending.

8 Environmental Impact Implications

- 8.1 The environmental and community safety implications have been considered and there are not expected to be any specific implications relating to this report.

9 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety

- 9.1 This report relates to the provision of a loan to enable Somerset Coast YMCA to redevelop what is currently an empty building. The occupation of the building will increase natural surveillance in the area creating new activity minimising the likelihood of community safety issues.

10 Equalities and Diversity

- 10.1 This report relates to provision of a loan to enable a wider investment and building programme. The planning and design work will need to take account of any issues around accessibility addressing that characteristic, however this will be the responsibility of YMCA-SC. There are no direct equalities and diversity implications in respect of the financing arrangement recommended within this report.

11 Social Value, Partnership, Health and Wellbeing

- 11.1 In making this loan the council would be supporting a project that has wider value through the nature of YMCA as an organisation that works with a range of young people. The YMCA intend to employ a range of young people in the hotel and hospitality element of the building. This will provide employment and training opportunities.

12 Asset Management and Consultation Implications

- 12.1 There are no direct asset management issues for the council with regards to this report as those fall to Somerset Coast YMCA. As mentioned in the report the repair and improvement of this building will have a positive and beneficial effect on the area of the station forecourt.

Democratic Path:

- Corporate Scrutiny – 26 April 2018
- TDBC Executive – No
- Shadow Executive – 5 July 2018
- Full Council – 10 July 2018

Reporting Frequency: Once

Contact Officers

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Appendix A – Confidential appendix – TDBC loan summary

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Full Council – 10 July 2018

Approval of Redundancies (Transformation) Where Severance Is Over £100,000 and Technical Change to Pension Discretions Policy

Report of the Transformation HR Lead

This matter is the responsibility of the Leader of the Council, Councillor John Williams and Cllr Andy Sully, Portfolio Holder for Resources.

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report is requesting Council to approve the redundancies of the Assistant Director Planning and Environment, the Open Spaces Area 1 Supervisor and the Housing and Community Project Lead. The necessary financial approvals are already in place via the Business Case for Transformation. This request for Full Council approval is a separate requirement of the Councils HR policies where severance costs exceed £100,000 per case.
- 1.2 The report also recommends a technical change to the Pensions Discretions Policy recommended by Peninsula Pensions which does not change the intent of the current policy but does reflect the appropriate Regulation to be used.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That Council approve the redundancies of the Open Spaces Area 1 Supervisor and Housing and Community Project Lead with effect from 30 September 2018 and the Assistant Director Planning and Environment with effect from 31 March 2019 in accordance with the financial details set out in Appendices A, B and C.
- 2.2 That Council approve the amended Pensions Discretions Policy as set out in Appendix D.

3 Risk Assessment

Risk Matrix

Description	Likelihood	Impact	Overall
Risk:Challenge from the Employee if not approved and decision relates to cost which in turn relates to age.	2	3	6
<i>Mitigation:These redundancy requests are within budget and are applying the appropriate policies of the Council and Regulations relating to the Local Government Pension Scheme</i>	1	3	3

Risk Scoring Matrix

Likelihood	5	Very Likely	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	Feasible	Low (3)	Low (6)	Medium (9)	Medium (12)	High (15)
	2	Slight	Low (2)	Low (4)	Low (6)	Medium (8)	Medium (10)
	1	Very Unlikely	Low (1)	Low (2)	Low (3)	Low (4)	Low (5)
			1	2	3	4	5
			Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
			Impact				

Likelihood of risk occurring	Indicator	Description (chance of occurrence)
1. Very Unlikely	May occur in exceptional circumstances	< 10%
2. Slight	Is unlikely to, but could occur at some time	10 – 25%
3. Feasible	Fairly likely to occur at some 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%

- 3.1 The legal comments highlight potential risks of challenge from the affected employees if Council decide not to approve the redundancies. In addition to this risk such a decision would also reduce the financial savings made.

4 Background Information

- 4.1 The purpose of this report is to request that Council agree the redundancies of:

the Open Spaces Area 1 Supervisor and Housing and Community Project Lead posts as at 30 September 2018; and

the Assistant Director Planning and Environment Planning as at 31 March 2019.

- 4.2 There is a requirement for these redundancies to be approved by Full Council as the 2018/19 Pay Policy Statements contain the following:

‘That where severance payments for staff exceed £100,000 they will be reported to Full Council for approval and in presenting information to Full Council the components of the relevant severance package will be clearly set out. These components may include salary paid in lieu, redundancy compensation, pension entitlements, holiday pay and any bonuses, fees or allowances paid.’

- 4.3 Under the transformation project the post holders were included in Phase 1 and, along with 19 other staff, expressed the preference to leave the organisation. The use of voluntary redundancy has been adopted to help achieve the required 22% savings in staff costs leaving those staff remaining to compete for the new posts created in the organisation.
- 4.4 The financial details are set out in Appendices A, B and C.
- 4.5 The report also proposes a technical changes to our Pensions Discretions Policy following advice from Peninsula Pensions. It does not change the current intent of the Discretions Policy.
- 4.6 Peninsula Pensions have recommended that, like a number of other authorities, we use Regulation 16(2)(e) and 16(4)(d) Funding of Additional Pension rather than Regulation 31 – Award of Additional Pension to allow staff to use any compensatory payment made for redundancy or retirement in the interest of efficiency of the service.
- 4.7 This technical change maintains the benefit for the employee and does not increase any costs to the authority. The Pensions Discretions Policy is attached at Appendix D and shows the relevant changes.

5 Business Continuity

- 5.1 Although Phase 1 of the new structure created through transformation will come into effect at the end of September 2018 discussions have been held with 1 of the employees to secure their services until the 31 March 2019 to ensure sufficient capacity is available to manage the workload of the Planning Service and identified risks to the service.

6 Links to Corporate Aims / Priorities

- 6.1 This proposal is in response to the Transformation Project, whose aims were set out in detail in the Business Case agreed by both Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council in 2016. Among the aims in the business case is to deliver financial savings which involves reducing staff costs.

7 Finance / Resource Implications

- 7.1 Both Full Council's approved funding for the "High Level Business Case – Transformation" in 2016 (TDBC on 26 July 2016 and WSC on 07 September 2016) which included an allowance for estimated termination costs of £3m (WSC: £493k; TDBC General Fund: £1,673k, TDBC Housing Revenue Account: £834k). The total costs for all 3 posts are £419k which is affordable within the agreed budget.
- 7.2 The payback period for all 3 posts is under 3 years and therefore within normal acceptable boundaries and in line with the business case. It is therefore considered the proposals achieve value for money for the Councils, both when considered in isolation and for the business case overall. The finance details

are set out in the confidential appendices A, B & C. If approved the costs will be disclosed in the annual statement of accounts for 2018/19, which as standard includes a note regarding remuneration costs that exceed £50,000 in any one financial year – including severance costs.

- 4.3 Should these redundancies not be approved then the annual cost of retaining these posts would be £170,500 which would reduce the ongoing savings proposed within the business case. There could also be further costs incurred if the decision is challenged by any of the post holders. The savings target per the Business Case is already incorporated into the Medium Term Financial Plans for the two Councils, therefore any shortfall will increase the budget gap that would need to be addressed in other ways.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 All relevant employment legislation and HR policy has been complied with.
- 8.2 The creation of the staffing structures has been delegated to the Chief Executive but, due to the requirement for all redundancies over £100,000 to be approved by Full Council, there is a need for these specific proposals to be considered by Members.
- 8.3 The requests for redundancy have been considered against and accord with Council policies. Individually and together they pay back within a three year period but it should be remembered that these are part of the wider transformation project.
- 8.4 Should the Council determine that any of the redundancies should not be approved then there is a risk of challenge by the affected post holders as this decision may be deemed to be discriminatory.

9 Environmental Impact Implications

- 9.1 None associated with this report.

10 Safeguarding and/or Community Safety Implications

- 10.1 None.

11 Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 11.1 All aspects of the Transformation Programme which are HR related, such as recruitment, redundancy etc, are being being monitored for equality purposes so that any equality impacts can be considered.
- 11.2 There are no equality issues arising from this report.

12 Social Value Implications

- 12.1 None.

13 Partnership Implications

13.1 None for the purposes of this report.

14 Health & Wellbeing Implications

14.1 None.

15 Asset Management Implications

15.1 None.

16 Consultation Implications

16.1 None.

Democratic Path:

- **Corporate Scrutiny – No**
- **Executive – No**
- **Full Council – 10 July 2018**

Reporting Frequency: One Off

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Written Statement on Local Government Pension Scheme Employers Discretions and Key Pensions Policy

Taunton Deane Borough Council

April 2018 to 31 March 2019

LGPS (Administration) Regulations 2008

Regulation B30 (2)

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

Regulation B30 (5)

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

Regulation B30A (3)

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

Regulation B30A (5)

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

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

Regulation 31 (2)

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

Regulation 31 (5)

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

Regulation 31 (7A)

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

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013

Regulation 100 (6)

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

Regulation 9 (1) and 9 (3)

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

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

It is not the policy of the Council to fund additional pension and the Council will not enter into a shared cost additional pension contributions arrangement other than where an employee leaving has requested that the Council use all of the compensatory payment to purchase additional pension benefits.

Regulation 30(6) Flexible Retirement

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

Regulation 30(8)

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

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

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

pay of the employee. Actual weekly pay does not include payment of pension contributions.

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

The Council provides up to 15 weeks compensation, in addition to any redundancy payment as set out in both the Compensation Policy.

Where additional compensation is paid the employee has the option to ask the Council to augment their pension benefits by using all of the additional compensation prior to their date of leaving.

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Council Meeting – 10 July 2018

Part I

To deal with written questions to, and receive recommendations to the Council from, the Executive.

Councillor John Williams

Financial Monitoring – Outturn 2017/2018

The Council's financial performance for the 2017/2018 financial year was considered by the Executive at its meeting on 5 July 2017.

The revenue outturn position for the financial year 2017/2018 is as follows:-

- The General Fund (GF) Revenue Outturn position for 2017/2018 is a net underspend of £21,000 (0.1% of Net Budget), after proposed reserve transfers and carry forwards; and
- The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is a 'Self-Financing' account for the Council's Housing Landlord function, which is budgeted to 'break even' (net of approved transfers to/from HRA Reserves). The HRA Outturn for 2017/2018 is a net overspend of £446k (1.7% of gross income).

The capital outturn position for 2017/2018 is as follows:-

- The total General Fund Capital Programme budget is £53,304,000, including ongoing schemes from previous years and new schemes approved at the start of and during 2017/2018. Of this, £13,883,000 has already been spent in previous years and a further £4,869,000 has been spent during 2017/2018. The projected spend in 2018/2019 and future years is £34,259,000 (not including new 2018/2019 budget approvals). A net underspend of £293,000 is being reported against the overall approved budget for the Programme.
- The HRA approved Capital Programme at the end of 2017/2018 was £18,839,000. This relates to schemes which will be completed over the next five years. The actual expenditure on the Capital Programme during 2017/2018 was £10,126,000 with £8,713,000 for planned investment to implement approved schemes in future years. There are no reported variances against the total approved programme.

The General Fund reserves balance as at 31 March 2018 stands at £2,299,000

which remains above the minimum reserves expectation.

HRA Reserve balance as at 31 March 2018 stands at £2,778,000, which is above the minimum level set within the Council's Budget Strategy and HRA Business Plan.

The total General Fund Earmarked Reserves balance as at 31 March 2018 is £21,615,000, and for HRA Earmarked Reserves the balance is £6,990,000, representing contingencies and funds that have been set aside for specific purposes to be spent in 2018/2019 or later years.

This has grown largely in respect of funds committed to support growth and infrastructure development, future capital programme spending, the business rates funding volatility, creating a new council and funding set aside to support service restructuring and transformation projects. The majority of this is planned to be spent over the next two years, although experience shows this may be over a longer period.

The year-end financial statements reported that Deane DLO has made an overall deficit of £44,000 after contributing £101,000 to the GF. This deficit has been transferred from the DLO Trading Account Reserves which, together with a £200,000 contribution to Transformation, has decreased the reserve balance to £121,000.

The Deane Helpline has reported a net deficit of £64,000 for the year, which is an underspend of £53,000 against the final budget and represents the net cost of the service to the GF.

The Outturn Report has previously been considered and supported by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee.

Recommended that:-

- (a) The reported General Fund Revenue Budget underspend of £21,000 in 2017/2018 and the General Reserves Balance of £2,299,000 as at 31 March 2018 be noted;
- (b) The General Fund Revenue Budget Carry Forwards totalling £1,195,000 (as set out in table 3 of the Executive's report) be approved;
- (c) A General Fund Capital Programme Budget Profile totalling £34,259,000 in 2018/2019 and later years (as set out in Appendix B to the Executive's report) be approved;
- (d) A Housing Revenue Account Budget Carry Forward totalling £344,000 (as set out in table 14 of the Executive's report) be approved; and
- (e) A Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme Budget Profile totalling £8,713,000 in 2018/2019 and later years (as set out in Appendix D to the Executive's Report) be also approved.

Council Meeting – 10 July 2018

Report of Councillor John Williams – Leader of the Council

1. Shadow Council – Inaugural Meeting

- 1.1 The Shadow Council came into being when the Structural Change Order, confirming the creation of the new single Council, was approved by Parliament on 29 May 2018 and ratified by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, James Brokenshire, MP.
- 1.2 Its role is to ensure the safe transition from the two existing Councils – Taunton Deane Borough and West Somerset – to the new Council in April next year. Elections for the new Council are due to take place in May 2019.
- 1.3 The Shadow Council consists of all Members of the two existing Councils and is an entity in its own right. It will monitor the delivery of the “Implementation Plan” drawn up to make sure that a legal, safe and functioning authority comes into being in April 2019.
- 1.4 We have had meetings of both the Shadow Council and the Shadow Executive and appointed Members to the various Shadow Committees. Attention will now focus on working to deliver the Implementation Plan – ensuring we transition effectively from two Councils into one. The Boundary Commission are progressing their work to establish a warding pattern for the new Council and their proposals will be published for consultation from 3 July – 27 August 2018.

2. Trenchard Way, Taunton

- 2.1 On 14 June 2018 I was delighted to attend the official naming of the Northern Inner Distributor Road as Trenchard Way. The road was named after Viscount Trenchard who was a remarkable man and he helped change the course of Britain’s 20th century history. It is appropriate that he is now being remembered in the town of his birth.
- 2.2 Lord Hugh Trenchard was guest of honour and unveiled a new memorial to his grandfather. The event was attended by dignitaries and representatives from the Royal Air Force, Royal Air Force Association, Royal British Legion and other members of the Armed Forces community, along with cadets from 41F (Taunton and District) Squadron Devon and Somerset Wing Air Training Corps.

3. Future of Local Government in Somerset

- 3.1 On behalf of Taunton Deane Borough Council, I am working with Leaders from Somerset’s Districts and Somerset County Council as we explore how public services are delivered and review the arrangements in Somerset so we

can determine the best way forward. We are working together and working constructively for the benefit of tax payers.

- 3.2 Any decisions will be based on a sound business case and what is in the best interests of the communities of Somerset. We will be open and transparent with our staff, members, unions and our residents throughout the process.
- 3.3 At this stage we cannot give any more detail about the process or timescales but these will become clearer as time goes on.
- 3.4 If other authorities are interested in being part of the discussion, we will, of course, be open to considering this.

4. Bridgwater and Taunton College

- 4.1 Taunton Deane Borough Council continues to forge an excellent working relationship with Bridgwater and Taunton College. Since opening the University Centre for Somerset at its Taunton Campus last year, the College has continued to develop its curriculum, focusing strongly on the higher level of skills needed by local employers. I am pleased to report that a visit for Councillors is being planned for this autumn, where Members will have the opportunity to see first-hand the work being done at the Taunton Campus and their ambitious plans for the future.

5. Visit to the UK Hydrographic Office

- 5.1 I had the pleasure of accompanying the Mayor and a number of my Executive colleagues on a visit to the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO) on 29 May 2018.
- 5.2 Members will recall that UKHO committed to re-develop its Headquarters at Admiralty Way in Taunton in December 2015, having considered a number of other locations along the M5 corridor. The new iconic HQ building is now taking shape and work is on track to enable staff to occupy the building in early 2019. It is an exceptional building that reflects the UKHO's ambition to be the world's leading geospatial marine agency and one that our whole community can be proud of.
- 5.3 During our visit we were shown the maritime archive, with navigational charts dating back to the time of Captain Cook, as well as other activities across the business where the latest innovative technology is being used to gather all manner of data relating to the world's oceans. This is a business with a long and distinguished history, at the cutting edge of digital technology and with a clear and compelling vision for its future.
- 5.4 We will continue to work closely with UKHO to support future innovation and skills development initiatives.

6. Update on Refurbishment of the Great Western Hotel, Taunton

- 6.1 An enabling loan of £75,000 is now complete which has enabled exchange of contracts and work to start. This loan is repayable after one year of awarding and has been provided through the use of Growth Reserve (formed with accumulated New Homes Bonus income) at a commercial rate. The Gateway site part, which is intrinsically linked to the Station development, will provide:-
- A business hub, incubator space, collaboration space and meeting rooms
 - Training and skills partnership utilising 15 bed boutique style hotel accommodation
 - The creation of 10 new jobs, 12 apprenticeships, 10 trainees plus volunteering opportunities
- 6.2 The enabling loan of £75,000 formed part of a larger proposal of funding for the redevelopment of the Great Western Hotel, Taunton. This investment will be delivered through provision of a capital loan to Somerset Coast YMCA (YMCA-SC) of £675,000. The loan will complete the wider funding package of £1,700,000 to enable the redevelopment of the Great Western Hotel, Taunton. Hopefully this was agreed by Members earlier in this evening's meeting.
- 6.3 As with any investment, this is not risk free, however, risks are considered to be acceptable. There are financial benefits for the Council, particularly through increased investment income. In a wider sense the loan creates leverage with other organisations which has enabled a funding package to be created through the use of a number of funding sources. The proposed scheme will, therefore, have a number of benefits creating wider economic benefit for Taunton Deane. It will support small businesses and enable greater collaborative working.
- 6.4 This item was considered and supported by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 26 April 2018.

7. Refurbishment of The Deane House

- 7.1 Phase 1 - Staff moved into first floor accommodation during the week commencing 21 May 2018. Feedback from those staff using the new space is very complimentary and they are enjoying working in the new environment.
- 7.2 The demolition for Phase 2 first floor works has started and Midas have made good progress in the first week.
- 7.3 Phase 2 works are due to complete in the autumn and Phase 3 works early in the New Year.

8. Police Lease and Occupation of The Deane House

- 8.1 In line with the Council decision not to enter into a contract with Midas until a lease was in place with Avon and Somerset, I can confirm that Avon and Somerset have signed a lease agreement and we have a contract with Midas Construction Limited.
- 8.2 The anticipated date for hand over for Avon and Somerset Police will be the

4 November 2018. Thereafter, there will be a period of fit out before final occupation and Police operations running from and within The Deane House. The date for full operational delivery of Policing services has yet to be confirmed.

Councillor John Williams

Council Meeting – 10 July 2018

Report of Councillor Mrs Jane Warmington - Community Leadership

THINK DIFFERENTLY, DO DIFFERENTLY ~ The strategic vision for Taunton Deane's most disadvantaged areas is that residents lives will improve significantly and that these priority areas will look better, feel safer and in the future place a more proportionate demand on public services. These services are already being delivered differently in our disadvantaged urban areas through co-ordinated, frontline, problem-solving, multiagency one teams providing early help working closely together in the area they serve. Rural parishes with more scattered communities are being helped to access services through community centres and local village agents who identify, signpost and support isolated residents to get the help they need. Urban priority areas need excellent education and health facilities within them if we are to build independence, resilience and raise aspirations in individuals, families and communities to sustain improvements and reduce the need and costs of interventions in the future.

1. Village Agents - Helping People in Rural Areas

- 1.1 The Community Council for Somerset now has two Village Agents (VA) who cover Taunton Deane, the posts having evolved to almost full time which has concentrated the expertise grown out of experience.
- 1.2 The VA in the west of the district is part funded by Somerset Partnership supporting the Lister House GP Surgery in Wellington and is part Community Agent providing a link between health and adult social care. Another VA covers the east of the district working with individuals covering a vast range of issues to help people remain independent and find appropriate care solutions, better integrate into their community and ensure sustainable support for the future.
- 1.3 VAs have reached almost 18,000 residents with information and advice through newsletters and events; have provided almost 2,000 hours of one-to-one and group support to residents across Taunton Deane; and supported over 500 clients during last year.
- 1.4 Health and social care continues to be the issue most people ask for help with initially and enquiries about benefits are second. Other issues often come up though and people are helped with these and made aware of what else is available to support them.
- 1.5 Taunton Deane is continuing to help fund VAs in the area with £20,000 per year for the next three years to reach out into our rural areas and offer support to those in need to improve their lives.

2. Examples of where Village and Community Agents have helped

- 2.1 **First case study** : One elderly lady is a widow who lives alone in a small cottage in a hamlet in Taunton Deane. She is fiercely independent but now has dementia, is naturally wary of people, has declining health and no family and few friends. Financially she makes ends meet but has no surplus money and is supported to manage her finances by the local community shop. She is increasingly relying on

her immediate neighbour but this neighbour is nearly eighty and the elderly community in the hamlet are struggling to support her. They therefore contacted the VA.

- 2.2 **ACTIONS** : The VA linked the community, neighbours, the local shop and the Health and Wellbeing (H&W) Adviser at the local surgery to come up with a long term solution enabling her to remain at home and be as independent as possible for as long as possible.
- 2.3 She agreed that a daily visit from a micro-provider would be helpful and reduce her frequent calls to her neighbour and the local shop. The H&W Adviser and the micro-provider are now helping her apply for Attendance Allowance.
- 2.4 The VA successfully applied for a £300 grant to enable her to buy extra coal as her home was not warm enough to promote good health last winter; pay for a micro-provider to bring coal in and keep the Rayburn lit, prepare warm meals and carry out general domestic duties. Once she is in receipt of Attendance Allowance the micro-provider will continue offering the same service.
- 2.5 **OUTCOMES** :
1. Health and social care needs met without the need for involvement of Adult Social Care.
 2. Benefits check and actions put in place to enable her to pay for care.
 3. She is feeling positive and her anxiety levels have improved evidenced by the reduced number of telephone calls made to the GP, her friends, neighbours and the local shop.
 4. Her views and those things which are most important to her have been respected – her dog, her independence and her privacy.
 5. She is encouraged to look after herself and make safe healthy choices.
 6. Her friends are able to have more valuable conversations with her.
- 2.6 **Second case study** : A mother of three children with poor physical health (one grown up living with his own family) has several issues with her other two children both who are bullied at school resulting in poor attendance and some safeguarding issues. The children help care for their mother when they are at home alongside her daughter-in-law. She was referred to the Community Agent (CA) through an Adult Social Care Peer Forum.
- 2.7 She has been feeling very low and this has led her to be even less mobile than she normally is with no enthusiasm for anything. Her wellbeing is also affected by a difficult childhood and she has experienced bullying in her own community and is afraid of going out in case people shout at her.
- 2.8 She is looking for support to access activities and support groups possibly with younger people as she is only in her thirties. She has a talent for crafting and would love to join or run a craft support group for people like her living with chronic illnesses.
- 2.9 **ACTIONS** : During the home visit it became clear that the mother was very anxious and needed to talk about her frustrations and issues. The CA was able to provide

listening support for two hours and noted that the mother started to feel better purely by being listened to.

- 2.10 The CA advised the mother to contact the Parent and Family Support Adviser (PFSA) in school and the safeguarding team, and the mother agreed that details could be shared between the professionals involved.
- 2.11 The CA arranged for the mother to join a craft group which cheered her up and she expressed a wish that eventually she would like to run one of her own. The CA promised to support her in looking into the possibility of this.
- 2.12 The mother has limited mobility and the CA gave her the number for mobility services and to phone them to make an appointment to try out an electric chair as this was a quicker route than waiting for a referral.
- 2.13 The CA stayed in touch every week to check up on the mother and supported her mental wellbeing and self-esteem.
- 2.14 **OUTCOMES :**
1. The CA supported mother to attend the craft group and someone to go with her so she did not have to go on her own the first time. The mother also met another woman who suffered from similar health issues and the two have since met up at another local support group.
 2. The CA identified that late night caffeine consumption was affecting the mother's sleep and she stopped this and slept better almost immediately.
 3. The mother has since bought an electric chair with her own money and this has made her life much easier.
 4. The CA has found a suitable space where she could start her own support craft group although excited about this the mother is not quite ready but the CA will support her if she decides to go ahead.
 5. The school is in regular contact with the mother now and can better support the children with the help of the PFSA.
 6. The CA supported the mother in setting up a Facebook group in support of chronic illnesses which now has 143 members from all over the country. The client expressed gratitude to the CA and said she feels her life has a purpose again.
 7. She is happier around her family who have noticed a difference and she is making new friends in similar situations. She feels supported and wants to get up in the morning now.
- 2.15 **Third case study :** An elderly gentleman with numerous health issues which have affected his mobility and resulted in his isolation. He used to be an active member in the community but feels he can no longer go out and about due to his chronic leg pain and disability.
- 2.16 He lives alone having lost his wife a few years ago although his house had been very well converted to suit their needs with a stair lift, wet room and altered drive way using their savings.
- 2.17 He has help from his family and a family member who lives nearby but he too is elderly and finds it more and more difficult to help out. His other family members

live away and although he loves to visit them he has not been able to do so due to numerous visits to hospital. This has led to his feeling lonely and guilty for putting pressure on his family so he often pretends he is fine even though he is not coping very well. He is generally a cheerful person with a positive outlook on life. He was referred to the CA by Adult Social Care.

- 2.18 ACTIONS : The CA informed the gentleman about Attendance Allowance and arranged for application forms to be sent to his daughter to fill in. He needs help with cleaning, shopping and transport to go to a social group or an activity. The CA provided him with a Micro Provider Directory so that when Attendance Allowance is granted he can choose a suitable provider to help around the house.
- 2.19 The CA set him up with online shopping through a local supermarket so food can be delivered.
- 2.20 He used to be active volunteer with Somerset County Cricket Club and CA contacted Somerset County Cricket Club for support and re-engagement.
- 2.21 OUTCOMES :
1. Attendance Allowance was awarded after CA assisted his daughter over the telephone with the forms which has enabled him to pay for four hours cleaning a week using a micro-provider, a huge relief for him and his family.
 2. The CA successfully contacted Somerset County Cricket Club who responded quickly having been alerted to the predicament of a past volunteer and have generously offered him some championship tickets so he can come along and watch some cricket. They will also let him know when other social events are taking place if he would like to come and have renewed his membership free of charge.
 3. This has resulted in a very happy man who feels elated and relieved that he can meet up with his old friends and watch some cricket. This has offered a welcome distraction from the debilitating hospital appointments and his relatively poor health. He will use part of his Attendance Allowance to fund taxi journeys to the County Ground.
 4. He is now shopping on line with an iPad provided by his family and the family member nearby is teaching him to use it. His first delivery of groceries arrived safely.
 5. His overall wellbeing has improved hugely and he will be able to live independently at home for far longer without having to rely on Adult Social Care. His family feel more at ease knowing he is now managing and has the necessary local support.

3. Wider work of Community Council for Somerset

- 3.1 The Community Council for Somerset (CCS) has distributed Surviving Winter grants totalling £3,676 (a redistribution of winter fuel allowance managed by the Somerset Community Foundation) to vulnerable Taunton Deane residents.
- 3.2 They have also distributed some Crisis Funds (a separate fund managed by CCS to support individuals at times of crisis). These grants are used creatively to help achieve outcomes for clients. The sums of money are very small, sometimes just

£50 and only used after all other possible avenues are exhausted. The kind of things people have been helped with are:-

- House deep-cleaning for hoarding issues;
- Help with basic removal costs;
- Clothing in cold weather;
- Basic items of furniture usually where people are sleeping in chairs/living rooms; and
- Travel costs to get people to appointments.

- 3.3 Two Talking Cafes currently run once a week in Taunton and in Wiveliscombe to provide a place where the different agencies can meet to encourage joint working resulting in better and quicker outcomes for people. They also identify any gaps in services which CCS can then look to fill using community based solutions.
- 3.4 Other community groups have been supported to book appropriate speakers, increase attendance and link with the wider support available in the community.
- 3.5 CCS have also been supporting Wivey Cares, a new network of micro-providers working in and around Wiveliscombe. A working group is in place and CCS has given them advice on legal structure and ways of working. This will provide residents in these areas with easier access to local care and support. Somerset is the national exemplar for micro-providers and information can be found on the website www.somersetchoices.org.uk
- 3.6 CCS are also working with Adult Social Care across Taunton Deane with two CA posts (funded by Somerset County Council). These posts take referrals direct from Adult Social Care (Social Workers and Occupational Therapists for example) from across the district to provide community solutions for complex cases. The CAs attend weekly peer forums with Social Workers as a member of the team where each person's needs are discussed.
- 3.7 CCS are also supporting individuals to connect with peers in their local area to help them manage their own health conditions better and any associated problems and therefore become and remain more independent.
- 3.8 Thank you to the Chief Executive of The Community Council for Somerset Keeley Rudd who provided the recent update for the Taunton Deane Strategic Partnership and gave permission for the case studies to be further anonymised and used here.

4. Diverted Giving - to help the homeless and reduce begging

- 4.1 Businesses are being asked to support the Diverted Giving Scheme set up by Taunton Deane with the Avon and Somerset Police to help homeless people and dissuade people from begging on the streets.
- 4.2 The Council has a collection box at the Taunton Visitor Centre in the Market House, where people can donate money directly to the local charity Open Door rather than giving to people begging on the streets. The Visitor Centre is open from 9.30am – 4.30pm Monday to Saturday.

- 4.3 More host businesses are being sought and we welcome greater opportunities for people to give their spare change or make charitable donations to Open Door which is using the donated funds to provide meals, showers, laundry and support to rough sleepers from its base in Mount Street (www.tauntonopendoor.org.uk). You can also donate to Open Door by post or in person at 1A Mount Street, Taunton, TA1 3QB or online at www.mydonate.bt.com and search for Taunton Open Door.
- 4.4 The Diverted Giving scheme is part of the One Team multi-agency effort to minimise the causes of rough sleeping, begging, anti-social behaviour and the associated problems these can create in the town centre.

5. Government Grant awarded to tackle rough sleeping

- 5.1 Taunton Deane has been awarded £231,590 after making a successful bid for money from Central Government's Rough Sleepers Initiative Fund. This will pay for specialist support to assist rough sleepers into accommodation and through the transition into independent living.
- 5.2 The One Team approach is working both proactively and reactively to identify and address the issues of rough sleeping, begging and anti-social behaviour; and develop a joined-up service for rough sleepers to help them break the cycle of homelessness and addiction.
- 5.3 There is no easy way to resolve the issue of rough sleeping and although the steps we are taking with our multi-agency One Team are starting to make a difference (starting with a bespoke plan for each rough sleeper) this new funding means we can respond quickly to offer the extra support and hand-holding we know is needed to successfully start to address often complex underlying issues.
- 5.4 So it is a really welcome boost to our efforts and recognition of our commitment to address the homeless issue in Taunton with the help of the public through Diverted Giving and our partners including the Police, ARC (formerly Taunton Association for the Homeless), Open Door, Somerset County Council and other support agencies to ensure that appropriate and necessary steps are being taken with every individual rough sleeper prioritising those who are causing anti-social behaviour.
- 5.5 I would like to thank our Housing Options Manager, Heather Stewart, who has been instrumental in securing this additional funding and for her continued invaluable input into the Rough Sleepers One Team.

Councillor Jane Warmington

Council Meeting – 10 July 2018

Report of Councillor Terry Beale – Housing Services

1. Housing Enabling and Development

There are numerous work streams currently being undertaken by the Housing Enabling and Development Team. A wide range of projects are ongoing both within the Council and working closely with our Housing Association partners to continue to deliver affordable housing within Taunton Deane.

Development

North Taunton

- 1.1 The third public consultation for the North Taunton Woolaway Project was held on Friday 8 June 2018. 64 of our Taunton Deane tenants and 22 owner occupiers visited the venue and in addition five visitors came from the wider area. It was very pleasing to see people from households who have not engaged previously.
- 1.2 At this event attendees were able to see the three options that are currently being considered:-
 - Refurbish all TDBC Woolaways;
 - Refurbish some TDBC Woolaways with some newbuild pockets working around private owners; and
 - Total newbuild in the central section with refurbishment of Taunton Deane homes in identified areas of Dorchester Road and Ludlow Avenue.
- 1.3 The event was extremely successful with a great many constructive conversations taking place. As a direct result the project Team have 1:2:1 appointments with 47 households to follow up discussions in greater depth.
- 1.4 In addition, members of the Design Group were able to gather valuable feedback from the community on a variety of topics including the desire to have a community space and views on the options being considered. This feedback will be assessed and reported back to the Project Board. This was a really useful exercise generating plenty of work as we move towards the final options appraisal. The next public event will be in October 2018.
- 1.5 A staff briefing following the consultation event was carried out at the Wellington Depot and within The Deane House to ensure colleagues remain informed as the project progresses and a full Members Briefing has been given to share the emerging proposals with Councillors.
- 1.6 Work continues to decant those households who have expressed a desire to move now and where a suitable property has been identified and we are working on other options including open market purchases to provide additional decant opportunities.

Weavers Arms, Rockwell Green, Wellington

- 1.7 Work continues on site. Technical approval for highways works has now been received from the County Council, however the Section 278 legal agreement is still within their system for signature. The required highways works will commence once the legal agreement is signed. We continue to work with the County Council and the contractor to complete this scheme.

12 Moorland Close, Taunton

- 1.8 I am extremely pleased to report that 12 Moorland Close has officially been handed over and we are busy setting up the Council processes. Assets are currently working with Taunton East Development Trust regarding their lease and we will have an official hand over when this work is completed.
- 1.9 In addition we have been granted planning permission to convert 121-123 Outer Circle into 4 x 1 bed flats and work will now commence on this development. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Rachel Searle who has worked tirelessly to bring these projects to fruition.

11 Belmont Road, Taunton

- 1.10 This is an extension project to enable a very large family with many and varied needs to be housed. I am happy to report that this project nears completion and preparations are underway to support the family in their return to their extended home.

Laxton Road, Taunton

- 1.11 The procurement process for a contractor is currently underway following additional site investigations. Our aim is to start on site towards the end of 2018/ early 2019 subject to contractor availability.

Oake Woolaway Repair Project

- 1.12 Site investigations have been undertaken and the results are being assessed with a view to commence the procurement process to select a contractor shortly.

Enabling

Affordable Housing Open Day

- 1.13 The 6 June 2018 saw the running of our 13th Affordable Housing Open Day at the Coopers Associates County Ground. The event was a tremendous success with 24 exhibitors and over 300 visitors. It was particularly pleasing to be joined by new exhibitors this year including the Taunton Heritage Trust, Somerset Cooperative CLT and Furnitrust. Also, several developers took the opportunity to join us informally to speak to both ourselves and the housing providers about new site opportunities. Overall the event was exceptional and the feedback from both visitors and exhibitors was extremely positive.

Staplegrove

- 1.14 This project is ongoing with a number of elements needing support. With the

allocation of monies from the Highways Infrastructure Fund the question of viability needs to be reassessed and we are working with colleagues from Planning to complete on this work. In addition work is continuing with SHAPE Legal with regard to the Section 106 Agreement and its implementation.

Comeytrowe

- 1.15 Approved at Planning Committee on 25 April 2018 with revised affordable housing provision - 17.5%. The Section 106 Agreement was currently under negotiation.

Oake

- 1.16 The planning application for Oake, 9 affordable homes to be cross-subsidised by 9 open market properties is under consideration. This is awaiting allocation of a new Planning Officer before commencing further.

Parmin Close, Taunton –

- 1.17 66 extra care units and 12 learning disabilities units being built by Livity (formerly known as Knightstone) are complete with an anticipated opening event provisionally booked for 26 September 2018 to enable residents to settle in.

At this point I would like to point out some problems which the team are encountering. There are several planning applications in being which seek to exploit planning policy where the provision of Affordable Housing can be reduced or removed entirely. We are working extremely hard to negotiate the best deals possible for the Council but it is extremely challenging.

But the good news is.....

Livity particularly are working with Housing Enabling to bring forward a range of developments. The planning application for The Paddocks, Bishops Lydeard is being prepared and will deliver 19 affordable homes for rent including seven homes for local residents with learning difficulties. Our efforts and tenacity for Cornhill, Wellington should result in a planning application being submitted imminently for 42 affordable homes in the centre of Wellington (this is a scheme with complex heritage issues and was due to deliver no affordable housing). Other exciting, yet challenging affordable housing led schemes are in the pipeline and further updates will be provided once they progress further.

Discounted Open Market Sales

- 1.18 We continue with a regular flow of discounted open market resales and recently reviewed the vetting procedure, including assistance from Powys Fraud to ensure the process remains robust.

Homefinder

- 1.19 The glitch in the system associated with the Parish First Choice has at last been fixed. We have run our data reports again since and as anticipated the picture has changed dramatically. There are now 2491 households showing with a Parish First Choice whereas in April, there were only 1209. As an example, there are now 25 households with Bishops Lydeard as their Parish First Choice in comparison to 12

in April. It is unfortunate that this has taken so long to fix and the figures have been distorted for the last 6-9 months but at least it is now rectified.

Affordable Housing Partnership

- 1.20 There are nine partners for 2018/2019 following the merger of Knightstone and DCH to form Liverty. Below is a summary of feedback received from the main partners.
- 1.21 We have established a rural housing forum with our other partners (Falcon, SHAL, SouthWestern Housing Society and TDBC Development) to provide a focus on rural housing. The aim of this forum is:-
- To look at where housing is needed.
 - To provide focused housing delivery.
 - To look at existing stock with a view to assessing potential swaps and housing management sharing opportunities.
 - To educate the Parish Councils/Public on what Housing Associations do.
 - To improve contacts at Parish Councils for letting properties.
 - To work together to assess which HA best suits sites coming forward and avoid bidding against each other.

Several rural parishes have been contacted to raise the profile of the housing associations with homes in their parish

Summary of Partnership Review Comments – Main Partners

Aster - Taunton Deane have been very proactive in the delivery of affordable housing, and Aster support the way in which the Council actively engage with Registered Providers with regular partnership meetings and 1:2:1 reviews. The Enabling Team have been very helpful and Aster continues to be proactive in Taunton.

Yarlington - A proactive, forward thinking local authority. Good clear lines of communication with the Enabling Team. Proactive in assisting to resolve issues around the progress of discharging outstanding planning conditions at Killams. They understand the lending implications for a cap on staircasing and not imposing any is a helpful approach, which ultimately makes it easier for buyers to get on a property ladder.

The sales team's interaction with the staff at Taunton Deane has always been positive. They are proactive, willing to help and accommodate our requirements. Requests for change in an allocation criteria are always considered and a fair solution or a compromise is put forward.

Stonewater - The Council's Housing Enabling Team has always been very helpful, pleasant to work with and accessible. They have assessed queries for shared ownership promptly and reasonably.

Liverty - We believe that we are continuing to make a positive contribution to Taunton Deane. Our development programme, both in Section 106s and directly-procured schemes is increasing significantly and we are considering strategic market-led sites in addition. We are the selected commercial partner for the North Taunton Regeneration

and have contributed to events such as the Garden Town Visioning event. We enjoy a positive and beneficial relationship with Council Officers.

We are very happy with our relationship with the Council and hope to develop it further.

Magna (new main partner hence limited comments) - Magna are pleased to be working with the Council on a range of potential development opportunities. We have recently appointed a Sales and Marketing Manager, who will liaise closely with the Council to deliver a meaningful shared ownership program. The vast majority of our programme is based on land-led opportunities and we are looking forward to working collaboratively with Taunton Deane to deliver additional schemes.

2. Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

- 2.1 The ASB Team continues to work extremely hard with an ever increasing workload. Their satisfaction level far exceeds the performance standards set and it is a credit to the entire team that complex cases are being brought to a conclusion.

3. Further Work Projects

Inspired to Achieve Contract

- 3.1 The current contract is due to end in January 2019. Meetings have been held with all the relevant parties and we have negotiated an extension with a renewed specification. This is still provisional but everyone is agreed in principle and we await the final sign off.
- 3.2 This project has proved extremely successful and a vital tool is helping tenants towards work and giving them a renewed sense of purpose. We are looking at providing funding to extend the full contract for a further three years.

Star Survey

- 3.4 We have recently received the reports of the latest tenants survey and the findings are being analysed. We have shared a summary and an initial action plan with Tenants Forum and Tenants Board and once we have analysed the results in detail and factored in any extraneous matters such as staffing levels we will report with a full and comprehensive report and action plan.

4. Deane Helpline

- 4.1 The Helpline continues to provide vital cover to our tenants and is going from strength to strength. We are currently looking at various ways of funding including providing cover for outside contracts and also examining our own working practices and work streams.

5. Universal Credit

- 5.1 As has been widely reported there are still problems with the system and the Government has announced a review which we welcome. Our staff are working very hard with our tenants to reduce the problems and stress and to assist where needed with shortfalls and major issues.

6. Repairs and Maintenance

- 6.1 Our maintenance teams are working extremely hard and exceeding their performance targets cross the board. One area which has excelled is in responsive maintenance. Our satisfaction levels are high and the staff have been working to ensure that this continues. It is fair to say that we have had some event setbacks however these have been analysed and remedial measures put in place. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the teams for their dedication and hard work.

7. Lodge Close Extra Care

- 7.1 The extra care contract which is administered by Somerset County Council was recently changed and there have been some very real issues which unfortunately have caused some stress and anxiety to our tenants and their relatives.
- 7.2 I must emphasise that these matters were not of our making nor within the control of Taunton Deane. I am pleased to say that these matters have been resolved until 2020 which is excellent news for us all. However we will be working very hard to ensure that we get value for money and the best service for our tenants post 2020.

And Finally.....

I have been extremely impressed at the professionalism and dedication of all the staff within my area and indeed across the Council as a whole. We are in challenging times with a great deal of change taking place both nationally with the approach of Brexit and locally with the formation of the new Council. Added to that The Deane House refurbishment and external matters with regards to the future of Councils in Somerset and you have choppy waters to say the least.

The staff have been exemplary in their work ethic and their ongoing commitment to the cause and I would like to thank them personally. Further I would ask each and everyone to acknowledge and understand these testing times and treat our staff with dignity and respect. They deserve it!!!

Councillor Terry Beale

Council Meeting – 10 July 2018

Report of Councillor Patrick Berry – Environmental Services and Climate Change

1. Environmental Health

Staffing Update

- 1.1 Chris Lewis – Food Safety Officer was successful in his application for the post of Business Analyst with the Transformation Team. It is planned to arrange cover using a food safety consultant for food inspections.

Food Hygiene Inspections

- 1.2 These are continuing at pace in order to complete the inspection programme before the end of the first quarter on 30 June 2018. We are slightly behind schedule due to time commitments linked to the transformation programme.

Hinkley Point Emergency Exercise

- 1.3 Both Taunton Deane (TD) and West Somerset (WS) Councils were involved in a recent exercise based at Police HQ at Portishead and Bridgwater Police Station. This was a successful exercise working in partnership with Somerset County Council and other responsible authorities such as the Environment Agency, Wessex Water and the Food Standards Agency.

Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs)

- 1.4 We are well into the events season now and SAGs have been initiated for a number of events in both areas including Welliestock in Wellington and Fake Festivals at Longrun Meadow.
- 1.5 Officers attend the meetings and are busy analysing event management plans and attending the meetings in order to provide feedback to event organisers on their plans for the events this year. So far SAGs have been initiated for concerts in Vivary Park, Minehead Seafront and a de-brief for Taunton Carnival. Other large events planned for this year for which SAGs will be needed include concerts at the racecourse and Watchet Live.

Public Health Funerals

- 1.6 The team dealt with 31 funeral cases across TD and WS (29 in TD). These involve liaison with the Coroner, Musgrove Park Hospital or family where available, our contracted funeral director – Nigel Ford (Dignity) and property searches to find legal, financial and other documents that may provide information on next of kin willing to make the necessary arrangements.

Process Redesign Programme

- 1.7 Officers have been working with the Transformation Team, looking at current and revised processes for reporting nuisance, food safety complaints and infectious diseases.

2. Licensing

Performance

- 2.1 96.6% of all applications completed between the 1 October and 31 December 2017 were completed within a 14 day timescale, meaning the service achieved its performance target (of 95%).

Staffing

- 2.2 The team will be appointing a new Licensing Officer. Leigh-Ann Fumagalli is to start a secondment as a Business Analyst in the Transformation Team at the end of June 2018. Licensing will be compensated to allow for temporary cover to be brought in. Initially, this will have a negative impact on performance of the service, given the need to bring the new team member up to speed and continuing added pressure of transformation.

Process Redesign Programme

- 2.3 The team is working with the Business Analysts in the Transformation Team to move licence applications and services online. So far, three types of taxi and private hire application have been re-designed so that in future, taxi and private hire businesses can submit their applications via the website. This will be advantageous to customers and council staff alike.
- 2.4 Members of the Taxi and Private Hire Trade Forum are being given the opportunity to test the new facilities and give feedback. There will also be a much more user-friendly process for members of the public to make complaints about a taxi drivers or vehicles.

3. Street Sweeping & Toilet Cleaning

- 3.1 The street cleansing contract with IdVerde continues to be effective with standards across the Borough being kept within the guidelines agreed in the Code of Practice. Littering in the town centre, commercial waste and the attacks of seagulls continue to be issues but the operatives are quick to respond and those incidents are short lived and they keep the area looking clean and tidy.
- 3.2 Regular monitoring of standards and inspections of streets, housing estates and public toilets are conducted by TDBC Open Spaces and Idverde Management and has resulted in a positive working relationship and improvements in the service.
- 3.3 The Open Spaces Team are trialling new grass cutting equipment which may reduce the amount of green waste going to landfill by mulching the clippings and reusing it

as fertiliser, reducing charges and improving the environment we all enjoy.

4. Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP)

Upgrading the Service: Recycle More

- 4.1 Upgrading of Somerset's Waste Services is moving ahead fast to take even more materials in kerbside recycling and generate electricity from the smaller amounts of rubbish left over.
- 4.2 The changes will involve aligning three multi-million pound contracts: for waste collection, rubbish disposal and a new fleet of refuse and recycling vehicles, all of which currently begin and end completely separately.
- 4.3 Lining them up will make services more efficient, help drive recycling rates from 53% to 60% and beyond, and cut waste costs by many millions of Pounds.
- 4.4 To accelerate progress, Somerset Waste Partnership (SWP) and waste collections contractor Kier have jointly agreed to end their current contract 18 months early, on 27 March 2020.
- 4.5 That will allow timely replacement of the ageing fleet with newly-designed recycling and rubbish trucks that can collect more materials in future.
- 4.6 It will also bring forward tenders for the new "Recycle More" long-term kerbside waste collections contract, with extra recycling materials taken every week and three-weekly rubbish collections.
- 4.7 A phased introduction of Recycle More starting in 2020 aligns it closely with Somerset's switch from landfill rubbish burial to the better option of generating energy from waste at a Resource Recovery Centre facility being built in Avonmouth by contractor, Viridor.

Plastics: Recycling Pots, Tubs and Trays

- 4.8 As part of Somerset's action on plastic, all recycling sites now accept rigid plastic food and other household pots, tubs and trays (PTT) in the skips also used for plastic bottles. Suitable for recycling:-
 - Plastic pots for yoghurt, soup, face cream, hair gel.
 - Plastic tubs for margarine, ice cream, laundry tabs.
 - Plastic trays (including black plastic) for meat, ready meals, and punnets for fruit and mushrooms.
- 4.9 This means that even before 2020 we can get more of our waste plastics recycled. Collecting these items can make a significant difference to your refuse. As you can see it also includes black plastic trays.

Kerbside knife warning

- 4.10 Our crews work hard day in day out and ensuring they go home safely every day is

of paramount importance to us. A sharp knife carelessly left in a recycling box led SWP to issue reminders that:-

- Knives and sharp objects should **not** be left in kerbside recycling boxes as they can cause injury, or be picked up by children or those with criminal intent. Knives should be taken with care to recycling sites;
- Broken glass should be well wrapped to ensure no risk and added to rubbish bins;
- Syringes must be disposed of in a sharps box, which SWP collects and replaces through a doctor or pharmacy.

5. Cemetery and Crematorium:

Small Projects Update

- 5.1 The Additional Grave Spaces at Wellington and St Mary's; all of these are ready to be offered to the public and this project is now complete.
- 5.2 The new Natural Area; the boardwalk has been completed and we are now getting ready to set out full burial plots within the area.
- 5.3 The new Children's Memorial Garden is well under way and the new memorials are being installed at time of writing. These have surpassed expected quality and design and will lead to a much improved choice for the bereaved.
- 5.4 The Memorial Cremation Walkway is being landscaped and memorials have been ordered; we are awaiting delivery.

Chapel Waiting Room Expansion

- 5.5 Preliminary works have started in earnest in getting ready for the Chapel Waiting Room expansion project. We are currently waiting on the decision from the Heritage Officer of the plans submitted detailing the works. Subject to the final OK the new temporary waiting room will be delivered thereby enabling the actual construction works to commence.

Business Figures

- 5.6 Cremation numbers taken from the 1 April 2018 are higher than the previous year, with 50 additional adult cremations taking place in the first quarter, when compared with 2017.
- 5.7 Overall income has increased by £62,000 in the same period when compared with the previous year.
- 5.8 The feedback received from our working partners about the improvements in the service over the last 18 months has been extremely positive.

Councillor Patrick Berry

Council Meeting – 10 July 2018

Report of Councillor Mark Edwards - Economic Development, Asset Management, Arts and Culture, Tourism and Communications

Section 1 – Communications

- 1.1 Both corporate social media accounts, Twitter and Facebook, are still growing with the number of Facebook likes heading towards 1,000 and Twitter close to 4,000 followers.
- 1.2 We are increasingly posting information on Facebook as it is a swift way to reach large numbers of people and use photographs to best advantage.
- 1.3 However, we continue to produce traditional press releases covering a very wide range of topics from how we are addressing issues around homelessness to the creation of the new Council and meetings of the Shadow Council.
- 1.4 Both initiatives will become higher profile and more work-intensive as we move towards implementation next year. We are also preparing to work with the Local Government Boundary Commission for England during consultations on the Warding of the new Council.
- 1.5 We continue to work closely with partners in both the public and private sector, either supporting or leading on a work stream or topic. A classic example of the Variable Message Signing system that – purely on the communications side – involved us working with Somerset County Council (SCC) as the Highways Authority and the private sector contractors.
- 1.6 Communications responds to an increasing number of media queries coming in from local, regional and national sources. The ability to respond quickly and accurately within very tight deadlines is vitally important.

Section 2: Business Development

Taunton Deane Business Awards

- 2.1 This year`s Taunton Deane Business Awards ceremony was held on 28 June 2018 which was in competition with England vs Belgium but still drew an impressive crowd with varying techniques being used to keep up with the result! The Council is very pleased to be one of the key sponsors of this event which celebrates excellence in our business community. We will look forwards to next year`s awards which will again be hosted by the Taunton Chamber and to working in partnership with this key local organisation.

Growing our Garden Town (Taunton Growth Prospectus)

- 2.2 The 'Growing our Garden Town' document for Taunton was formally approved in early April following a review and refresh of the current 'Growth Prospectus for Taunton', as well as the achievement of Garden Town status for Taunton in January 2017.
- 2.3 The document is intended to 'refresh' our growth vision and commitments as a recently designated Garden Town, and communicate this clearly to the Government and others whose support is essential to delivery. It is also intended to 're-galvanise' our key partners, most of whom we are already working closely with to deliver our growth ambitions. It sets a wide-ranging agenda for Taunton as a newly designated Garden Town, encompassing economic, social and environmental dimensions, and is available to view on the 'Invest Taunton' website – <https://www.investtaunton.co.uk/the-vision/>

Wiveliscombe

- 2.4 We have been working with EPS to secure their purchase of a site in Sandy`s Moor, Wiveliscombe. This purchase is now complete securing the future of this important local employer. The wider Council team is working with EPS as they convert the building and move towards occupying it on completion of the construction works. The site has a new name – utterly coincidentally! – The Edward`s Industrial Estate Units 1 and 2 which is much preferable to the Old Slaughterhouse!
- 2.5 We await news from SCC on the adjacent Enterprise Centre which we understand will commence works shortly.

Section 3: Events, Place, Retail Marketing and Visitor Centre

Events

- 3.1 We have just hosted another successful Somerfest event. Organised by Fuse Performance, I was delighted to see large crowds enjoying live music, outdoor arts and performances taking place in Castle Green, Goodland Gardens, Somerset Square and outside the Visitor Centre. The theme this year was celebrating 250 years of the Circus and our Garden Town status. Feedback received during the day and a review of footfall counters suggested the event had a positive effect on the town centre.
- 3.2 In addition to Somerfest, I have been pleased to see a full and vibrant series of events taking place this included the recent 40 Commando Freedom Parade, Eat Taunton in May and the Dragonboat Race last month where a team of Taunton Deane staff were narrowly pipped to the title.
- 3.3 Coming up we have a busy few weeks with the Party in the Park concerts in Vivary Park, Taunton Live in Goodland Gardens, Fake Festivals in Longrun Meadow, Taunton Flower Show and the West Somerset Steam Rally.

- 3.4 Discussions have already begun with the England and Wales Cricket Board on the Cricket World Cup which will come to Taunton in 2019 and I am delighted to announce we will be hosting three high profile matches as one of the 11 host venues in England and Wales, these will be:-
- Saturday 8 June – Afghanistan v New Zealand (day/night);
 - Wednesday 12 June – Australia v Pakistan; and
 - Monday 17 June – West Indies v Bangladesh
- 3.5 I look forward to updating Members on plans as they develop this will occur over the same period as the Somerfest next year so a huge opportunity to bring sport and culture together once more as we did in 2012.

Place and Retail Marketing

- 3.6 Positive discussions continue to take place with town centre retailers on the development of a Business Improvement District in Taunton Town Centre, these are being led by the Taunton Chamber of Commerce supported by officers.
- 3.7 Officers have funded the design of the new Foxglove Cycle Trail and have secured funding from the Great Western Railway Customer and Communities Fund to update and relaunch the East and West Deane Walking routes.
- 3.8 Taunton, Wellington and Wiveliscombe continue to be promoted through open Wi-Fi, the destination website and social media platforms
Destination website (www.visitsomerset.co.uk/taunton) – 44,962 unique users in April to June period;
Visit Taunton has - Facebook: 9,925 likes;
Instagram: 1,800 followers;
Twitter: 7,025 followers;
Visit Wellington – Facebook: 1,200 likes; and
Visit Wivey – Facebook: 760 likes
- 3.9 New literature produced:-
- The Deano (providing ideas for the Summer holidays); and
 - An updated Food and Drink leaflet.

Visitor Centre

- 3.10 The Visitor Centre Team continue to actively support all marketing activities. This includes providing content for all digital platforms in addition to the day-to-day job of welcoming many visitors to the office.
- 3.11 Bookings for the banners and poster rotunda units remains healthy. As do bookings for our promotional spaces in Fore Street and High Street. Street trading within the town centre continues to be buoyant with currently 20 traders using the street trading permit held by the Visitor Centre.

Section 4: Growth strategy and specific projects

Coal Orchard Redevelopment

- 4.1 We submitted the detailed matters planning application which was validated on 30 May 2018. This is now being evaluated by the Planning Team. Ahead of that submission we took the scheme to the Devon and Somerset Design Review Panel who strongly endorsed the scheme. They suggested some improvements which were included in this application helping us complete what is a very positive design for Taunton.
- 4.2 Our commercial agents are working on securing pre-lets for the scheme. There is strong local interest with one pre-let already having been secured. There are active discussions with gym operators and national restaurant operators underway. We have completed the engagement of local specialists (Connells) for the residential marketing with all agents who were interviewed having strong offers.
- 4.3 We are now procuring our build partner and the demolition contractors for the St James Street Pool. Once this is completed I will advise Members of the detailed dates for a start on site.
- 4.4 We are progressing The Brewhouse element of this redevelopment and have recently started the procurement process for design and build of the site. This is similar to the process followed on the other scheme which will utilise available New Homes Bonus funding in the early stages. As the design process evolves I will update Members further.
- 4.5 Linked to this The Brewhouse had a surprise visit from the Arts Council England (ACE) Chief Executive in June. The feedback from the meeting was really positive and this has enabled positive contact to be established with ACE who were impressed with the work that has been done and the ambition going forwards.

Section 5: Asset Management Service Update (to Mid-June 2018)

- 5.1 The new Lead Estates Surveyor started in early April 2018 following the Senior Estates Surveyor joining in February. Both have settled in well and are helping to focus efforts on a heavy workload with stretched resources since before the new Interim Asset Manager joined in December 2017. This is a challenging position for the teams to be in when facing organisational transformation and preparations for One Council in Spring 2019. However both the Estates Team and Asset Data and Compliance Team are preparing for these changes whilst embracing the extensive workload.
- 5.2 Recruitment of temporary resource to the Asset Data and Compliance Team has progressed to interview stage to cover the Asset Compliance Technician and a further Two Stock Condition / Compliance Surveyors until transformation is fully implemented.

Key project work updates include:

Asset Management System (Open Assets by Capita)

- 5.3 A revised programme was received from Capita on 30 April with implementation kick off meetings planned to commence in early September 2018. Set up, data loading and testing will follow to include stock condition data.
- 5.4 The draft contract was available in April and has been reviewed in conjunction with procurement and ICT. Subject to any further comments from all internal stakeholders on the contract before the end of the June, legal (SHAPE) will be engaged in the review.
- 5.5 In the meantime this allows for a good lead-in time for the team to ensure our asset data and SCS (Stock Condition Survey) data is in the correct format to import into OpenAssets system.
- 5.6 The team project lead (Asset Data and Compliance Manager) recently asked Capita to confirm the inclusion of integrations which cover Academy and OpenContractor. The project team continue to manage the review of system and process associated technical and HR resources plus risks.
- 5.7 To date, stakeholders have not specified any specific Firmstep integrations, the assumption is that Firmstep integral tools will be utilised, when future requirements become apparent.

Internal Special Health Safety (H&S) and Compliance Review

- 5.8 Building on continuing continuous improvement in H&S and Compliance, the Asset Data and Compliance Team have initiated a special project review to focus on efficiency and effectiveness improvements in the integration of all H&S and Compliance asset related systems and processes including co-ordination of activities between key process owners across the organisation.

Leisure Procurement – Facilities Lease Heads of Terms

- 5.9 Asset Management has continued to provide support to the Leisure Procurement Team regarding the Leisure Procurement tender process which is at an advanced stage. Draft Generic Lease Heads of Terms were included in documents made available to bidders via the OJEU system. These Heads of Terms are generic across all properties at this stage of the tender process.

Flook House

- 5.10 Work continues to regularise the accommodation agreements in place at Flook house.

Country Park

- 5.11 Asset Management forms part of the project steering group for acquisition of land near Nerrols Farm, Taunton for a proposed Country Park. The establishment of a Country Park forms an important component of the Council's Garden Town status and adopted Green Infrastructure Strategy.
- 5.12 Members of the Council's Community Scrutiny Committee voted to support the purchase of the land and development of the Country Park in October 2017. A planning application (08/17/0044) was made by the Council and approved for the change of use of the land from agricultural to recreational uses on 11 January 2018. The Parish Councils of West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine have indicated a willingness to take maintenance responsibility for the completed project. Legal (SHAPE) have been instructed.
- 5.13 Other ongoing service area project work:-

Annual Asset Valuation

- 5.14 In close liaison with our Estates Team, Consultants Wilks Head Eve delivered the Annual Asset Valuations reports for Taunton Deane and West Somerset Council property asset portfolios in April which has been accepted (Valuation date 31 March 2018).

One Public Estate (OPE) Meetings

- 5.15 The Asset Manager continues to attend One Public Estate meetings with a view to maximising opportunities for local public estate efficiency opportunities.

Traveller Encampments

- 5.16 The Asset Management Estates Team have experienced an increase in traveller encampment incidents this summer which has taken up a lot of time and resources. Unfortunately when significant officer time is taken over this issue it stops other critical work being done in the department which is an ongoing concern and one we need to reflect on carefully. The team has also engaged in a central Government consultation on unauthorised encampments.

Councillor Mark Edwards

Council Meeting – 10 July 2018

Report of Councillor Roger Habgood – Planning Policy and Transportation

1. Planning Policy

- 1.1 Plan Review: Work continues on compiling and building the evidence base to inform a future review of local planning documents for Taunton Deane.
- 1.2 As previously reported, the Green Infrastructure Strategy has been published. One of the projects from that strategy, the Country Park, is moving towards delivery in Monkton Heathfield, following a successful Planning for Real session with the community.
- 1.3 The joint Taunton Deane and West Somerset Retail, Leisure and Employment Study is now in draft and will soon be published.
- 1.4 The new Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been put out for a full tender response.
- 1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consultation closed in May 2018. The Council responses were submitted following the member briefing. The Government is expected to publish its major overhaul of the NPPF before the summer recess.
- 1.6 As a reminder the key changes are as follows:-
 - Greater responsibility for Local Authorities regarding housing delivery;
 - Maximising the use of land with more freedom regarding brownfield land;
 - Maintaining strong protections for the environment;
 - Ensuring the right homes are built;
 - Higher quality and design; and
 - A More transparent planning process.
- 1.7 Good progress is being made in developing a design guide. Preliminary discussions have taken place and subject to successful procurement work will commence in August 2018.

2. Garden Town Strategy and Plan

- 2.1 The Garden Town Plan for Taunton continues to develop. Once complete the plan will set the long-term vision for the town and guiding principles to inform planning and much of the Council's future activity in Taunton. The feedback from the visioning event is now available and will now be fed back to the participants and then to the wider community.
- 2.2 The Plan identifies key activities, priorities and proposals for Taunton in a living, dynamic action plan. The intent is to host the plan on a web platform providing up to the minute information on projects, progress towards delivery, etc.
- 2.3 Work on the River Tone Strategy continues. Atkins are leading this work.

3. Highways England Consultation - Taunton to Southfields Dualling Scheme

- 3.1 Following the consultation earlier this year on the three alternative routes for the new/improved road, Highways England are considering the responses and will make a decision on their preferred route in the Autumn. They anticipate this will be in October (2018). There will not then be any other option available and the chosen preferred route will be the one that goes forward.
- 3.2 Highways England will formally consult all interested parties on the preferred route in the spring of 2019. Concurrently with this, they will establish a Community Liaison Forum to look at this option and find the best solution to its implementation.
- 3.3 The County Council, South Somerset District Council and Taunton Deane are still pressing for a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA), the principle purpose of which will be to seek remuneration for the affected Council's for the work over and above their normal workloads that this project will cause.
- 3.4 Highways England anticipate that they will be in a position to formally submit the Development Consent Order (DCO) in the autumn of 2019. The DCO process will be resource heavy and time constrained for the Council. This element of resource is currently being considered by senior officers as part of the overall resource / project plan.
- 3.5 Highways England anticipate that they should be in a position to start preparatory works in Spring 2020; with full works commencing in the summer of 2021; and the road being open to traffic in the summer of 2024.

4. Taunton Urban Realm

- 4.1 This scheme is being developed and taken forward with County Council colleagues. It is of continued concern that implementation dates have yet to be confirmed. Progress meetings are taking place and the detailed issues particularly regarding East Street are being addressed.
- 4.2 Taunton Deane is dependent on the County Council (the Highways Authority) to set out and confirm the necessary traffic orders, traffic light amendments and signage. Discussions are continuing with County colleagues and WSP to finalise the scheme details and to take the scheme forward.

5. Variable Message Signage (VMS) and Car Park Pay on Foot (PoF)

- 5.1 The VMS are being commissioned and have been well received in the community. There have only been minor teething issues in commissioning the signs. A power connection issue at Crosskeys, a logistics issue on East Reach and a configuration issue relating to Park and Ride.
- 5.2 Messaging on this signage will include major events as well as further information regarding car parking and traffic control which reduces congestion and the associated traffic related pollution.
- 5.3 The ground works relating to the Pay on Foot (POF) have commenced and are progressing to plan. Project completion is on track for the first week in September 2018.

6. Connecting Taunton Transport Strategy

- 6.1 The strategy has progressed through Taunton Deane and Somerset County Council democratic processes.
- 6.2 A joint meeting with key stakeholders in the community took place recently in County Hall. Wider consultation is now planned.

7. Neighbourhood Plans

- 7.1 Bishops Lydeard and Cothelstone and the Trull and Staplehay West Monkton and Cheddon Fitzpaine Neighbourhood plans are made.
- 7.2 Taunton Deane and Creech St Michael (CSM) Parish Council have appointed the highly regarded Independent Examiner Ann Skippers to

examine the CSM Neighbourhood Plan. A very experienced examiner, Ann also advises Government on Neighbourhood Planning process. The examination on the CSM Neighbourhood Plan will commence in July 2018.

- 7.4 The plan area for Oake Parish Council has been designated. The Parish Council is continuing with its work of the plan.
- 7.5 Wiveliscombe and Wellington have both had their Neighbourhood Plan areas designated. Both councils have their plans under review.
- 7.6 The Council continues to engage with other parishes on neighbourhood planning matters.

8. Major Planning

Staplegrove

- 8.1 We continue to work on the Section 106 Agreement to reflect the planning decision of late last year.
- 8.2 We are also in discussion with Homes England over the award of £7,200,000 Housing Infrastructure funding for the spine road.

Firepool

- 8.2 Officers continue to work with major stakeholders to realise this important scheme. Taunton Deane welcomes the continued input and interest from residents and community groups.

Comeytrove

- 8.3 Our lawyers continue to work on the details of the Section 106 Agreement to reflect the decision of the Planning Committee on 25 April 2018.

Coal Orchard

- 8.4 The detailed application was received in May and the public consultation period expired on 22 June 2018. This will be reviewed and the target decision date is 29 August 2018.

Nexus 25

- 8.4 Following the Junction 25 planning consent the Local Development Order is made. Progress continues with this important employment site.

9. Resourcing of Planning Service

- 9.1 Our Planning Service is experiencing significant resourcing issues currently and we are doing our very best to resolve this by hiring additional agency staff, by working additional hours and by sharing administrative work across other areas of the Council.
- 9.2 We are making sure our customers are kept informed of any delays with their applications. This will take some time to resolve. Our team is working extremely hard and I thank them for their continued diligence in these difficult times.
- 9.3 This is a regional resource issue. All of the districts in Somerset and the County Council have similar difficulties at this time.

10. Heritage at Risk

Tonedale Mill, Wellington

- 10.1 Following the serving of the Urgent Works Notice for emergency measures to secure Tonedale House, due to non-compliance by the current owners, the Council stepped in and have now completed these works.
- 10.2 Next steps are being discussed with the current owners to secure the preservation of the building together with a raised awareness of the security of the whole Tonedale Mill site. Works have been progressing on the wider Regeneration Strategy for Tonedale. Dr O'Hara and the team continue to make significant progress.

Sandhill Park, Bishops Lydeard

- 10.3 Following notification that the developer has gone into administration meetings have taken place with the administrators representatives.
- 10.4 The administrators have shared their positive intent to build out the development complying with the necessary conditions to protect the building. The Parish Council and local residents have been fully appraised.

Councillor Roger Habgood

Council Meeting - 10 July 2018

Report of Councillor Mrs Vivienne Stock-Williams - Sports, Parks and Leisure

Good sports, parks and leisure facilities improve the health and wellbeing of our local communities.

1. Community Leisure

Play and Recreation

1.1 The following works have been completed, since the last report, using either the TDBC Replacement Play Equipment Budget and/or Section 106 Agreement funding:-

- Cotford St Luke Recreation Ground Play Area - construction of additional play equipment as chosen by the school children.
- Howard Road, Wellington –play equipment for the under 5's.
- Oaken Ground, Rockwell Green – Vortex roundabout and kindergarten pod swing.
- Westford Grange – multi play unit and improvement works to play surfacing.
- Hudson Way, Staplegrove – the new skate facility, consisting of a mini ramp and Vert Ramp has been officially opened and is being hailed as a great success. There remain some small cosmetic issues to be completed which are in hand. The local community has largely received the scheme well, but where there have been issues these are being actively addressed.
- Wellington Park – the work to provide new paths has been completed.

1.2 The following works are in hand:-

- Comeytrowe Park – installation of a log cabin climber.
- Victoria Park, Taunton – Planning permission has been granted for a 7.5 metre tower slide and baseball backstop fence. The construction of the Baseball pitch has been ordered. At present an on-site start date is awaited. Applications inviting tenders have been issued for the construction of the beach volleyball court and slide. Discussions have been held with the Victoria Park Action Group, who have a co-ordinating role within the park and will be kept informed of start dates when known.

1.3 **Planned works for 2018/2019**

Quotes have been requested from various play equipment providers for the following replacement play works:-

- Blackthorn Gardens – replacement swings.
- Carey Grove, Creech St Michael – Supernova roundabout and balance beam.
- Colman Road – Replacement flat swings and pod swing.
- Galmington Park – Replacement slide and multi-unit climbing frame.
- Gillards Close, Rockwell Green – replacement cradle swings.
- Lyngford Park – replacement for removed under 5's springy tractor.
- Pyrland Avenue – replacement for removed roundabout.
- Redlake Drive – gravity bowl and mini nest swing.
- Taunton Green – for redundant single red, green and blue arch swings to be replaced with hexagonal swing unit.

1.4 Section 106 Funding for Play, Sport, Allotments and Community Halls

Work continues monitoring housing developments for payment trigger points and assisting communities and organisations with their on-going projects. Works are underway at Bishops Hull Recreation Ground for the construction of the new Sports Pavilion. Creech St Michael Village Hall has successfully completed its storage extension and internal improvement works. Both projects being supported with Section 106 funding from within the applicable parishes.

1.5 Capital grant scheme for Voluntary Village Halls, Sports Clubs and Allotments and the Parish Play Area Grant Scheme

Interest has been shown in both schemes for which numerous application forms have been issued. Application for awards from the current financial year closed on 30 June 2018, after which assessment works will take place prior to grant decisions being made.

1.6 Summer Sunday Bandstand Concerts

The 2018 Summer Sunday Bandstand Concerts season is underway, with a full take up of all the available dates. Concerts take place in Vivary Park, Taunton on Sundays from 3 p.m. and last for approximately an hour and a half. Concerts in both Vivary Park and Wellington Park continue to prove very popular.

2. GLL (Taunton Deane)

Community Sport and Health

2.1 **Wacky Wednesdays**

Each school holiday Wellington One Team joins other local partner organisations to provide Wacky Wednesday for local children and families. This is a very low cost event for families, held in different parks and schools throughout Wellington. Members of GLL staff attended the Easter event at Rockwell Green School and over 140 children and families attended. At summer half-term, GLL staff co-ordinated a picnic walk from Wellington Park, through the natural beauty of the Basins and community woodland to the Recreation Ground. They distributed nature trail cards to fascinated children and their families, making it a memorable event for all.

2.2 **Swim Vouchers**

GLL are working with TDBC to provide swim vouchers for families in areas of higher deprivation. These vouchers are now being distributed across the partnership area by local agencies working directly with families with the highest levels of need, thus enabling them to access free swimming.

2.3 **GLL Sport Foundation 2018**

21 local athletes who applied to the GLL Sport Foundation Programme have received a financial award in 2018, with an additional 23 athletes receiving a training award, totaling over £23,350. Athletes have access to all GLL facilities across the country to support their training programmes.

Caroline Faithfull has received an award in 2018 and, although a regular user of GLL's swimming pools, the award will enable her to work with GLL's Fitness Instructor (Debbie Brown) to develop a gym based programme to develop her strength and stamina. Caroline, team captain of the GB squad, has recently competed in the Down's Syndrome European Open Championships in Southampton and achieved a fantastic four Golds, two Silvers and one Bronze medal. Caroline will be leading the GB Team in Canada at the World Championships in July.

2.4 **Swimathon**

Swimathon sessions were held this year at Blackbrook Leisure Centre and Spa, Wellington Sports Centre and Taunton Pool; all swimmers were raising funds for Cancer Research.

2.5 **Active Communities**

The Bumps and Beyond project, providing ante- and post-natal exercise classes for new mums and mums-to-be in partnership with midwives from Somerset NHS Trust, has now been extended across Somerset. Aqua natal sessions led by trained instructors are currently running at Blackbrook Leisure Centre and Spa, Wellington Sports Centre and Taunton Pool.

2.6 Health Walks

The summer programme was launched in May, with a variety of up to ten different walks each week. Numbers have continued to rise, with ten new walkers joining the Taunton and Wellington groups and over 700 participations.

2.7 Naturally Healthy Month

GLL took part in the annual Naturally Healthy Month initiative supported by Somerset Public Health and Somerset Wildlife Trust.

In addition to the weekly walk programme, GLL offered a number of additional walks including a lunchtime walk for Taunton Deane Borough Council staff. Meeting at The Deane House, the walkers enjoyed some of the local beauty spots, including Longrun Meadow and French Weir. The staff are making plans to continue the walks on a regular basis.

Facilities

Wellington Sports Centre

2.8 A number of activities were planned in Wellington to support Dementia Awareness Week (21-28 May), including GLL's annual health walk, to raise awareness of the condition. The Walk Well group met at Wellington Sports Centre and welcomed a number of new walkers to the group. GLL volunteer Walk Leaders have attended Dementia Friends or Dementia Awareness sessions during the past year.

2.9 Following the walk a Fraud and Scam Workshop was held at Wellington Sports Centre. The session was led by Trudi Henderson (NatWest Community Banker), with 38 people attending. Trudi gave everyone some very useful tips and advice for not only staying safe on line but also protecting yourself from telephone and doorstep scams.

Vivary Golf Course

2.10 The Vivary ProAm took place on Friday, 15 June 2018 with 22 teams entered. Mark Newman, GLL's Head Greenkeeper, celebrated 25 years working at Vivary Golf Course and received a presentation after the ProAm.

Blackbrook Leisure Centre and Spa

2.11 Wheelchair Development Series

On 12 and 13 May 2018 Taunton Tennis Centre held its annual Wheelchair Tennis Tournament. This was the best year since 1998 for entries, with 16 adults and 10 juniors entering the competition.

All the players in the Main Draw turned up early on Saturday ready to play and, with one match lasting over two hours, some great games took place. GLL managed to fit in some doubles in the afternoon.

2.12 Spa Experience

Spa Experience hosted an exclusive facial event on 24th May for the community to boost healthy lifestyle awareness and give a taste of the new Elemis Superfood skincare system (organic and vegan friendly). 25 guests took advantage of a skincare workshop, nutritional advice, a complimentary free gift (Elemis products) and healthy smoothies.

Wellsprings Leisure Centre

2.13 Flexercise Workshop

14 volunteers and staff from local care homes across the county attended a recent Flexercise Leaders Workshop at Wellsprings Leisure Centre. All attendees took away many ideas for delivering seated exercise sessions to older people in their workplaces. Feedback from the workshop was very positive and a further session is booked for September.

2.14 Daily Mile

Wellsprings Leisure Centre Children's Holiday Activity programme launched the start of the daily mile initiative during the May half-term holiday. With many local schools taking part in this initiative, staff at Wellsprings wanted to enable those taking part regularly at school to continue this great challenge during the holidays using the facilities on offer at Wellsprings. The summer holidays will see the launch of a league table, certificates and awards for all children taking part.

3. Parks and Open Spaces

3.1 Grass Cutting

The first quarter of the financial year began with some challenging wet weather leading to a late start for the grass cutting rounds and longer growth than we had hoped for. The rounds have now been completed and subsequent cuts should be easier to manage.

3.2 Housing Grounds Maintenance

The new specification for Housing Grounds Maintenance has been implemented and is having a dramatic effect on the standard of work being produced. Tenants and Estate Officers have been effusive in their praise of the improved conditions and the team responsible is operating at a high level of motivation and performance.

The following photographs were taken before and after recent maintenance work on a housing estate.



3.3 Vivary Park

Families flocked to Vivary Park on Easter Sunday, where a very successful Easter Egg Hunt took place which encouraged children to explore every nook and cranny of the park.

3.4 Vivary Park Lake

The proposed desilting of the lake has been reviewed with the Environment Agency and the operational plan redesigned to achieve a better longer term position with regard to silt build up. This has led to the project being postponed until after the summer, so it will not impact on either the Flower Show or Somerset Rocks events in July and August.

3.5 Wellington Park

The paths at Wellington Park have been resurfaced throughout, which was achieved through funding from Section 106 Agreements and a generous contribution from Wellington Town Council.

A three tier fountain has also been sourced from a local provider to replace the one that was vandalised and will be reinstalled soon.

4. Property

Blackbrook Pavilion Site

- 4.1 A considerable amount of rubbish was left on site by the travellers, which had to be quickly cleared by Ide Verde and DLO staff.

Leisure Facilities

- 4.2 Condition surveys have been carried out at all TDBC's leisure facilities.

Station Road Pool

- 4.4 External render repairs and decoration works are planned for the summer.
- 4.5 GLL responded immediately to the external fire caused by a night sleeper and covered all emergency activity. Permission is awaited from TDBC Insurance Officer to proceed with repairs.

Vivary Park Golf Course

- 4.6 The balustrade to the Café veranda has been repaired and work has been completed on broken boundary fencing next to the Green Keeper's stores and workshops, thus improving security.

Wellington Sports Centre

- 4.5 External render repairs and decoration works are planned for the middle of the year.
- 4.6 Plant room and filter refurbishment work for the swimming pool has been satisfactorily completed with no disruption to users. New pumps will need to be installed.

Wellsprings Leisure Centre

- 4.7 The travellers also left a huge amount of rubbish at this site when they moved on, which Forest School staff helped Council workers to clear quickly.
- 4.8 Additional car park repairs are scheduled for later this year to rectify sunken areas.

Wilton Lands

- 4.9 Renovation work on the well-used bridge at Wilton Lands has now been satisfactorily completed.

Councillor Vivienne Stock-Williams

Council Meeting – 10 July 2018

Report of Councillor Andrew Sully – Corporate Resources

1. Corporate Services

- 1.1 The key priority across all the service areas remains staff engagement, communications and support as we implement the restructure

2. Corporate Performance

- 2.1 GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations):-
- The new regulations came into force 25 May 2018;
 - We undertook a lot of preparatory work for this including updating policies and procedures, training for staff and Members, new privacy notices and updating our contracts;
 - But there is still a lot to do and we are progressing the delivery of the detailed GDPR Compliance Action Plan.
- 2.2 The Performance Outturn Report was completed and taken to the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on 21 June 2018 and the Executive on 5 July 2018.
- 2.3 The Annual Governance Statement was drafted and taken to the Corporate Governance Committee for approval on 19 June 2018.

3. Customer Services

- 3.1 The key priority is preparing for the go-live of the new Deane House Reception Area, which will involve working in a new way with new technology.
- 3.2 The service has taken on a number of support functions for other services including website maintenance, scanning for Planning and Housing, logging completed repairs jobs and calls, single person discounts for Council Tax and logging IT helpdesk calls.

4. Facilities Management

- 4.1 Facilities Management Continued to work closely with the Accommodation Project Team to coordinate the various office moves and to update fire procedures accordingly. This includes talking to the Police about how we work together in the future

5. ICT/Technology

5.1.1 The ICT team continue to support the delivery of critical 'business as usual' projects and support the Transformation Programme Team in delivering key technology projects to support the delivery of transformation. Current key projects include:-

- Supporting the Firmstep and Mod.gov software implementation;
- New Mobile Data Management software rollout (controls how mobile devices access our network);
- The procurement of new Infrastructure Security software, which will be rolled out in July 2018;
- Procurement of a new WIFI solution for all Council sites; and
- Supporting the provision of new equipment to enable the accommodation moves and the new Deane House Reception.

6. Members Case Management

6.1 This continues to work well and is dealing with a number of Member enquiries.

6.2 Since starting we have dealt with approximately 150 enquiries the majority relating to Planning and Parks and Open Spaces.

7. Resources and Support Services

HR and Organisational Development

7.1 Payroll has been busy implementing the national pay award, which was 2% per annum for the next two years and completing the end of year procedures for all employees and Members.

7.2 We have continued to support internal recruitment via secondments and agency staff. We are only recruiting permanent staff in exceptional circumstances due to the Transformation project.

7.3 The chaplaincy service, which was introduced last year, is proving increasingly popular with staff and we have now rolled this out to all our locations.

7.4 We are continuing to support staff on long term absence and have successfully reintegrated a number back to work in the last quarter.

8. The Mayoralty and Democratic Services

8.1 Following her appointment as Taunton Deane's last Mayor at the Annual Council meeting on 3 May 2018, Councillor Catherine Herbert has had an extremely busy start to her year in office. Stand out events so far have included her Celebration Party at the Cricket Ground, two services at St Mary's Church in Taunton, the first her Civic Service and the second to say farewell to Reverend Rod Corke who has taken up a new position at Malvern Priory, the 50-50 Cycle Ride and the 'Glitter Run' both for charity, helping

Parkfield Primary School with a Civic Award Project, welcoming visitors from Taunton's Twin Town in France, Lisieux and most recently, 40 Commando Royal Marines exercising their Freedom of the Borough by marching through the streets of Taunton on Armed Forces Day.

- 8.2 The Mayor would very much like to thank those past Mayors who have represented the Council at several events during the Deputy Mayor Elect, Councillor Fran Smith's recent absence on holiday.
- 8.3 Democratic Services has recently moved again into the old 'Planning Office' on the first floor of The Deane House which has been refurbished to a very high standard. Despite there being over 80 desks in the newly created space, the working environment is very pleasant with surprisingly little noise, four well-appointed meeting rooms, informal meeting spaces both inside and out - in a central open courtyard – and, during the recent very hot weather, temperature control.

9. Procurement Team

- 9.1 The Procurement Team continue to provide support across a wide range of projects and business usual activity:
- 9.2 Michael O'Halloran continues to support a number of key strategic projects including North Taunton Master planning, refurbishment of Woolaway Homes (Oake), the Laxton Road development, Firepool development, Lisieux Way and the new Leisure Contract. In respect of the Leisure contract the Tenderers have been shortlisted and Invitations to Submit Detailed Solutions have been issued and due back on the 27 July 2018.
- 9.3 David Carpenter is concluding Invitation to Tender documents in respect of the procurement of professional services for The Brewhouse Theatre project and supporting a number of projects associated with the new Council.
- 9.4 Other live projects include:-
- Air Source Heat Pumps (supply and service);
 - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment;
 - Coal Orchard (Works); and
 - Materials Management Solution (Property Services);
- 9.5 Contracts recently awarded include:-
- Professional Services – Firepool;
 - New Wifi Solution (The Deane House);
 - Authentication & authorisation, filtering and end point security (ICT);
 - Robotics (ICT System Integration);
 - Licensed Asbestos removal;
 - Asbestos related professional services;
 - HGC Vehicle – Property Services; and

- Bulford Car Parking (Works).
- 9.6 The Team continue to support South Somerset District Council on several projects as well as providing general procurement advice.
- 9.7 Work is progressing well to develop a range of updated procurement template documents with model forms of ITT and Contract templates now complete. The aim being to facilitate a greater degree of self service and general procurement skills/understanding amongst staff. Open spaces staff are now utilising the ProContract e-tendering solution to sleeve serve in respect of the procurement of vehicles
- 9.8 Work is continuing to develop bespoke procurement reports within the E5 system following a full 12 months use of the system. A comprehensive spend analysis is complete. The new contract register is close to completion/publication
- 9.9 Tenders that have either been recently issued or are currently being evaluated include:-
- External Wall Insulation; and
 - Kilkenny Court (small works).

10. Finance

- 10.1 The draft annual statement of accounts for the last (2017/2018) financial year have been produced and reports on the outturn position will have gone to Scrutiny and Executive during the current cycle of committee meetings. The statutory deadline for producing the accounts was brought forward to the end of June and this tighter timescale was achieved by the finance team. The Council's external auditors Grant Thornton are currently auditing the accounts and they are due to give their opinion by the end of July.
- 10.2 Alongside our ongoing financial activities we have continued to support a number of potential capital projects particularly those with a commercial and regeneration aspect including:-
- Firepool Project including new Hotel;
 - Coal Orchard;
 - The Collar Factory;
 - Somerset Flood Alleviation;
 - Taunton Station Regeneration; and
 - The Deane House Accommodation.
- 10.3 This work includes producing new and updating existing business cases for these capital projects to determine that they are affordable and meet investment criteria.

- 10.4 The Finance Team has continued to support the business transformation process and to support the preparation and delivery of financial processes for a new single Council. To this end the team will be focussing on the key financial deliverables that will have to be in place including the setting the up of new banking and insurance arrangements, setting up a new financial coding system and producing a Financial Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan for the new Council.

11. Revenues and Benefits

- 11.1 The Revenues Team is making good progress in reducing the significant volume of work that typically accumulates at this time of year from annual billing. Collection is ahead of target for both Council Tax and Business Rates. We are performing well in speed of benefit processing for 2018/2019 with the average time to reassess Housing Benefit under eight days from when the customer tells us of a change in their circumstances. We are working out new claims on average within 23 days of the date they are submitted.
- 11.2 The Shadow Scrutiny Committee for Somerset West and Taunton considered a report on 25 June 2018 to agree options for public consultation for the Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme.
- 11.3 On 16 July 2018 we will start public consultation to seek views on our local CTS scheme for working age people from 2019/20. Pension age CTS recipients will be unaffected as they will continue to receive support of up to 100% through a scheme set by the Government. However, everyone liable to pay Council Tax pays for the CTS scheme through their Council Tax payments.
- 11.4 Therefore, it is important we get a broad cross section of views, regardless of whether residents receive CTS or not. Public consultation will be for eight weeks and will close on 10 September 2018. Officers from the Revenues and Benefits Service will interview a random but proportionate selection of households in every parish, as well as the unparished area to obtain their views. We will also be seeking views on our options to change the CTS scheme from welfare support agencies and advice groups, such as the Citizens Advice Bureau, as well as inviting further consultation responses through our website.

Councillor Andrew Sully