

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