

SWT Corporate Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 19th May, 2021,
6.15 pm



Somerset West
and Taunton

The John Meikle Room - The Deane
House

[SWT MEETING WEBCAST LINK](#)

Members: Gwil Wren (Chair), Ian Aldridge, Marcus Barr, Sue Buller,
Norman Cavill, Nick Thwaites and Loretta Whetlor

Agenda

1. Election of Vice-Chair

To appoint a Vice-Chair for the 2021-2022 Municipal Year.

2. Apologies

To receive any apologies for absence.

3. Minutes of the previous Scrutiny Committee held on 7 and 28 April 2021.

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 7 and 28 April 2021.

(Pages 5 - 16)

4. Declarations of Interest

To receive and note any declarations of disclosable pecuniary or prejudicial or personal interests in respect of any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

(The personal interests of Councillors and Clerks of Somerset County Council, Town or Parish Councils and other Local Authorities will automatically be recorded in the minutes.)

5. Public Participation

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

For those members of the public who have submitted any questions or statements, please note, a three minute time limit applies to each speaker and you will be asked to speak before Councillors debate the issue.

Temporary measures during the Coronavirus pandemic

Due to the temporary legislation (within the Coronavirus Act 2020, which allowed for use of virtual meetings) coming to an end on 6 May 2021, the council's committee meetings will now take place in the office buildings at the John Meikle Room, Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.

Unfortunately due to capacity requirements the Chamber at West Somerset House is not able to be used at this current moment.

Following the Government guidance on measures to reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), the council meeting rooms will have very limited capacity. With this in mind, we will only be allowing those members of the public who have registered to speak to attend the meetings in person at the office buildings, if they wish. (We will still be offering to those members of the public that are not comfortable in attending, for their statements to be read out by a member of the Governance team). Please can we urge all members of the public who are only interested in listening to the debate to view our live webcasts from the safety of their own home to help prevent the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

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| 6. Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker | (Pages 17 - 28) |
| To review the finalised Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Tracker for 2020-2021 Municipal Year. | |
| 7. Corporate Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan | (Pages 29 - 30) |
| To receive items and review the Forward Plan. | |
| 8. Executive and Full Council Forward Plan | (Pages 31 - 36) |
| To review the Executive and Council Forward Plans. | |
| 9. Executive Councillor Portfolio Holder Session - Leader of the Council and Communications | (Pages 37 - 42) |
| To consider reports from Executive Councillors on their respective Portfolios; | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts – Leader of the Council and Communications | |

3.2 of the Scrutiny Terms of Reference state that the Scrutiny Committee may review and scrutinise and ask questions of the Leader, lead Councillors, the Executive in relation to their portfolios.

10. Corporate Risk Management Update

(Pages 43 - 48)

This matter is the responsibility of the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources, Councillor Ross Henley.

This paper provides an update on the current register of risks and issues.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'James Hassett', written in black ink.

**JAMES HASSETT
CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

Please note that this meeting will be recorded. You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected during the recording will be retained in accordance with the Council's policy. Therefore unless you are advised otherwise, by taking part in the Council Meeting during Public Participation you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of the sound recording for access via the website or for training purposes. If you have any queries regarding this please contact the officer as detailed above.

Following Government guidance on measures to reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), we will be live webcasting our committee meetings and you are welcome to view and listen to the discussion. The link to each webcast will be available on the meeting webpage, but you can also access them on the [Somerset West and Taunton webcasting website](#).

If you would like to ask a question or speak at a meeting, you will need to submit your request to a member of the Governance Team in advance of the meeting. You can request to speak at a Council meeting by emailing your full name, the agenda item and your question to the Governance Team using governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

Any requests need to be received by 4pm on the day that provides 2 clear working days before the meeting (excluding the day of the meeting itself). For example, if the meeting is due to take place on a Tuesday, requests need to be received by 4pm on the Thursday prior to the meeting.

The Governance and Democracy Case Manager will take the details of your question or speech and will distribute them to the Committee prior to the meeting. The Chair will then invite you to speak at the beginning of the meeting under the agenda item Public Question Time, but speaking is limited to three minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes and you can only speak to the Committee once. If there are a group of people attending to speak about a particular item then a representative should be chosen to speak on behalf of the group.

Please see below for Temporary Measures during Coronavirus Pandemic and the changes we are making to public participation:-

Due to the temporary legislation (within the Coronavirus Act 2020, which allowed for use of virtual meetings) coming to an end on 6 May 2021, the council's committee meetings will now take place in the office buildings within the John Meikle Meeting Room at the Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton. Unfortunately due to capacity requirements, the Chamber at West Somerset House is not able to be used at this current moment.

Following the Government guidance on measures to reduce the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19), the council meeting rooms will have very limited capacity. With this in mind, we will only be allowing those members of the public who have registered to speak to attend the meetings in person in the office buildings, if they wish (we will still be offering to those members of the public that are not comfortable in attending, for their statements to be read out by a Governance and Democracy Case Manager). Please can we urge all members of the public who are only interested in listening to the debate to view our live webcasts from the safety of their own home to help prevent the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).

Full Council, Executive, and Committee agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: www.somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

For further information about the meeting, please contact the Governance and Democracy Team via email: governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

If you would like an agenda, a report or the minutes of a meeting translated into another language or into Braille, large print, audio tape or CD, please email: governance@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

SWT Scrutiny Committee - 7 April 2021

Present: Councillor Gwil Wren (Chair)

Councillors Libby Lisgo, Ian Aldridge, Norman Cavill, Simon Coles, Dixie Darch, Habib Farbahi, Ed Firmin, Dave Mansell, Derek Perry, Phil Stone, Ray Tully, Nick Thwaites, John Hassall and Loretta Whetlor

Officers: Andrew Randell, Marcus Prouse, Alison North, Andrew Pritchard, Dawn Adey, James Barra, Chris Brown, Ian Candlish, Chris Hall, Sue Tomlinson, Simon Lewis and Rebecca Miller (Principal Planning Specialist)

Also Present: Councillors Richard Lees, Francesca Smith, Brenda Weston, Marcus Kravis, Chris Booth, Janet Lloyd, Peter Pilkington, Vivienne Stock-Williams, Anthony Trollope-Bellew, Sarah Wakefield and Alan Wedderkopp

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm)

155. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Buller and Wheatley.

Councillors Whetlor and Hassall attended as substitutes.

156. **Minutes of the previous meetings of the Scrutiny Committee**

(Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 3 and 4 March 2021 circulated with the agenda)

Resolved that the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee held on 3 and 4 March be confirmed as a correct record.

157. **Declarations of Interest**

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr N Cavill	All Items	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Coles	All Items	SCC & Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Lisgo	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr D Mansell	All Items	Wiveliscombe	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr D Perry	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted

Cllr N Thwaites	All Items	Dulverton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Tully	All Items	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Whetlor	All Items	Watchet	Personal	Spoke and Voted

An Additional personal interest was declared by Councillor Cavill as a Trustee of Taunton Heritage Trust.

158. **Public Participation**

No members of the public had requested to speak on any item on the agenda.

159. **Scrutiny Committee Request/Recommendation Trackers**

(Copy of the Scrutiny Committee Action Plan, circulated with the agenda).

A progress report of the Climate Change Budget would be considered at the June meeting.

The public transport task and finish group would report to the committee within two months.

Resolved that the Scrutiny Committee Action Plan be noted.

160. **Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan**

(Copy of the Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan, circulated with the agenda).

Councillors were reminded that if they had an item they wanted to add to the agenda, that they should send their requests to the Governance Team.

Resolved that the Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan be noted.

161. **Executive Forward Plan**

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

Councillors were reminded that if they had an item they wanted to add to the agenda, that they should send their requests to the Governance Team.

Resolved that the Executive Forward Plan be noted.

162. **Full Council Forward Plan**

(Copy of the Full Council Forward Plan, circulated with the agenda).

Councillors were reminded that if they had an item they wanted to add to the agenda, that they should send their requests to the Governance Team.

Resolved that the Full Council Forward Plan be noted.

163. **Climate Change Delivery Partnership**

The Council had the opportunity to create a climate change delivery partnership with Sedgemoor District Council for the benefit of both organisations.

The Partnership if approved would be established with Somerset West and Taunton leading on its delivery. The employees from Sedgemoor District Council will be seconded to SWT with SDC continuing to pay the associated costs of these employees and their proportion of the projects delivered.

A Member Consultation Panel would be created to represent the needs of both councils.

Somerset West and Taunton Council (SWT) and Sedgemoor District Council (SDC) have been in discussion at an officer level as to the potential benefits of joining up their Climate Change delivery activity.

Both Councils have approved the Somerset wide Climate Emergency Strategy and have an adopted localised action plan.

Many of the delivery ambitions are the same for both Councils and by sharing the project delivery resource creates an environment to centralise knowledge and experience, minimise duplication, and potentially deliver ambitions more quickly with the benefits of economies of scale.

The joined up service would acknowledge the sovereignty and prioritisation of both Councils as well as their independent finances. The attached governance diagram and section 5 of the report provides more detail on this.

The proposal considered the ways of achieving financial transparency. Through this process officers have excluded the option of the seconded resourced from Sedgemoor District Council only working on SDC project delivery. This option has only limited benefits to both organisations as there would remain a segregation of the works rather than combination and removal of duplication.

The proposal is for the team to work as a whole on the delivery of the agreed actions. This enables a crossover of knowledge and skills and prevents duplication. The proposed funding mechanism would see the contribution from SDC considered as a proportion of the new total and the work across the agreed priorities is delivered with that proportion back to SDC. The proposed contribution from SDC would be for two Project Delivery employees, this combined with SWT's three would produce an allocation of 60% to SWT and 40% to SDC. This allows all resources to be shared and the benefit of the activities increase.

The proposal would see Sedgemoor District Council resources seconded to SWT and fit within the existing organisational structure for Climate Change shown at Appendix A1. This allows the benefits of working together to be established early, and bring forward the connectivity of our priorities preventing duplication.

Officers from both councils recognised the importance of Member engagement within this delivery partnership. The proposal being put forward is that the Somerset West and

Taunton establish a joint Member Consultation Panel with appropriate cross party representation from each Authority.

The Panel is proposed to provide a means of engaging with each authority on a more detailed level, Appendix A2 shows a diagram of the proposed governance structure both for officers and Members.

The proposed make-up of the cross party Consultation Panel would consist of the Climate Change and relevant portfolio holder from SDC and SWT and two other Member nominations as approved by Full Council of each authority.

During the discussion the following comments and questions were raised:-

- Both partners had the same levels of ambition in the partnership. More urgency was encouraged in addressing the climate change priorities.
- 4.13 of the report set out funding opportunities and bid writing was considered. The Committee emphasised on exploring and succeeding in bid opportunities, this was important to the future success in tackling climate change.
- More information was requested around the Somerset wide implementation board alongside multi district project management.
- More emphasis was requested in relation to how councillors were engaged and welcomed to form and be part of climate change projects.
- The criteria of bids differed, some were open and some required a larger amount of detail.
- The joint consultation panel was linked to the proposed partnership. This was represented by two Councillors and a portfolio holder in each partnership.
- It was questioned what was required of the ecological strategist. This post would keep the Council focused on the Climate Change Strategy, making the biggest impacts on tackling climate change through projects ecologically.
- It was questioned if the job description and role could be circulated to the committee.
- Both Councils had a CNCR plan which had a crossover, both Councils had similar ambitions in their CNCR plan. The anticipated benefits was in shared resources for both Councils.
- Individual Councils sovereignty remained and could therefore prioritise and make decisions on this basis. The arrangement didn't prevent specific geographical work where needed.
- Concerns were expressed that setting up new structures could slow progress down. The funding bid writer and ecological strategist roles were welcomed.
- It was questioned why Mendip and South Somerset Councils were not involved in the arrangement.
- Sedgemoor were looking at cross funding the Ecology Strategist post.
- Two posts were proposed to be transferred from Sedgemoor, these were project officer and manager roles.
- The proposed model didn't prejudice any potential Unitary outcomes.

Recommendations

1. The Committee recommended that Scrutiny supported Executive in Somerset West and Taunton leading the creation and operation of a Joint Climate Change Delivery Partnership.

2. That impacted employees of Sedgemoor District Council will be seconded from Sedgemoor District Council to Somerset West and Taunton Council.

3. That a legal agreement is created for the partnership setting out cost and resource allocations, with delegated authority to the Director of External Operations and Climate Change, the Assistant Director for Climate Change, Regulatory Services and Asset Management, in consultation with the Climate Change portfolio holder to negotiate the final detail.

4. The creation of the Joint Consultation Panel with delegated authority to the Director of External Operations and Climate Change, the Assistant Director for Climate Change, Regulatory Services and Asset Management, in consultation with the Climate Change portfolio holder to create the Terms of Reference.

164. **Phosphates Update (Verbal Update)**

A Powerpoint presentation was provided alongside an update in relation to Phosphates by the Principle Planning Specialist. This set out the impact of the levels of phosphates on the levels along with the ongoing work conducted to mitigate phosphates as part of the Planning application process.

During the debate the following comments and questions were raised:-

- The length of delays in the planning process questioned
- The phosphates calculator had been successful as a mitigation tool, there had been positive feedback from applicants and developers. The calculator was being reviewed as part of a strategic piece of work.
- 75 hectares per year were required to be successful in offsetting phosphates.
- A clearer view and strategy to address this would be worked through once the work had been completed in the autumn.
- It was questioned if allotments could be included at Cotford St Luke as part of phosphate offsetting.
- It was considered if Housing Developers could offset phosphate related costs onto social housing. Concerns were expressed over the impacts on the cost of affordable housing.
- The estimated loss of projected income was estimated at £1.3 million for SSDC and SWT. So far both Councils had not experienced a reduction in Planning income.
- Natural England and Somerset County Council had agreed mitigation and phosphate calculations.
- The committee encouraged developers to sign up to mitigation measures through a section 106 agreement to ensure this is put in place.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the update.

165. **Executive Councillor Portfolio Holder Session - Housing**

Since the last report in November the main focus continued to be COVID-19 and in particular since the New Year, re-adjusting services to respond to the latest lock down measures. The Portfolio Holder acknowledged the flexibility of the team, partner organisations and contractors who once again have made substantial changes to services; and also our tenants who have been so accommodating and understanding. The Council continued to monitor issues closely.

Since the New Year no significant impact had been experienced as a result of Brexit with supply chains holding up, however we are starting to hear accounts of price increases on some supplies such as timber.

Elsewhere our project to replace our main housing management IT system has kicked off, this is a major piece of work and will run for around 16 months.

Lastly it was pleasing to see improvements in our STAR survey results (Survey of Tenants and Residents); particularly that in the last two years we have been through major organisational changes and have experienced nearly a year of COVID-19 impacts.

Housing Development and Regeneration Team

Housing Strategy

- Single Homeless Accommodation Strategy - The service was producing an accommodation strategy to respond to the Government aspiration to maintain accommodation support to reduce or end rough sleeping by 2025. The strategy will help inform the Council's partnership and investment decisions.
- The Homelessness Reduction Board is progressing to commence its work during 2021.
- LHA Housing Advisors Programme – Somerset councils and ARK consultancy had submitted the draft report into Better Futures for Vulnerable People in Somerset.
- This sets out how Somerset authorities work to support the most vulnerable people, provides examples of good practice and sets out under six themes opportunities to delivery better outcomes.
- The report will support the
- Homeless Reduction Board set its priorities and action.
- A Delivery Officer is being recruited to the team to deliver and oversee the Hinckley point C Housing Action Plan, unfortunately our first recruitment process was unsuccessful.
- The revised Private Sector Renew Policy was considered and supported by full council in December.

Housing Enabling

- 2020/21 completions are currently estimated as: 128 affordable homes by 31st March 2021, 265 completions are forecast in 2021/22.
- Although completions are low, this year has seen significant start on sites across the Council area including: 42 affordable homes at Cornhill, Wellington; 60 affordable homes at Allers Mead, Williton and 19 affordable homes at Paddocks, Bishops Lydeard.
- SWT was recognised as a High Affordability Area by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in December and is now eligible for social rent grant funding in addition to Affordable Rent and Shared Ownership tenures within the 2021 – 2026 Affordable Homes Programme.
- Viability and Self Build seminars have been hosted through the Enabling Team and had been well received by both Members and Officers.

During the debate the following comments and questions were raised:-

- More information had been requested in relation to lessons learned on modular housing. Visits had been made to factories of shortlisted organisations producing modular house, there were challenges with what modular housing was able to achieve and deliver standards to levels that is claimed. Air tightness challenge was a critical element for zero carbon credentials.
- Local connections were a recognised need across Homefinder in Somerset. Some needs were greater than others but it was acknowledged it could be taken into consideration in future and looked into.
- Addressing the backlog in Homefinder was ongoing with a weekly report on this produced, as a result numbers reducing with additional members of staff recruited to reduce the backlog.
- The Homeless reduction plan and board linked in with the health and wellbeing board and other organisations fed into this.
- Significant work had been undertaken in preventing antisocial behaviour which had been exacerbated as a result of neighbourhood disputes and increasing cases during lockdown. Environmental Health had been directing residents to a noise application, which would set out if it determined a statutory noise nuisance. Instances of approval had been sought for the use of community protection notices
- More information and data from housing would be circulated to all Councillors, to provide information around survey and satisfaction of tenants
- Community issues and the loss of the previous Community Scrutiny Committee was raised and requested to be addressed going forward.
- Homefinder was used in the whole of Somerset, although it was recognised that it was not without faults and certainly could be refined and the Council was in the process of procuring a new system
- SWT owning housing stock did not have an impact on homefinder. All were equal in relation to location as part of the bidding process.

Resolved that the Scrutiny Committee noted the update.

(The Meeting ended at 9.12 pm)

SWT Scrutiny Committee - 28 April 2021

Present: Councillor Gwil Wren (Chair)

Councillors Libby Lisgo, Ian Aldridge, Sue Buller, Norman Cavill, Simon Coles, Dixie Darch, Habib Farbahi, Ed Firmin, Dave Mansell, Derek Perry, Ray Tully and Nick Thwaites

Officers: James Barraah and Richard Hall ((Post Office External Affairs Manager - South England and Wales))

Also Present: Councillors Chris Booth, Andrew Govier, John Hassall, Richard Lees, Sue Lees, Janet Lloyd, Vivienne Stock-Williams, Sarah Wakefield, Alan Wedderkopp, Brenda Weston and Loretta Whetlor

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm)

1. Apologies

An apology was received from Councillor Wheatley.

Councillor Sully attended as a substitute.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Councillor or Clerk of a County, Town or Parish Council or any other Local Authority:-

Name	Minute No.	Description of Interest	Reason	Action Taken
Cllr N Cavill	All Items	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr S Coles	All Items	SCC & Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr L Lisgo	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr D Mansell	All Items	Wiveliscombe	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr D Perry	All Items	Taunton Charter Trustee	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr N Thwaites	All Items	Dulverton	Personal	Spoke and Voted
Cllr R Tully	All Items	West Monkton	Personal	Spoke and Voted

3. Public Participation

No members of the public had requested to speak on any item on the agenda.

4. **Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan**

(Copy of the Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan, circulated with the agenda).

Councillors were reminded that if they had an item they wanted to add to the agenda, that they should send their requests to the Governance Team.

Resolved that the Scrutiny Committee Forward Plan be noted.

5. **Update of Post Office Ltd Provision in the district (verbal) (Richard Hall - External Affairs Manager South England and Wales / Jason Collins Network Team)**

The Chair introduced Richard Hall to the committee and set out the background for the item being considered by the Scrutiny Committee. There had been questions around Post Office closures since the last election. With more information requested on closures of branches and the process and community consultation around decisions of closures of relocations.

Richard Hall provided an update to the committee setting out the progress made by the Post Office in continuing to provide its services through the pandemic whilst taking on additional responsibilities to support communities.

100 Area Managers across the Country had been recruited in the last 18 months to provide support for Post Masters where needed.

During the debate the following comments and questions were raised:-

- Proposals around closures and changes to the network were considered and detailed consultations were undertaken around this. The consultation period for closures was set at six weeks.
- Ward Councillors were informed of consultation periods in relation to closures.
- The most common reasons for Post Office closures were through retirement or resignations of postmasters or the renewal of premises and lease of a premises in which to operate. It was rare that closures were for any other reason.
- In these instances of closures, branches would look to be replaced with a new leasehold franchise where there were new parties willing to take this on. The post office were looking to expand franchises where possible.
- The details and situation around Mountfields Post Office closure would be checked and a response provided following the meeting. Concerns were expressed over the lack of engagement of the post master and councillors with the consultation signage arriving on the day of the consultation with no prior contact with the Post Master.
- Proposals for closure where compensation packages are involved were considered. Engagement or encouragement from post masters in relation to the consultation resulting in loss of compensation packages was questioned. The committee were reassured that there had been no gagging as part of closure programmes.
- The current offering from the post office was based on commercial retail with a post office offering, previously this was a post office offering mixed with some retail, with the model changing in the last decade.

- The aim by 2025 was to increase branches to 12,000. There was 11,500 estimated branches at present.
- It was recognised that recruitment for post masters needed to be easier and simpler for those looking to apply.
- The failings of the past were recognised in the recent Post Master Court Case and work was ongoing to ensure adequate and fair compensation for those involved.
- It was questioned if there were retail targets, there were initiatives of certain products at bigger branches but individual targets were not in place for smaller branches.
- Rural access for post office services was ensured locally but in some instances these were offered on a more limited timeframe with mobile services from other localities in place.
- The central post office in Taunton was under threat two years previously, with the location it has been in since to be moved and the service looking for a new site.
- The franchise business model was considered, to be able to deliver services it was questioned if the Post Office stepped out of the franchise model working directly with communities to build the community asset or social enterprise for the post office?
- There were recognised examples of where post offices had been developed in partnership with other organisations such as local government with the similar need to service the public and enable a facility for the public to access a face to face service.
- Local Authorities had taken on the operation of branches previously but this was rare. There were 3 social enterprises in Worcestershire run by the community. Details of these examples would be provided following the meeting.
- Work towards protecting access to cash and banks was underway with appointments being accessed via the post office, these services and arrangements were still in their infancy.
- Increasing provision through franchising was discussed, concerns were expressed in expecting post office branch businesses providing services effectively when they couldn't be profitable before franchising. Details around the government subsidies were requested.
- Subsidies from Government required the Post Office to be in a position to generate a surplus without a subsidy by 2025 and sharing profits with post masters.
- It was requested when the agreement with the Royal Mail has run out. A new ten year agreement had been signed in December 2020 with Royal Mail. This increased post master remuneration by increasing their fees in line with prices
- Mitigating any decreases in revenue was being assessed as a result in some of the branches.
- Collection of items were being trialled for post masters returning items via online distributors. This was providing value for taxpayer's money and developing services to achieve this.
- A subsidy of £200 million had been agreed for the next 12 months. A subsidy request for the next 12 month post 2022 was being considered. This propped up services that were not profitable but were important to communities. A new cloud based system integrated to save time for post masters was being introduced.
- Partnering with operators such as Amazon was not permitted due to the contract since 2012. The new contract allowed partnerships such as this going forward however the new agreement was in its infancy.
- Government Access criteria set out branches should be within an average 5 miles access for the community. Across UK the access criteria had been met.

- If less services were offered then more subsidy would be required to run the post offices.
- Maintaining services following post office cuts was a recognised issue, temporary post masters were in place with a good example of this being Taunton.
- Arrangements could go on for a number of years. A significant customer base would be disadvantaged with the loss of a central branch such as this. Attracting a temporary operator on an interim basis would be arranged.
- The social importance of the service was recognised along with the government achieving value for money for the taxpayer.
- Provision of services at Oake and Bishops Lydeard were questioned.
- Future Post Office provision in Wellington was questioned with it being an expanding town. An invite to speak at a future Wellington Town Council meeting was extended with the hope that this could be undertaken in person following further easing of restrictions.
- It was requested what the income from banking was for the Post Office service. These were currently in commercial confidence, however there was a third agreement being negotiated to extend the service provided for the banks and the way transactions took place.
- New branches were accessible for those with mobility issues, there was minimum guidance in addition to Post Office guidelines.
- Concerns were expressed in relation to the main Post Office provision in Taunton town centre. The temperature was a concern in addition to access for the elderly, being located at the back of a currently vacant shop.
- The current location was being temporarily managed. Discussions with prospective partners had not yet led to a solution. It was recognised that the vacation of the existing premises would need to happen.
- Space in a public or Council building was something that was looking to be explored if potential locations were available. A minimum of 9 square meters were required and information around footfall was needed to find a solution. Discussions would be held following the meeting to consider options.
- Greater promotion of the services of the post office to make the public aware of the wide variety of services available was encouraged.
- The committee thanked Richard Hall for his attendance and welcomed future engagement on matters considered at the meeting.

The Scrutiny Committee requested for the relevant portfolio holders commence a line of Communication following this meeting with the Post Office Ltd to come to a mutually agreeable solution to the relocation of the Main Post Office in Taunton.

(The Meeting ended at 8.22 pm)

SOMERSET WEST AND TAUNTON COUNCIL
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION TRACKER 2020/21

Date of Cttee	Scrutiny Recommendation	Decision Maker /Directorate Responsible	Final Decision/ Response to recommendation/	Date of response	Implemented?	Officer Comments/Update
03/06/20	Resolved:- The Committee resolved to establish a task and finish group to examine the current provision in relation to public transport in the district and what is required to increase provision and improved modal links including consideration of carbon neutrality	Scrutiny Cttee	N/A	N/A	YES	Task and Finish Group has been established and expects to conclude its work with a final report before the end of the municipal year.
01/07/20	Resolved: - The Scrutiny Committee recommend that the Council does not sign the Charter of compassion at Full Council.	Cllr Chris Booth – PFH Community	Report withdrawn from consideration by Council.	07/07/20	YES	N/A

02/09/20	<p>Requested that the Director of Development and Place and Economic Development Portfolio Holder, in consultation with Taunton Councillors, consider including Visit Taunton in addition to the Taunton Chamber of Commerce as the grant distributing bodies for Taunton.</p>	<p>Council / Cllr Marcus Kravis – PFH Asset Mgt and Economic Development</p>	<p>Agreed that the Director of Development and Place and Economic Development Portfolio Holder consult with councillors from the Taunton Charter Trustees alongside the Taunton Chamber of Commerce as part of the Working Group for Taunton.</p>	29/09/20 at Council	YES	N/A
30/09/20	<p>In the light of the recent adoption by Council of policy on an Affordable Employment Land Local Development Order, the Scrutiny Committee recommend to the Executive a new fund of £575,000 is allocated towards Employment Site enabling schemes to support that policy.</p>	<p>Executive/ Cllr Ross Henley – PFH Corporate Resources</p>	<p>SMT and the Executive will explore this proposal as part of the budget and medium term financial plan preparation.</p>	28/10/20 18/02/21	YES	<p>A proposed capital bid for 21/22 and 22/23 was included in the budget for Employment Land Schemes totalling £575,000.</p>

07/10/20	Firepool - 2.9 The committee request that a risk assessment be put in place recognising the recent Natural England advice around phosphates and potential impacts on the projects.	Exec and Council/ Cllr M Kravis – PFH Asset Mgt and Economic Development	The (Scrutiny) committee request that a risk assessment be put in place recognising the recent Natural England advice around phosphates and potential impacts on the projects.	04/11/20 - Council	YES	N/A
14/10/20	Climate Strategy - 2.5 The Committee request that the report to full council gives more details for proposals on the groups to take forward the strategy and action plan, including on member involvement, or that these details are brought back to a future Scrutiny meeting before they are finalised.	Executive / Cllr P Pilkington – PFH Climate Change	N/A	20/10/20 and 26/10/20 Exec and Council	AGREED PART IN	Although not specifically adopted as a recommendation and the further detail was not provided in the report to Full Council as requested, further reports on the Climate Delivery Partnership and the mechanisms for Member involvement are committed to return to the Scrutiny Committee for further discussion in due course.

14/10/20	Climate Strategy - 2.6 £50k of £500k Climate Change fund (referred to in 2.4) to be allocated for tree planting.	Executive / Cllr P Pilkington – PFH Climate Change	5) A report on allocations for the £500k “Climate Change Fund” budget be taken at an early stage to Scrutiny Committee for comment.	26/10/20 – Council 09/02/21 & 17/02/21	AGREED PART	IN	At the Budget meetings of the Executive and Council it was agreed to add into the budget proposals:- £100,000 towards further tree planting across the district.
14/10/20	Coastal Works B3191 - The committee wished to support moves to protect the coastline and coastal communities, there were significant concerns expressed in relation to the potential for responsibility and long term liability and recommend Executive and Full Council fully understand and request details on the long term liabilities going forward to ensure a full understanding of the longevity of the scheme and mitigate long term liability and risk.	Executive & Full Council – Cllr S Wakefield PFH Environmental Services	Scrutiny committee’s concerns were discussed by the Executive Members and it was considered that whilst there may be risks in the longer term for asset maintenance the offer presented to Council by SCC and the Environment Agency is more favourable than we could achieve from other sources and requires no financial investment from SWT at this stage or for many years to come. Executive Committee supported the recommendations as presented by the portfolio holder.	20/10/20 & 01/12/20 Exec and Full Council	AGREED PART	IN	N/A
04/11/20	Rough Sleeper Accommodation: The Scrutiny Committee expected the Executive to take full regard of the comments and concerns raised at Scrutiny and to take these into	Executive / Cllr F Smith – PFH Housing	Resolved that the Executive noted the proposed steps and timeline outlined in 4.16 including the resource requirements to undertake the options appraisal	18/11/20 Executive	AGREED PART	IN	Officers in the Housing Directorate to update on the mechanics of the appraisal and how Scrutiny’s recommendation was taken on board.

	account when making a full decision on this matter. In particular, any options appraisal must be open, transparent and a forward looking review of all potential sites. Any appraisals involving Canonsgrove should be communicated with both Trull and Comeytrove Parish Councils as well as local residents.		proposed to bring back a recommended solution.			
04/11/20	EV Charging Strategy: 2. Requested that the Report to Full Council contains more detail on how the Strategy will be delivered in the SWT area.	Executive & Full Council / Cllr P Pilkington PFH Climate Change	N/A	18/11/20 Exec & 15/12/20 Full Council	AGREED	Officers did provide further detail in the Full Council report

02/12/20	<p>VCS Grants Review: As part of the review of the Voluntary and Community Sector Grants, the increased workload for the two Citizens Advice Bureaus that cover the SWT area must be recognised accordingly with a grant increase in line with their objectives to meet increased demands due to Covid, and that this support is equalized across population areas that they cover, but not to the detriment of other organisations being funded by SWT.</p>	Executive / Cllr C Booth PFH Community	<p>An appendix was included with the report to Executive which explained that; It can be seen that Taunton CAB receives £125,610 for a population of 120,000, of which £42,000 is debt and benefit advice for tenants of SWT Council, giving a net figure of £83,610. West Somerset Advice Bureau gets £30,600 for a population of 35,000. The conclusion that can be drawn is that there is no inequality in funding between the two bureaux. However, Taunton CAB gains a specific funding input for advice to tenants who exclusively live within Taunton CAB catchment and which comes from their rental payments, there being no SWT tenants in the former West Somerset area.</p>	16/12/20 Executive	AGREED PART	IN	N/A
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02/12/20	Extension of Public Space Belvedere Road: The Committee consider that the historic importance of the building to Taunton in the long term requires that its future needs to be secured and the decision of its future needs to be taken at Full Council.	Executive / Cllr M Kravis PFH Asset Management and Economic Development	<p>1) The creation of a cross party working group to consider the options available for Flook House and the surrounding area. With a recommendation from this group being presented to Executive committee on the 21 April 2021; and</p> <p>2) That delegated authority be granted to the Portfolio Holder for Asset Management, along with the Director for External Operations and Climate Change to appoint Members to the working group and to agree the terms of reference for that group.</p>	16/12/20	UNCLEAR/TBC	The Executive commissioned a cross-party Working Group, it is unclear if this will report to Council as requested by Scrutiny.
27/01/21	HRA Revenue and Capital budget setting 21/22, including Dwelling Rent setting 21/22 and 30 year Business Plan Review 6. A Task and Finish Group on funding sources and approaches for a zero carbon retrofit programme for SWT's council housing is further investigated with a further report brought back to the Scrutiny Committee to decide	Scrutiny Committee	Scrutiny Committee – That the Scrutiny Committee resolved to establish; a) A cross party Task and Finish Group for Council Housing Zero Carbon Retrofit to investigate this topic in further depth and to report back to the Scrutiny Committee within four months (if possible). b) The Terms of Reference for the	03/03/21	Yes	Task and Finish Group to be established.

	on establishment, with Terms of Reference		Council Housing Zero Carbon Retrofit Group (Appendix A) are approved.			
03/03/21	<p>Options appraisal for delivering future single rough sleeper and homelessness accommodation in SWT</p> <p>The Scrutiny Committee, therefore recommend that, the Executive:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only consider option 1, with clear wind down and end date of March 2023, but ideally 6 months before March 2023, having alternative location/s identified, therefore take out item 3.3 from the recommendation. • Take into account the recent survey's report by the Trull Parish Council, which provides the needed evidence of the adverse impact of current use of 	Executive / Cllr F Smith (PFH Housing)	Executive -	17/03/21	Part Agreed	<p>Resolved that the Executive:-</p> <p>2.1 Noted and supported the draft Single Homeless Accommodation Strategy including its vision and objectives as a working document to articulate SWT ambition to end rough sleeping in the district by 2027 (Appendix 1).</p> <p>2.2 Approved recommended option one as set out in paragraph 4.38 as the preferred Council option for the future contribution of the Canonsgrove site to support the provision of single homeless accommodation in the District.</p>

	<p>Canonsgrove to the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide better management, community safety measures by communicating with the residents to allay current and future concerns by:- <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Looking at alternative accommodations within the district close to all the amenities now. 2) Work out a wider appraisal to deliver other accommodation options that are tested against the draft strategy with homelessness providers and support agencies, and inform Trull Residents Group, local Parish Councils about future plans, whereby other alternatives are identified and report back to the 					<p>2.3 Should option two be preferred by the Executive the service requested a supplementary budget of £130k, as identified in the report to the Executive in November 2020. This budget was to prepare for the purchase and conversion of Canonsgrove. Officers would return to the Council to request permission and the budget for the purchase and works for the site.</p> <p>2.4 Officers to improve engagement and two-way communication with Trull residents and stakeholders. This would be through direct engagement with the community as well as attendance at an appropriate forum to engage with the Parish Council and community representatives.</p>
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	<p>Scrutiny/SWT council within the next 6 months on plan to exit Canonsgrove.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a joint liaison Committee to improve two way communication between the Council and relevant local stakeholders. 					
28/04/21	<p>The Scrutiny Committee <u>recommended</u>;</p> <p><i>A request was made of the relevant Portfolio Holders on SWT's Executive to commence a line of communication with the Post Office Ltd, in order to consider a mutually agreeable solution to the re-siting of the Main Post Office in Taunton."</i></p>	<p>Development and Place & External Ops & Climate Change / Cllr M Kravis & Cllr C Booth</p>	Executive	28/04/21	TBC	TBC

Total Recommendations for 20/21:

Agreed: 7

Agreed in Part: 6

Not Agreed: 0

TBD: 2

CORPORATE SCRUTINY

Meeting	Draft Agenda Items	Lead PFH/ Lead Officer	Executive Report?
19th May 2021	Executive Cllr PFH Session - Leader of the Council & Communications	Cllr Federica Smith-Roberts	No
DH	Risk Management Report	Cllr R Henley / M. Riches	Yes
	Appointment of Vice-Chair		
2nd June 2021	Executive Cllr PFH Session		No
DH	CNCR Spend Update	Cllr D Darch / C. Hall	No
	Scrutiny Committee Work Plan for 2021-22	Scrutiny Committee	No
	Review of the Commercial Property Investment Activity and Performance Report	Cllr R Henley/ D. Adey & G. Mills	Yes
7th July 2021	Belvedere Road Public Space/ Flook House	Cllr M Kravis / C. Hall	Yes
DH	2020/21 Financial Outturn	Cllr R Henley / P. Fitzgerald	Yes
	Financial Strategy 2021-2023	Cllr R Henley / P. Fitzgerald	Yes
	Corporate Performance Report	Cllr R Henley / M. Riches	Yes
4th August 2021	Single Homelessness Accomodation Strategy	Cllr F Smith/ M. Leeman	Yes
DH	Executive Cllr PFH Session		No
1st September 2021	Financial Performance 2021/22 Q1	Cllr R Henley/ P. Fitzgerald	Yes
DH			
6th October 2021			
DH			
3rd November 2021	General Fund 2022/23 Draft Budget Update	Cllr R Henley / P. Fitzgerald	Yes
DH	Housing Revenue Account 2022/23 Draft Budget Update		
1st December 2021	Financial Performance 2021/22 Q2		
DH			
5th January 2022			
DH			

Executive Meeting	Draft Agenda Items
26 May 2021	Risk Management Report
venue =	SWT Cultural Strategy
Exec RD = 14 May	Scrutiny Recommendation - Post Office
Informal Exec RD = 26 April	
SMT RD = 14 April	
16 June 2021	
venue =	
Exec RD = 4 June	
Informal Exec RD = 11 May	
SMT RD = 28 April	
21 July 2021	Belvedere Road Public Space
venue =	2020/21 Financial Outturn
Exec RD = 9 July	Financial Strategy 2021-2023
Informal Exec RD = 15 June	Corporate Performance Report
SMT RD = 2 June	Firepool Design Guidance and Masterplan
18 August 2021	Single Homeless accommodation strategy and delivery plan
venue =	
Exec RD = 6 August	
Informal Exec RD = 13 July	
SMT RD = 30 June	
15 September 2021	Public Realm Design Guide for Taunton Garden Town – Feedback
venue =	Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide

Exec RD = 3 September	Financial Performance 2021/22 Q1
Informal Exec RD = 10 August	Corporate Performance Report
SMT RD = 28 July	
20 October 2021	
venue =	
Exec RD = 8 October	
Informal Exec RD = 14 September	
SMT RD = 1 September	
17 November 2021	Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Review
venue =	General Fund 2022/23 Draft Budget Update
Exec RD = 5 November	Housing Revenue Account 2022/23 Draft Budget Update
Informal Exec RD = 12 October	
SMT RD = 29 September	
15 December 2021	Financial Performance 2021/22 Q2
venue =	Corporate Performance Report
Exec RD = 3 December	
Informal Exec RD = 9 November	
SMT RD = 27 October	
19 January 2022	
venue =	
Exec RD = 7 January	
Informal Exec RD = 7 December	
SMT RD = 24 November	

Budget - 9 February 2022	Housing Revenue Account 2022/23 Budget
venue =	General Fund 2022/23 Budget
Exec RD = 28 January	
Informal Exec RD = 4 January	
SMT RD = 8 December	
16 February 2022	
venue =	
Exec RD = 4 February	
Informal Exec RD = 11 January	
SMT RD = 22 December	
16 March 2022	Financial Performance 2021/22 Q3
venue =	Capital, Investment and Treasury Strategy 2022/23
Exec RD = 4 March	Corporate Performance Report
Informal Exec RD = 8 February	
SMT RD = 26 January	
20 April 2022	
venue =	
Exec RD = 8 April	
Informal Exec RD = 15 March	
SMT RD = 2 March	

Items to be Confirmed	

FULL COUNCIL

Meeting	Report Deadline	Draft Agenda Items
6 July 2021	24 June 2021	Public Realm Design Guide for Taunton Garden Town – Feedback
		Somerset West and Taunton Districtwide Design Guide
		Review of the Commercial Property Investment Activity and Performance Report
		Skatepark Petition Update
7 September 2021	25 August 2021	Annual Review of the Commercial Property Investment Strategy
		Single Homeless accommodation strategy and delivery plan
		Firepool Design Guidance and Masterplan
7 December 2021	25 November 2021	Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Review
8 February 2022	27 January 2022	
24 February 2022	14 February 2022	Housing Revenue Account 2022/23 Budget
Budget Only		General Fund 2022/23 Budget
		Council Tax Resolution 2022/23
		NO MORE ITEMS

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29 March 2022	17 March 2022	Capital, Investment and Treasury Strategy 2022/23
10 May 2022	28 April 2022	Annual Council Meeting
		Council Committees for 2021/2022 and their Terms of Reference
		Appointment of Representatives on Outside Bodies
		To authorise the sealing or signing of documents to give effect to any decisions taken
ITEMS TO BE CONFIRMED		Skate Park Petition Update to be brought back in July 2021

Corporate Scrutiny Committee 19 May 2021

Full Council Meeting – 30 March 2021

Report of Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts – Leader of the Council

Introduction

Last year I wrote in my introduction about the reason the work that the Council does over and above its statutory responsibilities is so important to our communities. The drive behind this administration and Council is to make fundamental improvements to people's lives, especially the most vulnerable, ensuring we work with our partners and continue to be there when people need us. I am proud of all that we have achieved in the past year in this most difficult of circumstances and this is through the dedication and hard work of our staff and the strong vision that my leadership of this administration has given.

Coronavirus

The past year has been challenging for all of us and my thoughts go out to those that have suffered loss or hardship. Somerset West and Taunton has been an anchor in the community through this pandemic with the different initiatives and projects we have led and supported others with. I have been in awe of all of our communities and the resilience they have shown but most importantly the spirit of helping thy neighbour and the "be kind" mantra and I hope that this continues as by working together, whether in our communities or in the council, we only achieve more. Our staff have been phenomenal whether it was through adapting our businesses as usual services so they continue, to the millions of pounds we have paid out in business grants, to thousands of calls to our vulnerable residents to check if they need our help. I am in awe of the work we have done. We still have a long way to go and we need to take the many learning that the past year has given us in order to not just build back better but to also continue the ambitious plans we have laid out for the whole district.

Stronger Somerset

The consultation for Unitary has started and we are expecting a decision by the Secretary of State towards the end of the summer.

Central government invited all councils in Somerset to submit bids for a new unitary way of working in the county.

The District Councils – Sedgemoor, Mendip, South Somerset and Somerset West and Taunton – have designed a joint proposal called Stronger Somerset.

There are two bids going forward, the One Somerset case and the Stronger Somerset case.

At Full Council on 3 December, Somerset West and Taunton Council voted in favour of all four Districts to submit the full proposal to central government, with support drawn from across the political spectrum.

The Stronger Somerset plan sets an ambitious agenda for delivering a better and more efficient quality of services to its communities.

Development and Commercial Investment

Firepool

Further preparation work has been undertaken and the first block (no 6) has been given detailed planning approval. Parts of Block 3 are close to completion (GWR Goods Office). Various other preparatory works have been undertaken on Blocks 2 and 4. The new access from Trenchard Way has secured funding and will be starting on site shortly.

The block by block masterplan and accompanying Local Development Order has been progressed throughout the last year but has hit a phosphate blockage that has prevented submission. Various options to address Phosphates have been considered both in the short and medium term. Detailed planning applications have been progressed and will short be submitted for Blocks 1 (Firepool South by Viridor), 3 (Firepool North, opposite the station multi storey car park) and the infrastructure and engineering works required to support Blocks 2, 4 and 5. This year will see a substantial start and progress in all Blocks. Decisions about funding packages and delivery routes have also been agreed. Despite the challenges this site has and continues to present we will be in the delivery stages of the project in the coming 12 months.

Coal Orchard

The Development for Coal Orchard continued through the year. Despite the impact of the pandemic on working practices and impacting the supply chain for materials, the project has remained on budget with the first show-home being marketed at Easter. This Spring/Summer will see the final stage of the programme with the completion of the site and marketing of all of the properties. Whilst there has been a short delay in delivery due to the pandemic impact, the programme remain on track for budget and income forecast. Most importantly, the regeneration of this site into a modern and vibrant place where people can live and work, in the heart of Taunton, will be complete. We have secured our first commercial tenant and with the easing of lockdown restrictions allowing a handover schedule to be agreed, we can very shortly announce this milestone tenancy. We have also successfully negotiated a grant of £880k from Homes England towards the infrastructure on this project.

Seaward Way 2 units on Rainbow Way and the construction of infrastructure.

This programme marks the second regeneration project completed by this Council, bringing two new industrial units to Minehead which already have businesses in occupation and people working in them. This build was commenced and completed within 12 calendar months (which allowing for furlough and slow down due to Covid19, is remarkable).

The project was delivered under budget by £180k, and met or exceeded all other targets outlined in the business case, including the exceeding the forecast return on investment.

The one major outstanding item is the installation of the waste water pumping station by Wessex Water. Unfortunately during Covid19 the effectively stopped responding to all but emergency requests, so the start date for this work is May 21. We have also successfully negotiated a grant of £960k from Homes England towards the infrastructure on this project.

Wellington Station

Last year I commented that the Dept for Transport had announced that it was considering Wellington Station as a 'Restoring your Railway' scheme. Working in collaboration with Mid-Devon, a submission of a Strategic Outline Business Case has now been submitted for this scheme, which could fund up to 75% of the £15 Million of the cost of a new station at Wellington. Although the outcome of our submission at this time is unknown, the findings of the outline business case showed strong benefits could be gained in terms of social and economy benefits. This Council has made provision for resources needed for the creation of the Full Business Case and will take this project forward in 2021.

Active Travel

One of the unexpected events driven by the pandemic was the closure of East Street in Taunton, which was closed to allow safe passage for pedestrians to be able to socially distance. This gave us a unique opportunity to observe how traffic could flow and what impact this closure had on pedestrians and businesses should we consider this as a longer term aspect of Taunton Town Centre. We will be considering this, and further active travel improvements during 2021, including our FHSF award of £1.5m towards Active Travel schemes.

Commercial Income

Our commercial portfolio build is now well under way, with five property completions so far, remaining on track to hit our income target of £2.9 Million for 2021/2022 and onwards.

Climate Change

We have developed and approved our own Carbon Neutrality and Climate Resilience Action Plan (CNCR) which sits alongside the Somerset-wide strategy and have created a Climate Change Team which means, as a Council, we can progress the actions within the CNCR Plan.

We have also supported Somerset Waste Partnership's campaigns and initiatives to increase waste reduction, re-use and recycling including the 'Slim My Waste', 'Feed My Face' campaign.

We also monitor the Council's corporate greenhouse gas emissions and delivered actions on an annual basis.

SWT have adopted the Somerset-wide Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Strategy and have delivered a funding scheme for community charge points available to town and parish councils.

I am very pleased to say SWT are also part of the Department for Transport's e-scooter launch.

Housing

We completed new council homes at Laxton Road which were immediately let and have now approved a comprehensive programme of new build council homes introducing low and zero carbon standards which will help achieve our climate

change objectives and reduce fuel costs to tenants. We are progressing our commitment to more community housing with the regeneration of the North Taunton replacing poor quality homes with larger, better accessible, warmer and low carbon homes for rent. The demolition of the first phase of the North Taunton project is complete and new homes and a new community centre will commence imminently. Throughout the District we continue to enable more homes especially affordable homes through our housing association partners and private developers. In the areas hardest to develop, such as Exmoor and many of our most rural communities we are working closely with communities promoting Community Led Housing.

Although we now have a pipeline of new council homes coming forward over the coming years we have continued to purchase properties during the year to increase the number of affordable homes for rent.

Our strategic housing work has focused on better outcomes for our most vulnerable residents. Our analysis of the housing need in the District will help the council bring forward homes directly or through partners which better meet the diverse needs of our community.

Homelessness Provision:

At the start of the financial year, the government gave the Council three days' notice to bring all rough sleepers off the street to protect them from Covid-19. The response to this request, under these pressured timescales was phenomenal and the Council identified and secured accommodation at Canonsgrove Halls of Residence and the Beach Hotel and reached agreement with the YMCA Dulverton Group to manage this accommodation. Although the government's initial request was to protect this group for three months, Covid-19 is still here and they continue to urge us to accommodate all rough sleepers throughout this time.

The provision at Canonsgrove has been a great success with commitment from all partners to provide joined-up support to complex and vulnerable tenants, which has made a real difference and changed lives. The commitment of the Council, YMCADG, Mental Health Services, SCC Social Care Services, the NHS, Drug and Alcohol Services, Open Door, Salvation Army, RAFT and others has meant that many residents have been able to get the support they need, in safe accommodation and start to rebuild their lives. We know that our interventions have saved many people's lives. The model has been cited nationally and has attracted a considerable amount of national media attention. To date, we have been able to support close to 150 homeless people, many of whom we have now moved on into independent accommodation.

Alongside this, we have been successful in securing government funding to support our homelessness ambitions. This includes £1m capital and revenue funding to secure the Gascony Hotel in Minehead to allow us to move people on from the Beach Hotel. Again this has been achieved through strong partnership working with the YMCA Dulverton Group. The focus for next year will be to approve our Homeless Accommodation Strategy and identify and secure long-term accommodation and support, with partners, so that we ensure that all those supported through Covid-19 at Canonsgrove and elsewhere will have stable long-term accommodation offers in

the future. We are aware of the impact to the community and this will be a key aspect of a two way rebuilding of relations moving forward.

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 19th May 2021

Corporate Risk Management Update

This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Member Ross Henley.

Report Author: Malcolm Riches, Business Intelligence and Performance Manager.

1. Executive Summary / Purpose of the Report

This paper provides an update on the current register of risks and issues.

2. Recommendations

Members are asked to note the risks and issues held on the Councils register.

3. Risk Assessment

This report provides detail on the risks that have been identified, and the current issues for the council.

4. Background and Full details of the Report

The Audit, Standards and Governance Committee agreed the councils updated Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy on 1st February 2021. The Strategy sets out that a quarterly report on risks and issues will be presented to both Scrutiny and Executive. As this is the first such report, it is a stand-alone item, and provides an update on the risks and issues as of March 2021. In future, regular reports on risks and issues will be included with the quarterly performance reports.

The Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy states that only “key business risks”, i.e. those that have a score of between 15-25, will be reported to Executive and Scrutiny on a quarterly basis. As this is the first report, all risks have been included, but future reports will just include key business risks.

There is a Corporate Risk Register and Corporate Issues Log which are supported by registers for each Directorate. The registers are fluid documents and are reviewed and updated on at least a monthly basis, and more frequently if required. The registers are also aligned to the Directorate service plans and to the delivery of the Corporate Plan and the council’s strategic objectives. Programmes and projects that the council is undertaking also capture risks relevant to the work being delivered.

The Corporate Risk Register is attached in Appendix 1. There are currently 15 risks on the risk register. The RAG status of these risks is as follows:

RAG Status	Number of Risks
Red	4
Amber	Page 43

Green	3
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The Corporate Issues Log is attached in Appendix 2. There are currently 4 Issues on the issues log. The RAG status of these issues is as follows:

RAG Status	Number of Issues
Red	3
Amber	1
Green	0

Each risk is managed to reduce the impact and/or likelihood and mitigations are put in place. For some, there is acceptance that an inherent level of risk will always remain and therefore we need to be constantly vigilant. Where risks or issues are rated as red, there are more detailed action plans and mitigations in place to manage and reduce the risk.

5. Links to Corporate Strategy

Failure to mitigate business risks is a major risk to the Council and could impact on the Council’s ability to deliver its strategic objectives.

6. Finance / Resource Implications

If risks or issues have any financial implications, these are recorded on the register.

7. Legal Implications (if any)

If risks or issues have any legal implications, specific legal guidance is sought.

8. Climate and Sustainability Implications (if any)

If risks or issues have any climate or sustainability implications, these are recorded on the register.

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

If risks or issues have any safeguarding or community safety implications, these are recorded on the register.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications (if any)

If risks or issues have any equality and diversity implications, these are recorded on the register.

11. Social Value Implications (if any)

None

12. Partnership Implications (if any)

If risks or issues are impacted by partner organisations, this is recorded on the register.

13. Health and Wellbeing Implications (if any)

If risks or issues have Health and Wellbeing implications, these are recorded on the register.

14. Asset Management Implications (if any)

If risks or issues have implications on any assets, this is recorded on the register.

15. Data Protection Implications (if any)

If risks or issues have data protection implications, this is recorded on the register.

16. Consultation Implications (if any)

None

Democratic Path:

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

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

List of Appendices (delete if not applicable)

Appendix 1	Corporate Risk Register
Appendix 2	Corporate Issues Log

Contact Officers

Name	Richard Sealy	Name	Malcolm Riches
Direct Dial	01823 217558	Direct Dial	01823 219459
Email	r.sealy@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk	Email	m.riches@somersetwestandtaunton.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Corporate Risk Register

REF	Corporate Objective	Risk area	Risk Title	Risk Score			Owner
				Impact	Probability	Overall score	
CR2	Our Environment and Economy	Climate Change	Working towards carbon neutrality by 2030 has become an overstated target.	3	3	9	Andrew Pritchard
CR3	A Transparent and Customer Focused Council	ICT	ICT power failure as server room requires permanent solution to improve power supply.	2	2	4	Alison North
CR7	A Transparent and Customer Focused Council	Finance	Failure to achieve value for money when purchasing, not compliant with relevant legislation, inappropriate use of waivers, or poor contract monitoring.	4	3	12	Alison North
CR11	A Transparent and Customer Focused Council	ICT	Cyber security threats.	5	4	20	Alison North
CR12	A Transparent and Customer Focused Council	Finance	Financial sustainability.	4	3	12	Alison North
CR13	A Transparent and Customer Focused Council	Finance	Service delivery may be impacted by supplier issues / exposure.	3	3	9	Alison North
CR15	Our Environment and Economy	Emergency Planning	Civil contingencies and organisational resilience has not been tested.	3	3	9	Andrew Pritchard

CR16	An Enterprising Council	Planning	Failure to have an up to date Local Plan or deliver on housing or employment sites could lead to shortfalls in achieving a Five Year Land Supply or meeting the Housing Delivery Test and leave us vulnerable to loss of employment sites for other uses.	4	2	8	Dawn Adey
CR17	Homes and Communities	Housing	Gypsy and Traveller communities are not adequately supported.	3	4	12	James Barrah
CR20	A Transparent and Customer Focused Council	Data quality	Poor quality data could lead to operational errors, inaccurate performance reporting, and/or impact the right decisions being made.	3	3	9	Alison North
CR22	A Transparent and Customer Focused Council	Health and Safety Compliance	Failure of Risk Assessment process for staff operations leading to incident or near miss.	4	4	16	Alison North
CR23	Homes and Communities	Health and Safety Compliance	Failure to comply with Landlord Property Safety Compliance requirements leading to regulatory failure, failure to comply with the law, incident causing injury or death, negative PR, and financial loss (compensation and / or fine).	4	4	16	James Barrah
CR24	A Transparent and Customer Focused Council	Business Continuity	Business continuity plans are low maturity across the organisation and ownership of managing updates needs to be agreed.	3	1	3	Sean Papworth
CR26	Our Environment and Economy	Emergency Planning	Public health emergency (such as new Covid variants or other novel virus).	3	4	12	Andrew Pritchard
CR27	All	Unitary	Decision awaited regarding unitary proposals. Maintaining operational delivery during period of significant change.	4	4	16	James Hassett

Appendix 2 – Corporate Issues Log

REF	Directorate	Issue Title	RAG	Owner
CI7	Internal Ops	Improvements in financial control and reporting following recent audits.	A	Paul Fitzgerald
CI8	Internal Ops	Improvements in ICT infrastructure and connectivity to meet required standards.	R	Sean Papworth
CI9	Dev & Place	Management of phosphate levels in Tone catchment, particularly regarding impact on planning applications.	R	Gerry Mills
CI20	Internal Ops	Health and safety compliance especially with regard to working from height.	R	Sean Papworth