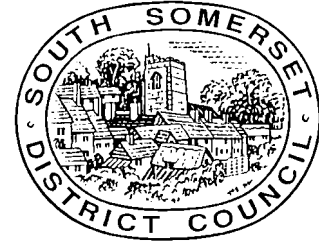


South Somerset District Council

Notice of Meeting



District Executive

Making a difference where it counts

Thursday 3rd May 2018

9.30 am

**Council Chamber
Council Offices
Brympton Way
Yeovil
Somerset BA20 2HT**



Disabled access and a hearing loop are available at this meeting venue.

Members listed on the following page are requested to attend the meeting.

The public and press are welcome to attend.

If you would like any further information on the items to be discussed, please contact the Democratic Services Specialist on 01935 462148 or democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk

This Agenda was issued on Wednesday 25 April 2018.

Alex Parmley, *Chief Executive Officer*

This information is also available on our website
www.southsomerset.gov.uk and via the mod.gov app



District Executive Membership

Ric Pallister
Peter Gubbins
Henry Hobhouse
Val Keitch
Jo Roundell Greene
Sylvia Seal
Peter Seib
Angie Singleton
Nick Weeks
Derek Yeomans

Information for the Public

The District Executive co-ordinates the policy objectives of the Council and gives the Area Committees strategic direction. It carries out all of the local authority's functions which are not the responsibility of any other part of the Council. It delegates some of its responsibilities to Area Committees, officers and individual portfolio holders within limits set by the Council's Constitution. When major decisions are to be discussed or made, these are published in the Executive Forward Plan in so far as they can be anticipated.

Members of the Public are able to:-

- attend meetings of the Council and its committees such as Area Committees, District Executive, except where, for example, personal or confidential matters are being discussed;
- speak at Area Committees, District Executive and Council meetings;
- see reports and background papers, and any record of decisions made by the Council and Executive;
- find out, from the Executive Forward Plan, what major decisions are to be decided by the District Executive.

Meetings of the District Executive are held monthly at 9.30 a.m. on the first Thursday of the month in the Council Offices, Brympton Way.

The Executive Forward Plan and copies of executive reports and decisions are published on the Council's web site - www.southsomerset.gov.uk.

The Council's Constitution is also on the web site and available for inspection in Council offices. The Council's corporate priorities which guide the work and decisions of the Executive are set out below.

Questions, statements or comments from members of the public are welcome at the beginning of each meeting of the Council. If a member of the public wishes to speak they should advise the committee administrator and complete one of the public participation slips setting out their name and the matter they wish to speak about. Each individual speaker shall be restricted to a total of three minutes. Answers to questions may be provided at the meeting itself or a written reply will be sent subsequently, as appropriate. Matters raised during the public question session will not be debated by the Committee at that meeting.

Further information can be obtained by contacting the agenda co-ordinator named on the front page.

District Executive

Thursday 3 May 2018

Agenda

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the District Executive meeting held on 5th April 2018.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (as amended 26 February 2015), which includes all the provisions relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), personal and prejudicial interests, Members are asked to declare any DPI and also any personal interests (and whether or not such personal interests are also "prejudicial") in relation to any matter on the Agenda for this meeting.

Members are reminded that they need to declare the fact that they are also a member of a County, Town or Parish Council as a Personal Interest. Where you are also a member of Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council within South Somerset you must declare a prejudicial interest in any business on the agenda where there is a financial benefit or gain or advantage to Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council which would be at the cost or to the financial disadvantage of South Somerset District Council.

4. Public Question Time

5. Chairman's Announcements

Items for Discussion

6. The South Petherton Neighbourhood Plan Referendum (Pages 5 - 9)

7. Strategic Development and Regeneration in South Somerset District Council (Pages 10 - 20)

8. Somerset Homelessness Strategy 2017 - 19 (Pages 21 - 90)

9. Community Right to Bid Half Year Report - October 2017 to March 2018 (Pages 91 - 98)

10. Draft Responses to Consultations (for information) (Pages 99 - 124)

11. District Executive Forward Plan (Pages 125 - 131)

12. Date of Next Meeting (Page 132)

13. Exclusion of Press and Public (Page 133)

**14. Budget for Chard Regeneration Programme and Yeovil Regeneration Programme
(Confidential)** (Pages 134 - 166)

Agenda Item 6

The South Petherton Neighbourhood Plan Referendum

Executive Portfolio Holder: Angie Singleton, Strategic Planning (Place Making)
Ward Member(s) South Petherton - Adam Dance, Crispin Raikes
Director: Martin Woods, Director, Service Delivery
Service Manager: Jo Wilkins, Acting Principal Spatial Planner
Lead Officer: David Clews, Spatial Planner
Contact Details: david.clews@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462054

Purpose of the Report

1. To note the progress that has been made on the preparation of the South Petherton Neighbourhood Plan; to agree the independent Examiner's report and recommendations for Proposed Modifications; and to set out the process for 'making' the plan following a favourable local referendum to be organised by the District Council.

Forward Plan

- 2 This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of May 2018.

Public Interest

- 3 The Neighbourhood Plan represents the views of South Petherton Parish Council and other stakeholders on the preferred approach to future development in the village and surrounding area. This has been the subject of Independent Examination by a qualified person and if the Council agree with the Examiner's report and recommendations for Proposed Modifications, the Plan will then be subject to a referendum of all those in the community on the Electoral Register. The referendum will be on whether they agree with the modified Plan's content and if it should be used in the determination of planning applications.
- 4 The Neighbourhood Plan has been the subject of resident surveys, public meetings, discussions with businesses; and consultation events; and the Parish Council have a dedicated section on its website in association with this process. ([Parish Plan – Neighbourhood Plan](#))

Recommendations

- 5 That the District Executive:-
 - a. agrees to the Examiner's report and recommendations for Proposed Modifications to the South Petherton Neighbourhood Plan.
 - b. agrees to the Council organising a referendum for local people on the Electoral Register as to whether they want South Somerset District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for South Petherton to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area.
 - c. delegates responsibility to the Director for Service Delivery in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning to make any final minor text amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan, in agreement with South Petherton Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

Background

- 6 Neighbourhood planning aims to help local communities play a direct role in planning the areas in which they live and work. The plan can show how the community wants land to be used and

developed in its area. If a plan is 'made' following a successful referendum, it becomes part of the development plan for that area. Planning applications are determined by local planning authorities in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A development plan sets out the planning policies for the development and use of land.

- 7 The South Petherton Neighbourhood Area designation was approved by the District Council in April 2015. Since then, the Neighbourhood Plan for the area has been prepared and a 'Pre-Submission' Plan was consulted upon by the local Steering Group in March 2017 (Regulation 14). This was followed by formal submission of the Plan in October 2017 and the District Council carried out formal consultation in line with procedures set out in the relevant Regulations (Regulation 16). The Plan has now been the subject of independent examination and this report relates to the District Council's decision on the Examiner's recommendations and the next step of a local referendum.

The South Petherton Neighbourhood Plan

8. The South Petherton Neighbourhood Plan sets out a vision for the Parish and the Plan's main aims and objectives; and includes a short summary of the town's physical, demographic and historic context. A Parish Design Statement has also been submitted and forms part of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan summarises the consultation process and evidence base informing its preparation; and policies seeking to guide future development in the town relating to what are considered to be the most sustainable locations, protecting and enhancing the natural environment, retaining the character of the village, setting design and space standards, seeking to ensure that new housing meets local needs, strengthening the local economy, seeking to reduce the impact of traffic and improving parking; and providing a wide range of community facilities.
9. Key issues raised at events and in the questionnaires during the consultation carried out by the Neighbourhood Planning Group under Regulation 14 were:
 - Concern over potential local flooding
 - Parking provision in the village
 - Redevelopment of the Recreation Ground
 - Concern over farm traffic in the village
 - Encouragement of new businesses
 - Housing development

The things that the community said they value the most about South Petherton were:

- The village 'feel'
- The character and quality of the built environment
- The shops and facilities
- The surrounding landscape and views
- The wide range of activities available

10. The main objectives within the Neighbourhood Plan are stated to be the following:

- Protect the land we value locally from inappropriate development and set parameters for new development to be found acceptable.
- Designate and protect green spaces of importance to the Parish and Protect and Create Natural Habitats
- Protect important views (including those of Ham Hill)
- Limit development in the countryside

- Produce a Parish Design Guide to ensure quality & design of new development
- Set up list of local heritage 'assets' to be protected
- Reduce flood risk

- Improve and extend network of local rights of way and footpaths, cycle paths and bridleways
 - Provide footpath links to and from new development

 - Establish and monitor scale and nature of local housing need
 - Ensure that new housing increases options
 - Provide some bungalows and lifetime homes
 - Provide dwellings suitable for single person households

 - Support the local village and wider rural economy through the creation of small and medium business units and by enabling the organic growth of local businesses

 - Provide new parking spaces/areas to serve key locations and facilities
 - Increase car parking opportunities
 - Ensure there is sufficient off-road parking per dwelling

 - Protect community and social spaces and buildings from change of use
 - Redevelop pavilion with sports facilities, toilets and changing rooms
 - Expand into new Rec. space when it's made available
 - Enable new leisure and recreation activity
 - Enable increase in local health and welfare services
 - Provide public toilets
11. A fresh appraisal of the historic built environment was undertaken by the local Steering Group as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process and a Conservation Area Appraisal was undertaken. The current South Petherton village Conservation Area boundary was designated in 1975 and is due to be reviewed by the District Council in 2017/18. The Design Statement is stated to be to ensure that the unique visual character of the village and its surroundings is preserved.
 12. Alongside the Neighbourhood Plan itself, the Regulations require that a statement is submitted which states how the Plan meets the specified 'Basic Conditions', a Consultation Statement; and confirmation that the Plan meets the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations and other European legislation.
 13. On receipt of the Submission Documents, the Council carried out the required public consultation for a period of six weeks under Regulation 16; this included a notice in the press and at South Petherton Library and writing to all authorities, utility providers, a wide range of stakeholders and other bodies considered to have an interest in the Plan, including those that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had consulted itself. The submission documentation was made available on the Council's website and hard copies were also made available at the library.
 14. A total of five responses were received and the District Council also presented its own comments; these were all sent to the Examiner.
 15. The Examiner's Report concludes that the correct procedure for the preparation and submission of the South Petherton Neighbourhood Plan was followed and that it meets the 'Basic Conditions', subject to several Proposed Modifications being made. The amended documents in accordance with these proposed changes is appended to this report, together with the Examiner's Report. The original Submission Plan, Design Statement, supporting documents and representations received are all available on the District Council's website - [South Somerset District Council – South Petherton Neighbourhood Area Designation](#).
 16. If the District Council accepts the Examiner's recommendations, the next stage would be to hold a local referendum in South Petherton. The prescribed question that needs to be asked is:

“Do you want South Somerset District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for South Petherton to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area”.

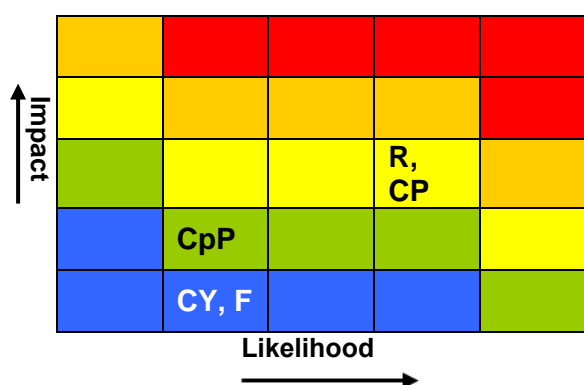
If more than 50% of those who vote say Yes, the Neighbourhood Plan is 'made' (or adopted); and it becomes part of the statutory Development Plan for the District Council and needs to be taken account in the determination of planning applications.

Financial Implications

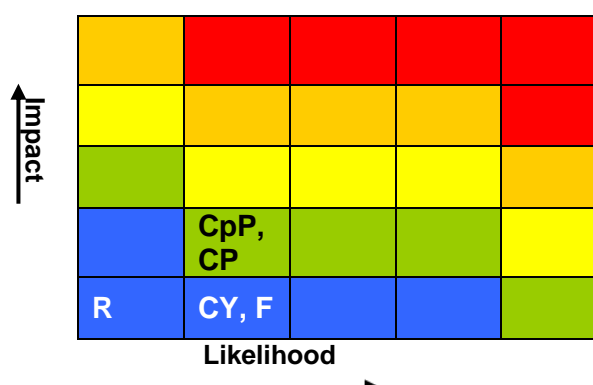
- Under the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations, 15% of Community Infrastructure Levy receipts are generally passed directly to those parish and town councils (in England) where development has taken place. In England, communities that draw up a neighbourhood plan and secure the consent of local people in a referendum, will benefit from 25% of the levy revenues arising from the development that takes place in their area.
- The District Council does not have the option to decline to hold the Referendum as this is required by legislation; and the associated costs will need to be absorbed into existing budgetary arrangements. However, the Council is able to claim a grant of up to £20,000 towards the costs of progressing the Neighbourhood Plan from the Department for Communities and Local Government once the date of the Referendum has been set.

Risk Matrix

Risk Profile before officer recommendations



Risk Profile after officer recommendations



Key

Categories	Colours (for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)
R = Reputation	Red = High impact and high probability
CpP = Corporate Plan Priorities	Orange = Major impact and major probability
CP = Community Priorities	Yellow = Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY = Capacity	Green = Minor impact and minor probability
F = Financial	Blue = Insignificant impact and insignificant probability

Council Plan Implications

- The South Petherton Plan accords with the Council's aims to increase the focus on jobs and economic development, protect and enhance the quality of our environment; and to enable housing to meet all needs. The District Council's values include supporting people and communities, enabling them to help themselves; and the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the local community who wish to have an influence on future development in the town. The Council Plan states that it will focus on supporting communities to develop local, parish and neighbourhood plans.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

20. The South Petherton Neighbourhood Plan does not directly address carbon emissions or climate change and no such issues arise.

Equality and Diversity Implications

21. No significant changes to a Service, Policy or Strategy are proposed directly and it is therefore not necessary that an Equality Assessment is undertaken.

Privacy Impact Assessment

22. No personal data handling is involved.

Background Papers (all published in separate appendix)

Appendix A – Examiner’s Report

Appendix B – South Petherton Neighbourhood Plan (with Proposed Modifications)

Appendix C – Parish Design Statement (with Proposed Modifications)

Agenda Item 7

Strategic Development and Regeneration in South Somerset District Council

Executive Portfolio Holders: Ric Pallister, Strategy and Policy
Jo Roundell Greene, Environment and Economic Development
Director: Alex Parmley, Chief Executive
Contact Details: alex.parmley@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462101

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 South Somerset District Council (SSDC) is transforming the way it organised, operates and delivers services; changing the way customers interact with us, the way they receive services, and the way we are organised to best deliver those services in a modern and efficient way. A central aim of Transformation is to ensure the Council is more efficient and is better able to deliver Members' priorities and meet community needs in the context of fewer resources. Therefore, there is a need to ensure that the way we operate and function as an organisation best enables the delivery of our strategic objectives and outcomes, and this means carefully considering the way we approach our strategic programmes and projects.

2. Public Interest

2.1 In transforming the way it operates, the Council is aiming to become more effective and efficient at delivering its aims and priorities as set out in the Council Plan. It is imperative that we use Officer and Member time efficiently and effectively as well as ensuring governance arrangements and our performance management tools ensure we deliver on our key priorities and ambitions as a Council. In a time of more limited resources, it is also important to focus our resources on delivering a manageable set of priorities, rather than trying to move too many projects forward and spreading resources too thinly and risk undermining effective delivery of our priorities. In being more business-like, we need to move at pace, recognising there is a cost to time both financially and reputationally, and in promoting the development of our towns. However, public accountability for delivery and ensuring Members' ambitions are realised remains important too.

2.2 In February 2018, Full Council set out 5 areas of focus for the Council (High quality cost effective services, Economy, Environment, Homes, Health & Communities). Aligned to this the Council agreed 8 priority projects:

1. To implement the Transformation programme and Commercial Strategy
2. **To complete the "Yeovil Refresh" for Yeovil Town Centre and progress implementation**
3. **To develop proposals for the regeneration of Chard and progress implementation**
4. **To create a town centre action plan for Wincanton and progress implementation**
5. To deliver Phase 2 of the Yeovil Innovation Centre.
6. **To facilitate appropriate local development to ensure that local housing and infrastructure needs are met**
7. **To support our small and medium sized businesses across the District, including internet access, to meet their needs**
8. To meet the new duties of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

2.3 Those priorities highlighted in bold represent the focus the Council places on the strategic development of the District including regeneration, economic development, infrastructure and housing. The proposals within this report set out new arrangements to ensure the Council is more effective and efficient at delivering the priorities for the development of the District.

3. Recommendations

3.1 District Executive recommends to Full Council:

3.1.1 Discontinue the following Programme and Project Boards:

- a. Strategic Regeneration Board
- b. Local Development Scheme Board
- c. The Four Area Regeneration Boards (West, North, East and South)
- d. The Chard Regeneration Project Board

3.1.2 Establish a Strategic Development Board with the remit and membership as set out in paragraphs 6.1 to 6.5

3.1.3 Establish a Chard Regeneration Programme Board with the remit and membership as set out in paragraphs 6.6 to 6.16

3.1.4 Establish a Yeovil Regeneration Programme Board with the remit and membership as set out in paragraphs 6.6 to 6.16

3.1.5 Establish a Wincanton Regeneration Programme Board with the remit and membership set out in paragraphs 6.6 to 6.16

3.1.6 Agree the principle of delegating a Gross Spend and Net Cost budget to the Regeneration Programme Boards as outlined in section 7 of this report, and delegate authority to S151 Officer to approve funding arrangements for Gross and Net arrangements.

3.1.7 Agree the principle of prioritising Business Rates Pooling gains for Regeneration Programmes.

4. Current Approach to Regeneration

4.1 Currently there is a Strategic Regeneration Board, four Area Regeneration Boards, and more local regeneration boards, such as the Chard Regeneration Board, established with the intention of ensuring that local priorities for regeneration investment could be shaped and submitted to Council for resource allocation. Following this the Area Boards were put in place to monitor the progress of projects. This arrangement will no longer match with the recommended structure of the Programme Boards and their individual projects and this report proposes the changed arrangements necessary to support programme delivery whilst ensuring accountability.

4.2 In addition the Local Development Scheme (LDS) Board was established by the Council to monitor progress on the Local Plan process, and to act as a mechanism to agree with Area Chairs significant reports and stages. The Local Plan is a major policy tool shaping the

development of the District including regeneration, economic development, infrastructure and housing. Thus far, it has worked somewhat independently of the other boards.

- 4.3 Economic development ambitions are, to some extent but not wholly, overseen by the Strategic Regeneration Board. Whilst this same Board was set up to oversee the Council's infrastructure ambitions, the proposed arrangements will ensure greater integration of the related aims and priorities, including infrastructure and housing
- 4.4 At an Officer level, the division of responsibility between community, economy and planning teams has been challenging for a number of years. The new operating model will design in ways of working to focus on to the Council's vision, priority projects and Area+ Plans and will seek to align the whole Council into a "One Team" approach to delivering Member priorities and outcomes as set out in the Council Plan. To be effective it will need robust performance management arrangements including effective governance and accountability. The primary means for achieving this, and to ensure Members are effectively steering the priorities and holding Officers to account for delivery, is through ensuring a good programme management structure, which is appropriately focussed and resourced, supported by effective project management.
- 4.5 It is therefore appropriate as we move forward with Transformation and as we start to commence delivery of some of our regeneration programmes, that we consider how we align our programme governance to support effective delivery of Members' ambitions and priorities.

5. Proposals for Change

- 5.1 There is an opportunity to bring together a number of related strands of work to give a strategic oversight to the development of the District in its multiple aspects: planning, regeneration, economic development, infrastructure and housing.
- 5.2 Regeneration projects that deliver long term economic and social benefits, in turn help deliver the South Somerset vision. However, they are complex pieces of work and involve careful risk management. There are requirements for resources and decisions which sit outside of the direct control of the Council (with other partners and Authorities). There is also a need to be able to move schemes forward at pace, within the agreed parameters, plans and objectives set by the Council. Currently, the approval process to deliver a project in a regeneration scheme is protracted, requiring each element to be approved by the Regeneration Board, possibly Area Board and / or Area Committee, District Executive, and Council even if it requires only modest levels of capital. Coupled with this is the need to ensure that there is clear accountability to deliver value to the taxpayer, and the necessity to include meaningful local involvement during design, planning and implementation.
- 5.3 Each of the priority projects for local regeneration warrant an individual Programme Board, made up of the people best equipped to turn plans into action on the ground, with sufficient authority and delegation to progress the implementation of plans. This needs to be coupled with accountability back to the Council and the wider community for the benefits and outcomes for local residents and businesses.
- 5.4 It is also important that Regeneration Programme governance structures are designed to ensure the right level of involvement by key stakeholders – such as other public sector bodies, business and community representatives. These will be different according the specific ambitions and challenges of each project – and the distinctiveness of each place. Partners working with us can influence success through their own resources and talents,

and provide constructive challenge. Ultimately though, the Council is accountable back to the community – and so the detailed design of boards and their governance must reflect this.

6. Changes to Governance

6.1 In order to deliver the proposals set out in this report and the ambitions of the Council Plan it is proposed to change the governance that wraps around this. Therefore, it is proposed that at a strategic level:

a) the Strategic Regeneration Board and the Local Development Scheme Board are discontinued

b) a Strategic Development Board is created

6.2 The Strategic Development Board would be responsible for managing and coordinating the delivery of the Council's development ambitions for the District including:

- Infrastructure
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Regeneration

6.3 The key purpose of this Board would be to ensure alignment of the appropriate priority projects and have an overview of strategic development to ensure the relevant ambitions of the Council are being delivered. It would also ensure a coordination and synergy between the Council's key strategies including the Council Plan, Local Plan, Housing Strategy and Economic Development Strategy. It would hold and overview the delivery of a programme of work (projects, actions, policy initiatives and potentially service delivery initiatives) aimed at achieving the Council's development ambitions as set out in the Council Plan, Local Plan, Housing Strategy and Economic Development Strategy. In this role it would overview and coordinate the delivery of the Regeneration Programmes (but accountability for the delivery of Regeneration Programmes would be with their relevant Regeneration Programme Board).

6.4 The Strategic Development Board and its delivery would be held to account through Scrutiny and Council. Progress with the programme would be reported through the Council's performance management systems including the quarterly performance reports.

6.5 It is proposed that the Board would comprise:

- the Leader of the Council
- 4 Area Chairs
- the relevant Portfolio Holders covering Economy, Homes, Environment, Infrastructure, Spatial Planning & Development Management

6.6 At a Regeneration Delivery level it is proposed to:

a) Discontinue the 4 Area Regeneration Boards and the current Chard Regeneration Project Board

b) Create 3 new Programme Boards to manage, direct and deliver the Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton regeneration projects.

6.7 As the regeneration of the three towns progresses, other Council priority projects may be identified for other South Somerset towns and subject to resources, it is envisaged similar

Regeneration Programme Boards would be formed. Smaller scale regeneration initiatives will continue to be within the remit of the Area Committees and form part of the Area Development Plan.

6.8 The three boards will be responsible for the delivery of the Regeneration Programme for each of the respective town centres. They will operate with a large degree of decision making and financial delegation within parameters agreed by the Council. The Regeneration Boards will be accountable for delivery and scrutiny of their progress will be undertaken by the relevant Area Committee, the Strategic Development Board and the Scrutiny Committee. Progress will be reported through the Council's performance management arrangements including the quarterly performance reports.

6.9 In order to progress the programme, the Regeneration Programme Boards will be required to produce for the Strategic Development Board:

- scheme objectives and outcomes
- an outline programme
- a delivery plan outlining the approach including funding approach.

6.10 They will also be required to:

- put in place robust and proportionate project management arrangements for each element of the scheme following the Council's prescribed methodology
- put together a business case for project investment against a set of criteria and seeking to follow a commercial approach in line with that set out in the Commercial Strategy (such business cases being able to be approved by the Regeneration Board within the financial delegations)
- produce quarterly performance reports for consideration of their Programme Boards, the Strategic Development Board, and for informing the Councils quarterly performance reporting to Area Committees, Scrutiny and District Executive.

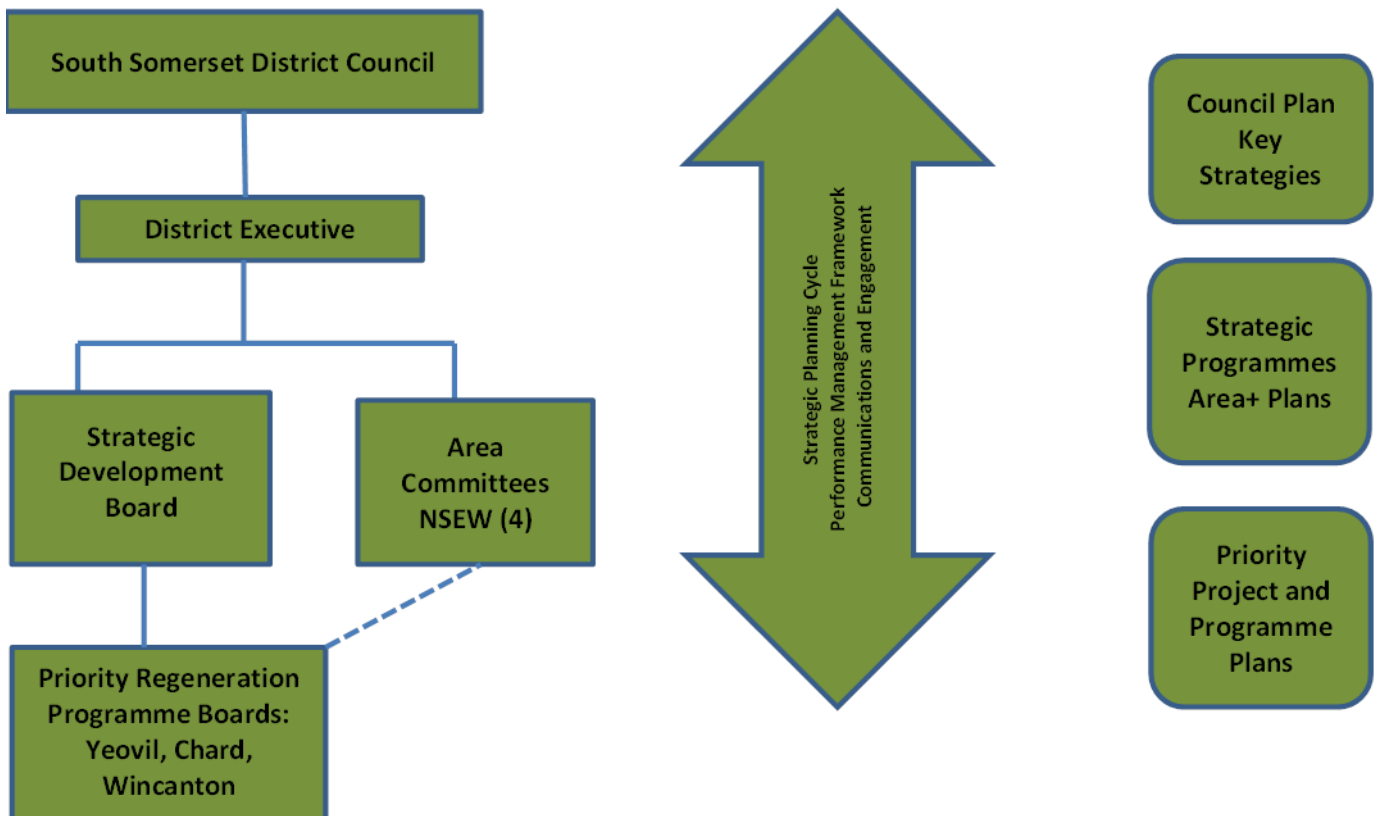
6.11 These Boards would be made up of:

- There will be normally four Members whilst ensuring the following criteria and representation are met:
 - the Area Chair (unless otherwise agreed with the Area Chair) - who will chair the Board, to ensure tie in to the Strategic Development Board (mentioned above), and to ensure strong links back to the Area Committee and its work plan
 - at least one member from each of the political groups in and around the town where the regeneration programme is to be delivered
 - at least one of the members is a ward member for the town area
 - The Leader of the Council - To ensure consistency across the regeneration programmes
- the Lead Director,
- the Chief Executive,
- where appropriate, a limited number of key delivery partners (i.e. partners who bring a contribution and resource to the scheme). This will be at the discretion of the Chairman and Lead Director and will not normally exceed two

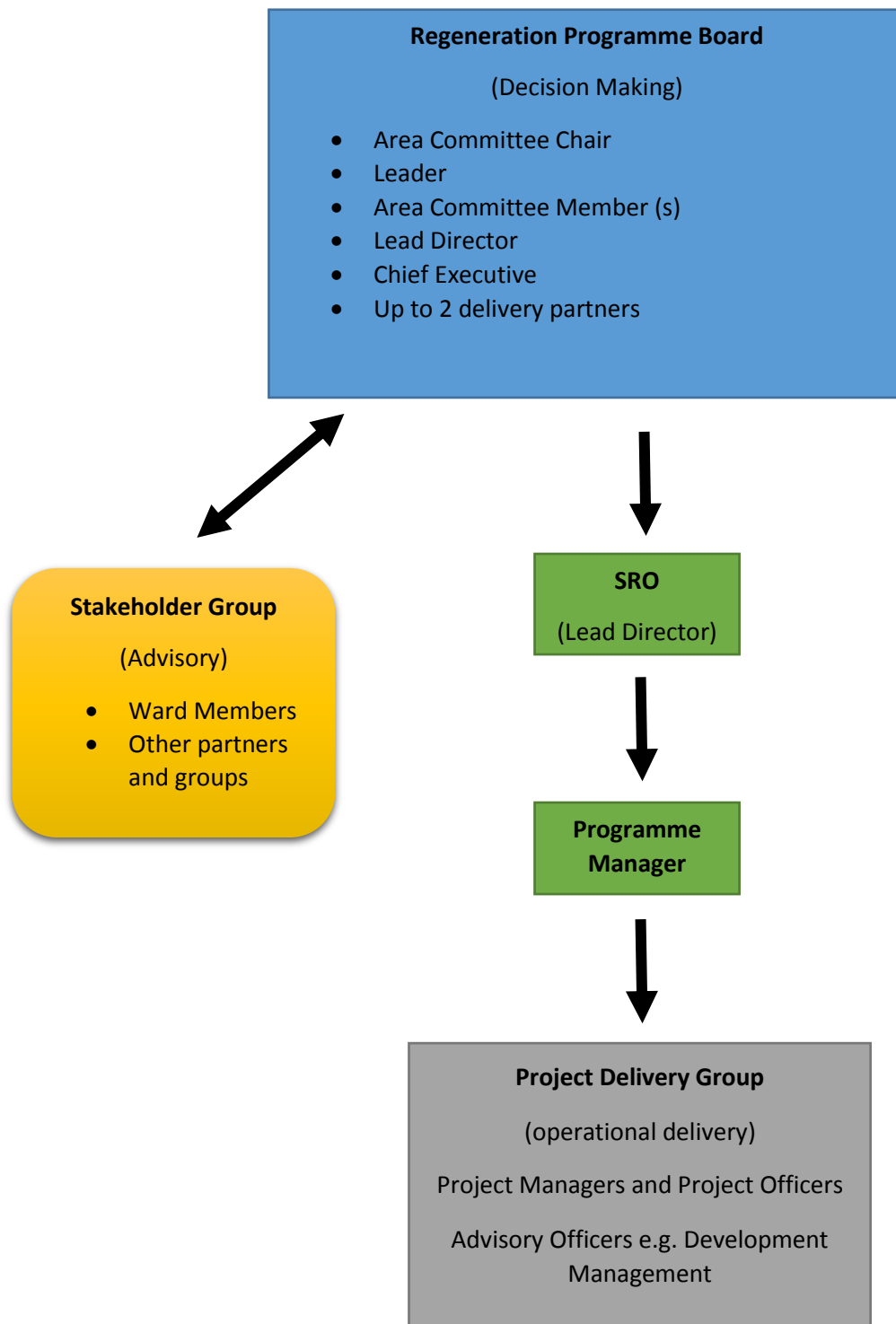
6.12 Given the importance of the projects to the Council Plan which was agreed by the whole Council, the Boards will operate on a cross party basis and therefore will aim to be politically inclusive. It is important that they are able to work effectively as a team and therefore the Chairman of each of the Programme Boards will have the authority to

select the other members from those on the relevant Area Committee who have expressed an interest.

- 6.13 It is intended that each Regeneration Programme Board will operate by consensus. Should differences occur that cannot be reconciled, then they will be referred to the CEO and Leader for a decision in the first instance and exceptionally District Executive for any major differences.
- 6.14 In addition to the Programme Manager, who will normally attend the Board, other officers of the Council and potentially other agencies, will attend the Board from time to time as required, to contribute advice and support. However, for the avoidance of doubt, they will not be Members of the Board.
- 6.15 Sitting beneath each Board will be a Stakeholder Advisory Group which will consist of relevant Members and external partners or groups considered by the Board to be important to the success of the Regeneration Programme. In addition there will be an officer Project Delivery Group, which will provide professional input and advice and also be tasked with delivery by the Board.
- 6.16 The above proposal is outlined diagrammatically below.



Scrutiny would continue to review policy and make recommendations to Council



7. Financial Approach

- 7.1 Regeneration Programmes consist of a related set of projects that will deliver the overall vision and objectives. Currently the funding approval process for each project requires the agreement by Area Committees, District Executive and Full Council. If the Council is to move forward the delivery of the key Council Plan priorities at pace and secure the benefits it desires for its communities, similar to meeting the Commercial Strategy ambitions, it is important to review delegations and limits on these and the impact they might have on delivery. To facilitate progress it is proposed to delegate a large degree of operational financial decision making to the Programme Boards, within parameters and clear financial envelopes. It is proposed that each Programme will be allocated a gross spend budget and a net cost to the Council budget.
- 7.2 Within Yeovil and Chard, considerable research has been undertaken in to what is desirable and feasible. Included in this are some high level costings. However, each project does not have detailed costings at this stage and some of the final costings (and likely revenues or capital surpluses) will not be known until the projects and therefore Programmes are further advanced.
- 7.3 Each Programme Board would be responsible for delivering the broad aims of the scheme within both the gross spend budget and the net spend budget. This would be subject to them having produced scheme objectives and outcomes, an outline programme, and a delivery plan outlining the approach including funding, as mentioned above. This approach will require the Programme Boards to develop the projects in more detail, but also ensure there is synergy between projects in the Programme. Projects that can generate surpluses will seek to generate the maximum return in regeneration and financial terms to provide support to those projects which are not self-financing and require a subsidy. In practice, the actual delegation of the budgets would sit with the Lead Director in consultation with the Chair of the Board and S151 Officer (or his Deputy) having put the proposals before the Board for agreement.
- 7.4 If a Programme Board wished to or needed to go outside of its gross spend or net cost budget, or wanted to change the programme substantially to that which was agreed, (such as changing objectives or commissioning projects that were significantly out of scope of what was originally envisaged) they would need to come back through the democratic process for further approval.

The gross spend budget

- 7.5 This is the maximum amount the Regeneration Board can spend on the scheme but is not the true cost to the Council. It is based on the assumption that the Programme will seek to maximise the leverage of other sources of funding within the entirety of the programme. To achieve this it will require the Council to spend money in order to gain a return. This recognises that some aspects of programmes are likely to represent a net cost and others are likely to represent a net income but will require investment to achieve that income. Therefore, the gross expenditure does not represent the true final cost to the Council which will be much lower than the gross expenditure budget.

The net spend budget

- 7.6 This is the maximum true cost to the Council over the term of the Programme. It represents the money the Council will spend that will not be directly returned to the Council in some way. It is the product of the gross spend budget minus income generated by the scheme

whether through capital receipts e.g. sales of property, through revenue generated over a term of an invested asset above operating costs, which can be used to “pay back” capital expenditure, or grants secured towards the scheme from other agencies or sources.

7.7 In order to deliver this approach, it will require that the Council establishes revolving funds for each Regeneration Programme. To support the revolving fund the Council will also need to agree that specified corporate assets and any direct surpluses (capital or revenue) generated by their development as part of the Regeneration Programme, will be included in the fund and therefore ring-fenced to the delivery of other projects or aspects of that programme. To be clear, this is not establishing a principle that assets within an Area and any proceeds arising from them are for the use of that Area. The assets remain corporate assets and the proposal is that the Council agrees that certain corporate assets be utilised in delivering corporate priorities agreed by the Council.

7.8 An example of how the revolving fund and ring-fencing of assets would work is as follows: Improvement of the public realm as part of the regeneration programmes will represent a cost. The improvements this will make to the town may indirectly contribute income to the Council e.g. through increased business rates and increased use of car parks and therefore income (or arresting the decline in parking income). However, this is difficult to account for and cannot be relied upon to fund this work. It is likely that developers contributions can be secured towards some of the costs of these works, however, these may not be realised until after the works are complete and may not cover the full costs. Therefore, there is likely to be:

- a. a forward funding issue – getting the works done before the money comes in, and
- b. a final net cost to the Council.

7.9 However, the final net cost to the Council of this project could be offset, partly or entirely, by another project(s) that generates a net surplus - for example, the development of a site in the Council’s ownership which should aim to generate a surplus to the Council. Within this proposal, the development of that asset would be included in the Regeneration Programme and the surpluses generated would be used to support the public realm works (and potentially other projects or aspects within the Programme). In such cases the surpluses would be outside the scope of the Commercial Strategy and related funding.

Example Scenario:

	Project A	Project B	Project C	Programme Total
Gross Project Costs	1,000,000	5,000,000	4,000,000	10,000,000
Capital Receipt	-2,500,000			-2,500,000
Grants / CIL / S106	0	-3,000,000	-500,000	-3,500,000
Net Capital Cost	-1,500,000	2,000,000	3,500,000	4,000,000
Capital receipt recycled (revolving fund)	1,500,000	-1,500,000		
Borrowing Requirement		500,000	3,500,000	4,000,000
Surplus revenue income over project term – repays borrowing		-500,000	-1,500,000	-2,000,000
Programme Net Costs	0	0	2,000,000	2,000,000

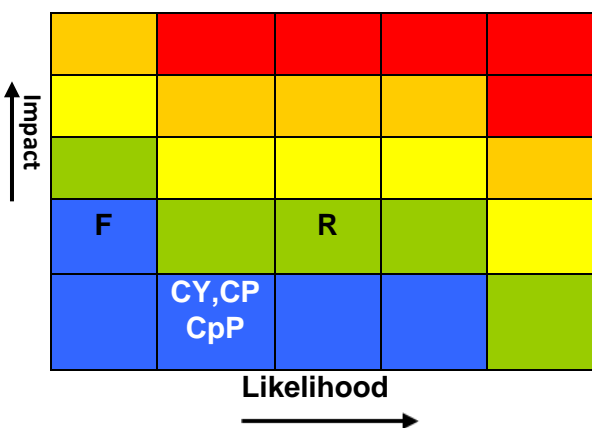
7.10 The financial approach will require Council to approve Gross Budgets and Net Budgets for each Programme. The Council’s current capital programme effectively fully allocates

existing capital resources and therefore the funding requirements for gross spend will require borrowing approvals. This is likely to be a mix of short term borrowing need, pending income receipts, and longer term borrowing where this represents the net cost and relies on net surpluses materialising over the long term. The Borrowing Limits within the Treasury Strategy will need to be increased when Council approves Gross Spend allocations – recommendations will be included in Mid-Year and Annual Treasury Strategy reports to secure such increases once delegated amounts are determined by Council.

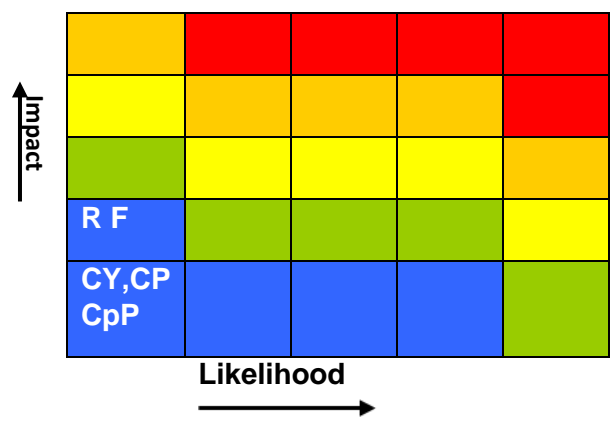
- 7.11 In addition to borrowing, as referred in the Council’s Financial Strategy, there may be options to reprioritise some New Homes Bonus funding through reducing reliance on this grant in the revenue budget for day to day services. Members may also consider drawing from the MTFP Support Fund (deferred NHB income) to contribute to Regeneration schemes. There is also the potential for gains in business rates retention through the Pooling arrangement with other Somerset authorities. Whilst the gain will not be confirmed until the end of each financial year, Members are requested to agree in principle that Pooling gains are prioritised to fund Regeneration Programmes.
- 7.12 The S151 Officer will ensure treasury arrangements enable the delivery of these programmes, taking advice from Arlingclose as necessary to optimise these arrangements. It is also proposed that the S151 Officer reviews the Minimum Revenue Provision policy (due to report to Council in February 2019), and recommends any changes to Council if beneficial to delivering the Programmes and maintaining corporate financial prudence.
- 7.13 In order to safeguard the robustness of budget delegations, and financial planning and delivery by the Programme Boards, finance specialists will advise the Programme Boards and Project Delivery Groups. It will be important that robust financial, legal and other implications and recommendations are included in decision reports, with specific advice provided by the S151 Officer (or delegates) as required. Financial performance will be managed through delegated arrangements and periodically reported to Members in line with the Council’s performance and reporting framework. The Programme Boards and Strategic Development Board will be accountable to the Executive in operating within delegated powers.

Risk Matrix

Risk Profile before officer recommendations



Risk Profile after officer recommendations



Key

Categories	Colours <i>(for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)</i>
R = Reputation	Red = High impact and high probability
CpP = Corporate Plan Priorities	Orange = Major impact and major probability
CP = Community Priorities	Yellow = Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY = Capacity	Green = Minor impact and minor probability
F = Financial	Blue = Insignificant impact and insignificant probability

8. Council Plan Implications

8.1 This report seeks to support the delivery of key priority projects in the Council Plan namely:

2. To complete the “Yeovil Refresh” for Yeovil Town Centre and progress implementation
3. To develop proposals for the regeneration of Chard and progress implementation
4. To create a town centre action plan for Wincanton and progress implementation
6. To facilitate appropriate local development to ensure that local housing and infrastructure needs are met
7. To support our small and medium sized businesses across the District, including internet access, to meet their needs

9. Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

9.1 There are no carbon emission and climate change implications arising out of this report.

10. Equality and Diversity Implications

10.1 There are equality and diversity implications arising out of this report.

Agenda Item 8

Somerset Homelessness Strategy 2017 - 19

Executive Portfolio Holder: Ric Pallister, Leader of the Council, Strategy and Policy
Director: Martin Woods, Service Delivery
Service Manager: Alice Knight/Barbie Markey, Acting Housing & Welfare Manager
Lead Officer: Alice Knight/Barbie Markey, Housing and Welfare Manager
Contact Details: alice.knight@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462943
barbie.markey@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462774

Purpose of the Report

1. For members to adopt the new Somerset Homelessness Strategy 2017-19.

Public Interest

2. District Councils have a statutory duty to adopt a Homelessness Strategy. Our existing Homelessness Strategy for Somerset (2013-16) sets out the strategic goals for the five Somerset Housing Authorities and was extended to 2018 to enable the authorities to work together on a revised Strategy, and fully understand the potential impacts of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.

Recommendation

3. That District Executive adopt the Somerset Homelessness Strategy and Review 2017-19 and the associated SSDC Implementation Plan.

Background

4. In 2002 the Homelessness Act placed a duty on Local Authorities to develop a homeless strategy and an obligation to renew every five years. The last strategy was developed with the four other District Councils in Somerset and was adopted in November 2013. The strategy covered from 2013 to 2016. This was extended (by Portfolio Holder agreement) until 2018 to allow time to work on another countywide one. Whilst work was being carried out on the strategy the Government passed the Homeless Reduction Act 2017.
5. The Homeless Reduction Act is one of the biggest changes in housing legislation for twenty years and it is crucial that the Act's implications are included in any strategy going forward.

Current Situation

6. The five Local Housing Authorities have achieved the majority of objectives in the 2013-16 Strategy.
7. In South Somerset these include:
 - Increased the number of direct access facilities and support services for rough sleepers
 - Preserved the direct access hostel provision in South Somerset despite the withdrawal of revenue funding by the County Council.
 - Been active partners on the Somerset and Avon Rough Sleepers steering group
 - Ensured all staff are adequately trained in casework

- Maintained a register of temporary accommodation and kept the use of Bed & Breakfast to an emergency last resort only
 - Delivered a P2i Hub in each area to prevent young people from becoming homeless during the current contract as issued by the County Council.
 - Task & Finish Review completed for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) and revised policy adopted in 2017 to ensure these are being utilised in the best way for local residents
 - Worked proactively with local landlords to ensure early intervention to prevent tenants being evicted
 - Increased the provision of 1 and 2 bedroom social housing and ensured planners take evidence from Homefinder Somerset into consideration
 - Agreed a Dangerous Offenders Protocol with the police and prison service to reduce the number of clients released from prison presenting to homeless teams without prior warning – responded to 3-6 cases per year through this route in South Somerset
8. In October 2017, the Government passed the Homelessness Reduction Act, which places further duties on local authorities to prevent homelessness, including:
- An extension of the period during which an Authority should treat someone as threatened with homelessness from 28 days to 56 days.
 - The introduction of Personalised Housing Plans for clients to outline the circumstances of homelessness, the housing needs of the client, any support required to secure and sustain accommodation, steps that the client is required to take along with the steps the Local Authority is required to take to assist the client.
 - A new duty to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness, regardless of priority need.
 - A new duty to relieve homelessness for all eligible homeless applicants, regardless of priority need.
 - A new duty on other public services to notify a Local Housing Authority if they come into contact with someone they think may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
9. Similar legislation was introduced in Wales in 2015 and the following outcomes were experienced by Local Authorities:
- A rise in applications and caseload for Housing Options Officers.
 - A rise in the percentage of cases owed prevention and relief duties.
 - A high dropout rate as a result of client withdrawal or client contact lost.
 - A reduction in full duty acceptances.
 - A reduction in temporary accommodation use.
 - A rise in the number of successful homeless prevention cases.
10. The Act became effective from April 2018 and our Housing & Welfare Team are implementing new procedures to ensure we are fully compliant with the requirements of the Act and provide an excellent service to our customers.

The Strategy

11. The Somerset Homelessness Strategy and review is attached at Appendix 1. It includes an Action Plan with 4 priorities for 2018-19:
- I. Support the transition in services required by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 to reduce and prevent homelessness.

- II. Support clients to remain in their existing accommodation where appropriate.
 - III. Support clients to access suitable and affordable accommodation where appropriate.
 - IV. Build and maintain strong working relationships across partnerships.
12. The Somerset Homeless Managers Group (HMG) will be responsible for the delivery of this strategy and action plan, and for monitoring progress against actions and targets.

SSDC Implementation of the Strategy

13. As the Strategy is county wide and over-arching, we have drafted a local SSDC Implementation Plan to ensure we are delivering each aspect of the Strategy relevant to South Somerset, and closely monitoring progress against each action. This is attached below.

Financial Implications

14. Any resources required to deliver the Actions are identified in the Action Plan. We also have a detailed SSDC Delivery Plan for the Homeless Reduction Act which has the support of the Ministry of Housing & Local Government and has been approved (and will be monitored by) SLT – this includes the allocation of resources against each aspect of delivery.

Corporate Priority Implications

15. Council Plan 2016 – 2021:
- Minimise homelessness and rough sleeping.
 - Meet the new duties of the Homeless Reduction Act 2017

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

16. None

Equality and Diversity Implications

17. A comprehensive Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out County-wide as part of the preparation of the strategy and will be monitored by the Somerset Homeless Managers Group. In addition a further EqA has been completed on our SSDC Implementation Plan which has identified a number of positive impacts as a result of the Strategy being delivered.

Background Papers

Portfolio Holders Decision Countywide Homeless Strategy – Sept 2016 and Dec 17
Somerset Homeless Strategy 2013 - 16
District Executive Minutes & Agenda, November 2013

What is SSDC doing locally to deliver the County-wide Action plan in South Somerset?

Priority 1: Support the transition in services required by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 to reduce and prevent homelessness	
1.1 Address any staffing skill gaps by recruiting/retraining individuals to effectively deliver what is required by the Act	SSDC has received approx. £49k pa for 3 years in Government New Burdens funding. Assessment of staffing required in Housing has been carried out and we will recruit staff to deliver the service both through Transformation Phase 2/3 and potentially 2 FTE additional specialist staff during 2018. All staff are undergoing HRA specific training, in particular use of the new Personal Housing Plans.
1.2 Share best practice in delivering the Act amongst Somerset Homelessness Managers & Officers	The Housing & Welfare Manager represents SSDC on the Homeless Managers Group and expertise/new developments/training is being shared on a monthly basis to help the 5 LAs respond consistently to the Act. Regular meetings will also take place over the year with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to ensure good practice
1.3 Develop protocols for Public Services, Housing Providers & all other Agencies to refer clients they believe to be homeless or at risk of homelessness	The Housing & Welfare Team are designing new procedures and forms so that all agencies can easily refer clients to SSDC. The effectiveness of this, and numbers of referrals, will be closely monitored. Forms will be consistent with other districts so County-wide agencies can refer easily.
1.4 Maximise partnerships with all existing service providers to ensure the quality of support provided to clients	We have drafted a list of relevant local service providers which we can draw on as part of each client's individual Personal Housing Plan, identifying who they should contact and/or who we should refer to, e.g. Drug & Alcohol services, Citizens Advice etc. The client will sign their PHP to show commitment to working with those agencies. We are currently attending briefings of a number of partnerships/agencies to raise their awareness of the HRA.
Priority 2: Support clients to remain in their existing accommodation where appropriate	
2.1 Review options and availability of tenancy support services both for families and single homeless clients	In 2016-2018 we are working with Yeovil4Family to provide Floating Support for single people and families. This model has proved very successful with 68 families and 29 individuals supported in 2016-17. We are in discussions with a number of floating support providers to provide services from April 2018 onwards as part of our duties under the HRA, and have earmarked approx. £80k for this.
2.2 Review the countywide Pre Eviction Protocol to take account of the Homelessness Reduction Act	There is legislation around pre-eviction procedures for social landlords, to ensure possession is a last resort. Our team will be represented on the county-wide group to review the existing protocols/procedures across the County to ensure we are liaising closely with social landlords. Our housing team will continue to challenge evictions in court as appropriate.
2.3 Review the initiatives currently in place to prevent the ending of Assured Shorthold Tenancies (AST's) in the Private Rented Sector	Our Housing & Welfare Team support landlords to work with tenants and prevent evictions. Where appropriate we put in floating support, offer debt advice and welfare benefits advice to help people maintain tenancies
2.4 Continue to monitor the effectiveness of the P2i initiative in supporting 16-24 year olds to remain in their homes	P2i is the housing support service for 18-24 year olds, currently delivered in South Somerset by Mendip YMCA. In 2017, 141 people were supported through this service. SSDC is represented on the P2i Monitoring Board.
2.5 Ensure housing/homelessness awareness sessions are promoted in schools & colleges in each District	To be led by SCC, to expand on work already initiated by YMCA and Taunton Action for the Homeless.
2.6 Evaluate the "stay safe" at home options available for victims of domestic violence where this choice is suitable.	While there has been a reduction in Refuges in Somerset (now only 1 in Taunton), through the face to face interviews and PHPs all suitable options will be considered for victims of domestic violence. HFS Policy and banding has also been reviewed to ensure consistency across the County.

Where ‘stay safe’ at home is not an option, review banding, policy and processes around domestic violence to ensure consistency.	
2.7 Explore the options to provide mediation services to different age groups/client groups	We are currently looking for a mediation agency to provide this service in South Somerset. This is a crucial element of delivering the HRA and we have £10k set aside in the Housing & Welfare Budget to deliver this. Staff will also be trained in mediation skills for working directly with clients.
Priority 3: Support clients to access suitable and affordable alternative accommodation where appropriate	
3.1 Review available options for the use of Social Lettings Agencies and the services offered by existing Social Lettings Agencies to improve access to affordable private rented sector accommodation	Sedgemoor and West Somerset have set up successful lettings agencies. They are managed by the council and are enabling increased options for tenants seeking good quality and affordable private rented sector accommodation. Initial work on a feasibility study of setting up our own social lettings agency in South Somerset has been carried out.
3.2 Reduce the impact that Universal Credit is having on private landlords and agents shying away from households in receipt	Our SSDC Welfare Advice team and our Housing team support clients applying for and managing their UC claims. We work closely with the DWP Partnership Manager to resolve complex cases and liaise directly with landlords to reassure them that rent can be paid. We raise awareness of UC through our regular Landlord Forum and newsletter.
3.3 Continue the development of the Tenant Accreditation Schemes and ensure consistency provision and availability throughout the County	Tenancy Accreditation is currently delivered through Homegroup to our tenants at Pathways Hostel. In 2017/18, 93% of their tenants engaged with the Home Achievement Programme. We are looking to expand the scheme to cover other clients across the district to improve their ability to maintain a tenancy and live independently; we have ringfenced £10k in the Housing & Welfare budget to develop this.
3.4 Monitor the success of the Lodgings Scheme in Sedgemoor, Taunton Deane & W Somerset and consider roll out to other Somerset Districts	Once the other schemes have been evaluated we will explore options for this scheme, for South Somerset.
3.5 Explore options to increase the number of single units available to single homeless clients, particularly the 25-34 year age group	Our Strategic Housing Team ensure that suitable property mixes are sought when new affordable housing schemes come forward, to include an appropriate proportion of 1 bed properties. SSDC has also recently allocated capital funding for BCHA for 5 x 2 bed properties for shared move-on from supported housing.
3.6 Work with social housing providers to ensure that there are transparent and fair tenant selection practices. Monitor skipping reasons more closely.	This will be monitored closely through HMG and HFS monitoring board
3.7 Develop Somerset wide Rough Sleepers Strategy	Our most recent rough sleeper count totalled 4 in South Somerset. We work closely with (and fund) the rough sleeper outreach team at Pathways hostel and work with rough sleepers on a range of options to help them into suitable accommodation. We instigate emergency cold weather provision on a number of occasions during winter months as the temperature drops below zero, to offer all rough sleepers a bed for the night.
3.8 Raise awareness amongst Planners and Enabling Teams on the need and demand for particular units of accommodation	SSDC has a thorough analysis of the requirements for particular units of accommodation in various locations; this translates into tailored requirements into individual Section 106 Agreements.

Priority 4: Continue to build and maintain strong working partnerships to deliver cost effective and responsive services	
4.1 Improve partnership working between Community Mental Health Teams and Drug/Alcohol dependency support to improve outcomes for dual diagnosis clients	Working with these agencies will become a crucial aspect of our new individual Personalised Housing Plans. From 1 st April we will allocate a 2 hour appointment for each client so that their full circumstances can be taken into account and tailored solutions discussed. We are developing new referral pathways and each client will have a commitment to maintaining their engagement with these services as appropriate.
4.2 Continue to work with Community Mental Health Teams, Hospitals, Prisons and Probation to develop a protocol to ensure that clients are not discharged/released without suitable accommodation	<p>We liaise closely with prisons, mental health teams and hospitals in South Somerset to try to find suitable accommodation for people being discharged, however we experience an increased number of last-minute/emergency cases. We are developing a much clearer referral pathway which will ensure these providers give us much more warning/preparation time to work with clients before their release/discharge, in order to avoid them becoming homeless.</p> <p>The Dangerous Offenders protocol is currently being reviewed with Probation services across Somerset, Bristol and B&NES so that we are better co-ordinated across the region to support these clients.</p>
4.3 Work with Registered Providers to maximise the creation of new properties using creative design solutions in the right locations	Our Affordable Housing Delivery Programme is tailored to take this into account. Where viability forces a lower level of affordable housing under planning obligations, we ensure that it's the most needed properties that are preserved. In addition, SSDC has our own capital budget to build or acquire the most urgently needed properties where required.
4.4 Continue to share best practice within the HMG	The Housing & Welfare Manager represents SSDC on the Homeless Managers Group and expertise/new developments/training is being shared on a monthly basis to help the 5 LAs respond consistently to the Act. Regular meetings will also take place over the year with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to ensure good practice
4.5 Provide briefings for elected Members periodically on the work of HMG	The Housing & Welfare Manager provides an update at the Housing Portfolio Briefing for all Members (quarterly)

In addition a high priority for SSDC is maintaining a range of suitable temporary accommodation for use when required, and spreading the risk across a range of social housing providers. This will be crucial for our ongoing priority of preventing homelessness and the delivery of the Homeless Reduction Act.



Somerset Homelessness Review & Strategy 2017

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

December 2017

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Foreword by Cabinet Member for Housing Mendip District Council



Welcome to the new Somerset Homelessness Review and Strategy which sets out a vision and plan for tackling homelessness across the five districts.

In times of challenging need with limited funding, the Homelessness Strategy sets out the framework for our work and the action plan that will help us deliver specific objectives. We are aligning our practices with the new statutory framework of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 which we believe brings significant positive and empowering change to help us to increase our homelessness prevention work through early intervention and new duties.

Our district residents and businesses are central to everything we do. We care about our people and we know that a home is an essential foundation for good health and wellbeing supporting individual capacity to positively contribute in their local community. Consequently, we are focused on finding the best solutions to prevent and alleviate homelessness and have been successful in reducing the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation despite rising numbers nationally.

We are committed to continuous improvement and quality service provision for our community. One of only a handful of authorities in England to have achieved silver status, we are working to achieve the Gold standard in Housing and Homelessness Prevention by the National Practitioner Support Service.

We invest time, energy and resources into services that make a real difference to the lives of individuals and families who face homelessness. In response to reductions in funding, changes in government policy and new legislation, we continue to find fresh and innovative ways of working. Our voluntary sector and statutory partners help us to deliver these critical services locally where they are most needed and in ways and places that are accessible to our most vulnerable residents.

Our collaborative projects help us to deliver better outcomes for our households at risk of homelessness and increase value for money. Together with our partners we have made a significant number of achievements since the last Homelessness Strategy; however, with continuing challenges and increasing needs and vulnerabilities, more remains to be done.

I would like to extend my thanks on behalf of the Council to everyone who has contributed to the development of this strategy and crucially, the ongoing work and partnerships which will help us improve the way in which we tackle future homelessness.

Councillor Nigel Woollcombe-Adams

Portfolio Holder for Planning, Growth and Housing Services and Vice Chairman of the Planning Board

Foreword by Cabinet Member for Housing Sedgemoor District Council



Sedgemoor District Council welcomes this Homelessness Strategy for Somerset and also acknowledges the tremendous challenges we face in ensuring all of our residents have access to a safe and secure place to live. Homelessness nationally is on the increase and in Sedgemoor, our residents have additional pressures including the issues arising from the introduction of Universal Credit, the pressures on the private rented stock given the influx of workers at the Hinkley Point C development and the on-going shortage of 1 bedroomed accommodation.

Nevertheless, Sedgemoor DC has a proud record in assisting households facing potential homelessness and has been in the top quartile of councils in the prevention of homelessness over several years. In addition, we also have a proud record of working in partnership with social landlords to provide good quality, affordable housing for our residents.

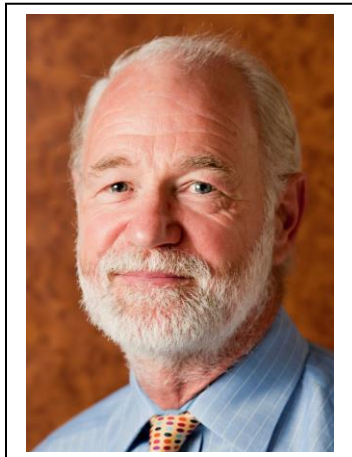
We support the 4 priority areas as identified by this Strategy:

- We will support the transition in services required by the Homelessness Reduction Bill 2017 - the process of restructuring the Housing Advice service in preparation for the introduction of the Act is well underway.
- We will support clients to remain in their existing accommodation where appropriate by ensuring our staff are fully trained with sufficient resources to react quickly to resolve issues which could lead to homelessness.
- We will continue to support clients to access suitable and affordable alternative accommodation where appropriate. We will do this by utilising a wide range of homeless prevention initiatives developed over several years and by working with our clients on robust Personal Housing Plans.
- We will continue to build and maintain strong working partnerships to deliver cost effective and responsive services. Partnership working in Sedgemoor over many years has played a crucial role in the provision of good quality housing and homelessness services and we intend to strengthen and expand those partnerships.

The Homelessness Reduction Act is considered to be the most important piece of homelessness legislation in 40 years. It is essential therefore, that all councils in Somerset support this Strategy and give the front line teams who will implement the action plan all the support they need.

Councillor Andrew Gilling
Portfolio Holder – Housing

Foreword by Cabinet Member for Housing South Somerset District Council



Aligning thinking across 5 District Councils will always be a challenge but in 2003 we recognised the benefits of working seamlessly across Somerset on the issue of Homelessness and that created a logical alliance that dovetailed with our joint decision to use one ICT platform for Housing and create “Homefinder Somerset”. Much has changed in the intervening years and across the country Homelessness and Rough Sleeping is inexorably rising month by month. Whilst Somerset is not immune from the changes, across the five Districts we are not matching the National picture. Our figures have consistently been at the lower end of the graph from which it is clear that Homeless Prevention is delivering better outcomes in Somerset. We need to stay in that enviable position. Using the combined resource and experience that has been created through joint working we are undoubtedly making a real difference to the lives of those who find themselves in the situation of facing Homelessness in our County.

Over the past few years a perfect storm has been created through the cumulative impact of central Government measures primarily designed to reduce the financial burden of Welfare Benefits. Individually, each measure has an impact and a commensurate saving and on their own each may be absorbed or managed by individuals or families but taken as a cocktail of measures it is creating a new and potentially very serious situation. On one side we have individual debt continuing to rise and we have rent on private sector properties also rising whilst on the opposite side of the scales we have capping or restrictions across a whole range of benefits that should make housing affordable to those in need but doesn't. Facing us is the impact and implications of the Homelessness Reduction Act which will increase Local Authority responsibilities and duties. Learning, evaluating, supporting and delivering solutions together in a holistic way across the County has to offer better chances of meeting and reacting to the changes than doing it individually and hence the importance of that work being underpinned by a Homelessness Strategy informed by an up to date review.

I am conscious of the hard work that has gone into delivering this document and specialist staff across Somerset have all gone the extra mile for our residents.

Finally, whilst an important starting point, a Strategy is only words on a page and thus the really important part is what is contained in the detailed Action Plan that sets out what we are going to do about the issues facing us. It is right that we review again in 18 months to measure how effective our Plan is in this fast changing world but I believe this document is the core contributor that we need now if we are to minimise the impact of the changes.

Ric Pallister OBE
Leader & Executive Member for Strategic Housing
South Somerset District Council

Foreword by Cabinet Member for Housing Taunton Deane Borough Council



Taunton has an ambitious programme for growth and we recognise the need for a range of new housing of mixed tenure, particularly affordable housing.

Taunton is seeing a steady rise in the number of rough sleepers since 2013. In response to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, there is a need to further embed prevention into the core of our delivery of homelessness services- a holistic approach to enable individuals, young people and families to achieve their aspirations.

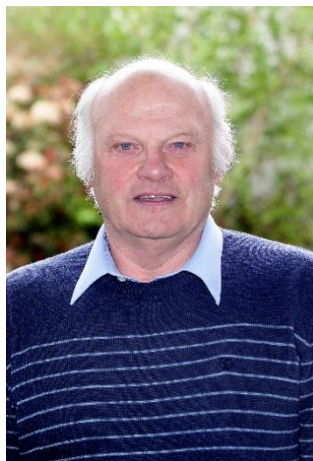
Accordingly, we welcome the new Somerset Homelessness Review and Strategy. The provision of the right support is pivotal and is the focus of the Strategy as we seek to work on maintaining existing tenancies and increasing access to affordable accommodation.

We want to be ambitious and engaging with all partners and stakeholders to create innovative solutions that will provide for the wide ranging needs that described in the Strategy. We also want to be forward thinking and respond creatively to challenges such as Hinkley Point C.

Finally, we want to continue the strong working relationship with our partners such as the Taunton Association for the Homeless, Open Door and the range of Housing Providers we work with.

Terry Beale
Executive Member for Housing Services

Foreword by Cabinet Member for West Somerset Council



West Somerset is a beautiful place to live, but has its own unique housing challenge, particularly around its demography and rurality. Social mobility for young people is also a pertinent issue and West Somerset has successfully obtained £6million to remedy this. House prices are increasingly unaffordable as market entry levels are 10 times the average earnings.

With the advent of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, we must prepare for the rise in numbers and welcome the new Somerset Homelessness Review and Strategy for its holistic approach to ensuring the right support and working partnerships are available and effective.

For the future, it is essential to build on the successes to date with a clear focus on prevention and early intervention especially with the Hinkley Point C funding, ensuring it provides a lasting legacy. We will also continue to explore options to provide affordable shared housing solutions within West Somerset.

Keith Turner
Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health & Well Being

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In accordance with the Homelessness Act 2002, it is a legal requirement that Housing Authorities have in place a homelessness strategy based on a homelessness review within their Boroughs. This exercise should be carried out and the strategic documents reviewed at least every five years.
- 1.2 The five Somerset District Authorities, Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, South Somerset District Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset Council decided in 2003 that they would work in partnership to carry out a homelessness review and create a homelessness strategy jointly in order to recognise the opportunities to pool resources and highlight best practise across the larger area.
- 1.3 A homelessness review has been carried out in 2003, 2008 and 2013. A homelessness strategy representing all five Districts was created after each review.
- 1.4 The homelessness strategy to be created following this homelessness review will cover the next 18 months, after which it will be reviewed. The decision to review after 18 months has been made by the five Local Authorities due to the amount of change within the area forthcoming as a direct result of the perceived impact of the Homeless Reduction Act and the Hinkley Point Development.
- 1.5 EDF Energy is building a brand new nuclear power station called Hinkley Point C on the Somerset Coast, North West of Bridgwater. Construction has started and it is envisaged that the new plant will be operational in 2025. Once it is operational it is estimated that the plant will support 700 operational and 200 contractor jobs. However, the construction of the plant itself will create circa 25,000 full time equivalent construction jobs over the lifetime of the build. At its peak workforce, there is estimated to be around 5,600 full time equivalent jobs on the site. This is having and will continue to have an impact on the local housing market for the region.
- 1.6 There are strategies covering provision of Hinkley Point C Housing Funding for Sedgemoor and West Somerset Councils through the Site Preparations Works section 106 agreement and the allocation of new funds made available to Sedgemoor, West Somerset Council and Taunton Deane Council through the Hinkley Point C DCO section 106 agreement. The aim of the funding is to mitigate any potential adverse effects on the local private rented and low cost housing market, and particularly the ability of those on lower incomes to access local housing, that might arise as a result of the Hinkley Point C development.

The £4m of funding secured through the Site Preparation section 106 agreement became available to West Somerset Council and Sedgemoor District Council in May 2014. A further £3.5m of funding became available in June 2016 when EDF Energy transitioned from the Site Preparation Works planning permission to the Development Consent Order (DCO). This additional funding was secured to deliver additional housing capacity in West Somerset, Taunton Deane, Sedgemoor and North Somerset.
- 1.7 This document provides a detailed account of the results of the Homelessness Review undertaken across the five Districts. This evidence will inform the new Homelessness Strategy.
- 1.8 This review has considered the way homelessness services are delivered across the area. It has established current levels of homelessness, who is becoming homeless locally and why

and examined trends in homelessness. It has considered available accommodation and support services to identify gaps in provision.

- 1.9 It is intended that the Homelessness Strategy will be a partnership approach between the Local Authorities and their partners. As such extensive consultation with partners has been carried out in order to include their views and opinions on homelessness priorities for the area. This consultation has taken a variety of formats including, online surveys, consultation events/focus groups and one to one interviews.
- 1.10 The findings from this strategic review have been used to inform the priorities that will underpin the Homelessness Strategy for the area for the next 18 months.

2.0 NATIONAL AGENDA & POLICY LINKS

- 2.1 In conducting this review, the Local Authorities have complied with legal duties set out in the Housing Act 1996 Part 7, the Homelessness Act 2002, the Localism Act 2011 and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
- 2.2. The review has considered all statutory orders relating to the suitability of accommodation in England.
- 2.3 It has further considered all relevant statutory guidance on allocations and homelessness, along with best practice in the delivery of housing options and homelessness services.
- 2.4 The Councils have had regard to both Ministerial Working Group reports on homelessness:
- *“Vision to End Rough Sleeping: No Second Night Out”* and;
 - *“Making Every Contact Count: A Joint Approach to Preventing Homelessness”*
- 2.5 The toolkit created by the DCLG funded National Practitioner Support Service *“Developing Homelessness Strategies”* has been carefully considered.
- 2.6 The national Gold Standard challenge outlined in the second Ministerial Working Group report has formed a key aspect of this review and the five District Local Authorities aspire to achieving the 10 Local Challenges set by Government for Local Authorities. The 10 challenges are:
- To adopt a corporate commitment to prevent homelessness which has buy in across all Local Authority services.
 - To actively work in partnership with the voluntary sector and other local partners to address support, education, employment and training needs.
 - To offer a Housing Options prevention service to all clients including written advice.
 - To adopt a No Second Night Out model or an effective alternative.
 - To have housing pathways agreed or in development with each key partner and client group that include appropriate accommodation and support.
 - To develop a suitable private rented sector offer for all client groups, including advice and support to both client and landlord.
 - To actively engage in preventing mortgage repossessions including through the Mortgage Rescue Scheme.
 - To have a homelessness strategy that sets out a proactive approach to preventing homelessness and is reviewed annually to be responsive to emerging needs.
 - To not place any young person aged 16 or 17 in Bed & Breakfast accommodation.
 - To not place any families in Bed & Breakfast accommodation unless in an emergency and for no longer than 6 weeks.

- 2.7 This review has also considered the likely impact and forthcoming changes in the delivery of housing options services to be introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, effective from 1 April 2018.
- 2.8 The key measures within this Act and affecting the delivery of housing options services include:
- An extension of the period during which an Authority should treat someone as threatened with homelessness from 28 days to 56 days.
 - The introduction of personalised plans for clients to outline the circumstances of homelessness, the housing needs of the client, any support required to secure and sustain accommodation, steps that the client is required to take along with the steps the Local Authority is required to take to assist the client.
 - A new duty to prevent homelessness for all eligible applicants threatened with homelessness, regardless of priority need.
 - A new duty to relieve homelessness for all eligible homeless applicants, regardless of priority need.
 - A new duty on other public services to notify a Local Housing Authority if they come into contact with someone they think may be homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- 2.9 Similar legislation was introduced in Wales in 2015 and the following outcomes were experienced by Local Authorities:
- A rise in applications and caseload for Housing Options Officers.
 - A rise in the percentage of cases owed prevention and relief duties.
 - A high dropout rate as a result of client withdrawal or client contact lost.
 - A reduction in full duty acceptances.
 - A reduction in temporary accommodation use.
 - A rise in the number of successful homeless prevention cases.

3.0 SOMERSET STRATEGY LINKS

- 3.1 A draft Somerset Strategic Housing Framework will be ready by the end of January 2018 focusing on the priorities and ambitions for Somerset. These will be reflected on in the District based action plans that will pick up on the challenges within each locality.

The Somerset Strategic Housing Framework includes information from a number of sources including the Somerset Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Strategic Housing Market Assessments and Youth Housing Strategy and Action Plan.

4.0 DISTRICT STRATEGY LINKS

- 4.1 This review has regard for the Mendip District Council Corporate Strategy 2017 – 2020 “*Shape the District*”. This strategy has two core priorities:
- Transformation – finding better ways of working together, and making better use of assets, resources and skills to deliver the best possible outcomes for local communities.
 - Inclusive Growth – Mendip District Council would like to see positive growth in the District. They would like to see businesses develop, grow and enjoy greater success.
- 4.2 This review has regard for the Sedgemoor District Council Corporate Strategy 2016-2024. The strategy has three priority themes:
- Customers & efficiency
 - Growth & infrastructure
 - Housing, health & well-being
- 4.3 This review has regard for the South Somerset Council Plan 2016 – 2021. The Plan has five aims:
- Protect core services to the public by reducing costs and seeking income generation
 - Increase the focus on jobs and economic development
 - Protect and enhance the quality of our environment
 - Enable housing to meet all needs
 - Improve health and reduce health inequalities
- 4.4 This review has regard for the Taunton Deane Corporate Strategy 2016 – 2020. The strategy has four overarching themes:
- People
 - Business & enterprise
 - Our place
 - An efficient and modern Council
- 4.5 This review has regard for the West Somerset Corporate Strategy 2016 – 2020. The strategy has four overarching themes:
- Our Communities
 - Business & Enterprise
 - Our places & Infrastructure
 - An efficient and modern Council
- 4.6 This review has regard for the South Somerset Rural Housing Action Plan 2016-2018 which outlines the Council’s approach to the provision of affordable housing in rural locations (parishes with a population of less than 3,000), and the South Somerset District Council Housing Strategy Implementation Plan 2014.
- 4.7 This review has regard for the Somerset West Unlawful Evictions Policy, Somerset West Housing Enforcement Policy, Somerset West Civil Penalty Policy and the Somerset West Empty Homes Strategy which focuses on housing homeless families in empty properties which have been brought back into use through grants and loans from the Local Authority.

5.0 THE SOMERSET DISTRICTS

5.1 There are five Somerset Districts and they are located in the South West region of England:

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

5.2 These are represented in the map below:



5.3 The size of each individual District is shown below (Source: Wikipedia)

Table 1: Size of each District

Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset
738km ²	564km ²	959km ²	463km ²	726km ²

5.4 The population of each District in 2016 is shown in the table below (Source: Nomis)

Table 2: District Population

Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset
112,500	121,400	165,600	115,500	34,300

5.5 The total population for all five Districts is 549,300.

5.6 Population projections for each District are shown below. These are based on 2014 figures and it appears based on the figures shown in 5.4 above that the population of Taunton Deane has grown faster than originally anticipated. (Source: 2014 based, ONS, nearest thousand)

Table 3: Population Projections

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Mendip	112,000	113,000	113,000	114,000
Sedgemoor	121,000	123,000	124,000	125,000
South Somerset	166,000	167,000	168,000	169,000
Taunton Deane	114,000	115,000	116,000	117,000
West Somerset	34,000	34,000	34,000	34,000

5.7 The population split between males and females for each District is shown below (Source: 2016 Nomis). These compare to 49.2% males / 50.8% females for the South West region and 49.3% males / 50.7% females for Great Britain.

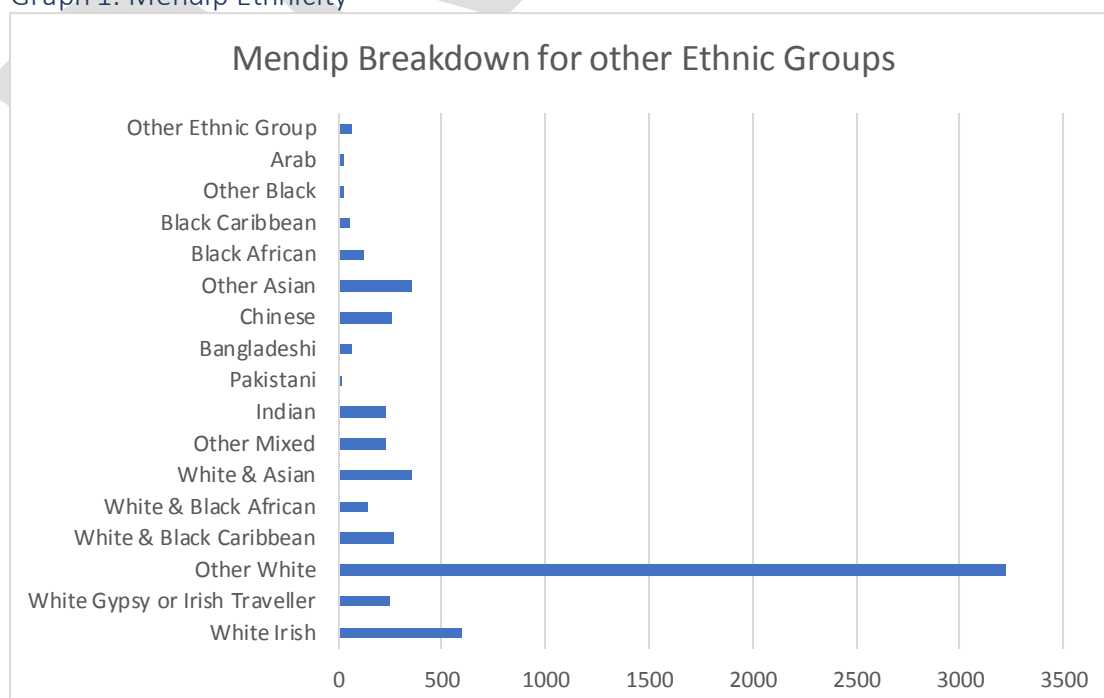
Table 4: Population by Gender

	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	South West	Great Britain
Males	48.7%	49.1%	49.1%	48.6%	48.1%	49.2%	49.3%
Females	51.3%	50.9%	50.1%	51.4%	51.9%	50.8%	50.7%

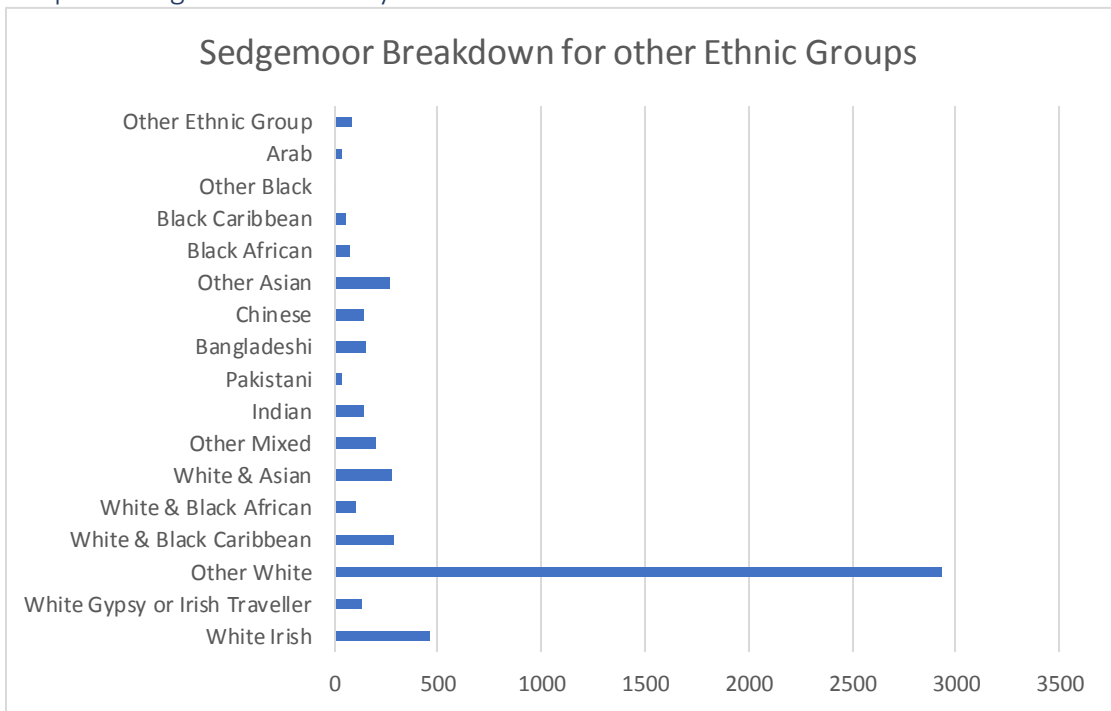
5.8 The largest ethnic population group in each of the Somerset District is “White British”. These form percentage populations as follows; Mendip (94.24%), Sedgemoor (95.30%), South Somerset (94.96%), Taunton Deane (93.50%) and West Somerset (95.83%). These compare to 93.67% in England and Wales and 91.80% for the South West region. (Source: Census 2011)

The distribution of other ethnic groups for each District is shown in the bar graphs below.

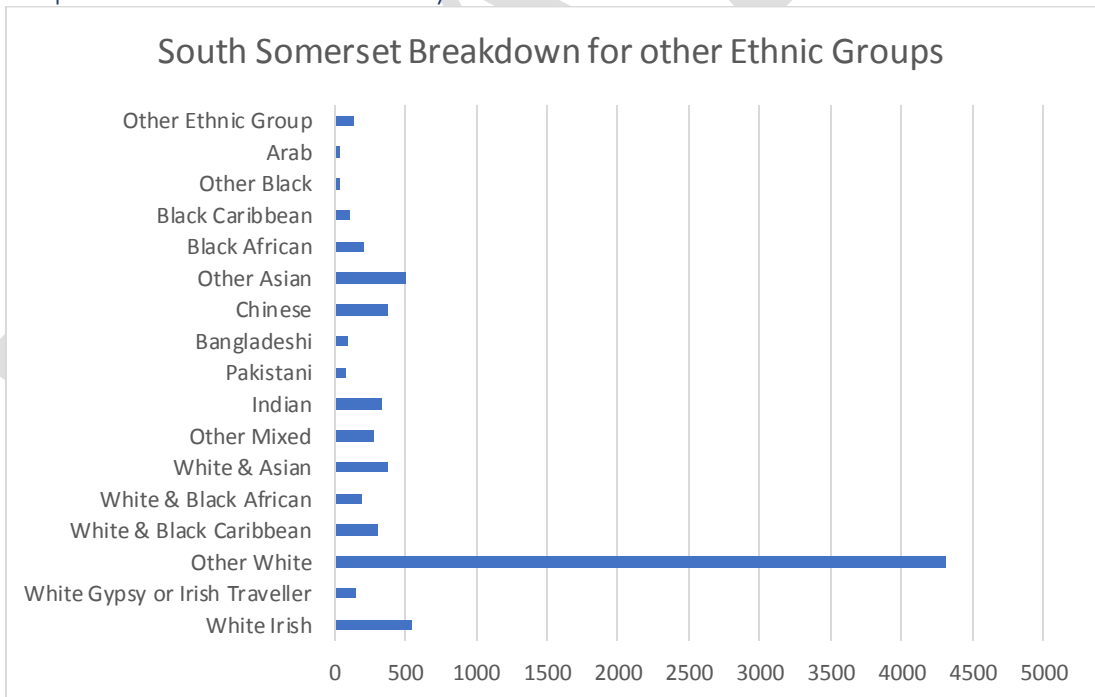
Graph 1: Mendip Ethnicity



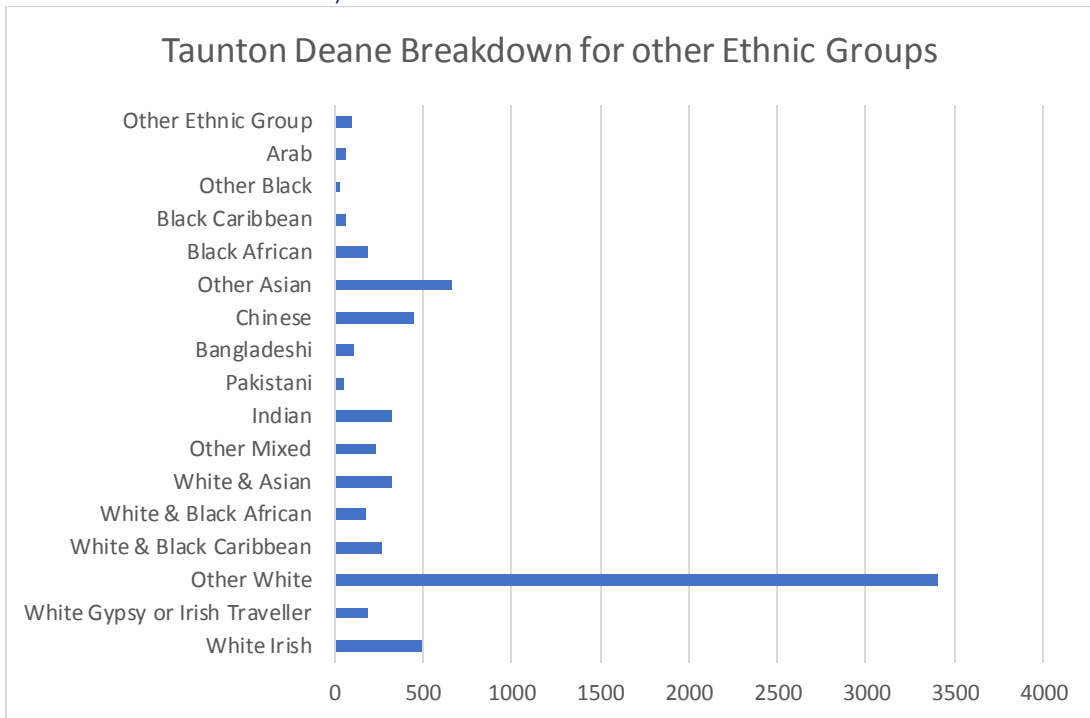
Graph 2: Sedgemoor Ethnicity



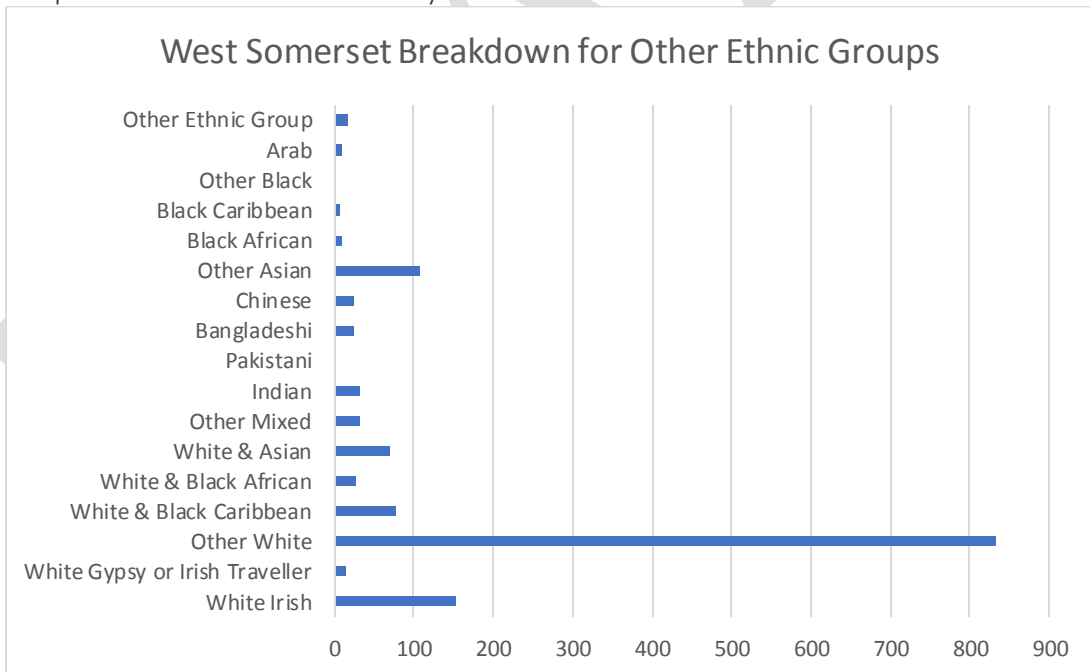
Graph 3: South Somerset Ethnicity



Graph 4: Taunton Deane Ethnicity



Graph 5: West Somerset Ethnicity



- 5.9 Economic activity for each District is shown below along with unemployment figures. (Source: *Nomis, Jul 2016 – Jun 2017*). The percentage economically active of the working age population for the South West region is 81.0% and for Great Britain this figure is 78.0%. The unemployment rate for the South West region is 3.7% and for Great Britain it is 4.6%.

Table 5: Economic Activity by District

	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	South West	Great Britain
Economically active (% of working age population)	79.3%	79.3%	78.4%	79.6%	84.4%	81.0%	78.0%
Unemployment	4.8%	4.8%	3.5%	4.3%	3.6%	3.7%	4.6%

6.0 HOUSING MARKET, DEMAND, SUPPLY AND POSSESSION ACTION

- 6.1 The table below describes what multiple of the lower quartile income in the area the lower quartile house price in the area is since 2012 (Source: *Shelter Databank*).

A household is considered to be able to afford to buy a home if it costs less than four times the gross household income. It has also been assumed that a household would have a 10% deposit.

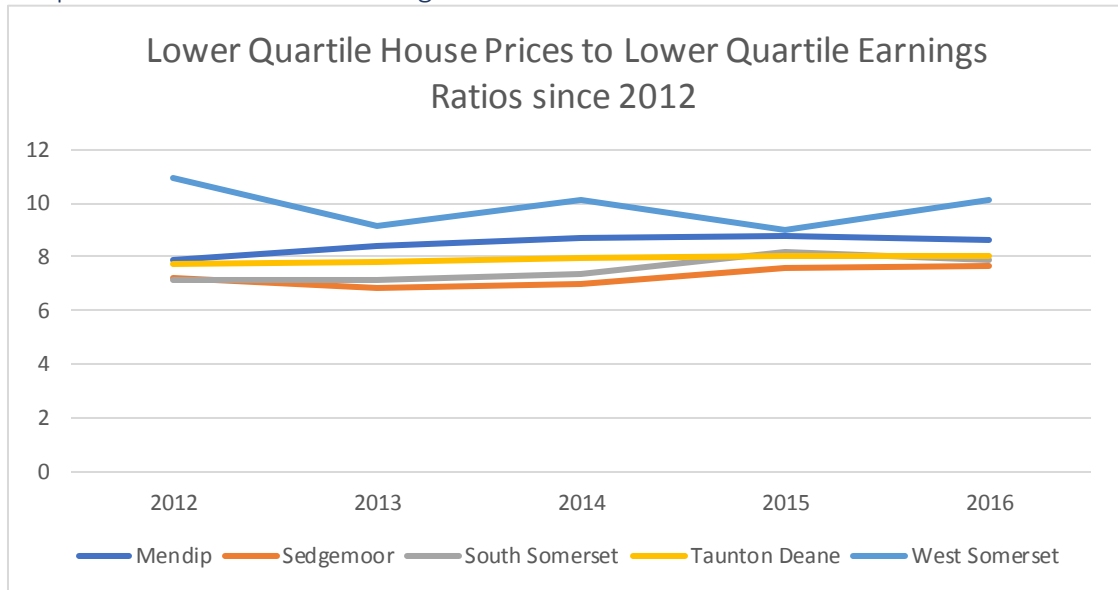
Table 6: Household Income Multiplier

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Mendip	7.85	8.37	8.73	8.77	8.61
Sedgemoor	7.23	6.87	6.98	7.62	7.65
South Somerset	7.17	7.16	7.33	8.19	7.89
Taunton Deane	7.7	7.83	7.96	8.06	8.02
West Somerset	10.92	9.17	10.09	8.99	10.1

In the South West region, the multiple in 2016 was 8.45 and in England it was 7.16. From the table above it can be seen that there is a large disparity in affordability by lower quartile incomes for lower quartile house prices across the Somerset Districts with West Somerset having the highest ratio in comparison to Sedgemoor and South Somerset Districts.

The graph below shows how the lower quartile income in the area compares to the lower quartile house price over time since 2012.

Graph 6: House Prices to Earnings



6.2 The table below shows the average selling house price in each area at the end of each quarter in the years since 2012. (Source: Shelter Databank)

Table 7: Average House Price

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Mendip	189,691	195,158	207,514	220,231	237,430
Sedgemoor	163,533	169,668	174,449	190,036	207,223
South Somerset	179,888	184,969	190,543	199,299	215,989
Taunton Deane	182,775	190,414	198,769	205,846	221,186
West Somerset	184,600	186,749	193,029	212,075	209,696

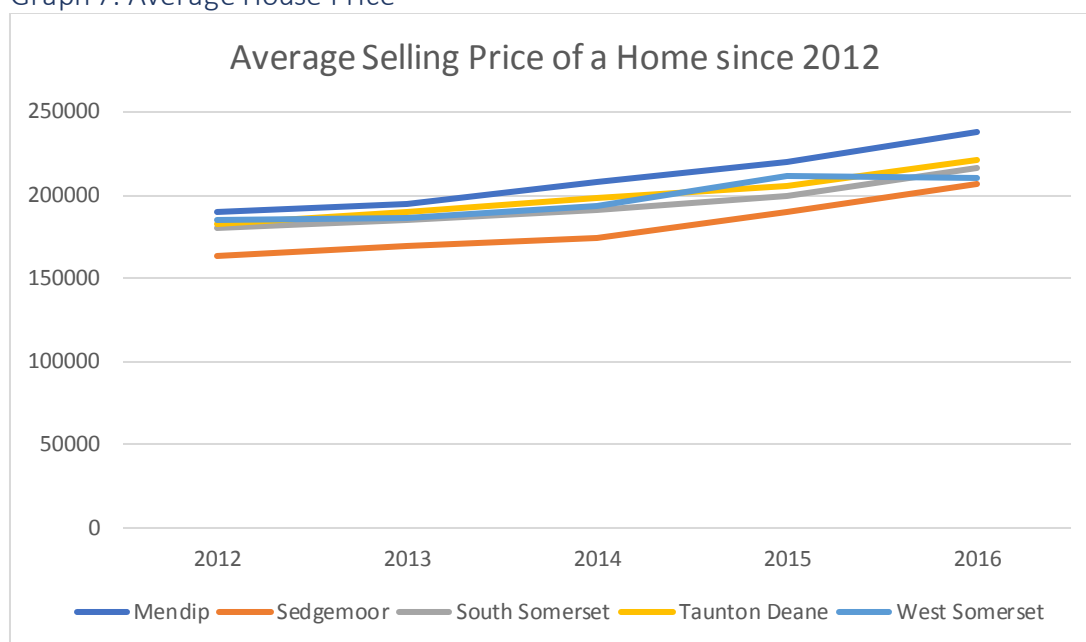
The following percentage changes demonstrate how these prices have changed over the last five years:

Mendip: 25.2% increase
 Sedgemoor: 26.7% increase
 South Somerset: 20.1% increase
 Taunton Deane: 21.0% increase
 West Somerset: 13.6% increase

The average selling house price in 2016 for the South West region was £242,808 (higher than all of the five Districts in 2016) and £236,424 for England (also higher than all of the Districts other than Mendip).

The graph below shows how the average selling price of a house has varied over the last five years in each District.

Graph 7: Average House Price



6.3 The table below shows the median private rents by District since 2012. (Source: Shelter Databank). These figures compare to £675 in 2016 for the South West region and £650 for England.

Table 8: Median Private Rents

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% Change
Mendip	575	600	603	625	625	+8.7%
Sedgemoor	550	560	570	575	575	+4.5%
South Somerset	575	575	575	595	600	+4.3%
Taunton Deane	575	595	595	595	600	+4.3%
West Somerset	595	595	595	600	600	+0.8%

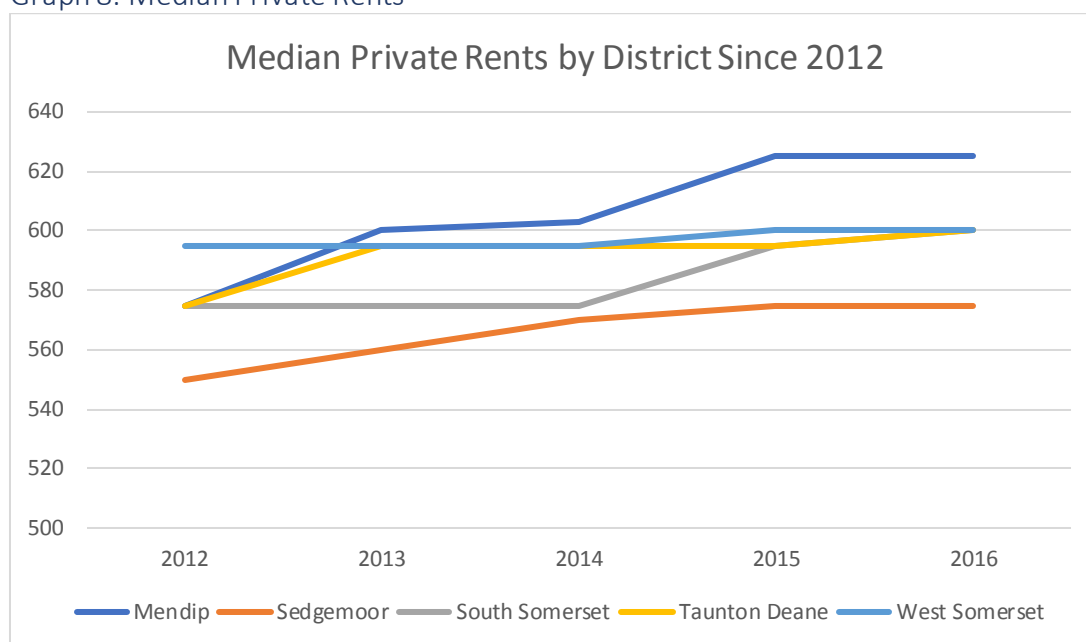
Over the last five years, median private rents have gradually increased the percentage increases are shown below for each District:

- Mendip: 8.7% increase
- Sedgemoor: 4.5% increase
- South Somerset: 4.3% increase
- Taunton Deane: 4.3% increase
- West Somerset: 0.8% increase

In the South West, median rents have increased by 12.5% and in England they have increased by 17.4% over the past five years.

The graph below shows the trends in the median private rent by District since 2012.

Graph 8: Median Private Rents



6.4 The table below shows the mean private rents by District since 2012. (Source: Shelter Databank). These figures compare to £748 in 2016 for the South West region and £839 for England.

Table 9: Mean Private Rents

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	% Change
Mendip	600	656	655	678	685	+14.2%
Sedgemoor	572	594	603	600	618	+8.0%
South Somerset	598	597	602	625	630	+5.4%
Taunton Deane	601	609	628	620	642	+6.8%
West Somerset	603	607	631	622	637	+5.6%

Over the last five years, mean private rents have gradually increased, the percentage increases are shown below for each District:

Mendip: 14.2% increase

Sedgemoor: 8.0% increase

South Somerset: 5.4% increase

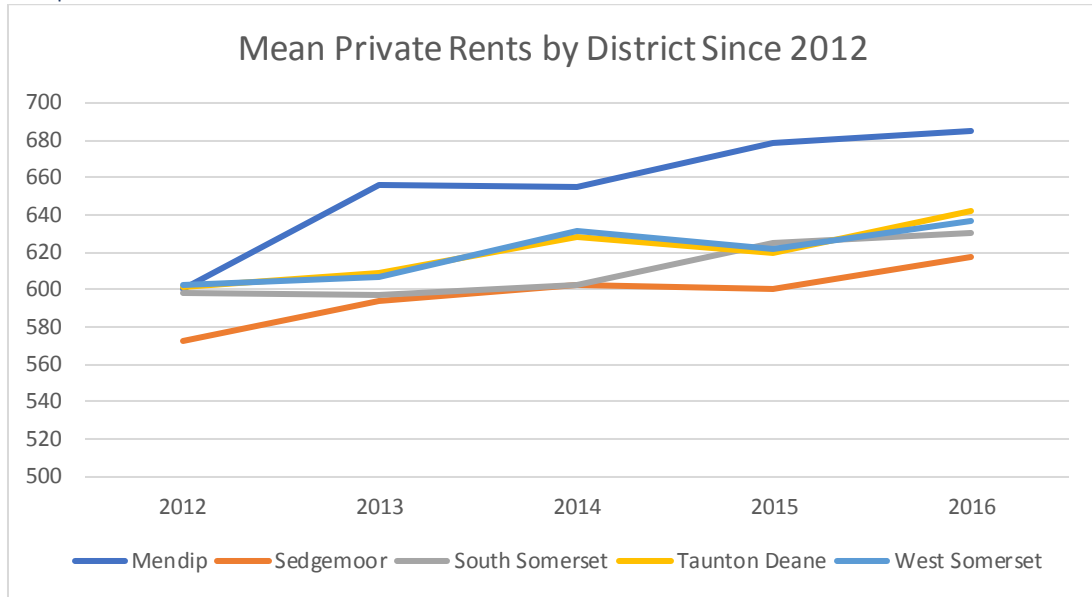
Taunton Deane: 6.8% increase

West Somerset: 5.6% increase

In the South West, mean rents have increased by 13.3% and in England they have increased by 19.0% over the past five years.

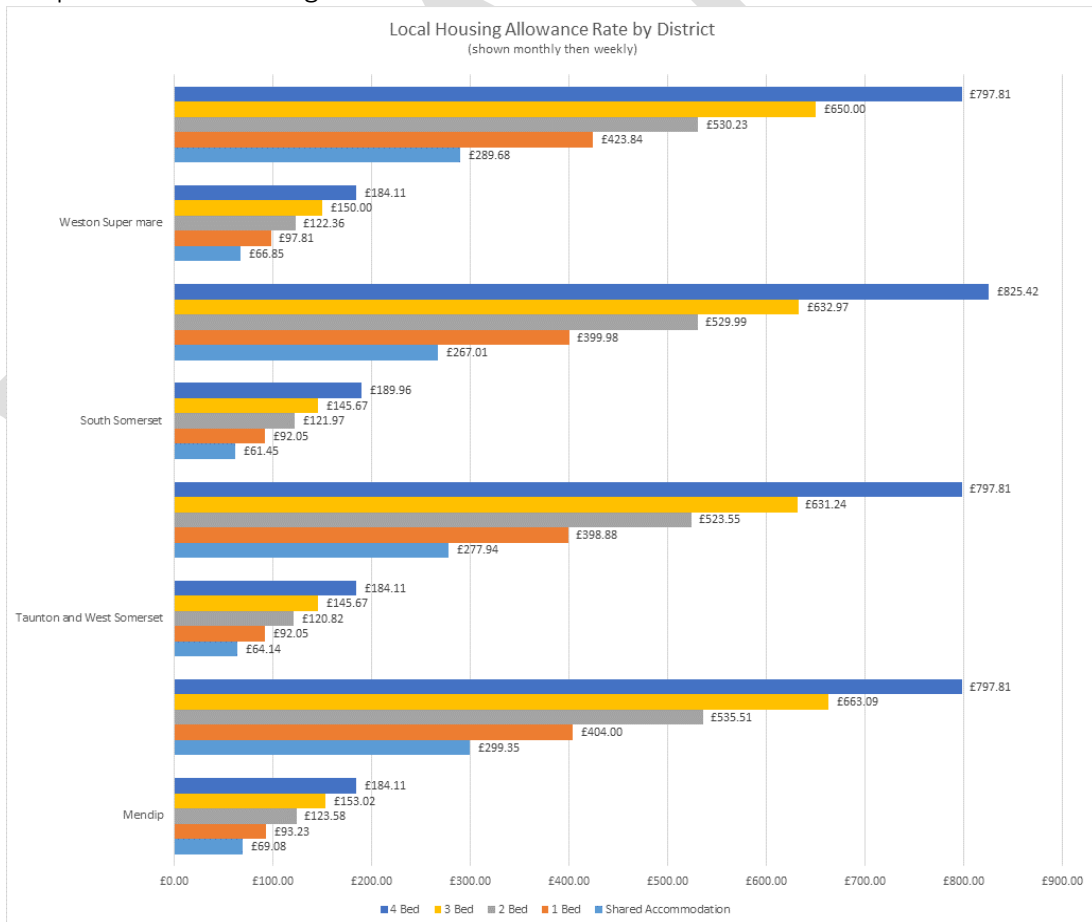
The graph below shows the trends in the mean private rents by District since 2012.

Graph 9: Mean Private Rents



6.5 The graph below shows the Local Housing Allowance rate in each district.

Graph 10: Local Housing Allowance



6.6 The table below shows the number of households on Homefinder Somerset since 2012.

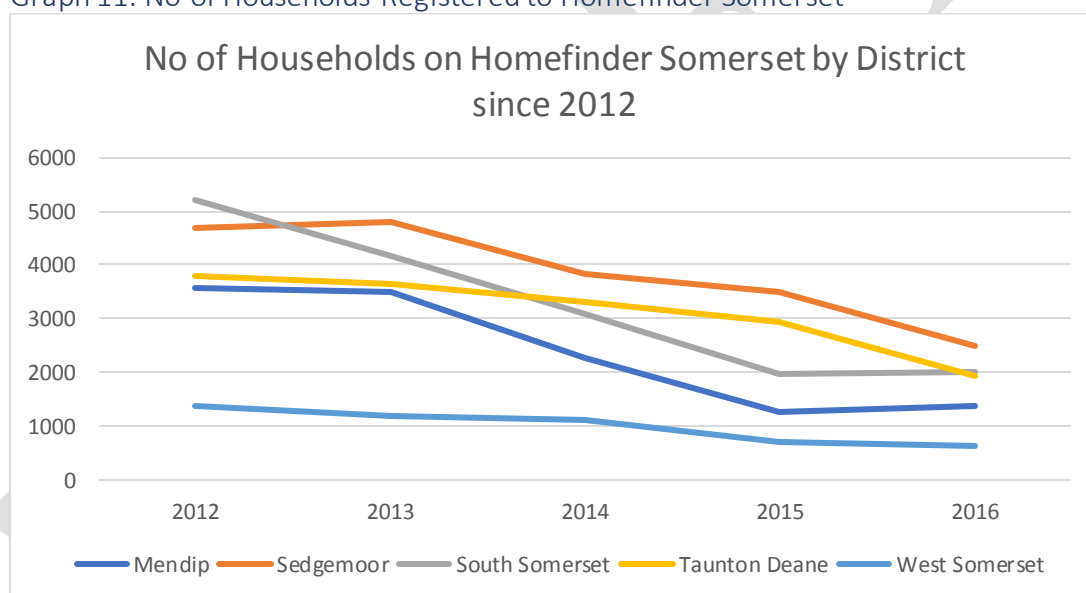
Table 10: No of Households Registered to Homefinder Somerset

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Mendip	3580	3500	2261	1258	1391
Sedgemoor	4706	4807	3830	3505	2511
South Somerset	5211	4150	3097	1975	2006
Taunton Deane	3783	3633	3310	2956	1949
West Somerset	1363	1173	1122	700	622
Total	19,643	17,263	13,620	10,394	8479

In total the number of households on Homefinder Somerset has decreased since 2012 by 56.8% across all the Districts.

The graph below shows the trend in the number of households on Homefinder Somerset since 2012.

Graph 11: No of Households Registered to Homefinder Somerset






6.7 The table below shows the current banding and property need per District for all households currently registered on Homefinder Somerset (December 2017).

Table 11: No Registered in Each Band on Homefinder Somerset

Local Authority	Band	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	5 Bed	6 Bed	Total
Mendip	Bronze	371	241	61	6			679
	Emergency	2			1			3
	Gold	62	23	8	6	7		106
	Silver	260	221	109	24	2		616
		695	485	178	37	9		1404
Sedgemoor	Bronze	590	402	132	19	1	1	1145
	Emergency	3	1			1		5
	Gold	38	36	12	5	4	1	96
	Silver	187	180	119	47	2		535
		818	619	263	71	8	2	1781
South Somerset	Bronze	618	342	115	10	1		1086
	Emergency	2	2					4
	Gold	74	49	19	6	8		156
	Silver	261	214	131	50	3	1	660
		955	607	265	66	12	1	1906
Taunton Deane	Bronze	667	434	114	8	1		1224
	Emergency	3						3
	Gold	109	42	24	5	5		185
	Silver	204	180	151	52	2		589
		983	656	289	65	8		2001
West Somerset	Bronze	249	114	41	5	1		410
	Emergency		1					1
	Gold	23	3	7	5	2	1	41
	Silver	84	52	29	16	3		184
		356	170	77	26	6	1	636
	TOTAL	3807	2537	1072	265	43	4	7728

The banding criteria for each band is shown in the diagram below. The Emergency Band is for those applicants that require an 'urgent' move to ensure their safety and welfare. As you can see from the table above, the highest accommodation need for applicants within each District is for 1 bedroom accommodation.

Table 12: Banding Criteria for Homefinder Somerset

Gold Band – High need 	Silver Band – Medium Need 	Bronze Band – Low Need 
Homeless households who are owed a main homeless duty by a Homefinder Somerset partner authority.	Where the applicant lacks 1 bedroom in their current home.	Where an applicant is adequately housed.
Applicants who lack 2 or more bedrooms or have been confirmed as overcrowded by a Local Authority officer.	Applicants who can demonstrate a need to move for employment reasons or to give or receive support where significant harm would result if this was not provided.	Where applicants own their own property but whose home is not suitable for their needs but they have sufficient equity to address their housing needs.
Current supported housing residents or care leaving applicants who are assessed as ready to move on to independent living.	Where there is a medium medical need. Medium welfare need	Applicants with a low medical need. Applicants with a low welfare need.
High disrepair for people living in the private sector.	Medium disrepair for people living in the private sector.	Applicants living in short term supported housing, or are care leavers prior to being ready to move at which stage they will move up to the gold band.
High medical need High welfare need	Applicants with dependent children and are lodging with friends or family or in accommodation with shared living facilities.	Applicants with no dependent children and are lodging with friends or family or in accommodation with shared living facilities.
Applicants awarded a 'medium' medical priority, combined with 'medium' disrepair award from the silver band.	Other homeless (where Homefinder Somerset partners do not owe an applicant a full homeless duty).	Applicants are assessed as having adequate financial resources to address their housing needs.
Victim of harassment or violence at their current property within the Homefinder Somerset area.	Applicants of split families who not by choice are living separately.	Applicant has no housing need.
Applicant awarded 4 or more silver band housing needs with the exception of applicants found to be intentionally homeless.		Applicant has deliberately worsened their circumstances or made use of the under occupation band before, or has accepted an offer that doesn't meet their needs previously.
Social housing tenants whose homes are subject to major works for rebuilding/renovation or re-designation.		Applicants with low disrepair needs living in private sector rented property.
Where the Local Authority receives written support from a Homefinder Somerset landlord that an applicant has no legal right to succession and the landlord will pursue possession.		Applicants that have no local connection applying for extra care or sheltered properties.

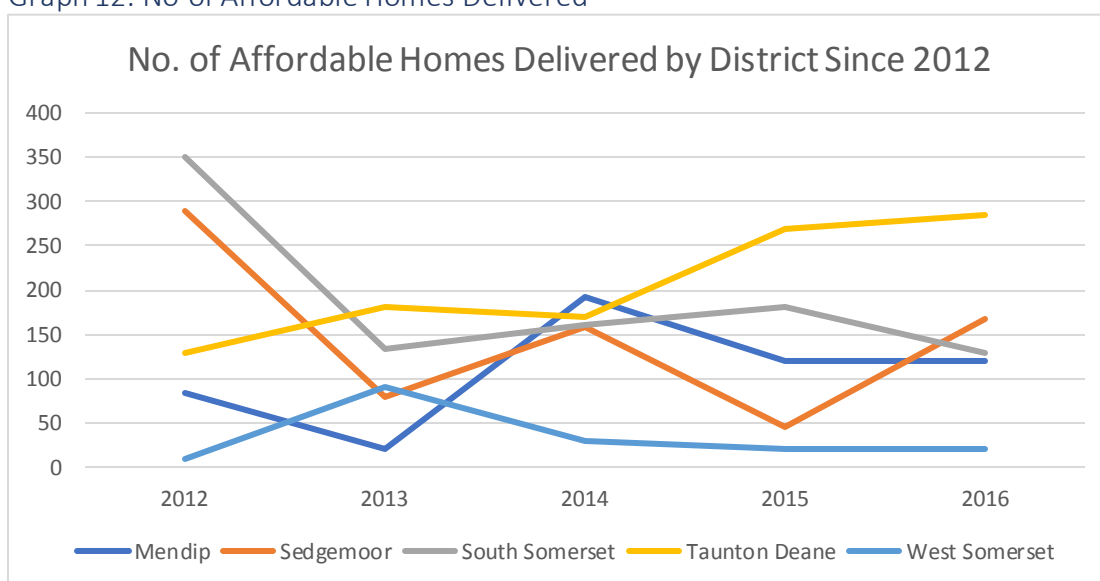
6.8 The table below shows the number of affordable homes delivered by each District since 2012. This includes the number of social rented, intermediate rented and low cost home ownership homes delivered through new build, acquisition or refurbishment during that time period.

Table 13: No of Affordable Homes Delivered

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Mendip	83	20	193	120	120
Sedgemoor	290	80	158	45	168
South Somerset	350	134	161	181	128
Taunton Deane	130	180	170	270	285
West Somerset	10	90	30	20	20

The graph below shows how the number of affordable homes delivered has varied by District since 2012.

Graph 12: No of Affordable Homes Delivered



6.9 The table below and included within the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2016 demonstrates the estimated annual need for affordable housing by location.

Table 14: Estimated Annual Affordable Housing Need

	Current need* (annualised)	Newly forming households	Existing households falling into need	Total need	Relet supply	Net need
Mendip	17	351	191	559	319	240
Sedgemoor	15	408	232	655	354	301
South Somerset	20	466	379	865	659	206
Taunton Deane	17	363	393	774	613	161
SOMERSET	74	1665	1274	3013	2058	955

* Current need reflects the annual number of households already in need of affordable housing and includes households without housing (concealed households).

The table below shows the estimated size of dwellings needed for affordable housing 2014 to 2039 by Local Authority area. This table is sourced from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2016.

Table 15: Estimated Size of Dwellings Needed 2014-2039

	One bedroom	Two bedrooms	Three + bedrooms
Mendip	48.2%	31.5%	20.2%
Sedgemoor	43.3%	28.4%	28.3%
South Somerset	44.6%	37.3%	18.2%
Taunton Deane	47.5%	32.3%	20.2%

6.10 The table below shows the older person population by District in 2015. This information has been taken from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2016.

Table 16: Older Population by District

		Under 65	65-74	75-84	85+	Total	Total 65+
Mendip	Pop	87,102	13,552	7,674	3,396	11,724	24,622
	% pop	78.0%	12.1%	6.9%	3.0%	100.0%	22.0%
Sedgemoor	Pop	93,251	14,924	8,408	3,677	120,260	27,009
	% pop	77.5%	12.4%	7.0%	3.1%	100.0%	22.5%
South Somerset	Pop	125,125	21,661	12,499	5,697	164,982	39,857
	% pop	75.8%	13.1%	7.6%	3.5%	100.0%	24.2%
Taunton Deane	Pop	88,820	13,154	7,957	4,090	114,021	25,201
	% pop	77.9%	11.5%	7.0%	3.6%	100.0%	22.1%
Somerset	Pop	417,458	69,350	40,109	18,473	545,390	127,932
	% pop	76.5%	12.7%	7.4%	3.4%	100.0%	23.5%
South West	% pop	78.6%	11.6%	6.8%	3.0%	100.0%	21.4%
England	% pop	82.3%	9.6%	5.7%	2.4%	100.0%	17.7%

The table below shows the projected change in population of older persons (2014 to 2039) by District. This table has been sourced from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2016.

Table 17: Projected Population Change – Older Persons 2014-2039

	Under 65	65-74	75-84	85+	Total	Total 65+
Mendip	-0.7%	32.8%	85.6%	159.4%	14.0%	67.3%
Sedgemoor	9.0%	33.4%	85.2%	151.0%	21.6%	65.8%
South Somerset	-1.9%	22.6%	74.8%	150.8%	12.2%	57.5%
Taunton Deane	2.8%	31.3%	80.8%	154.3%	16.8%	66.9%
Somerset	1.3%	27.6%	78.0%	137.4%	16.4%	57.4%
South West	5.4%	27.3%	72.1%	137.4%	16.4%	57.4%
England	7.4%	33.3%	70.1%	137.5%	16.5%	59.2%

This table suggests that by 2039, Mendip will have experienced the largest percentage growth in population over the age of 65 with South Somerset experiencing the smallest percentage growth.

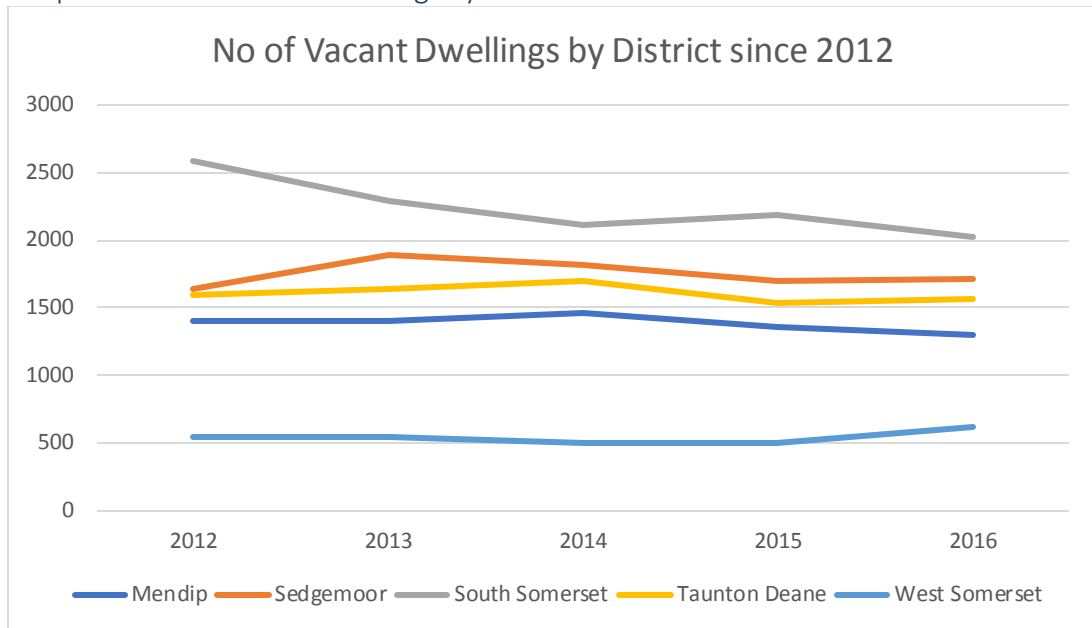
6.11 The table below shows the number of vacant dwellings per District since 2012. (Source: Shelter Databank)

Table 18: No of Vacant Dwellings

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Mendip	1403	1402	1461	1351	1292 (2.54%)
Sedgemoor	1643	1886	1815	1694	1714 (3.19%)
South Somerset	2588	2286	2108	2191	2023 (2.65%)
Taunton Deane	1596	1644	1703	1529	1557 (2.97%)
West Somerset	545	544	495	501	622 (3.45%)

The graph below shows how the number of vacant dwellings have changed by District since 2012.

Graph 13: No of Vacant Dwellings by District



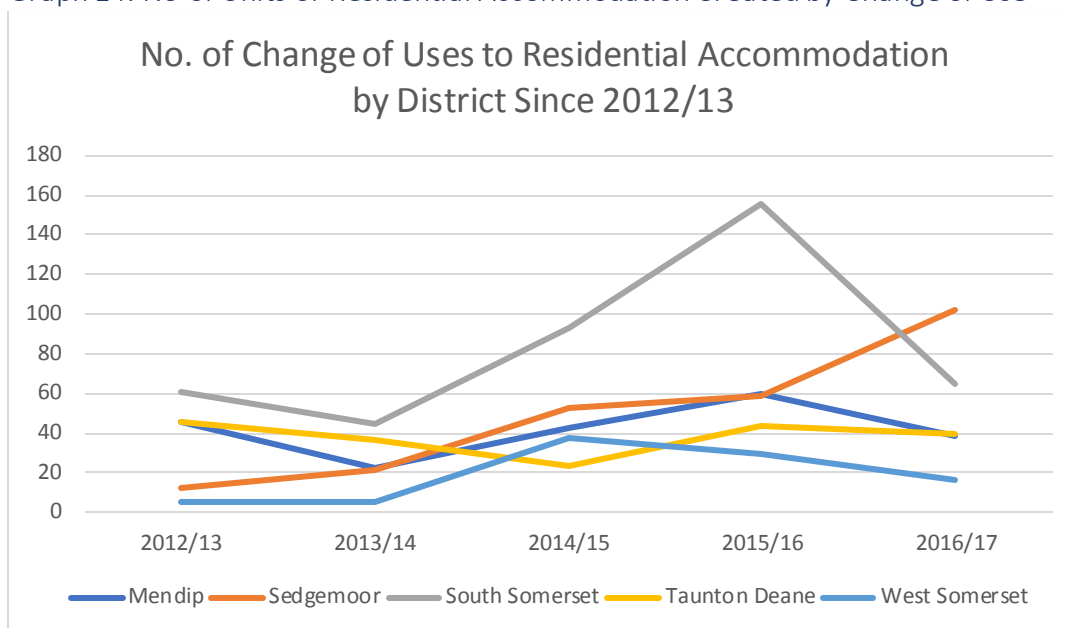
6.12 The table below shows the number of properties in each District where a change of use has been exercised in order to create residential accommodation since 2012/13 (*Source: Government Live Tables*).

Table 19: No of Units of Residential Accommodation Created by Change of Use

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Mendip	46	23	43	60	39
Sedgemoor	12	21	53	59	102
South Somerset	61	45	93	156	65
Taunton Deane	46	37	24	44	40
West Somerset	5	5	38	30	16

The graph below shows the number of new residential accommodation units created from change of use since 2012/13. The Sedgemoor District shows a spike in numbers for the 2016/17 period which could well be attributed to the start of the Hinkley Point development.

Graph 14: No of Units of Residential Accommodation Created by Change of Use



6.13 The table below shows the possession claims taken by landlords within each District since 2012. (Source: Shelter Databank)

Table 20: Possession Claims taken by Landlords

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Mendip	131	144	198	119	134
Sedgemoor	164	171	165	161	193
South Somerset	212	239	213	189	184
Taunton Deane	163	211	203	235	189
West Somerset	26	12	7	13	30

The change over the last five years in each District is shown as a percentage below:

Mendip: 3.1% increase

Sedgemoor: 17.7% increase

South Somerset: 13.2% decrease

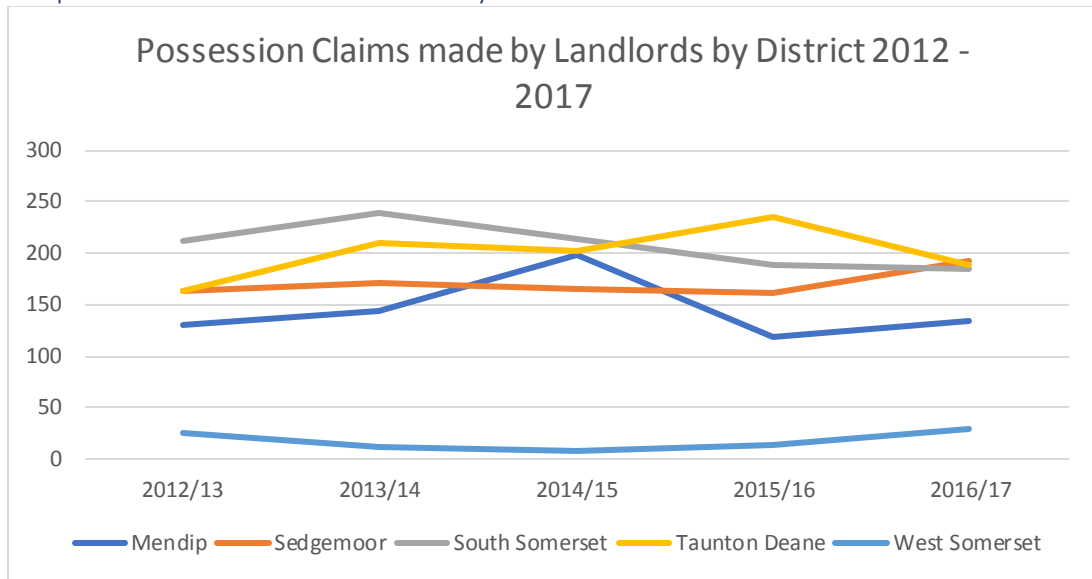
Taunton Deane: 16.0% increase

West Somerset: 15.4% increase

This compares to a 7.1% increase in the South West region and an 8.9% decrease in England.

The graph below demonstrates the trends by District in possession claims by landlords since 2012.

Graph 15: Possession Claims taken by Landlords



6.14 The table below shows the number of possession claims issued by mortgage lenders by District since 2012. (Source: Shelter Databank)

Table 21: Possession Claims Issued by Mortgage Lenders

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Mendip	77	87	66	15	25
Sedgemoor	116	102	65	31	30
South Somerset	120	97	71	32	42
Taunton Deane	67	51	41	21	18
West Somerset	0	31	6	0	1

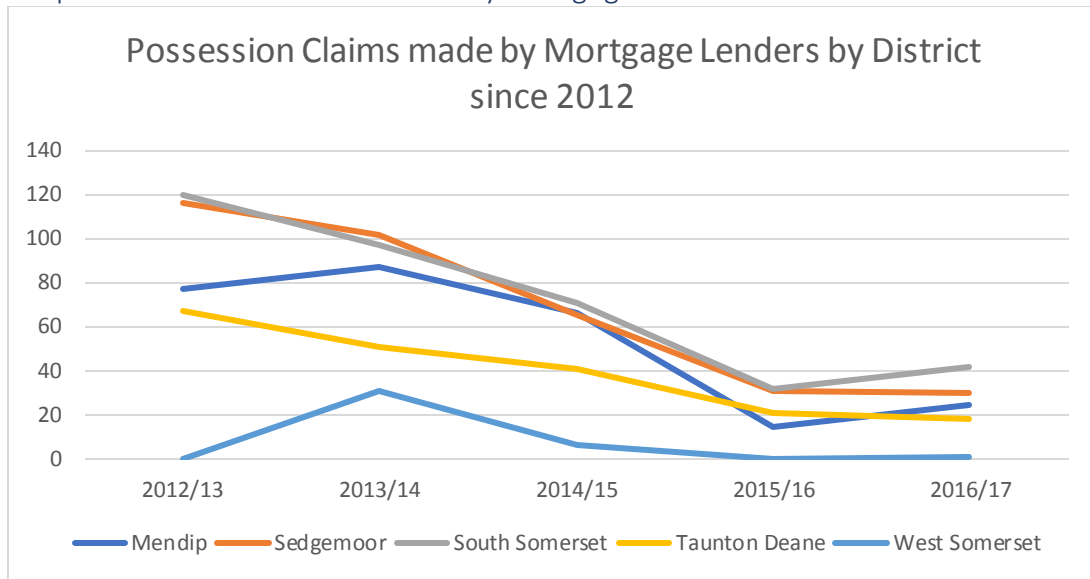
The change over the last five years in each District is shown as a percentage below:

- Mendip: 67.5% decrease
- Sedgemoor: 74.1% decrease
- South Somerset: 65% decrease
- Taunton Deane: 73.1% decrease
- West Somerset: 100% increase

This compares to a 69.9% decrease in the South West region and a 69.4% decrease in England.

The graph below demonstrates the trends by District in the number of possession claims made by mortgage lenders since 2012.

Graph 16: Possession Claims Issued by Mortgage Lenders



6.15 SUMMARY OF DATA

Average house prices are continuing to rise across the Somerset Districts. The increases seen over the last five years range from 13.6% in West Somerset to 26.7% in Sedgemoor. However, the average house price in the five Districts is still lower than that of the South West region, and with the exception of Mendip, also lower than the average for England.

Low wage levels within the five Districts coupled with house prices make it impossible for first time buyers to purchase on the open market without substantial deposit sums.

The multiple of the lower quartile income to lower quartile property price ranges from 7.65 in Sedgemoor to 10.1 in West Somerset. All Districts have a higher multiple than the comparative for England. Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Taunton Deane have a lower multiple compared to the South West region whereas Mendip and West Somerset are higher. A household is generally assumed to be able to afford a property at less than four times multiple.

Median private rents have increased in all Districts over the last 5 years. The largest increase was seen in Mendip (8.7% increase) and the smallest increase was seen in West Somerset (0.8% increase). All Districts have seen much smaller increases in median private rents than the comparative increases for the South West region and England.

Mean private rents have also increased in all Districts over the last 5 years. The largest increase was seen in Mendip (14.2% increase) and the smallest increase was seen in West Somerset (5.4% increase). All Districts have seen smaller increases in mean private rents than the comparative increases for the South West region and England with the exception of Mendip which had a higher increase in mean rent than the South West region average. Local Housing Allowance rates have not been updated for the past two years and prior to that they were only updated at a maximum of 1% per annum. Therefore, comparing these marginal increases to the increases the Districts have seen over the last five years in both

median and mean rents, it can be concluded that the private rented sector in the Districts is becoming less affordable for low income households.

All the District Councils in Somerset use Homefinder Somerset to allocate affordable housing. The number of households on Homefinder Somerset has decreased since 2012 by 56.8% across all the Districts. There are currently 7,728 households registered with Homefinder Somerset across four different bands – Emergency, Gold, Silver and Bronze and ranging in need from 1 bed to 6 bed need. The highest need in all Districts is for 1 bedroom accommodation.

Population estimates suggest that by 2039, the Districts will experience a big shift in ageing population. Mendip will experience the largest percentage growth in population over the age of 65 years with a 67.3% increase with the number of over 85 year olds projected to increase by 159.4%. South Somerset will experience the smallest growth in the over 65 year age group with a 57.5% increase of which the over 85 year old group will have an increase of 150.8%. Therefore, any homeless strategy must prepare to provide housing options to an aging population.

The number of vacant dwellings has remained fairly constant across the Districts over the last five years. The highest number of vacant properties can be found in South Somerset where there are 2,023 vacant dwellings. The smallest number is found in West Somerset where there are 622 vacant dwellings. However, as a percentage of the total dwelling stock within the Borough, West Somerset has the highest percentage of vacant dwellings at 3.45% of all dwellings.

The change in possession claims initiated by landlords over the past five years has varied by District. All Districts have shown an increase in claims with the exception of South Somerset where there has been a decrease in claims by 13.2%.

All Districts have shown a substantial decrease in the number of possession claims issued by mortgage lenders. These range from a 65.0% decrease in South Somerset to a 100% increase in West Somerset, albeit from an extremely low starting point. These decreases are comparative to those experienced across the South West region and England.

7.0 HOMELESSNESS IN MENDIP, SEDGEMOOR, SOUTH SOMERSET, TAUNTON DEANE & WEST SOMERSET

7.1 Since the first joint homelessness strategy between the Districts in 2008, there has been a focus on the prevention and relief of homelessness. The number of homeless prevention and relief cases recorded by each Local Authority is shown in the table below (*Source: Shelter databank*):

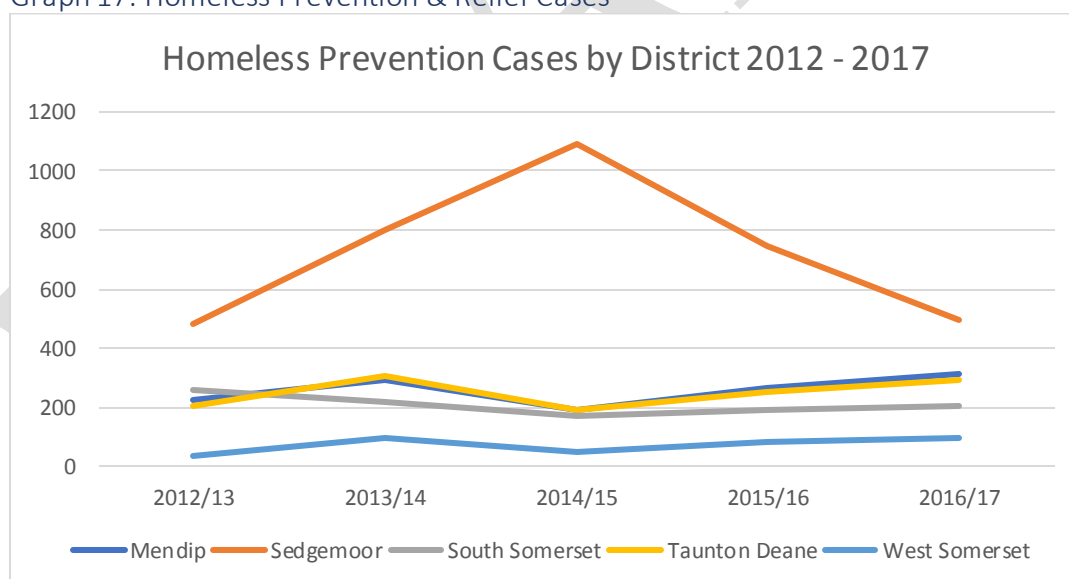
Table 22: Homeless Prevention & Relief Cases

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	% Change
Mendip	222	295	192	263	313	+41.0%
Sedgemoor	483	797	1089	747	498	+3.1%
South Somerset	260	219	172	190	201	-22.7%
Taunton Deane	204	306	187	248	289	+41.7%
West Somerset	32	97	46	85	94	+193.8%

In England, there has been an increase of 6.1% of homeless prevention and relief cases.

The graph below demonstrates the trends in each Local Authority area of homeless prevention cases.

Graph 17: Homeless Prevention & Relief Cases



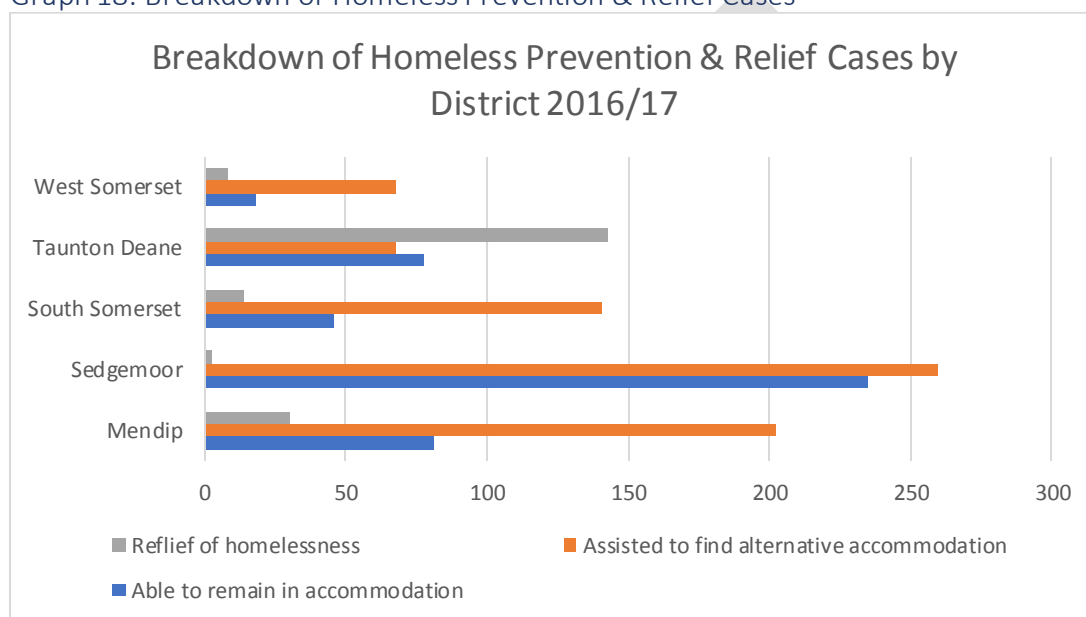
The number of homeless prevention and relief cases can be further broken down in order to analyse how many households were assisted to remain in their accommodation, how many households were assisted to move to alternative accommodation and in how many cases homelessness was effectively relieved. The breakdown of these figures for 2016/17 is shown in the table below by District.

Table 23: Breakdown of Homeless Prevention & Relief Cases

	Assisted to remain in accommodation	Assisted into alternative accommodation	Successful homelessness relief	Total
Mendip	81	202	30	313
Sedgemoor	235	260	3	498
South Somerset	46	141	14	201
Taunton Deane	78	68	143	289
West Somerset	18	68	8	94

The bar graph below demonstrates the breakdown of homeless prevention and relief cases by District in 2016/17.

Graph 18: Breakdown of Homeless Prevention & Relief Cases



7.2 The number of homeless acceptances made by each District since 2012 is shown in the table below. (Source: Shelter Databank)

Table 24: Homeless Acceptances

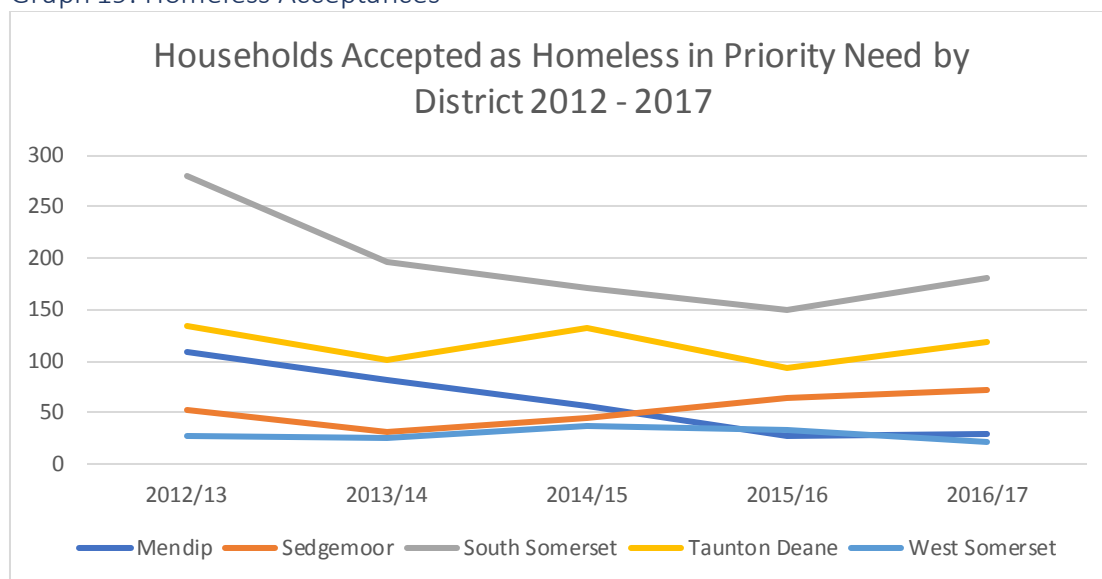
	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	% Change
Mendip	126	92	61	24	34	-73.0%
Sedgemoor	53	32	45	64	72	+35.8%
South Somerset	255	221	177	150	165	-35.3%
Taunton Deane	139	106	133	90	97	-30.2%
West Somerset	33	16	34	36	22	-33.3%

The change experienced by each District over the last five years is shown as a percentage above.

In the South West, there was a 16.4% increase in the same period and in England there was a 10.8% increase.

The graph below demonstrates the trends in each Local Authority area of homeless cases accepted.

Graph 19: Homeless Acceptances



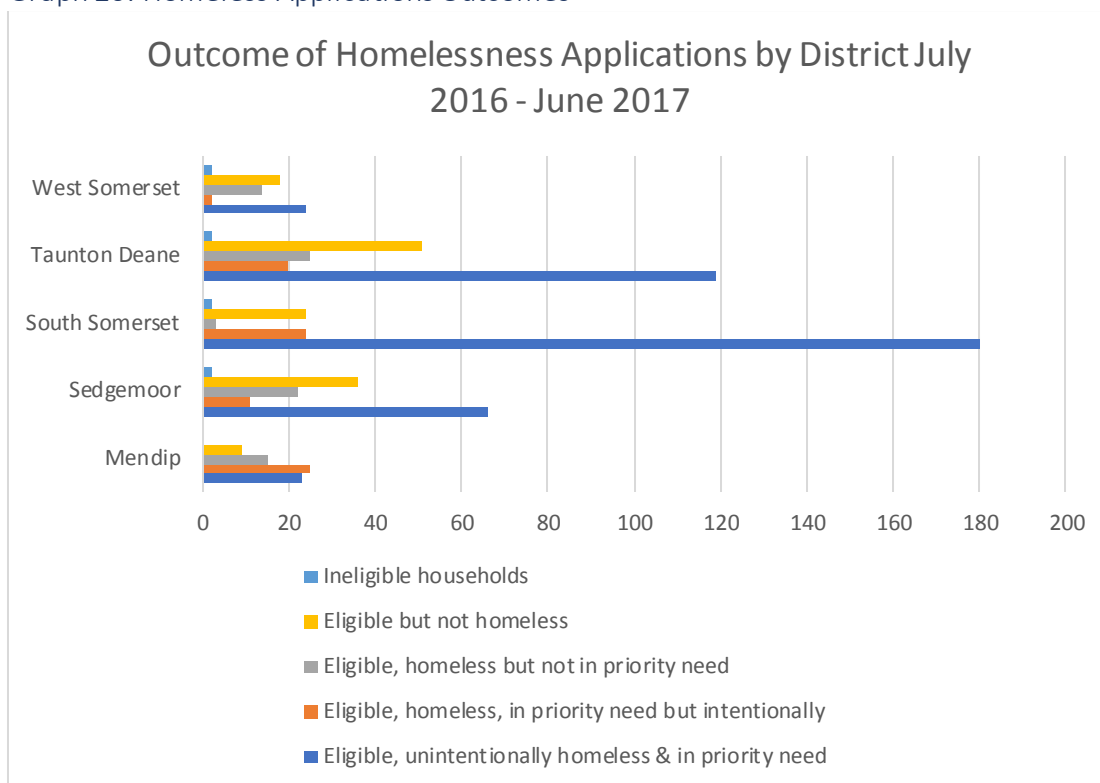
7.3 The table below shows the outcome of homelessness applications by District in the period July 2016 to June 2017. (Source: Government Live Tables)

Table 25: Homeless Applications Outcomes

	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset
Eligible, unintentionally homeless & in priority need	23	66	180	119	24
Eligible, homeless, in priority need but intentionally	25	11	24	20	2
Eligible, homeless but not in priority need	15	22	3	25	14
Eligible but not homeless	9	36	24	51	18
Ineligible households	0	2	2	2	2

The graph below shows the outcome of homeless decisions by District during the period July 2016 to June 2017.

Graph 20: Homeless Applications Outcomes



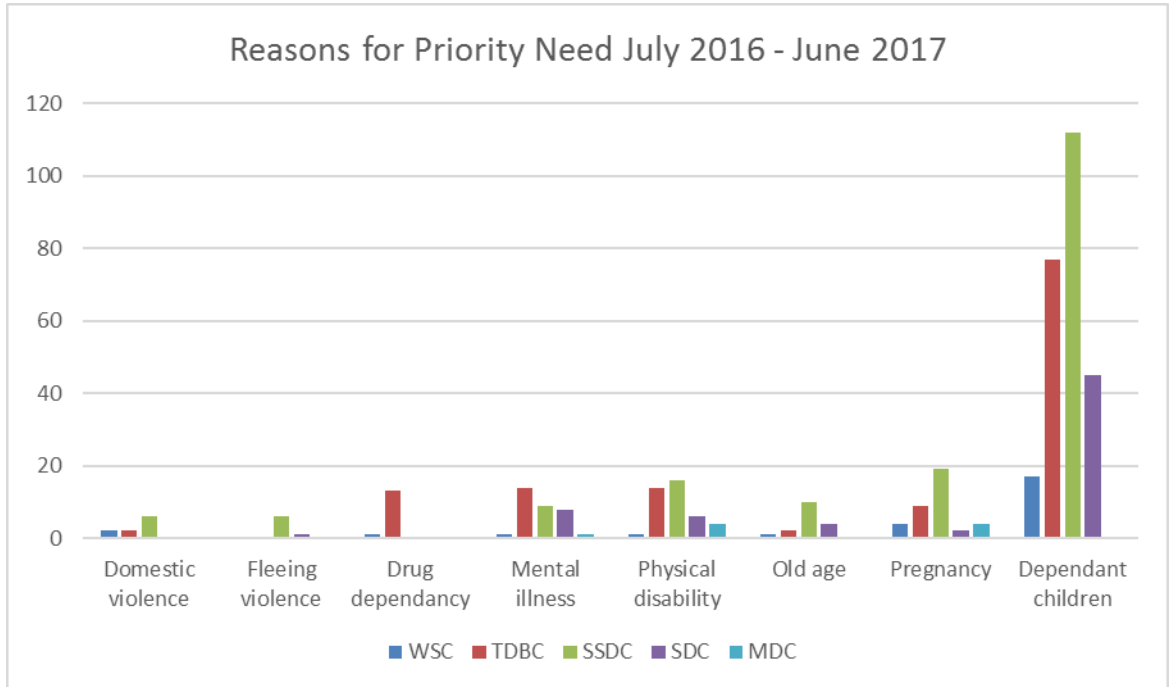
7.4 The table below shows the ethnicity of eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need households by District over the last four quarters of data available (July 2016 to June 2017). (Source: Government Live Tables)

Table 26: Homeless Acceptances Ethnicity Breakdown

	White	Black	Asian	Mixed	Ethnicity not stated	Other
Mendip	19	0	0	0	3	2
Sedgemoor	61	0	0	0	0	0
South Somerset	155	0	0	1	21	3
Taunton Deane	115	1	1	3	1	0
West Somerset	24	0	0	0	0	0

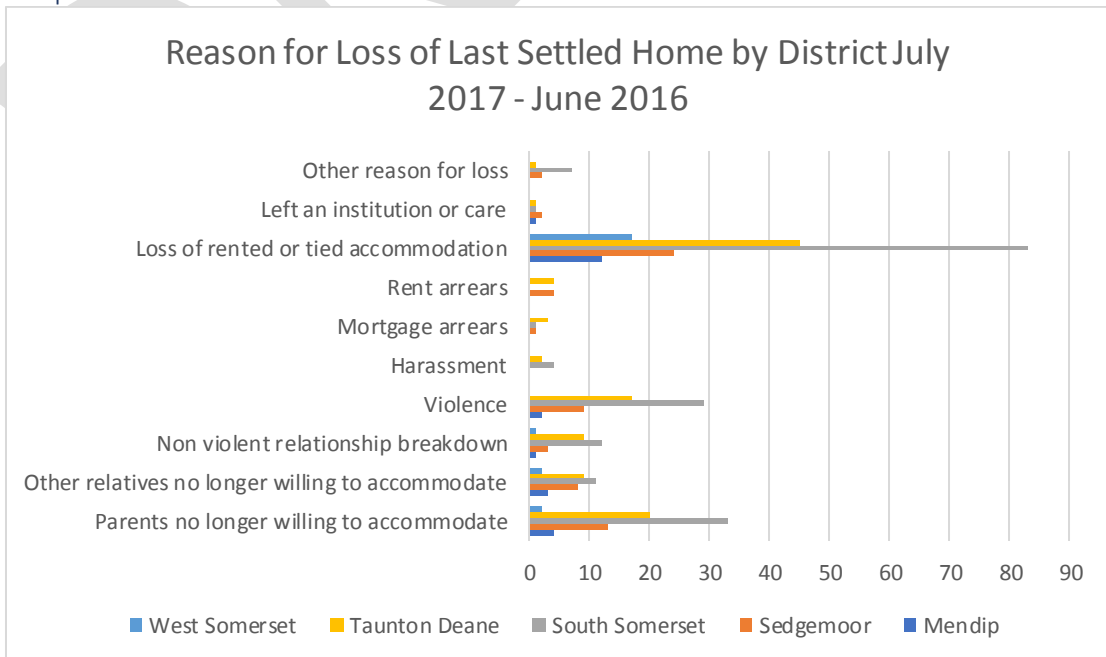
7.5 The bar graph below shows the reason for priority need for applicant households found to be unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need for July 2016 to June 2017. (Source: Government Live Tables)

Graph 21: Reason for Priority Need



7.6 The bar graph below shows the reason for the loss of last settled home for applicant households found to be unintentionally homeless, eligible for assistance and in priority need for July 2016 to June 2017. (Source: Government Live Tables)

Graph 22: Reason for Loss of Last Settled Home



7.7 The table below shows the number of households in temporary accommodation within each District since 2012 at the end of quarter 3. (Source: Shelter Databank)

Table 27: No of Households in Temporary Accommodation

	2012 Q3	2013 Q3	2014 Q3	2015 Q3	2016 Q3
Mendip	30	19	4	4	4
Sedgemoor	15	21	19	17	24
South Somerset	50	37	32	34	31
Taunton Deane	37	39	35	29	26
West Somerset	5	0	0	6	0

The change in use of temporary accommodation over the last five years by each District is shown below:

Mendip: 86.7% decrease

Sedgemoor: 60.0% increase

South Somerset: 38.0% decrease

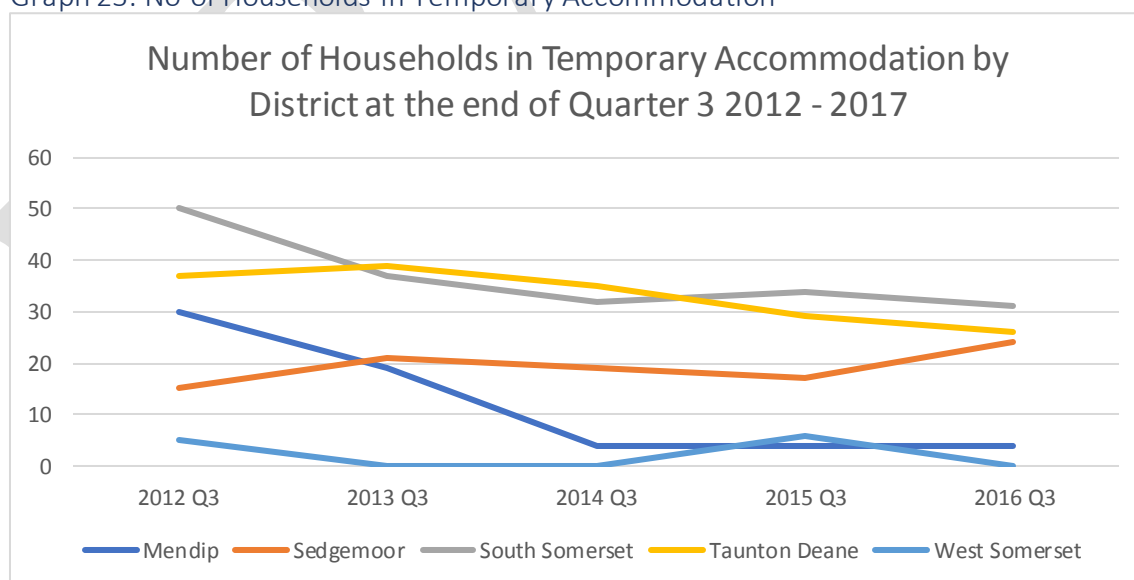
Taunton Deane: 29.7% decrease

West Somerset: 100.0% decrease

The South West region recorded a 17.7% increase in the same period and England recorded a 40.9% increase in the use of temporary accommodation.

The graph below demonstrates the trends for each Local Authority in its use of temporary accommodation over the last few years.

Graph 23: No of Households in Temporary Accommodation



7.8 The table below shows the number of households with dependent children in temporary accommodation by District since 2012 at the end of quarter 3.

Table 28: No of Households with Dependent Children in Temporary Accommodation

	2012 Q3	2013 Q3	2014 Q3	2015 Q3	2016 Q3
Mendip	28	16	11	0	7
Sedgemoor	8	11	11	10	13
South Somerset	27	19	8	10	7
Taunton Deane	26	26	23	15	19
West Somerset	5	0	0	6	0

The change over the last five years in percentages is shown below for each District:

Mendip: 75.0% decrease

Sedgemoor: 62.5% increase

South Somerset: 74.0% decrease

Taunton Deane: 26.9% decrease

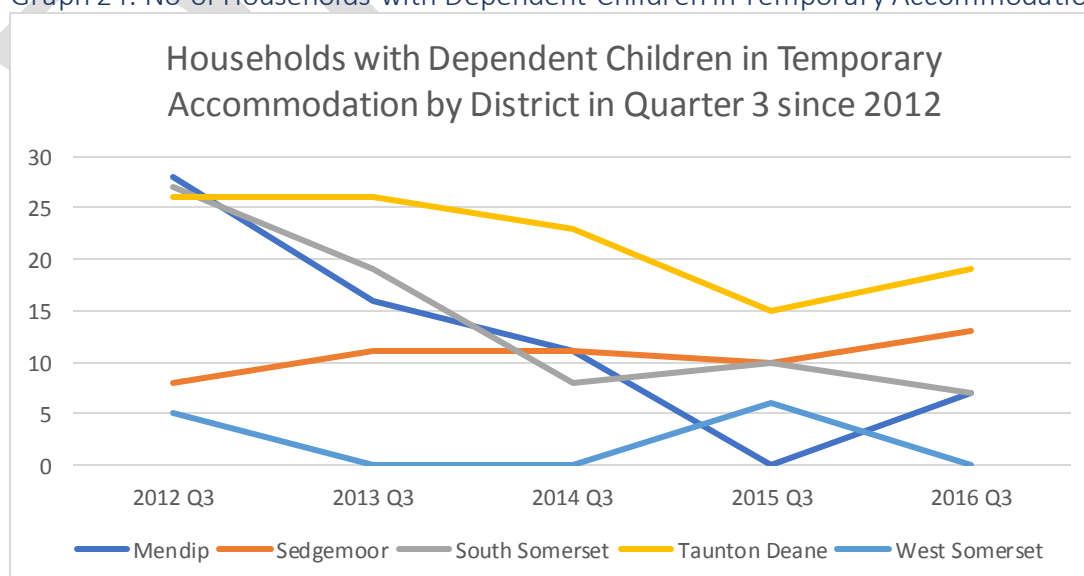
West Somerset: 100.0% decrease

Over the same period, the comparative percentages for the South West region and England were 35.7% increase and 47.8% increase respectively.

It should be noted that these statistics are a snap shot of the situation at the end of each quarter and do not necessarily reflect long term trends in all cases. It is clear however that the use of temporary accommodation for applicants with dependant children has been consistently low in Somerset over the past few years.

The graph below demonstrates the trends for each Local Authority in the number of households with dependent children in temporary accommodation since 2012.

Graph 24: No of Households with Dependent Children in Temporary Accommodation



7.9 The table below shows the number of households found to be intentionally homeless since 2012 by District.

Table 29: Households Found Intentionally Homeless

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Mendip	16	12	23	31	30
Sedgemoor	7	8	6	12	10
South Somerset	26	22	10	22	18
Taunton Deane	3	6	11	11	19
West Somerset	10	11	7	4	0

The percentage change over the past five years for each District are shown below:

Mendip: 87.5% increase

Sedgemoor: 42.9% increase

South Somerset: 30.8% decrease

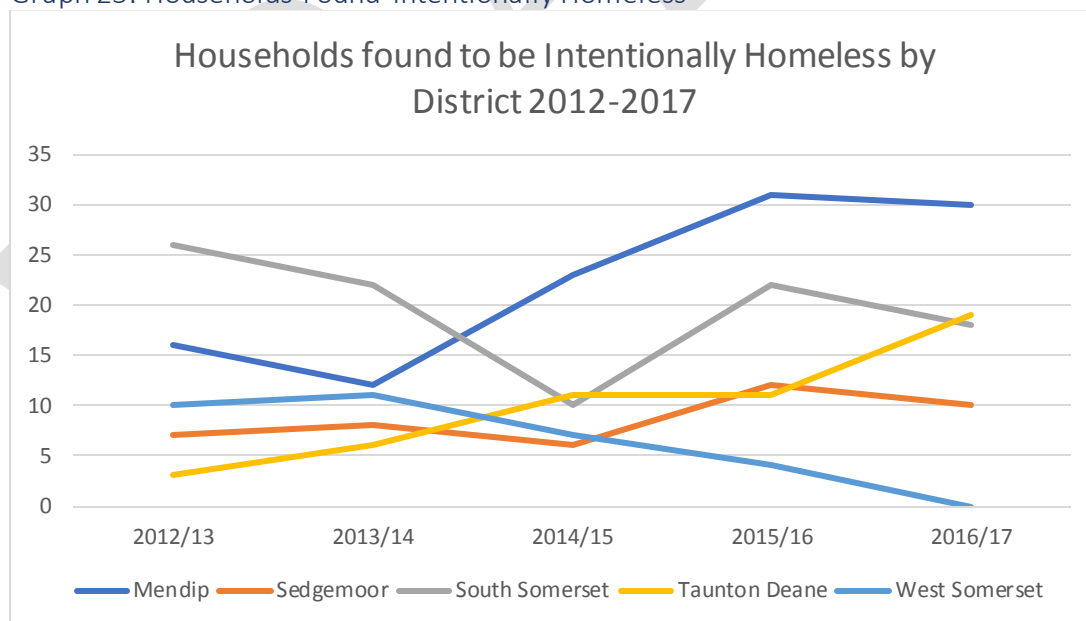
Taunton Deane: 533% increase

West Somerset: 100.0% decrease

In the South West region there was 30.3% increase over the same time period and in England, a 20.3% increase.

The graph below demonstrates the trends for each Local Authority in the number of households found to be intentionally homeless.

Graph 25: Households Found Intentionally Homeless



7.10 The table below shows the extent of rough sleeping by District since 2012. This information is based on a single night snapshot carried out in autumn every year using street counts and intelligence driven estimates.

Table 30: Extent of Rough Sleeping

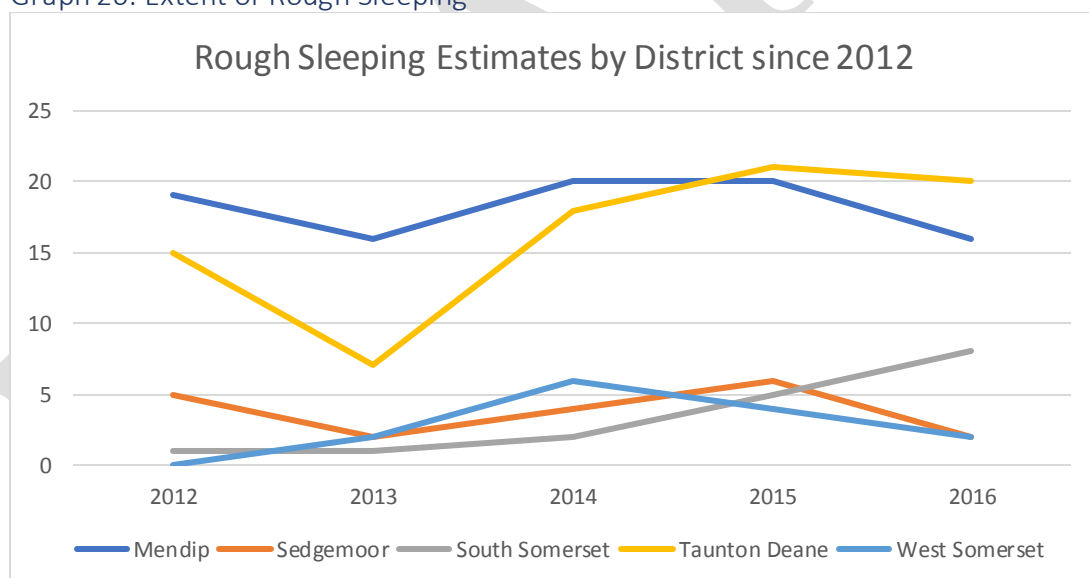
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Mendip	19	16	20	20	16	19
Sedgemoor	5	2	4	6	2	7
South Somerset	1	1	2	5	8	4
Taunton Deane	15	7	18	21	20	23
West Somerset	0	2	6	4	2	4

The change over the last five years in terms of percentages is shown below:

- Mendip: 15.8% decrease
- Sedgemoor: 60.0% decrease
- South Somerset: 700.0% increase
- Taunton Deane: 33.3% increase
- West Somerset: 200.0% increase

The graph below demonstrates the trends in rough sleeping estimates by District since 2012.

Graph 26: Extent of Rough Sleeping



7.11 SUMMARY OF DATA

The change in number of homeless prevention and relief cases has been very varied across the Districts over the last five years. South Somerset has experienced a decrease of 22.7% whereas West Somerset has experienced an increase of 193.8%. This compares to a 6.1% increase across England.

When further broken down, all Districts prevented more homelessness by assisting households into alternative accommodation than assisting clients to remain in their homes with the exception of Taunton Deane. Taunton Deane had much higher rates of homelessness relief and households assisted to remain in existing accommodation.

All districts saw a decrease in homeless households accepted over the last five years except Sedgemoor which saw a 35.8% increase. The largest decrease was seen in Mendip where the percentage decrease in homeless household acceptances was 73.0%. Both the South West region and England saw increases in homeless households accepted. This was 16.4% in the South West and 10.8% in England.

The main reasons for priority need of homeless applicants across all the Districts during the period July 2016 to June 2017 were households with dependent children, pregnancy, disability, old age, fleeing violence, mental illness and drug dependency.

The main reasons for becoming homeless across all the Districts for the period July 2016 to June 2017 were loss of tied or rented accommodation, parents or relatives no longer willing to accommodate and violence.

Use of temporary accommodation in the Districts over the monitored period for the last five years has mostly decreased across the Districts. Sedgemoor was the only District to experience an increase of 60.0%. Both the South West and England experienced percentage increases over the same period of 17.7% and 40.9% respectively.

The change in use of temporary accommodation for households with dependent children over the monitored period for the last five years is also similar. West Somerset achieved a 100.0% reduction whereas Sedgemoor had a 62.5% increase. Both the South West and England experienced percentage increases over the same period of 35.7% and 47.8% respectively.

The number of households becoming homeless intentionally has decreased in two Districts over the last five years – South Somerset and West Somerset. The other Districts all experienced an increase. Both the South West and England experienced increases of 30.3% and 20.3% each.

The extent of rough sleeping by the official autumn street counts each year has varied considerably by District over the last five years. South Somerset has seen a 700% increase, West Somerset a 200% increase and Taunton Deane an increase of 33.3%. Mendip and Sedgemoor both registered decreases over the last five years. The disparity in data could well be explained by rough sleepers moving through areas and presenting in other Districts.

8.0 CREATING THE NEW STRATEGY – CONSULTATION

- 8.1 In order to assess the effectiveness of the outgoing homelessness strategy and to examine the ongoing homelessness issues in the area, extensive consultation was undertaken with the five Districts as well as their partners.
- 8.2 The homelessness managers from each Local Authority were invited to submit their views via an online survey. This survey asked them to specify what actions from the previous homelessness strategy had been difficult to achieve, what the ongoing homelessness issues were for their areas and any examples of best practise they wished to highlight. They were also asked to provide a list of partners who should also be consulted as part of the exercise. A response was received from each of the five Somerset Local Authority Districts.

- 8.3 The named partners were then also encouraged to complete an online survey in order to gauge their views on the outgoing homelessness strategy and give feedback on the ongoing homelessness issues affecting their geographical area, their partners and their areas of work. In total, 51 responses were received. 143 partners were invited to submit feedback via the online survey giving a response rate of 35.7%.
- 8.4 Two consultation events were held on Thursday 2 November 2017 to which all named partners were invited to attend. A lunchtime session was held at the Sedgemoor District Council offices and a further session was held in Street later in the afternoon. 143 partners were invited to attend these sessions and across both sessions there were 45 attendees, giving a response rate of 31.5% for this consultation method.
- 8.5 Twelve key stakeholders of the 143 named partners were consulted with on a more direct basis, either by phone or email interview.

DRAFT

9.0 OUTGOING HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

The outgoing homelessness strategy covering Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset, Taunton Deane and West Somerset for the period 2013 to 2016 had three main goals;

- 1) Reduction and prevention of homelessness
- 2) Provision of appropriate advice, accommodation and support if a crisis occurs
- 3) Maximising effective partnership working to provide cost effective and responsive services

9.1 REDUCTION AND PREVENTION OF HOMELESSNESS

Actions suggested under this goal heading included:

- Continued use of the Homeless Prevention Fund- proactive use of funds to reduce homelessness using innovative solutions
- Bond/Deposits schemes and rent in advance - helps homeless households secure privately rented accommodation
- No Second Night Out - All five authorities have signed up to deliver the Governments 'no second night out vision'. We are also part of the Avon and Somerset Rough Sleepers Group, which aims to prevent rough sleeping and improve the advice given to single non-priority homeless.
- Provide support and incentives to private sector landlords to encourage them to let their properties to homeless or threatened with homelessness households.
- Ensure households threatened with homelessness are given the right advice as soon as it is needed
- Work with registered providers to maximise the number of properties let through Homefinder Somerset
- Mediation especially when relationships have broken down at home and young people are asked to leave their accommodation
- Provide good quality advice to landlords, people threatened with homelessness and the general public

9.2 PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE ADVICE, ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT IF A CRISIS OCCURS

Actions suggested under this goal heading included:

- Ensuring staff have up to date training to give the correct advice and information to applicants
- To facilitate grants to bring empty properties back into occupation
- To facilitate grants to improve the standard of private sector accommodation
- Continue to work with Somerset County Council and the providers to deliver P2I which includes providing education work at schools and colleges
- Continue to work with Somerset County Council to deliver P4A
- To support where appropriate the Family Focus Programme
- To provide a Tenant Accreditation Scheme so households are equipped with the right skills to maintain their tenancy.

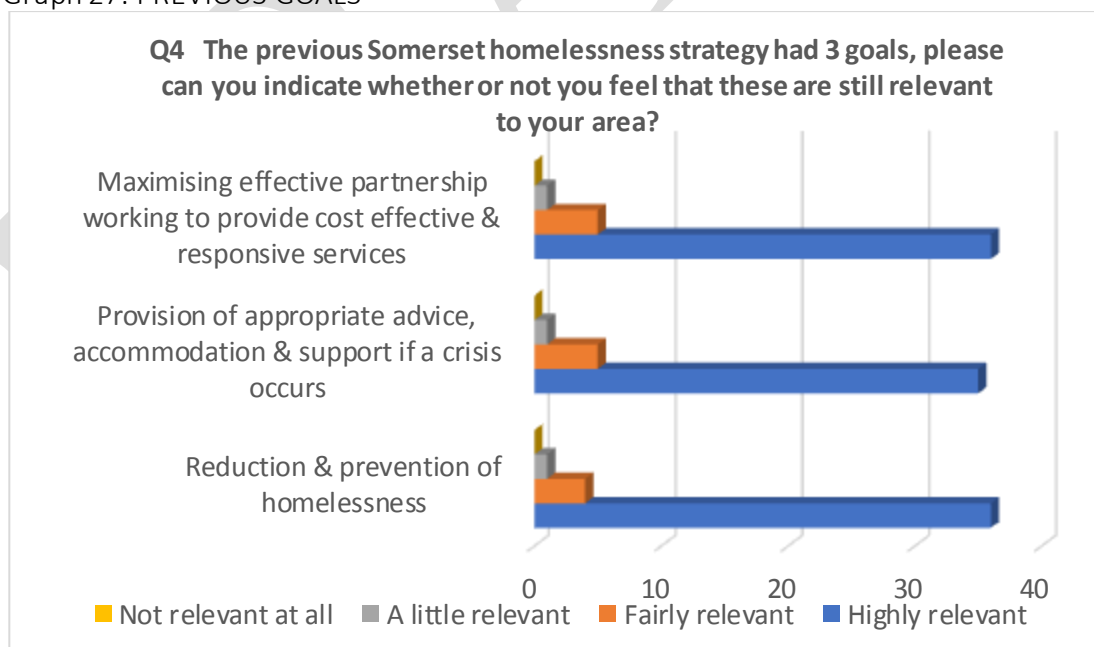
9.3 MAXIMISE EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIP WORKING TO PROVIDE COST EFFECTIVE AND RESPONSIVE SERVICES

Actions suggested under this goal heading included:

- Create a protocol with the Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs) and hospitals to ensure patients are not discharged from hospital without suitable accommodation.
- Create a protocol with the local Prisons and Police to ensure people are not released from prison/custody without suitable accommodation.
- Work with Registered Providers to maximise the creation of appropriate new properties.
- Work with Partners to give advice e.g. debt advice, mortgage repossession to households threatened with homelessness to ensure their long-term stability.
- Work with Avon and Somerset Rough Sleepers Steering Group to ensure there is adequate provision for single homeless and rough sleepers in each District.
- Work collaboratively with partners to deliver value for money services and maximise funding opportunities.
- Work with Housing Benefits to maximise the use of Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) to prevent homelessness.
- Continue to work together to administer Homefinder Somerset
- To ensure District Planning authorities are made aware of the appropriate size and type of accommodation that is required using evidence from Homefinder Somerset.

9.4 Survey respondents were asked how relevant they felt the outgoing homelessness strategy goals were and the results are shown below:

Graph 27: PREVIOUS GOALS



9.5 As can be seen from the results above, the majority of respondents felt that all three goals were still relevant. However, the outgoing goals also received some criticism. Some respondents felt that the goals were too broad in nature and that the new homelessness strategy should be more specific in relation to its goals.

10.0 PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN THE DELIVERY OF THE OUTGOING ACTION PLAN & HOMELESSNESS ISSUES AFFECTING THE REGION

- 10.1 Key stakeholders and partners within each Somerset District Authority were asked by survey and group consultation to highlight areas of the outgoing action plan they had found difficult to implement. They were also asked to highlight current areas of weakness/barriers experienced in delivering homelessness objectives in the region. They were also asked about achievements from the outgoing action plan and examples of good practice for which responses will be covered in the next section.

Their responses have been grouped into themes.

10.2 DUAL DIAGNOSIS CLIENTS

Concern was expressed with regard to how dual diagnosis clients that may fall between mental health teams and drug/alcohol teams were catered for. There was group consensus that this client group may be passed from one team to another without collaborative assistance for the client. There are also widespread concerns about the under-resourcing of mental health services and drug and alcohol services, which can be a significant factor in causing and sustaining homelessness. It was suggested that a better partnership approach was required for this group of clients in order to better support their prevention of homelessness.

10.3 SINGLE HOMELESS CLIENTS

Providing adequate accommodation options for single households was cited as a particular challenge. It was also felt that this problem has been exacerbated by the Hinkley Point development with private landlords now developing and letting single units of accommodation with Hinkley Point workers in mind as preferred tenants. Anecdotal evidence from the consultation exercise suggested that private landlords may also be actively serving notice on existing private tenants in order to re market and achieve increased rental returns by letting to Hinkley Point workers. There appears to be a reluctance by private landlords to enter the houses in multiple occupation (HMO) market. There also appears to be a lack of ongoing support for single homeless clients with some support needs in managing to avoid repeat homelessness.

The new Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places greater emphasis on Local Authorities to cater for non-priority need clients and as such more work needs to be done around supporting single homeless client groups.

10.4 HOUSING OPTIONS FOR THE 25-34 YEAR AGE GROUP

Closely linked to the issue highlighted above is that of the housing options available for clients within the 25-34 year old age group. This group of clients is generally expected to live in shared accommodation and is restricted to the shared accommodation housing element of universal credit. The consultation exercise suggested that whilst there are a comparatively high number of options and services catering for young people, the options diminish at the time an individual reaches the age of 25. This is creating problems in moving clients on from programmes and freeing up spaces when they reach the age of 25. There is also a lack of

ongoing support for the client group so when they do manage to secure accommodation they are at high risk of repeat homelessness.

10.5 DIFFICULTIES EXPERIENCED IN WORKING WITH PARTNERS

Whilst consultation on the partnership approach between local authority homelessness functions and third parties was generally positive and mutually respectful, there were a couple of examples cited of where further focus and work was required to meet satisfactory outcomes for homeless clients. It was suggested that there needed to be more resource dedicated to engaging with the County Council. It was also suggested that there had been difficulties experienced in establishing a protocol for patients being discharged from hospital and mental health schemes.

10.6 OCCURRENCE OF REPEAT HOMELESSNESS

The consultation exercise suggested that numbers of repeat homelessness could be high and rising. One of the reasons suggested for this were the cutbacks in funding for floating support services for families in crisis. It was generally felt that if more floating support services were available, repeat homelessness may reduce and private sector landlords may be more willing to accept homeless households in private rented sector properties.

10.7 PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS FOR 16/17 YEAR OLDS

The consultation exercise revealed that there was desire to work with local schools in raising awareness around homelessness for this age group, however there had been difficulties experienced with buy in from the schools and fitting in with the current curriculum. It was generally felt that there needed commitment at County Council level to push the project forward.

10.8 ACCESS TO SOCIAL HOUSING

There were concerns raised around the level of information and scrutiny being applied to households being selected by social housing providers with the result being that households that may previously have been accepted into social housing now being declined due to scrutiny of their housing/personal history. Universal Credit was generally blamed for this shift due to the loss of direct payments to landlords with social landlords becoming far more risk adverse.

10.9 UNIVERSAL CREDIT

Universal credit has now been rolled out across all the Districts and has been cited as causing a number of problems in relation to homelessness and sustainment of accommodation:

- Nationally, delays in new claimants receiving Universal Credit payments have been cited as 6 to 8 weeks but consultees suggested that in their areas, delays of 13-14 weeks are not unheard of.
- These delays are causing clients to experience high levels of debt that can become unsurmountable by the time payment is eventually received.
- Clients are being refused private rented accommodation because private landlords don't want to take the risk of Universal Credit and possible rent arrears.
- Clients are struggling to make the online application for Universal Credit and experience difficulty in finding places to get online.
- Clients with support needs are struggling to complete the application without assistance.
- Social landlords are reportedly being more selective with social housing applicants.

- Once completing a Universal Credit online application, clients are expected to make their own appointment with the Job Centre. When clients don't do this, their claims get cancelled and they have to re start the process.
- Tenants are losing accommodation because they are getting into high rent arrears.
- Tenants are living in poverty because delays in receiving payments mean that they have no income for food or essential items.
- Chaotic clients do not prioritise their rent money and so when huge sums of backdated monies are received, other choices may be made on how it is spent.
- A lot of work with young people in the area is trying to teach them how to be responsible in preparation for a tenancy however, with the delays in payments being experienced, clients are very often in high levels of debt and it was felt that this is counterproductive to the lessons trying to be taught.
- Some consultees suggested that the delays being experienced in receiving Universal Credit are having a detrimental effect on client health and mental well-being.

10.10 OPTIONS FOR OLDER PERSONS

The region is expected to experience an increase in the number of older persons, particularly in the number of people to be in the over 85 year age bracket. It was highlighted that more housing options needed to be developed to meet the future demands of this client group moving forward.

10.11 SKILLS GAP IN HOMELESSNESS

Managers responsible for homelessness within the Local Authorities suggested that the skillset and attributes required within Housing Options Officers has changed over the last few years as the emphasis around homelessness has shifted to that of prevention and relief. New skills such as negotiation skills are now required to deliver positive outcomes and as such there may be a need to upskill existing members of staff and re define officer key attributes when recruiting for vacancies.

10.12 PRIVATE RENTAL MARKET

It was suggested that due to the local housing allowance rates applied, large parts of the county were unaffordable to clients, making it very difficult for clients to maintain links with local communities and families if required to move to cheaper areas of the Districts. The private rented sector was cited as becoming increasingly difficult to access due to the unwillingness of landlords to accept households on low incomes and in receipt of Universal Credit. It was suggested that increasing numbers of landlords are choosing professional households particularly in light of the development occurring at Hinkley Point. The demand for accommodation near Hinkley Point has pushed up private rents in the area making them even less affordable for local households threatened with homelessness.

10.13 RURAL HOUSING AND OPTIONS

Large parts of the Districts represented by this homelessness review are rural in nature and as such it presents a continued challenge providing rural housing options for local households. Affordable housing for local families is difficult to achieve Transport links between areas can also present a challenge in how easy it is for a client to access and engage with support services that are made available to them and can directly affect or hinder their effectiveness.

10.14 ROUGH SLEEPING

The numbers of rough sleepers remains fairly constant across the Districts with higher numbers statistically present in the Districts of Mendip and Taunton Deane. Organisations that regularly support rough sleepers claim the actual numbers of rough sleepers to be higher due to the “unseen” cases of homelessness. This includes those that are sofa surfing as well as sleeping in vehicles. Rough sleeper support workers also claim that as it is a very rural area, there are rough sleepers who seek to sleep away from society in wooded areas. Practitioners state that cross region links need to be improved to ensure that when a rough sleeper moves from one District to another after exhausting services in an area, they are recognised and supported.

11.0 ACHIEVEMENTS & EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE ACROSS THE DISTRICTS

11.1 The consultation exercise highlighted a number of examples of good practice across the Districts, some just being piloted in one District, other examples spanning several of the Districts. These are highlighted below.

11.2 SOCIAL LETTING AGENCIES

Nationally there has been a general shift away from Local Authority backed deposit bond schemes to the delivery of social lettings agencies. A social lettings agency is a private sector access scheme that is run on a commercial basis for the purpose of helping households homeless or threatened with homelessness access affordable accommodation in the private rented sector.

There are two social lettings agencies operating in the Somerset Districts – Keyring Lettings in Mendip and Somerset West Letting Agency (part of Taunton Association for the Homeless and joint funded by Sedgemoor and West Somerset Local Authorities).

Keyring Lettings is an independent social enterprise operating predominantly in the Mendip area. It offers full management and tenant introduction services for private landlords and accepts all types of properties. Any properties that are not affordable for low income households are let on the open private rental market, thus creating opportunities for income to be put back into the work it does with households threatened with homelessness.

Keyring have directly helped 71 tenants to find affordable and decent accommodation since its beginning in October 2013.

Somerset West Letting Agency operates across the Sedgemoor and West Somerset Districts. It offers full management and let only options for private landlords and charges fees for its services. It finds that many of its landlords use its service because of its ‘not for profit’ status and tends to attract landlords with a philanthropic outlook.

In the first two years of operation the Somerset West Lettings Agency secured 89 bed spaces in Sedgemoor and 5 bed spaces in West Somerset.

11.3 YMCA TENANCY TRAINING & ACCREDITATION

The YMCA Somerset Coast offers a Tenant Accreditation Scheme to anyone over the age of 16 which includes six modules covering where to look for accommodation, what a tenancy agreement is, what landlords expect, budgeting, looking after a home and themselves and what they should do when things go wrong. It was initially offered as a group session but due to

the demand for the service it is now offered in one to one sessions as well. All clients successfully completing the course receive a certificate. Whilst it is recognised by some letting agents and landlords in the area, more work could be on the recognition of this qualification. There are aspirations to expand this scheme to include an online option.

Tenant Accreditation can be accessed across all districts although, only the YMCA schemes have been audited by the South West Audit Partnership and are also signed up to the Somerset Tenant Accreditation Group (STAG). The Scheme is delivered by Mendip YMCA to supported housing schemes in South Somerset. The Home Group are also delivering a tenant accreditation model in South Somerset but not under STAG or audited by SWAP. An agreement for all schemes to work to the same standards and to be verified by the same independent auditors would be of benefit to residents and landlords across Somerset.

YMCA Somerset Coast deliver Tenant Accreditation across Sedgemoor, West Somerset and Taunton Deane Districts whilst Mendip YMCA delivers the scheme in Mendip.

In 2016/17, 75 clients enrolled on the scheme; 40 from Sedgemoor, 23 across Taunton Deane and a further 12 across West Somerset. 27 clients successfully completed the course; 18 from Sedgemoor, 4 from Taunton Deane and 5 from the West Somerset District.

In Mendip, 49 individuals engaged in the scheme in the first two quarters of 2017/18 achieving 252 completed modules and 21 fully completed the course.

The Tenant Accreditation Scheme is widely used as a homeless prevention tool amongst the Somerset Housing Authorities. Referrals are sent through on behalf of clients who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and in need of support and skills to sustain their tenancy.

11.4 LOAN SCHEMES

Sedgemoor District Council has been trialling several loan schemes within their District in partnership with the Credit Union. Funding for these new schemes came from Hinkley Point C section 106 funds and a grant from the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner's Community Safety Grant. Details of the schemes are as follows:

- Repossession prevention loan scheme – loans provided to households threatened with repossession action of up to £5,000. A financial assessment is completed by the Citizens Advice Bureau and the finances administered by the Credit Union.
- Sedgemoor Loan Guarantee Scheme – to alleviate or prevent homelessness. Up to £350.00 per application and administered by the Credit Union.
- Universal Credit Rent in Advance Loan Scheme – scheme designed to help assist households in receipt of universal credit access the private rented sector. Up to two months' rent in advance is available and borrowed from the Credit Union. It is paid directly to the landlord and recouped from Universal Credit payment.
- Loan a phone – clients can borrow a phone so that they can keep track of their Universal Credit application.
- Furniture package – credit union loan for essential furniture.

11.5 MENDIP HELP TO RENT SCHEME

Mendip District Council works closely with Mendip Community Credit Union to assist clients into the private rented sector where they have limited finance and meet the necessary eligibility criteria. The Help to Rent scheme allows the applicant to take out an affordable

loan with the Credit Union at 0% interest for a suitable period in order to secure a suitable property within the private rented sector.

11.6 DEPOSIT GUARANTEE SCHEME

Mendip District Council works in partnership with Mendip YMCA to provide a Deposit Guarantee Scheme (DGS) to help clients into private sector housing. The DGS is in effect a non-cash deposit where the landlord of the property being rented, agrees that in the event that a tenant causes damage or requires reimbursement for costs normally taken out of a cash deposit, the YMCA would pay the landlord the agreed amount and the tenant would then be liable to pay that money back to the YMCA.

11.7 SEDGEMOOR LODGINGS SCHEME

This is a partnership scheme with Somerset Coast YMCA to establish lodgings so that people can remain in their homes and provide much needed accommodation. A £1000 grant is available to make property suitable for lodgings. The Lodgings Scheme was set up using mitigation funding from the Hinkley C Development (planning gain money for site preparation) and this funding was restricted to Sedgemoor and West Somerset Districts. In the first two years of operation it delivered 180 bed spaces in Sedgemoor and 38 in West Somerset.

11.8 YMCA ADULT EMERGENCY HOST FAMILY ACCOMMODATION (EHFA)

Adult EHFA is the provision of Host Family Accommodation for up to seven nights for someone aged 25 and over. The scheme is operated by Mendip YMCA

11.9 HELPING ROUGH SLEEPERS

The Avon & Somerset Rough Sleeper Group was formed by the 9 Avon & Somerset local authorities. The group were awarded £450k by DCLG in 2011 to improve services and access to housing provision for this group experiencing the most acute form of homelessness. Over the last 7 years, the funding has been spent on initiatives to reduce rough sleeping in the Avon and Somerset area and to improve services and access to accommodation. The group still meets to share good practice, making joint applications for funds, monitoring rough sleeping and its implications, organising training events and working together to implement changes required by the Homelessness Reduction Act.

The Elim Connect Centre in Wells is a good local example of excellent service provision for this particular client group. Mendip District Council commission them to deliver an outreach service to work with rough sleepers on a one to one basis. Due to the sometimes transient nature of rough sleeping, people can navigate away from their home and support networks to the Mendip area. As with all of the Avon and Somerset Authorities, the outreach service will work closely with Mendip Housing Options Team to reconnect those without a local connection to Mendip to their home authority.

11.10 REPRESENTATION OF CLIENTS FACING HOMELESSNESS IN COURT

Housing Officers in South Somerset attend Court on request to prevent homelessness which has proved very successful. While the numbers of people attending possession hearings have decreased, figures for warrant suspension cases has increased, indicating that clients are leaving things until crisis stage. The proximity of the housing office to the courts is useful and we are often called over at very short notice to attend a hearing, sometimes at the Judge's request if they feel the Tenant needs assistance. This remains an essential tool for preventing homelessness.

In Sedgemoor, the Council provides the Citizens Advice Bureau with £10,000 per annum to prepare referred clients' files and represent them in Court to prevent homelessness.

11.11 SOMERSET HOMELET WEBSITE

This is a new initiative that allows private landlords and agents to advertise their vacant properties to let for free. The service only currently covers Sedgemoor, West Somerset, Taunton Deane and North Somerset and has been funded in partnership with the Hinkley Point development. At the time of writing this strategy, there are currently the following properties registered on this site.



11.12 PATHWAY TO INDEPENDENCE (P2i)

Somerset County Council and the five District Councils across Somerset commissioned Pathways to Independence (P2i) during 2012/2013 as a response to the escalating issues around youth housing in Somerset. P2i was launched in May 2013 and is a multi-agency homelessness prevention service for young people aged 16-25 who reside in, or have a local connection to the Somerset area. It was recommissioned in 2016 and a new contract began on 1st January 2017.

First and foremost the service is designed to prevent homelessness by providing targeted prevention measures. If prevention is not possible the service allows young people with housing related support needs to progress along a pathway of outcome focused needs led provision, until they are able to sustain independent living without the need for support.

The service is jointly funded by Somerset County Council and the five District Councils within Somerset and is currently commissioned to be delivered by two providers taking responsibility for a designated geographical area.

P2i is an outcome based homelessness prevention service which aims to provide a service for all vulnerable young people aged 16 to 25 inclusive who have a relevant need. There are however some young people who are unsuitable for P2i because:

- Their needs are so complex that they require a specialist, or statutory based service, which providers are not regulated to provide;
- Their requirement is only that of accommodation and not support;
- They are not eligible as they do not reside in, or have a local connection to Somerset.

In these circumstances P2i will aim to work in a multi-agency way to find the best immediate solution.

The following have been identified as having a primary need for P2i support:

- 16 and 17 years olds towards whom children's social care have a responsibility;
- Care Leavers aged 18 to 21 (or 25 if in full time education)
- 16 and 17 year old homeless young people;
- Vulnerable 18 to 25 year olds in priority need (as defined under homelessness legislation).

Under the P2i Initiative there are a total of 168 beds available across the count; 48 in Taunton and West Somerset, 40 in Sedgemoor, 38 in Mendip and 42 in South Somerset.

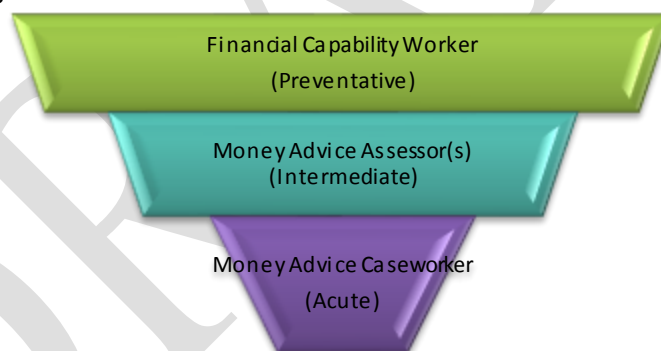
Young people request a service under P2i through the area access hubs in each area. A total of 770 contacts were made at these hubs Jan 17-Jan 18. 413 in Taunton, 141 in South Somerset, 149 in Sedgemoor and 67 in Mendip. These contacts include repeat customers, telephone calls and emails.

After their initial presentation the young people are discussed at a weekly allocations panel. In 2017 672 young people were discussed at these panels, 138 (21%) were care leavers and 140 (21%) were 16/17 year olds.

11.13 MONEY ADVICE IN SEDGEMOOR

Citizens Advice Sedgemoor delivers a model of Money Advice on behalf of Sedgemoor District Council as set out below in order to address the challenges faced by Universal Credit and in order to offer a comprehensive money advice service to the people of Sedgemoor.

The model takes into account the whole spectrum of money advice needs and the abilities of clients to progress matters themselves.



Preventative level

Improving financial capability gives people the power to make the most of their money and improve their lives to enable them to have the best possible financial wellbeing, both now and in the future.

Universal Credit clients can access financial capability sessions through Personal Budgeting Support in order to help them to manage their Universal Credit payments.

Intermediate level

This enables those clients who have an increased need for support to have a more in-depth conversation with a money advice assessor, on an appointment basis. The money advice assessor can produce a financial statement on behalf of the client, look at ways to maximise the client's income, or refer on to a money advice caseworker.

Acute level

A referral to a money advice caseworker where a client is vulnerable, has complex needs or issues or requires input in order to achieve long term money advice solutions. This may include preparing a client for insolvency proceedings, submitting a Debt Relief Order for a client, representation at court and ongoing negotiation with creditors.

Key Outcomes

- reduction and eradication of debt ;
- improved emotional well-being ;
- improved mental health ;
- preventing homelessness ;
- maintaining jobs/wages ;
- increased income ;
- avoiding criminality ;

CITIZENS ADVICE WARRANT, DEBT AND BUDGETING SCHEME

Mendip District Council works closely with Citizens Advice to provide applicants with Warrant, Debt and Budgeting schemes.

The Warrant scheme can be used where the applicant is at risk of homelessness due to their landlord having obtained a bailiff's warrant. The scheme ensures urgent professional advice and assistance is available to see if the warrant can be stopped. Providing the Warrant has not already been executed, a referral can be made to Citizens Advice.

The Debt scheme provides applicants whose debts may mean they are at risk of homelessness, with specialist debt advice by pre-arranged appointment.

The Budgeting scheme is for applicants who may be at risk of falling into arrears due to their budgeting to provide them with advice to maximise their income. This scheme aims to help people that need assistance with budgeting and living within their means. It would also include help budgeting following transition to Universal Credit.

11.14 FLOATING SUPPORT SERVICE

Since 2016, South Somerset District Council has funded Yeovil4Family, a church based organisation, to provide a floating support service to people at risk of homelessness. Clients work directly with a Link Worker and a trained volunteer mentor for up to 1 year. The approach is proving very successful; 56 referrals have been received, 26 individuals have been supported and 18 mentors trained. Positive outcomes already being identified include sustained tenancies, training, employment, improved self-esteem and accessing support for drug and alcohol issues.

YMCA Mendip offer a Private Rented Sector Worker for those 25 and over to work with people to source and sustain affordable accommodation in the private rented sector. This support can be tailored for the individual and be for any length of time. This floating support may also offer assistance with a deposit bond and put clients in touch with landlords who will accept those on a low income.

11.15 SOUTH SOMERSET IN HOUSE WELFARE BENEFITS TEAM

South Somerset District Council has an in-house welfare benefits team with 2.1 Full Time Equivalent posts (FTE) undertaking casework for clients across South Somerset. The team provides free, confidential and impartial information, advice and advocacy on Welfare

Benefits. They carry out specialised case work; preparing claims, representing clients at Appeals, up to and including First-Tier and Upper Tier Tribunals.

In 2016/17, they supported 482 clients across South Somerset, achieve an annual increased income of £1,025,202 and lump sum payments in total of £175,940.

11.16 HOMEFINDER SOMERSET

All five councils in Somerset are part of the Homefinder Somerset partnership. The Homefinder Somerset Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme and Common Lettings Policy is administered by the five Somerset Local Authorities (LA's) in partnership with the majority of the registered housing providers operating within Somerset. The single policy takes account of Somerset's strategic housing framework, homelessness strategy and tenancy strategy.

Homefinder Somerset is considered a major success in terms of partnership working across the county, providing social housing applicants with a wide choice of properties and creating freedom of movement across a wide geographical area.

11.17 POSITIVE LIVES

Positive Lives is a county-wide initiative designed to support vulnerable homeless adults with complex needs. Following an £880,000 cut in housing support and with reduced funding of £309,000, statutory and voluntary agencies and local housing providers are working together to tackle challenging needs. Each agency has piloted and found local creative solutions. After listening to Service User's aspirations and views, services were redesigned to be empowering and flexibly meet their individual needs through smaller bespoke services. New initiatives are piloted to build a successful evidence based approach to engaging individuals who find traditional services unhelpful. Services incorporate peer support and mentoring, accommodation with support, floating support, creative use of budgets to engage individuals in their own solutions, emergency access accommodation, family hosting and therapeutic models. Removing interagency barriers and collaborative working between local statutory and voluntary partners, local providers and service users has been critical to the success of Positive Lives.

12.0 HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2017-2019

12.1 Using the evidence from the homelessness review and information obtained from the consultation in preparation for this strategy, four new priorities have been developed to focus the Homelessness Strategy for the Districts over the next 18 month period. These are described below. Each Local Authority will adopt the Action Plan locally to ensure that it is relevant to their District and the priorities for each Local Authority area have been highlighted in the forewords of this document.

12.2 PRIORITY 1

Support the transition in services required by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 to reduce and prevent homelessness.

The Act will become effective from 3rd April 2018 and presents a new way of working and expansion of existing homeless services. It will present a number of challenges due to the level of change required and as such it has been given its own priority category for the short

term. It is expected that upon review of the strategy in 18 months' time it will no longer need to be considered a priority in its own right.

12.3 PRIORITY 2

Support clients to remain in their existing accommodation where appropriate.

This priority involves looking at and improving the range of options, support and tools that can assist an individual in remaining in their existing accommodation. Needing to move accommodation can be hugely disruptive and costly for individuals and families. Being able to sustain current accommodation can deliver cost savings for Local Authorities and their partner agencies.

12.4 PRIORITY 3

Support clients to access suitable and affordable accommodation where appropriate.

It may not always be possible for a client to remain in their current accommodation so where a move cannot be avoided, this priority will ensure that they can access suitable accommodation that is affordable to them in a timely manner. This priority looks at the options available to clients and addresses accommodation options such as the private rented sector and move on options.

12.5 PRIORITY 4

Build and maintain strong working relationships across partnerships.

This homelessness strategy for the next 18 months is a partnership approach between five Local Authorities as well as their partners. It cannot be delivered in isolation and this priority recognises the need for existing working relationships to be maintained and built upon. Effective partnership working brings a number of benefits including the sharing of best practice and effective use of resources to deliver cost savings to all working partners and for this reason it remains a priority for this homelessness strategy.

- 12.6 It is expected that the Homeless Managers Group (HMG) will be responsible for the delivery of this strategy and action plan and responsible for monitoring progress against actions and targets.

13.0 ACTION PLAN

PRIORITY 1: Support the transition in services required by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 to reduce and prevent homelessness

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
1.1	Address any staffing skill gaps by recruiting/retraining individuals to effectively deliver what is required by the Act including increased ability to provide good quality advice and information	April 2018 and on-going	HMG	Within existing resources and New Burdens funding from Government.	Assess current staffing skillsets Identify gaps in skillsets Identify training programmes Recruit new skills required	Achieve and deliver the requirements as set out by the Act	Increase in support available to clients Improvement in the quality of advice offered to clients Increase in the number of cases where homelessness is successfully prevented and relieved
1.2	Share best practice in delivering the Act amongst Somerset Homelessness Managers & Officers	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources	Ensure that each Local Authority is represented at HMG meetings Improved use of IT to share information Explore options for sharing best practise	Share best practice across Districts Brainstorm challenges Share information Share resources	Evidence of new ideas, practices & initiatives that will contribute to improved homeless prevention
1.3	Develop protocols for Public Services, Housing Providers & all other Agencies to refer clients they believe to be homeless or at risk of homelessness	October 2018 and on-going	HMG Public Services to be defined by Government	Within existing resources	Create procedure Create associated forms Monitor effectiveness of new protocol	Achieve and deliver the requirements as set out by the Act	Increase in the number of referrals from third parties of clients believed to be homeless or at risk of homelessness

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
					Raise awareness of new protocol and duties on Public Services		
1.4	Maximise partnerships with all existing service providers to ensure the quality of support provided to clients	Ongoing	HMG All Partners	Within existing resources	Raise awareness of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 amongst partners	Achieve and deliver the requirements as set out by the Act	Increase in support provided to clients Improvement in the quality of advice offered to clients Increase in the number of referrals to and from third parties of clients believed to be homeless or at risk of homelessness

PRIORITY 2: Support clients to remain in their existing accommodation where appropriate

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
2.1	Review options and availability of tenancy support services both for families and single homeless clients	June 2018	HMG Solutions to be identified on a District basis Floating support providers	Within existing Use of new burdens funding.	Identify gaps in provision of floating support & barriers to effective use	Increase in the number of tenancies sustained	Increase in the number of homeless prevention & relief cases
2.2	Review the countywide Pre Eviction Protocol to take account of the Homelessness Reduction	September 2018	HMG	Within existing resources	Create awareness and campaign using social media, radio and Local Authority publications	Increase in landlords contacting the Council	Fewer homeless approaches as a result of loss of last settled home

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
	Act				Appoint a landlord liaison officer in each District	<p>Increase in early interventions</p> <p>Reduction in number of eviction notices served</p> <p>Reduction in officer caseload created by Homeless Reduction Act</p> <p>Improvement in landlord relations</p>	Fewer homeless presentations to Local Authority
2.3	Review the initiatives currently in place to prevent the ending of Assured Shorthold Tenancies (AST's) in the Private Rented Sector	December 2018	HMG / Partners	Within existing	<p>Brainstorm within the Partnership</p> <p>Develop pilot projects, procedures, plans for any new initiatives</p>	Reduction in the number of evictions caused by private landlords serving notice	Fewer homelessness approaches as a result of loss of last settled home
2.4	Continue to monitor the effectiveness of the P2i initiative in supporting 16-24 year olds to remain in their homes	Ongoing	P2i Monitoring Board	Within existing	Develop any new services, initiatives or pilot projects within this framework to meet a specific need	Increase in the number of 16-24 year olds remaining at home	<p>Fewer homelessness approaches by clients aged 16-24</p> <p>Fewer homelessness approaches as a result of parents or relatives no longer willing to accommodate</p>
2.5	Ensure housing/homelessness awareness sessions are promoted in schools & colleges in each District	December 2018	HMG Somerset County Council	Within existing	Meet with Somerset County Council to improve school "buy in" and attach to curriculum	Increase in the number of 16-24 year olds remaining at home	<p>Fewer homelessness approaches by clients aged 16-24</p> <p>Fewer homelessness</p>

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
			YMCA TAH		Expand on work already initiated by YMCA and TAH Develop a programme		approaches as a result of parents or relatives no longer willing to accommodate
2.6	Evaluate the “stay safe” at home options available for victims of domestic violence where this choice is suitable Where ‘stay safe” at home is not an option, review banding, policy and processes around domestic violence to ensure consistency	January 2019	HMG Avon & Somerset Police Somerset County Council Homefinder Somerset	Within existing	Evaluate existing “stay safe” at home options Identify gaps and weaknesses of current schemes Develop any new services Review banding, processes & Procedures	Ensuring victims of domestic violence remain safe	Increase in the number of domestic violence victims able to remain in their home where it is practical to do so Consistent banding policy for victims of domestic violence
2.7	Explore the options to provide mediation services to different age groups/client groups	January 2019	HMG Mediation Providers	Within existing	Identify and create new relationships with mediation providers	Increase in the number of clients supported to remain in their homes	Increase in the number of cases where homelessness is successfully prevented

PRIORITY 3: Support clients to access suitable and affordable alternative accommodation where appropriate

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
3.1	Review available options for the use of Social Lettings Agencies and the services offered by existing Social	May 2019	HMG	Additional funding required / re allocation of	Evaluate the effectiveness of Keyring Lettings and Somerset West	Increase in the number of households able to access good quality	Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
	Lettings Agencies to improve access to affordable private rented sector accommodation			existing budget	Lettings Explore additional services that could be offered to landlords by both organisations Carry out feasibility studies for social lettings agencies in Taunton Deane and South Somerset	and affordable private rented sector accommodation Expansion of existing social lettings agencies or creation of new social lettings agencies	
3.2	Reduce the impact that Universal Credit is having on private landlords and agents shying away from households in receipt	Ongoing	Each District Authority	Existing resources	Promote awareness of loan schemes available to households amongst landlords and agents Promote awareness of support services available to households amongst landlords and agents Explore guaranteed rent options within social lettings agencies Explore additional pre-tenancy training or support for clients in successfully making UC claim	Increase in the number of households able to access good quality and affordable private rented sector accommodation	Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases
3.3	Continue the development of the Tenant Accreditation Schemes and ensure consistency provision and	December 2018	HMG Local providers	Additional funding required for expansion	Explore options to extend pre-tenancy training across more Districts and all client	Increase in the number of households able to access good quality	Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
	availability throughout the County		Somerset Tenant Accreditation Group		groups Explore option to deliver programme online Increase awareness of scheme with private landlords & agents	and affordable accommodation	Fewer homeless approaches
3.4	Monitor the success of the Lodgings Scheme in Sedgemoor, Taunton Deane & W Somerset and consider roll out to other Somerset Districts	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources. Additional funding may be required for any grant adaptations	Review pilot Identify deliver partners Develop eligibility criteria Develop procedures & raise awareness	Increase in the number of single units of accommodation available in the private rented sector Increase in the number of residents able to afford to remain in their own homes	Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases Fewer homeless approaches
3.5	Explore options to increase the number of single units available to single homeless clients, particularly the 25-34 year age group	November 2018	HMG	Within existing resources to explore options Additional funding may be needed if grants to landlords considered viable	Carry out feasibility study to assess type, numbers and areas in which units are needed Consider options to meet this need Consider grant funding to property owners to increase number of single units available in exchange for referral rights to properties	Increase in the number of single units of accommodation available in the private rented sector Increase in availability of move on accommodation from 16-24 year housing projects	Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases Fewer homeless approaches by those aged under 35

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
3.6	Work with social housing providers to ensure that there are transparent and fair tenant selection practices. Monitor skipping reasons more closely.	Ongoing	HMG Social housing providers Homefinder Somerset Board	Within existing resources	Written and transparent selection criteria Review processes for refusals or review boards Explore risk mitigation options	Reduction in the number of households refused by social landlords Improved access to social housing for clients with difficult housing histories	Improved housing options for clients
3.7	Develop Somerset wide Rough Sleepers Strategy	April 2019	HMG	Within existing resources	Carry out consultation with partners Develop strategy and action plan	Improved communication between partners in relation to rough sleeping Improved options & outcomes for rough sleepers Improved access to services for rough sleepers	Fewer rough sleepers
3.8	Raise awareness amongst Planners and Enabling Teams on the need and demand for particular units of accommodation	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources	Create & distribute fact sheets Meet Development Teams Attend Development Committees	Address the need within each District for 1 bedroom accommodation	Fewer households waiting for 1 bedroom accommodation on Homefinder Somerset

PRIORITY 4: Continue to build and maintain strong working partnerships to deliver cost effective and responsive services

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
4.1	Improve partnership working between Community Mental Health Teams and Drug/Alcohol dependency support to improve outcomes for dual diagnosis clients	Ongoing	Somerset County Council Rethink Connect Drug alcohol teams HMG	Within existing resources	Identify where cases are falling between services Develop protocols to prevent clients falling between services	Personalised and planned positive outcome for client	Reduction in the number of clients falling between services Increase in the number of successful homeless prevention & relief cases Fewer repeat homeless cases Increase in the number of successful move on cases
4.2	Continue to work with Community Mental Health Teams, Hospitals, Prisons and Probation to develop a protocol to ensure that clients are not discharged/released without suitable accommodation	Ongoing	HMG Hospitals Community Mental Health Team Prisons Probation	Within existing resources	Effective protocol in place Protocol launched Awareness raised Protocol monitored Review Dangerous Offender Protocol	Personalised and planned positive outcome for client	Reduction in the number of discharge patients presenting in homeless departments without warning
4.3	Work with Registered Providers to maximise the creation of new properties using creative design solutions in the right locations	Ongoing	HMG Homefinder Somerset Registered Providers Planners	Within existing resources	Work in partnership and provide data/evidence to ensure that new developments meet desired local housing need	Suitable units of affordable housing provided	Increase in the number of affordable units of social housing provided Fewer clients registered on Homefinder Somerset

No.	Our Aims/Priorities	When?	Who will deliver this?	Resources Needed	What Will We Do?	Target/Outcome	What would success look like?
4.4	Continue to share best practice within the HMG	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources	Share knowledge on challenges and achievements within the homelessness sector Identify best practice Implement pilot projects	Partnership working Increased knowledge Cross District services linked more closely	Reduce costs Improved use of resources
4.5	Provide briefings for elected Members periodically on the work of HMG	Ongoing	HMG	Within existing resources	Produce briefing every 6 month and circulate	Better awareness amongst Members on homelessness issues	Fully informed elected Members on homelessness achievements and challenges

Agenda Item 9

Community Right to Bid Half Year Report – October 2017 to March 2018

Executive Portfolio Holder: *Angie Singleton, Strategic Planning (Place Making), Area Development*
Ward Member(s) *All Wards*
Director: *Netta Meadows*
Service Manager: *Helen Rutter, Communities Lead*
Lead Officer: *David Crisfield, Third Sector and Equalities Co-ordinator*
Contact Details: *helen.rutter@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01963) 435012*
david.crisfield@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462240

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform members of the current status of the register of Assets of Community Value in South Somerset using the Community Right to Bid, for the second half of the 2017/18 financial year (October 2017 to March 2018) and to propose

Forward Plan

2. This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of May 2018.

Public Interest

3. The Government is providing communities with more opportunities to take control over the ownership and management of local assets. The Community Right to Bid came into effect on 21st September 2012 as part of the Localism Act 2011. It provides opportunities for voluntary and community organisations, as well as Parish Councils, to identify land and buildings which they believe to be important and which benefit their community. If they qualify, these can be placed on a Register of Assets of Community Value (ACV). If the asset comes up for sale, then in certain circumstances, an eligible community group can apply to be given time to make a bid to buy it on the open market.

Recommendations

4. That the District Executive:-
 - a. Comment on and note the report.
 - b. Approve the cessation of regular six monthly reporting.

Background

5. In November 2012, District Executive agreed a process for considering nominations from communities to place assets onto the SSDC Register of Assets of Community Value. This was based on clear criteria set out in the Localism Act. When nominations are received, SSDC has 8 weeks to consider them and respond to the applicant.
6. The assessment of nominations is carried out by the relevant Area Team Lead in conjunction with the Ward Member(s) and Area Chair. Previously a quarterly report was presented to District Executive for information. At its meeting in October 2016, District Executive resolved to reduce the level of reporting to two 6 monthly reports. Decisions about any SSDC-owned properties will be brought to District Executive for decision.

7. As of 6th April 2015 the legislation was amended so that pubs nominated to be included on the Local Authority's list would require planning permission to be demolished or converted to any other use. In effect existing permitted development rights are removed for pubs listed as ACVs for as long as the pub is on the Local Authority's list.

The new regulations regarding public houses can be summarised as follows:

- All pubs listed as ACVs (including those already listed) will require planning permission prior to any change of use or demolition. This protection applies from the date of nomination and applies for the duration of the period the asset is listed (usually 5 years).
 - If the building is nominated, whether at the date of nomination or on a later date, the Local Authority must notify the developer as soon as is reasonably practicable after it is aware of the nomination and on notification development is not permitted for the specified period.
 - The Local Authority has 56 days to confirm whether the pub is listed or nominated. This means that the owner cannot change use or demolish a pub lawfully within the prescribed 56 day period.
8. Since the Community Right to Bid regulations came into force, SSDC has approved and placed a total of **44** assets on the Register of Assets of Community Value. Ten assets have subsequently been removed. The register is therefore currently made up of **34** nominated assets, four of which are pubs/village stores that were sold as going concerns and which remain on the register therefore by virtue of being exempt disposals.
 9. A copy of the current register is attached at Appendix A.

Nominated Assets

10. One further asset was added to the Register during the period covered by this report:
 - Somerset Skills and Learning Centre in Ilminster.

Unsuccessful Nominations

11. There were no unsuccessful nominations during this period.

Nominations Pending

12. There are two new nominations currently being assessed and for which decisions have not yet been made:
 - Templar's Retreat, Templecome
 - Village allotments, Hinton St George

Assets Removed from the Register

13. Assets must be removed from the register as soon as practicable:
 - a) After a relevant disposal (other than an exempt disposal)
 - b) When an appeal against a listing has been successful
 - c) When the Council forms the opinion that the land or buildings are no longer of community value; or

- d) No later than 5 years from the date of entry on the list.
- 14. During the period covered by this report one asset has been removed from the register, namely a parking area in Hinton St George that was incorrectly nominated in 2014.
- 15. One further asset, Barrington School, is currently sold, subject to contract, and will be removed from the register once confirmation of the sale is received.

The Picture to Date

- 16. Of the **34** assets currently on the register in South Somerset:
 - a) 16 are village pubs/social clubs
 - b) 5 former school properties and/or playing fields
 - c) 3 churches/church halls
 - d) 3 Post Offices/Stores
 - e) The remaining 7 comprise a mix of recreational land, an ex-Youth Centre, Football Stadium and miscellaneous community facilities.
- 17. Of the **34** listed assets **27** were nominated by parish or town councils.
- 18. There has been no further feedback from the DCLG in relation to their survey which we contributed to in December 2015.

Future Reporting

- 19. It is proposed that the current practice of submitting reports for information on a 6 monthly basis is brought to an end for the following reasons.
 - a. The process for managing the Community Right to Bid process is now well established and efficiently managed.
 - b. Any initial concerns that SSDC might incur compensation costs have not materialised as only one tentative claim has been submitted in the 6 years since the scheme has been operating, which was not carried through.
 - c. Area Chairs and ward members are directly involved in the decision to approve or disallow nominations for assets to be placed on the register of Assets of Community Value.
 - d. A desire to cut down on the number of reports that are presented to committee for information only and which do not add any additional value to committee business.
 - e. Information on both successful and unsuccessful nominations is published and publically available on the council website.
- 20. In the future reports, could be brought to District Executive committee on an as required basis or an annual update report be provided to the relevant Portfolio Holder.

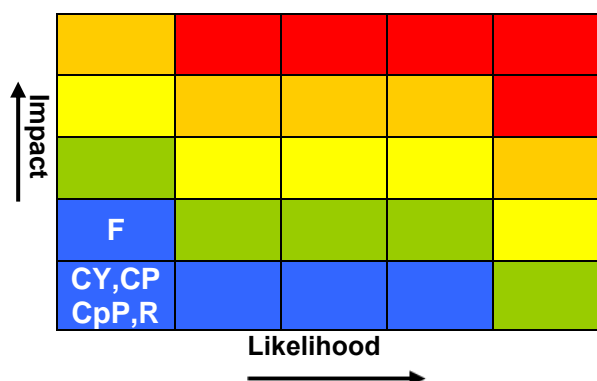
Financial Implications

- 21. There are none at this point in time. From 2014/15 onwards any costs must be absorbed into the Revenue Support Grant.
- 22. Property owners who believe they have incurred costs as a result of complying with these procedures can apply for compensation from the Council. Our Compensation Scheme was approved by members in January 2016. Government recognises this as a potential risk to

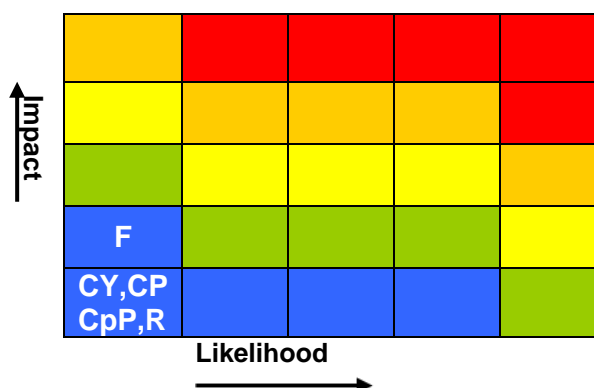
local authorities and will provide a safety net whereby any verified claims of over £20,000 will be met by Government.

Risk Matrix

Risk Profile before officer recommendations



Risk Profile after officer recommendations



Key

Categories	Colours (for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)
R = Reputation	Red = High impact and high probability
CpP = Corporate Plan Priorities	Orange = Major impact and major probability
CP = Community Priorities	Yellow = Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY = Capacity	Green = Minor impact and minor probability
F = Financial	Blue = Insignificant impact and insignificant probability

Council Plan Implications

23. Evaluate the overall requirements of the Government's Localism legislation and work with communities to develop plans for their community.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

24. None in relation to this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

25. None in relation to this report.

Privacy Impact Assessment

26. None in relation to this report.

Background Papers

- Localism Act 2011
- District Executive Agenda and Minutes November 2012;
- Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012 Statutory Instruments 2012 n.2421;

- District Executive Agenda and Minutes August 2013; December 2013; September 2014; December 2014; March 2015; July 2015; October 2015; January 2016; April 2016; July 2016; October 2016; April 2017; October 2017
 - Nomination Forms received
-



South Somerset District Council
Asset of Community Value Register

Reference	Nominator (name of group)	Name, address and postcode of Property	Date entered on register	Current use of property/land	Proposed use of property/land	Date agreed by District Council	Date SSDC received notification of intention to sell	Date of end of initial moratorium period (6 weeks after date of notification to sell is received)	Number of Expressions of Interest received	Date of end of full moratorium period (6 months after date of notification to sell is received)	Number of written intentions to bid received	Date to be removed from register (auto-fill ie. 5 years after listing)	Property protected from nomination/moratorium triggers (18 months from notification of intention to sell)	Comments
ACV3	Barrington Parish Council	Barrington Oak Public House Main Street Barrington Ilminster TA19 0JB	10/05/2013	Licensed public house	Licensed public house	09/05/2013	27/01/14	N/A		N/A		10/05/2018		Sold as a going concern. 'Exempt Disposal' and remains on the register
ACV5	Compton Dundon Parish Council	Former School Playing Field School Lane Compton Dundon Somerton TA11 6TE	01/08/2013	Not used	Community Allotments	01/08/2013						01/08/2018		
ACV6	Dinnington Parish Council	The Dinnington Docks Dinnington Hinton St George TA17 8SX	21/08/2013	Public House	Not known - would like it to remain as village pub	21/08/2013						21/08/2018		
ACV8	Combe St Nicholas Parish Council	Combe Wood Recreation Field Combe Wood Lane Combe St Nicholas TA20 3NJ	05/04/2014	Community Recreational Area	Community Recreational Area	05/04/2014						05/04/2019		
ACV9	Queen Camel Community Land Trust	Mildmay Arms High Street Queen Camel Yeovil BA22 7NJ	28/05/2014	Public House	Public House	28/05/2014	18/06/15	n/a		n/a		28/05/2019		
ACV11	Ash Parish Council	The Bell Public House 3 Main Street Ash TA12 6NS	11/07/2014	Public House	Public House with other community facilities	11/07/2014						11/07/2019		
ACV13	Ilminster Town Council	Land known as the Hammerhead Access to Brittons Field & Wharf Lane Recreation Grounds Canal Way Ilminster TA19 0EB	16/07/2014	Access to recreation area	Access to recreation area	16/07/2014						16/07/2019		
ACV14	Save our Kings Head.org	The Kings Head Church Street Merriott Somerset TA16 5PR	06/08/2014	Public House	Public House in community ownership	06/08/2014	19/08/14	29/09/14	0	18/02/15		06/08/2019	18/02/2016	Pub sold as a going concern (May 16) therefore an Exempt Disposal and remains on register
ACV16	Hinton St George Parish Council	Lord Poulett Arms High Street Hinton St George Somerset TA17 8SE	28/11/2014	Public House	To be determined but ideally a public house	28/11/2014						28/11/2019		
ACV17	Hinton St George Parish Council	School House & Playing Fields West Street Hinton St George TA17 8SA	28/11/2014	School & Playing Field	To be determined but ideally a school & playing field	28/11/2014						28/11/2019		
ACV18	Streetspace South Somerset	Chard Young People's Centre Essex Close Chard TA20 1RH	28/01/2015	Youth & Community Club	Youth Club	28/01/2015						28/01/2020		

Reference	Nominator (name of group)	Name, address and postcode of Property	Date entered on register	Current use of property/land	Proposed use of property/land	Date agreed by District Council	Date SSDC received notification of intention to sell	Date of end of initial moratorium period (6 weeks after date of notification to sell is received)	Number of Expressions of Interest received	Date of end of full moratorium period (6 months after date of notification to sell is received)	Number of written intentions to bid received	Date to be removed from register (auto-fill ie. 5 years after listing)	Property protected from nomination/moratorium triggers (18 months from notification of intention to sell)	Comments
ACV19	North Cadbury & Yarlington Parish Council	The Catash Inn High Street North Cadbury Yeovil Somerset BA22 7DH	04/02/2015	Public House and Bed & Breakfast	Public House	04/02/2015						04/02/2020		
ACV20	East Chinnock Parish Council	The Portman Arms High Street East Chinnock Yeovil Somerset BA22 9DP	26/02/2015	Public House	Public House	26/02/2015	02/03/15	12/04/15	1	01/09/15	1	26/02/2020	01/11/2016	Community bid deemed unacceptable by owner. Pub subsequently sold and operating as a going concern therefore 'exempt disposal' and remains on the register
ACV22	Gainsborough Community Interest Group	The Gainsborough Arms 74 Gainsborough Milborne Port Dorset DT9 5BB	27/03/2015	Public House	Public House	27/03/2015						27/03/2020		
ACV24	Barrington Parish Council	Barrington Primary School Water Street Barrington Ilminster Somerset TA19 0JR	09/09/2015	School	Education & social opportunities	09/09/2015	05/11/15	17/12/15	1	04/05/16		09/09/2020	04/05/2017	Subject to a compensation claim. Currently being advertised on open market
ACV25	Barrington Parish Council	Barrington Primary School Playing Field Water Street Barrington Ilminster TA19 0JR	09/09/2015	School playing field	Community play space	09/09/2015	15/08/17	26/09/17	1	15/02/18		09/09/2020		
ACV27	Yeovil Without Parish Council	All Saints Church Yeovil Marsh Yeovil Somerset BA21 3QG	05/12/2015	Place of worship	Community use	05/12/2015						05/12/2020		
ACV28	Yeovil Without Parish Council	Johnson Sports & Social Club Coronation Avenue Yeovil Somerset BA21 3DX	04/12/2015	Social club & sporting facilities	Social club & sporting facilities	04/12/2015						04/12/2020		
ACV29	Yeovil Without Parish Council	Yeovil Marsh Church Hall Yeovil Marsh Yeovil BA21 3QG	04/12/2015	Village hall	Village hall	04/12/2015						04/12/2020		
ACV30	Yeovil Without Parish Council	Great Lyde Inn 1 Cavalier Way Yeovil Somerset BA21 5UA	04/12/2015	Public house	Public house	04/12/2015						04/12/2020		
AVC31	The Hardington Mandeville Community Group	Mandeville Arms High Street Hardington Mandeville Yeovil BA22 9PQ	17/02/2016	Community pub	Public house	17/02/2016						17/02/2021		
AVC32	Long Sutton Parish Council	Long Sutton Stores The Green Long Sutton TA10 9HT	30/03/16	Village stores	Village stores	30/03/16						30/03/2021		Village Stores sold as a going concern therefore an 'Exempt Disposal' and remains on register.

Reference	Nominator (name of group)	Name, address and postcode of Property	Date entered on register	Current use of property/land	Proposed use of property/land	Date agreed by District Council	Date SSDC received notification of intention to sell	Date of end of initial moratorium period (6 weeks after date of notification to sell is received)	Number of Expressions of Interest received	Date of end of full moratorium period (6 months after date of notification to sell is received)	Number of written intentions to bid received	Date to be removed from register (auto-fill ie. 5 years after listing)	Property protected from nomination/moratorium triggers (18 months from notification of intention to sell)	Comments
AVC33	Yeovil Town Supporters Society Ltd	Huish Park Stadium Lufton Way Yeovil BA22 8YF	21/04/2016	Playing association football	Playing association football and other leisure activities	21/04/2016						21/04/2021		
AVC 34	Yeovil Town Supporters Society Ltd	Huish Park surrounding land Lufton Way Yeovil BA22 8YF	21/04/2016	Football pitches, car parks, community space	Leisure	21/04/2016						21/04/2021		
ACV35	Martock Parish Council	The Post Office East Street Martock TA12 6JQ	26/07/2016	Post Office	Post Office	26/07/2016						26/07/2021		
ACV36	Martock Parish Council	The George Inn & associated car park Church Street Martock TA12 6JL	29/07/2016	Community hub & spiritual centre	Community hub	29/07/2016						29/07/2021		
ACV37	Queen Camel Parish Council	Countess Gytha Primary School High Street Queen Camel Yeovil BA22 7NH	18/08/2016	Formerly a primary school but now closed	Community meeting facility	18/08/2016	15/08/2016	26/09/2016	1	17/02/17	0	18/08/2021	15/02/2018	Protected period ended.
ACV38	Martock Parish Council	The Gospel Hall Church Street Martock TA12 6JL	03/08/2016	Meeting place	Meeting place	03/08/2016	03/08/21					03/08/2021		
ACV39	The Charltons Parish Council	Charlton Adam Post Office & Stores Broad Street Charlton Adam TA11 7AY	22/11/2016	Post Office & Stores	General Store	21/11/2016						22/11/2021		
ACV40	The Charltons Parish Council	Fox & Hounds Inn Broadway Road Charlton Adam TA11 7AU	22/11/2016	Public House & function room	Public House	22/11/2016						22/11/2021		
ACV41	The Charltons Parish Council	The Reading Room Hillway Charlton Mackrell TA11 6AN	22/11/2016	Community facility with café	Community facility	22/11/2016						22/11/2021		
ACV42	Winsham Parish Council	The Bell, 11 Church Street, Winsham	08/02/2017	Public House	Public House with community shop and café area	08/02/2017						08/02/2022		
ACV43	Curry Rivel Parish Council	King William IV Public House, High Street, Curry Rivel	09/06/17	Public House and associated car park	Public House and associated car park	08/06/2017	Not received	21/07/17	1	09/12/17	0	09/06/2022	09/12/18	
ACV44	Iminster Town Council	Somerset Skills & Learning, Ditton Street, Iminster TA19 0BW	05/02/18	Adult Education / Community Education Centre (until Dec 2017)	Community Space with Town Council Offices and community meeting rooms	05/02/2018						05/02/2023		

Agenda Item 10

Draft Responses to Consultations (for information)

Executive Portfolio Holder: Angie Singleton, Strategic Planning (Place Making), Area Development
Director: Martin Woods, Service Delivery
Service Manager: Jo Wilkins, Acting Principal Spatial Planner
Lead Officer: Jo Wilkins, Acting Principal Spatial Planner
Colin McDonald, Corporate Strategic Housing Manager
Contact Details: jo.wilkins@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462588
colin.mcdonald@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462331

At the request of the Chairman, the SSDC responses to the following two Government consultations from the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government are enclosed:-

1. Draft revised National Planning Policy Framework

The draft revised National Planning Policy Framework incorporates policy proposals previously consulted on in the Housing White Paper and the Planning for the right homes in the right places consultation - the government responses to these are available at the respective consultation pages.

The Budget 2017 included additional proposals to change planning policy and legislation to bring forward more land in the right places. This consultation seeks views on these additional policy proposals.

2. Supporting housing delivery through developer contributions consultation responses

Following the announcements at Autumn Budget 2017, the government is seeking views on a series of reforms to the existing system of developer contributions in the short term. These reforms will benefit the local authorities who administer them, developers who pay them and the communities in which development takes place.

Both of these consultations close on 10th May 2018.

Consultation response form

This is the response form for the consultation on the draft revised National Planning Policy Framework. If you are responding by email or in writing, please reply using this questionnaire pro-forma, which should be read alongside the consultation document. The comment boxes will expand as you type. Required fields are indicated with an asterisk (*)

Your details

First name*	Jo
Family name (surname)*	Wilkins
Title	Acting Principal Spatial Planner
Address	Brympton Way
City/Town*	Yeovil
Postal code*	BA20 2HT
Telephone Number	Click here to enter text.
Email Address*	Jo.wilkins@southsomerset.gov.uk

Are the views expressed on this consultation your own personal views or an official response from an organisation you represent?*

Organisational response

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please select the option which best describes your organisation. *

Local authority (including National Parks, Broads Authority, the Greater London Authority and London Boroughs)

If you selected other, please state the type of organisation

Local Government

Please provide the name of the organisation (if applicable)

South Somerset District Council

Chapter 1: Introduction

Question 1

Do you have any comments on the text of Chapter 1?

It is noted that planning policy for traveller sites has not been incorporated into the revised NPPF. This is considered to be a missed opportunity to align Government policy on all housing and make the NPPF more comprehensive in its coverage.

Chapter 2: Achieving sustainable development

Question 2

Do you agree with the changes to the sustainable development objectives and the presumption in favour of sustainable development?

Yes

Please enter your comments here

Agree with the economic, social and environmental objectives.

It is considered that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is clearer when read with the rest of Framework and supporting guidance. Pleased to see that it is explicitly stated that the presumption does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making, reflecting recent legal judgements.

Question 3

Do you agree that the core principles section should be deleted, given its content has been retained and moved to other appropriate parts of the Framework?

Yes

Please enter your comments here

The remainder of the Framework captures the essence of these principles.

Question 4

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 2, including the approach to providing additional certainty for neighbourhood plans in some circumstances?

No, the text relating to neighbourhood plans reflects the Written Ministerial Statement of 12 December 2016.

Chapter 3: Plan-making

Question 5

Do you agree with the further changes proposed to the tests of soundness, and to the other changes of policy in this chapter that have not already been consulted on?

Not sure

Please enter your comments here

The proposed changes seem to be sensible however, it is unclear how the proposed amendment to the 'Justified' test – now referring to 'an' appropriate strategy rather than "the most appropriate strategy" aligns with the Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal process. Some clarification on this point would be welcomed.

Question 6

Do you have any other comments on the text of chapter 3?

The revised approach to viability could result in delays and potentially elongate the plan –making process, perhaps taking over from the arguments around housing numbers. It may also place a further financial burden on LPAs due to the need to commission specialist assessments that will require significant levels of engagement with development industry representatives.

Additionally the proposed approach to viability does raise a question about the degree to which a standard methodology can be applied. Whilst on paper it seems to be a pragmatic approach, in reality it may overlook the fact that every site is different, existing use values will vary significantly from site to site and live developments can never be sufficiently close to the typologies tested. A plan wide assessment is only a snap shot in time. Although the framework allows for plans to identify circumstances where additional assessments are required we may end up in a situation where more assessments are required than not. Whilst plan-making can establish parameters testing at the decision making stage is still likely to be required.

The Draft Planning Practice Guidance clarifies that the price paid for land is not a relevant justification for failing to accord with relevant policies in Plans, this is welcomed.

Paragraph 22 states that strategic polices should look ahead over a minimum 15 year period. With regards to calculating housing need the draft PPG states:

“How can plan-making authorities apply the method to the plan period?”

The method can be applied to the whole plan period. However, local planning authorities are required to review their plans every five years. This will ensure that plans are based on the most up-to-date and accurate available projections.”

Step 1 and Step 3 b. of the guidance refer to a 10 year period. Clarification is needed as to whether LPAs should be calculating their housing needs over a 10 year period, a 15 year period or the whole plan period often 20 years. The time period over which the need is calculated will have an impact on the annual housing requirement, which is likely to result in LPA's deciding to base their Plan requirement on the option which results in the lowest figure. For example calculated over 10 years 2016-2026 South Somerset's housing requirement equates to 734 dpa however, if it is calculated over 20 years 2016-2036 it equates to 679 dpa.

It is accepted that if plans are reviewed every five years in the light of the latest evidence then the housing requirement is likely to change anyway. Experience has shown that local communities who are not supportive of housing growth in their locality will argue strongly for the lowest possible housing requirement in order to limit the amount of housing growth in their town.

Chapter 4: Decision-making

Question 7

The revised draft Framework expects all viability assessments to be made publicly available. Are there any circumstances where this would be problematic?

Not sure

Please enter your comments here

From an LPA point of view, this would no be a problem. The development industry may have a different view and have concerns regarding commercial confidentiality.

Question 8

Would it be helpful for national planning guidance to go further and set out the circumstances in which viability assessment to accompany planning applications would be acceptable?

Yes

Please enter your comments here:

This would be helpful and would ensure a consistent approach across the country.

Question 9

What would be the benefits of going further and mandating the use of review mechanisms to capture increases in the value of a large or multi-phased development?

Please enter your comments below

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Question 10

Do you have any comments on the text of Chapter 4?

The clarity provided in paragraphs 48 to 51 is welcomed.

Chapter 5: Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

Question 11

What are your views on the most appropriate combination of policy requirements to ensure that a suitable proportion of land for homes comes forward as small or medium sized sites?

Please enter your comments here

The proposal that 20% of allocations (as clarified in the draft Practice Guidance but not made clear in the draft NPPF) should be on small sites seems rather ineffective. If an LPA is allocating 20 sites then that would be four small sites, depending on the definition of a 'small site' (see comments below) this would equate to a minimal proportion of the overall housing requirement, therefore as a proportion of the overall housing requirement seems more appropriate. However, allocating a very large number of small sites would be very resource intensive, cause delays in the plan making process and is unlikely to be particularly beneficial as many of these sites will be infill plots within existing development boundaries or would be permitted through other Local Plan policies. Consequently, the preferred approach would be for LPAs to be encouraged to deliver a proportion of their overall requirement on small sites through whatever mechanism they chose.

There is a conflict between the terms 'small sites' and 'major development'. Major development is expressly defined as development of 10 or more homes or where a site has an area of 0.5 ha or more. But Paragraph 69 seems to be defining a 'small site' as a site of 0.5ha (or less). Should the definition of a 'small site' be revised to a site providing 9 or less homes or having a site area of 0.49 ha or less? – In this scenario very careful site area measuring would be required.

As a rural authority it is our experience that a large number of our homes are delivered on small sites this is mostly facilitated through Local Plan Policy SS2 which allows development in qualifying Rural Settlements where it meets local needs and contributes to the overall sustainability of the settlement. Robust community engagement is expected.

Delivery in Rural Settlements is exceeding expectations. The policy does not preclude 100% affordable housing development or other specialist housing types.

Given the complications of setting percentages and thresholds it may be better to state that a mix of site sizes should be provided and 20% of the total dwelling requirement should be provided on sites that fall outside of the definition of 'major development'.

Question 12

Do you agree with the application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development where delivery is below 75% of the housing required from 2020?

Not sure

Please enter your comments here

The range of different percentages relating to the Housing Delivery Test is somewhat confusing:

- Action plan if delivery is below 95%
- 20% buffer to be applied to five year housing land supply if delivery is below 85%
- Application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development if delivery is below 75%

If an LPA is only delivering 75% their annual housing requirement then it is likely that it will not be able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply, therefore the presumption would apply anyway. This seems very much a 'belt and braces' approach. However, it does support the Government's objective of creating a planning environment where the balance is weighted towards the delivery of new homes.

It is re-iterated once again that in many LPAs are not housebuilder/developers therefore to penalise LPAs over something they do not have control over seems rather unfair.

Question 13

Do you agree with the new policy on exception sites for entry-level homes?

Yes

Please enter your comments here

As "entry-level" means lower quartile market housing this is supported. SSDC Policy SS2 (see response to Q11) allows for just this type of development. It may mean that more affordable housing is delivered alongside as acceptable types of market

provision can help cross-subsidise.

Question 14

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 5?

The following comments are made on the Housing Delivery Test Draft Measurement Rule Book, March 2018 (HDTMRB):

- The text in paragraph 3 does not seem to align with Table 2 in terms of describing the transitional arrangements as there is no mention of the alternative potentially lower figure. Additionally the second bullet point in paragraph 3 states “..for financial years 2014-15 to 2017-2018” this is four years – 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17, 2017-18, is this intentional given that the HTD is based upon a three year period?
- PAS have sought to clarify what the HDTMRB means in terms of transitional arrangements; the explanation provided was complex and resulted in more confusion than clarity. It is vital that LPAs are clear about the data they should be using and the figure they are being assessed against. It is suggested that either LPAs are provided with much clearer guidance including worked examples or MHCLG provides the numbers to be used.
- Assessing LPAs against the number of homes delivered when they are, in the main, not housebuilders does not seem to be an effective approach to increasing the number of homes built. Measures should be directed towards the development industry. The findings of the Letwin Inquiry will be useful in informing this debate.

It is noted that paragraph 62 refers to identifying the type, size and tenure of homes for specific groups, including travellers. Planning Policy for Traveller sites has not been incorporated into the revised NPPF, it is suggested that this is an opportune moment to combine the two. The proposed revision to the online guidance also needs to be amended to take into account the needs of travellers (see pages 28 & 29 which outlines other specific groups but neglects to include this, potentially the most marginalised, group)

Paragraph 64 precludes seeking an affordable housing contribution on sites below 10 dwellings or 0.5 ha, except in designated rural areas. The paragraph should be more explicit about the nature of this designation, for example by citing the relevant legislation &/or the designating authority, but preferably by allowing the LPA to determine for itself, based on the character of the local area, which parts are rural enough to merit a lower threshold. Arguably the wording also retains the ambiguity over sites of 6-9 dwellings by referring to ‘5 or fewer’. For it’s rural areas the LPA should be free to set any lower threshold up to 10.

Paragraph 65 imposes a new requirement of at least 10% being for affordable home ownership (products). Whilst we welcome this in principle, there are two potentially unintended consequences. Firstly this may be an over-representation of the types of sub-market housing that can be afforded by local income cohorts – for example the recent SHMA evidences that in South Somerset this figure should only be 8%. Secondly, without a caveat, this may force the LPA to ‘sacrifice’ other forms of affordable housing, such as for rent, first where there are mitigating circumstances such as a legitimate viability argument (notwithstanding the above comments) – but

it should be for the LPA to determine which obligations, and in which proportions, to reduce in such circumstances according to the very specific needs of the locality.

Paragraph 72 (a) refers to 'affordable rent' – this should either be 'affordable housing for rent' (in line with the revised definition in the glossary) or 'social rent or affordable rent'

Paragraph 74 b) refers to an annual position statement. The draft PPG seems to infer that this would only be sought where the LPA believes they have a five year land supply. In many instances LPAs are challenged at appeal on their five year land supply despite having stated clearly that they do not have one. Developers seek to argue that the deficit in the supply is even greater than that stated by the LPA. This scenario needs consideration - it is suggested that guidance states that if the LPA accept they do not have a five year supply then this should be the basis on which the appeal is determined and no further argument ensues, alternatively LPAs could be given the opportunity to secure an annual position statement where they accept that they do not have a five year supply.

Overall the process for securing an annual position statement seems very resource intensive, it relies on PINS having the resources to issue decisions quickly; otherwise the statements will only be valid for a short period of time which may not align itself to the planning appeals where it would be useful.

Chapter 6: Building a strong, competitive economy

Question 15

Do you agree with the policy changes on supporting business growth and productivity, including the approach to accommodating local business and community needs in rural areas?

Yes

Please enter your comments here

Yes, this is a positive approach to supporting business in rural areas. However, plan strategies and policies need to be carefully considered and monitored in order to balance any impacts of a significant increase in the number of workers commuting by private car to work in countryside locations.

Question 16

Do you have any other comments on the text of chapter 6?

No other comments.

Chapter 7: Ensuring the vitality of town centres

Question 17

Do you agree with the policy changes on planning for identified retail needs and considering planning applications for town centre uses?

Yes

Please enter your comments here

Yes, support paragraph 86 d) and the use of 'reasonable period' in paragraph 87, although would appreciate guidance on what would be regarded as a 'reasonable period'.

Question 18

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 7?

No other comments.

Chapter 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities

Question 19

Do you have any comments on the new policies in Chapter 8 that have not already been consulted on?

Whilst it is appreciated that proposed new policy in paragraph 96 seeks to ensure that design solutions take account of potential malicious threats and natural hazards it seems somewhat city centric and onerous for rural LPAs to anticipate and address "all plausible malicious threats and natural hazards....."

Question 20

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 8?

No other comments.

Chapter 9: Promoting sustainable transport

Question 21

Do you agree with the changes to the transport chapter that point to the way that all aspects of transport should be considered, both in planning for transport and assessing transport impacts?

Yes

Please enter your comments here

No other comments.

Question 22

Do you agree with the policy change that recognises the importance of general aviation facilities?

Yes

Please enter your comments here

No other comments.

Question 23

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 9?

No other comments.

Chapter 10: Supporting high quality communications

Question 24

Do you have any comments on the text of Chapter 10?

Whilst being supportive of the requirement in paragraph 112 to set out how high quality digital infrastructure is to be delivered it is vital that the infrastructure providers actively engage with LPAs to help them to understand their strategies and planned investment.

Chapter 11: Making effective use of land

Question 25

Do you agree with the proposed approaches to under-utilised land, reallocating land for other uses and making it easier to convert land which is in existing use?

Yes

Please enter your comments here

Yes, agree that under-utilised land within existing settlements should be prioritised for development. However, it should be recognised that many of these sites have not been developed due to particular site constraints such as contamination, access, landowner expectation or other complications which mean that viability is an issue.

Pleased to note paragraph 121 recognises that key economic sites or sectors should not be undermined by proposals for housing growth.

Question 26

Do you agree with the proposed approach to employing minimum density standards where there is a shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs?

Not sure

Please enter your comments here

It would be useful if guidance could clarify what is meant by “Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs...” Does it mean where LPAs cannot accommodate their housing requirement within the Plan area or is it where there is no a five-year housing land supply or where the HDT result falls below 75%?

Question 27

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 11?

No other comments.

Chapter 12 : Achieving well-designed places

Question 28

Do you have any comments on the changes of policy in Chapter 12 that have not already been consulted on?

No other comments.

Question 29

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 12?

No other comments.

Chapter 13: Protecting the Green Belt

Question 30

Do you agree with the proposed changes to enable greater use of brownfield land for housing in the Green Belt, and to provide for the other forms of development that are 'not inappropriate' in the Green Belt?

Yes

Please enter your comments here

Opportunities for housing development on brownfield land in the Green Belt should be supported.

Question 31

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 13?

No other comments.

Chapter 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Question 32

Do you have any comments on the text of Chapter 14?

No other comments.

Question 33

Does paragraph 149b need any further amendment to reflect the ambitions in the Clean Growth Strategy to reduce emissions from building?

Not sure

Opportunities to create more sustainable buildings through design, location and orientation should be maximised, however this has to be balanced against individual site characteristics, local environment and other objectives such as those to make efficient use of land.

Chapter 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Question 34

Do you agree with the approach to clarifying and strengthening protection for areas of particular environmental importance in the context of the 25 Year Environment Plan and national infrastructure requirements, including the level of protection for ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees?

Yes

Please enter your comments here

The additional protection afforded to ancient woodland and aged veteran trees is welcomed.

Question 35

Do you have any other comments on the text of Chapter 15?

No other comments.

Chapter 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Question 36

Do you have any comments on the text of Chapter 16?

Welcome the revisions to paragraphs 182 and 189.

Chapter 17: Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

Question 37

Do you have any comments on the changes of policy in Chapter 17, or on any other aspects of the text in this chapter?

No other comments.

Question 38

Do you think that planning policy in minerals would be better contained in a separate document?

No

Please enter your comments here

As a District Council we are not the Minerals Authority but it seems logical to have all the national planning policy in one document.

Question 39

Do you have any views on the utility of national and sub-national guidelines on future aggregates provision?

No

Please enter your comments here

No comments to make.

Transitional arrangements and consequential changes

Question 40

Do you agree with the proposed transitional arrangements?

Not sure

Please enter your comments here

The transitional arrangements seem fair however would refer you to the response to Q14 regarding the HDT.

Question 41

Do you think that any changes should be made to the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites as a result of the proposed changes to the Framework set out in the consultation document? If so, what changes should be made?

Yes

Please enter your comments here

Planning Policy for Traveller Sites should be integrated into the revised NPPF.

Question 42

Do you think that any changes should be made to the Planning Policy for Waste as a result of the proposed changes to the Framework set out in the consultation document? If so, what changes should be made?

Not sure

Please enter your comments here

No comments to make.

Glossary

Question 43

Do you have any comments on the glossary?

The revised definition of affordable housing is welcomed but requires further refinement. In two places (a & c) there is reference to being at least 20% below the local market (rent/price), but this would be improved by inserting the word 'prevailing' to give absolute clarity to the intention. Under (a) there are, arguably, other social landlords who could or should be included in addition to Registered Providers such as certain Almshouses and Community Land Trusts. Further clarification would also be welcome under (a) in the new definition of 'affordable housing for rent' by inserting "(for example dwellings traditionally referred to as 'social rent') after "...Government's rent policy". Finally the definition stills reflects a bias towards traditional forms of accommodation and could more explicitly include the provision of suitably serviced pitches for gypsies and travellers where these are provided at below the prevailing market cost.

Neighbourhood area is missing from the glossary – it would be useful to include a definition.

Given that the revised NPPF now refers to travellers, the definition found in Annex 1 of Planning Policy for Traveller Sites should be included.

The definition of Major development for residential development should include 1,000sqm floor space or 10 or more homes or site area of 0.5 ha or more.

Developer Contributions Consultation response form

If you are responding by email or in writing, please reply using this questionnaire proforma, which should be read alongside the consultation document. You are able to expand the comments box should you need more space. Required fields are indicated with an asterisk (*)

This form should be returned to
developercontributionsconsultation@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Or posted to:

Planning and Infrastructure Division
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
2nd floor, South East
Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 4DF

By 10 May 2018

Your details

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Telephone Number	
Email Address*	jo.wilkins@southsomerset.gov.uk

Are the views expressed on this consultation your own personal views or an official response from an organisation you represent?*

Organisational response

If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please select the option which best describes your organisation.*

Local authority (including National Parks, Broads Authority, the Greater London Authority and London Boroughs)

If you selected other, please state the type of organisation

Click here to enter text.

Please provide the name of the organisation (if applicable)

Click here to enter text.

Reducing Complexity and Increasing Certainty

Question 1

Do you agree with the Governments' proposals to set out that:

- i. Evidence of local infrastructure need for CIL-setting purposes can be the same infrastructure planning and viability evidence produced for plan making?

Yes

- ii. Evidence of a funding gap significantly greater than anticipated CIL income is likely to be sufficient as evidence of infrastructure need?

Yes

iii Where charging authorities consider there may have been significant changes in market conditions since evidence was produced, it may be appropriate for charging authorities to take a pragmatic approach to supplementing this information as part of setting CIL – for instance, assessing recent economic and development trends and working with developers (e.g. through local development forums), rather than procuring new and costly evidence?

Yes

Question 2

Are there any factors that the Government should take into account when implementing proposals to align the evidence for CIL charging schedules and plan making?

Whilst point iii sounds a good idea in principle it could be time consuming and it may be difficult to get consensus from the development industry regarding costs.

Ensuring that consultation is proportionate

Question 3

Do you agree with the Government's proposal to replace the current statutory

consultation requirements with a requirement on the charging authority to publish a statement on how it has sought an appropriate level of engagement?

Yes

Question 4

Do you have views on how guidance can ensure that consultation is proportionate to the scale of any charge being introduced or amended?

Where charging schedules are to be amended targeted consultation should be encouraged. Council Web sites could be used to bring the consultation to the attention of the wider population.

Removing unnecessary barriers: the pooling restriction

Question 5

Do you agree with the Government's proposal to allow local authorities to pool section 106 planning obligations:

- i. Where it would not be feasible for the authority to adopt CIL in addition to securing the necessary developer contributions through section 106?

Yes

- ii. Where significant development is planned on several large strategic sites?

Yes

Question 6

- i. Do you agree that, if the pooling restriction is to be lifted where it would not be feasible for the authority to adopt CIL in addition to securing the necessary developer contributions through section 106, this should be measures based on the tenth percentile of average new build house prices?

Please select an answer from this drop down menu

- ii. What comments, if any, do you have on how the restriction is lifted in areas where CIL is not feasible, or in national parks?

There should be no threshold and the restriction should be lifted.

Question 7

Do you believe that, if lifting the pooling restriction where significant development is planned on several large strategic sites, this should be based on either:

- i. a set percentage of homes, set out in a plan, are being delivered through a limited number of strategic sites; or

Option i seems more pragmatic and less complicated.

- ii. all planning obligations from a strategic site count as one planning obligation?

Click here to enter text.

Question 8

What factors should the Government take into account when defining 'strategic sites' for the purposes of lifting the pooling restriction?

Major development is defined in the Glossary of the draft revised NPPF. A strategic site would therefore be expected to be bigger but much bigger would have to be determined. It could potentially be defined as having 50 or more homes or a site area of 2 ha or more.

Question 9

What further comments, if any, do you have on how pooling restrictions should be lifted?

For the purposes of simplicity and clarity pooling restrictions should be removed across the board.

Improvements to the operation of CIL

Question 10

Do you agree with the Government's proposal to introduce a 2 month grace period for developers to submit a Commencement Notice in relation to exempted development?

Yes

Question 11

If introducing a grace period, what other factors, such as a small penalty for submitting a Commencement Notice during the grace period, should the Government take into account?

Agree that a small penalty for submitting a Commencement Notice during the grace period would be appropriate. However, this would be another administrative burden on charging authorities.

Question 12

How else can the Government seek to take a more proportionate approach to administering exemptions?

Applicants should be made aware of their obligations relating to CIL via Council web sites. A reminder could be sent out by charging authorities with decision notices. The template planning application form could be amended to include a note reminding applicants that they need to submit a Commencement Notice in order to apply for any CIL exemptions prior to commencing work. On a more general point, the CIL exemption for self and custom build homes has a significant impact on the sums achievable through the levy in many rural authorities where a significant number of dwellings are delivered on small sites.

Question 13

Do you agree that Government should amend regulations so that they allow a development originally permitted before CIL came into force, to balance CIL liabilities between different phases of the same development?

Yes

Question 14

Are there any particular factors the Government should take into account in allowing abatement for phased planning permissions secured before introduction of CIL?

Click here to enter text.

Question 15

Do you agree that Government should amend regulations on how indexation applies to development that is both originally permitted and then amended while CIL is in force to align with the approach taken in the recently amended CIL regulations?

Yes

Increasing market responsiveness

Question 16

Do you agree with the Government's proposal to allow local authorities to set differential CIL rates based on the existing use of land?

No

Question 17

If implementing this proposal do you agree that the Government should:

i. encourage authorities to set a single CIL rate for strategic sites?

No

ii. for sites with multiple existing uses, set out that CIL liabilities should be calculated on the basis of the majority existing use for small sites? Yes/No

No

iii. set out that, for other sites, CIL liabilities should be calculated on the basis of the majority existing use where 80% or more of the site is in a single existing use?

No

iv. What comments, if any, do you have on using a threshold of 80% or more of a site being in a single existing use, to determine where CIL liabilities should be calculated on the basis of the majority existing use?

Large strategic sites are often not viable for CIL due to the extensive infrastructure costs associated with their delivery. If differential rates are to be set and these are based on existing use values and thresholds are to be set, this will increase the level of complexity around the whole process. The consultation document recognises this and states that such an approach should only be undertaken where there is a strong case for doing so. The approach of encouraging authorities to set a single CIL rate (including a nil rate where appropriate) is encouraged (127 a)).

Question 18

What further comments, if any, do you have on how CIL should operate on sites with multiple existing uses, including the avoidance of gaming?

No further comments.

Indexing CIL rates to house prices

Question 19

Do you have a preference that CIL rates for residential development being indexed to either:

- a) The change in seasonally adjusted regional house price indexation on a monthly or quarterly basis; OR

No

- b) The change in local authority-level house price indexation on an annual basis

Yes

Question 20

Do you agree with the Government's proposal to index CIL to a different metric for non-residential development?

Yes

Question 21

If yes, do you believe that indexation for non-residential development should be based on:

- i. the Consumer Price Index? OR

Yes

- ii. a combined proportion of the House Price Index and Consumer Prices Index?

No

Question 22

What alternative regularly updated, robust, nationally applied and publicly available data could be used to index CIL for non-residential development?

No suggestions.

Question 23

Do you have any further comments on how the way in which CIL is indexed can be made more market responsive?

No.

Improving transparency and increasing accountability

Question 24

Do you agree with the Government's proposal to?

- i. remove the restrictions in regulation 123, and regulation 123 lists?

Yes

- ii. introduce a requirement for local authorities to provide an annual Infrastructure Funding Statement?

Yes

Question 25

What details should the Government require or encourage Infrastructure Funding Statements to include?

- Monies secured via CIL and S.106 during the financial year.
- Monies collected via CIL and S.106 during the financial year.
- CIL and S.106 monies spent during the financial year.
- CIL and S.106 priorities for the coming year based upon expected income.

Question 26

What views do you have on whether local planning authorities may need to seek a sum as part of Section 106 planning obligations for monitoring planning obligations? Any views on potential impacts would also be welcomed.

If S.106 monies are set aside for administrative costs it will reduce the amount of money available to be spent on infrastructure. LPAs should be provided with an annual sum from Government to cover the costs of the all new burdens as with Brownfield Registers.

A Strategic Infrastructure Tariff (SIT)

Question 27

Do you agree that Combined Authorities and Joint Committees with strategic planning powers should be given the ability to charge a SIT?

Yes

Question 28

Do you agree with the proposed definition of strategic infrastructure?

No

Question 29

Do you have any further comments on the definition of strategic infrastructure?

Currently strategic infrastructure does not seem to be clearly defined with alternatives being offered.

Question 30

Do you agree that a proportion of funding raised through SIT could be used to fund local infrastructure priorities that mitigate the impacts of strategic infrastructure?

Yes

Question 31

If so, what proportion of the funding raised through SIT do you think should be spent on local infrastructure priorities?

As stated in the consultation document the introduction of a SIT alongside CIL and S.106 is likely to add further complexity, and it may not be viable on developments outside of major cities. Any sum to be used to mitigate local impacts may help to get local buy in, but will be added to overall costs and therefore have an impact on viability. There is not a bottomless pit of money available for these tariffs. What would be the dividing line between a strategic project and a national infrastructure project?

Question 32

Do you agree that the SIT should be collected by local authorities on behalf of the SIT charging authority?

Yes

Question 33

Do you agree that the local authority should be able to keep up to 4% of the SIT receipts to cover the administrative costs of collecting the SIT?

Yes

Technical clarifications

Question 34

Do you have any comments on the other technical clarifications to CIL?

Any further technical clarification to CIL is welcomed.

Agenda Item 11

District Executive Forward Plan

Executive Portfolio Holder: Ric Pallister, Leader, Strategy and Policy

Lead Officer: Angela Cox, Democratic Services Specialist

Contact Details: angela.cox@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462148

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report informs Members of the current Executive Forward Plan, provides information on Portfolio Holder decisions and on consultation documents received by the Council that have been logged on the consultation database.

2. Public Interest

2.1 The District Executive Forward Plan lists the reports due to be discussed and decisions due to be made by the Committee within the next few months. The Consultation Database is a list of topics which the Council's view is currently being consulted upon by various outside organisations.

3. Recommendations

3.1 The District Executive is asked to:-

- I. approve the updated Executive Forward Plan for publication as attached at Appendix A;
- II. note the contents of the Consultation Database as shown at Appendix B.

4. Executive Forward Plan

4.1 The latest Forward Plan is attached at Appendix A. The timings given for reports to come forward are indicative only, and occasionally may be re scheduled and new items added as new circumstances arise.

5. Consultation Database

5.1 The Council has agreed a protocol for processing consultation documents received by the Council. This requires consultation documents received to be logged and the current consultation documents are attached at Appendix B.

6. Background Papers

6.1 None.

Appendix A - SSDC Executive Forward Plan

Date of Decision	Decision	Portfolio	Service Director	Contact	Committee(s)
June 2018	Private Sector Housing Enforcement and Charging Policy	Portfolio Holder for Area West	Director Service Delivery	Alasdair Bell, Environmental Health Manager	District Executive
June 2018 June 2018	SSDC Annual Performance Report 2017/18	Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Policy	Director Strategy and Commissioning	Anna-Maria Lenz, Performance Officer	District Executive South Somerset District Council
June 2018	Capital & Revenue Budget out-turn reports 2017/18	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services	Director Support Services	Paul Fitzgerald, Section 151 Officer	District Executive
July 2018	Affordable Housing Delivery Programme	Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Policy	Director Service Delivery	Colin McDonald, Corporate Strategic Housing Manager	District Executive
August 2018	Council Tax and Housing Benefit fraud report	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services	Director Support Services	Ian Potter, Lead Specialist (Vulnerable Customers)	District Executive
August 2018	Capital & Revenue Budget monitoring reports for Quarter 1	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services	Director Support Services	Nicola Hix, Lead Specialist (Finance)	District Executive
August 2018	Quarterly Performance and Complaints Monitoring Report	Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Policy	Director Strategy and Commissioning	Anna-Maria Lenz, Performance Officer	District Executive

Date of Decision	Decision	Portfolio	Service Director	Contact	Committee(s)
October 2018 October 2018	South Somerset Local Plan Review, approval of Preferred Options for consultation	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning (Place Making)	Director Service Delivery	Jo Wilkins, Acting Principal Spatial Planner	District Executive South Somerset District Council
October 2018	Transformation Project Progress Report	Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Policy	Chief Executive	Caron Starkey, Strategic Lead for Transformation	District Executive
October 2018	Community Right to Bid Half Year Report - April 2018 to September 2018	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning (Place Making)	Director Strategy and Commissioning	David Crisfield, Third Sector and Equalities Co-ordinator	District Executive
November 2018	Capital & Revenue Budget monitoring reports for Quarter 2	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services	Director Support Services	Nicola Hix, Lead Specialist (Finance)	District Executive
November 2018	Quarterly Performance and Complaints Monitoring Report	Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Policy	Director Strategy and Commissioning	Anna-Maria Lenz, Performance Officer	District Executive
December 2018	Annual review of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services	Director Strategy and Commissioning	Paula Goddard, Legal Specialist	District Executive

Date of Decision	Decision	Portfolio	Service Director	Contact	Committee(s)
February 2019 February 2019	2019/20 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services	Director Support Services	Paul Fitzgerald, Section 151 Officer	District Executive South Somerset District Council
February 2019	Capital & Revenue Budget monitoring reports for Quarter 3	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Legal Services	Director Support Services	Nicola Hix, Lead Specialist (Finance)	District Executive
February 2019	Quarterly Performance and Complaints Monitoring Report	Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Policy	Director Strategy and Commissioning	Anna-Maria Lenz, Performance Officer	District Executive
March 2019	Transformation Project Progress Report	Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Policy	Chief Executive	Caron Starkey, Strategic Lead for Transformation	District Executive

APPENDIX B - Current Consultations – May 2018

Purpose of Document	Portfolio	Director	Response to be agreed by	Contact	Deadline for response
<p>Local government ethical standards: stakeholder consultation</p> <p>The Committee on Standards in Public Life invites responses to its consultation to inform its review of local government ethical standards.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-ethical-standards-stakeholder-consultation</p>	Democratic Services, Member Development, Equalities and Diversity	Director – Support Services	Officers in consultation with Portfolio Holder	Angela Watson	18 May 2018
<p>Civil society strategy: have your say</p> <p>Have your say on how government can work with and for civil society to tackle challenges and unlock opportunities to build a stronger society now and in the future. From supporting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in society to the work of charities, community groups and businesses helping good causes, civil society is part of the fabric of our society. We want to have an open conversation about civil society, what is working well, and what government can do to strengthen it further. If you want to help create a stronger civil society, we want you to share your ideas on how government can work with and support civil society to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support people - including young people - to play an active role in building a stronger society • unlock the full potential of the private and public sectors to support social good • help improve communities to make them better places to live and work in • build stronger public services <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/civil-society-strategy-have-your-say</p>	Leisure and Culture	Communities Lead	Officers in consultation with Portfolio Holder	David Crisfield Third Sector and Equalities Co-ordinator	22 May 2018

Purpose of Document	Portfolio	Director	Response to be agreed by	Contact	Deadline for response
<p>Draft revised National Planning Policy Framework</p> <p>The draft revised National Planning Policy Framework incorporates policy proposals previously consulted on in the Housing White Paper and the Planning for the right homes in the right places consultation - the government responses to these are available at the respective consultation pages. The Budget 2017 included additional proposals to change planning policy and legislation to bring forward more land in the right places.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/draft-revised-national-planning-policy-framework</p>	Strategic Planning (Place Making)	Director – Service Delivery	Officers in consultation with Portfolio Holder	Jo Wilkins & Colin McDonald	10 May 2018
<p>Supporting housing delivery through developer contributions</p> <p>Following the announcements at Autumn Budget 2017, the government is seeking views on a series of reforms to the existing system of developer contributions in the short term. These reforms will benefit the local authorities who administer them, developers who pay them and the communities in which development takes place.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/supporting-housing-delivery-through-developer-contributions</p>	Strategy and Policy	Director – Service Delivery	Officers in consultation with Portfolio Holder	Jo Wilkins, Colin McDonald, Simon Fox	10 May 2018
<p>Powers for dealing with unauthorised development and encampments</p> <p>This consultation asks a series of questions relating to powers for dealing with unauthorised development and encampments, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local authority and police powers • court processes 	Strategic Planning (Place Making)	Director – Service Delivery	Officers in consultation with Portfolio Holder	Simon Fox	15 June 2018

Purpose of Document	Portfolio	Director	Response to be agreed by	Contact	Deadline for response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trespass • planning enforcement • the provision of authorised sites • the impacts on the travelling community https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/powers-for-dealing-with-unauthorised-development-and-encampments?utm_source=a20442cf-3cdf-4c45-b7a0-3d40b1565c35&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily					
<p>Reducing litter; Proportionate enforcement</p> <p>This consultation seeks your views on proposals by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, to modify the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse to incorporate guidance on the proportionate and effective use of fixed penalties (civil and criminal) against littering and related offences.</p> https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environment/reducing-litter-proportionate-enforcement/	Environment and Economic Development	Director – Service Delivery	Officers in consultation with Portfolio Holder	Chris Cooper / Alasdair Bell	08 June 2018

Agenda Item 12

Date of Next Meeting

Members are asked to note that the next scheduled meeting of the District Executive will take place on **Thursday, 7th June 2018** in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil commencing at 9.30 a.m.

Agenda Item 13

Exclusion of Press and Public

The Committee is asked to agree that the following item (agenda item 14) be considered in Closed Session by virtue of the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A under paragraph 3:

“Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).”

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption from the Access to Information Rules outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Agenda Item 14

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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