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## District Executive

**Thursday 5th March 2020**

**9.30 am**

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

(disabled access and a hearing loop are available at this meeting venue)



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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](mailto:democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk)

This Agenda was issued on Wednesday 26 February 2020.

**Alex Parmley**, *Chief Executive Officer*



This information is also available on our website  
[www.southsomerset.gov.uk](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk) and via the mod.gov app

# District Executive Membership

Jason Baker  
Mike Best  
John Clark  
Adam Dance  
Sarah Dyke  
Peter Gubbins  
Henry Hobhouse  
Val Keitch  
Tony Lock  
Peter Seib

## 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.southsomeset.gov.uk](http://www.southsomeset.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 5 March 2020**

## Agenda

### **1. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the District Executive meeting held on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

### **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. Adoption of the Yeovil Public Realm Design Guide as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** (Pages 4 - 7)
- 7. SSDC Transformation Programme - Progress Report** (Pages 8 - 18)
- 8. Corporate Performance Report 2020-21 Key Performance Indicators** (Pages 19 - 30)
- 9. Business Rates Relief** (Pages 31 - 36)
- 10. District Executive Forward Plan** (Pages 37 - 40)
- 11. Date of Next Meeting** (Page 41)

# Agenda Item 6

## **Adoption of the Yeovil Public Realm Design Guide as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

*Executive Portfolio Holder:* Cllr Peter Gubbins, Yeovil Refresh Lead  
*Ward Member(s)* Town centre ward members  
*Director:* Martin Woods, Service Delivery  
*Service Manager:* Mike Holmes, Interim Regeneration Programme Manager  
*Lead Officer:* Ian Timms, Yeovil Refresh Project Manager  
*Contact Details:* [Ian.Timms@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:Ian.Timms@southsomerset.gov.uk) or 01935 462961

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek a recommendation from District Executive for the Yeovil Public Realm Design Guide to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The guide has now completed the required steps for adoption relating to consultation as outlined in this report.
2. The adoption process requires endorsement of the SPD by District Executive. The formal adoption process will then be completed by approval of the document at the Council meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020.
3. This adoption creates a SPD which supports relevant policies in the Council's adopted Local Plan (2006-2028) and completes Project P1 from the Yeovil Refresh.

### **Forward Plan**

4. The adoption of the SPD was identified in the forward plan for March 2020 following the report considered by District Executive on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019 as part of the consultation process.

### **Public Interest**

5. This report is requesting that District Executive endorse the Yeovil Public Realm Design Guide for formal adoption by South Somerset District Council. The guide is a key foundation in the work to deliver the Yeovil Refresh. It will create a template for any building projects that happen in Yeovil town centre. This includes projects that the council is planning to deliver in the main streets. It will help create a guide for other developers to follow when designing public areas. The guide also includes a shopfront guide which is meant to help businesses by giving a clear style and quality when making or upgrading a shopfront.

### **Recommendations**

6. That the District Executive:
  - a. endorses the attached Public Realm Design Guide for adoption by Council. (Appendix A)
  - b. endorses the attached Shopfront Guide for adoption by Council (Appendix B).  
**(due to their size, these documents will be published as a supplement to the Agenda)**

### **Background**

7. The Yeovil Refresh was adopted in 2018 creating a new vision for Yeovil town centre. The Refresh describes how this vision will be delivered through four key themes. These are Development, Transport, Public Realm and Complementary Initiatives.

8. This report deals with the Public Realm Design Guide which is a key component of the Public realm theme, this is defined as project P1. The Design Guide is intended to provide a clear foundation for all future public realm schemes in Yeovil town centre. This includes a series of schemes P2- P5 described in the refresh document which cover the core town centre streets.
9. The Design Guide and associated Shopfront Guide are now ready to be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents. These will provide further policy definition in Yeovil town centre to the council's town centre planning approach. These documents provide definition to policies in the Local Plan specifically policy EQ2: General Development and general town centre related policies. The SPD is intended to assist in driving through the aspirations for the town centre within the Yeovil Refresh document.
10. The Public Realm Design Guide has been created through the past year as the wider public realm design project has progressed. It is broken into a number of sections which:
  - a. Explore the existing situation
  - b. Set out design parameters
  - c. Describe the approach to public art,
  - d. Sets a Lighting strategy
  - e. Creates a Wayfinding and Signage strategy
  - f. Describes the Quality and types of Materials which are required.
11. The Design Guide has an associated shopfront guide which sets out parameters to improve the quality of design in the town centre.

## **Process of adoption**

12. The Town and County Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 set out the framework for the preparation, consultation and adoption of supplementary planning documents. The council also has an adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) which creates a clear framework for consultation relating to Local Plan documents. In accordance with the process for creating supplementary planning documents there are a number of steps to follow to ensure that the document has been subject to appropriate consultation. The following has been delivered or is planned:
  - The principles of the Design Guide were subject to public, stakeholder and councilor consultation in the summer of 2019 which gathered information on the wider public realm proposals.
  - A screening report to determine whether the Design SPD requires a Habitats Regulation Assessment and/or a Strategic Environmental Assessment has been carried out and sent to statutory consultees for their comment. This was considered by District Executive on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019 as part of the request to consult on the document.
  - The Design Guide and Shopfront Guide must be subject to a formal consultation which is a minimum of 4 weeks as required by legislation. This was approved by District Executive on 7<sup>th</sup> November. The consultation ran from 19<sup>th</sup> December to Monday 27<sup>th</sup> January 2020 to allow for the Christmas period.
  - Consultation feedback has been considered and no amendments have been needed as a result of the feedback.
  - Final Design Guide and Shopfront Guide submitted to District Executive in March 2020.
  - Document adopted by Council 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

- Issue formal statement of adoption and allow three month period for any person aggrieved by the decision to adopt the SPD to apply to the High Court for permission to apply for a judicial review. Make the document available on the SSDC website and at key locations.

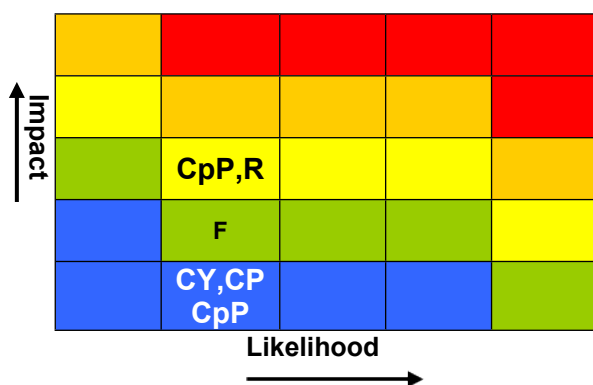
- The feedback received from the recent consultation is appended to this report as Appendix C. This feedback has been considered and no amendments have been made to the documentation. Historic England have responded as a Statutory Consultee their comments are attached as Appendix D and will be utilized in the delivery of projects as they are implemented.
- The completion of the adoption process will mean that the Supplementary Planning Document will support the delivery of the local plan. This creates a clear design style for Yeovil town centre intended to support the wider regeneration of the area.
- As stated above if Council agree the adoption on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020 a statutory adoption statement will be issued which allows a further 3 months for comments prior to the SPD adoption process being finalized. This is attached as Appendix E.

## Financial Implications

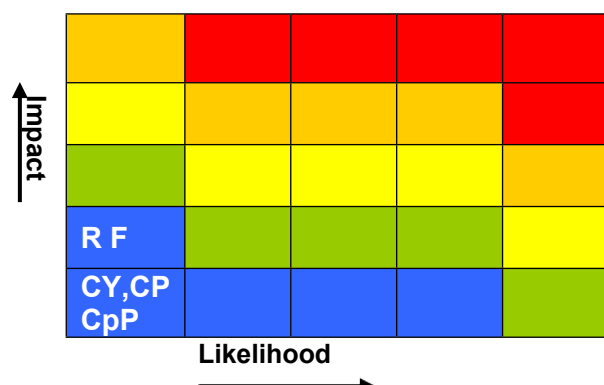
- The Design Guide creates a backdrop for the use of materials and other components of any proposed build scheme. The council is currently working on design proposals for the core streets in Yeovil.
- The ultimate adoption of the Public Realm Design Guide, subject to due process, would have impacts on costs of those schemes. This design guide will inform cost and quality of all schemes. Those impacts though will be considered by the Yeovil Regeneration Board as part of any delivery proposals.

## 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**

18. Council Priority 3: To continue the Refresh of Yeovil Town Centre includes the adoption of a Public Realm Design Guide (P1) as one of the 2019/20 desired outcomes. This report seeks endorsement for adoption of the guide which will enable this outcome to be achieved in Quarter 4 of 19/20.

## **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

19. The guide supports changes to the town centre which would have a positive impact for climate change. Whilst the guide is a framework if adopted as a supplementary planning document it sets principles for additional tree planting, better use of permeable materials and improved practice in management of the streets.

The guide supports a shared space approach which places greater reliance on walking and cycling. This aims to reduce impacts created by petrol and diesel vehicles in the town centre.

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

20. The Design guide seeks to support greater access in the town centre through improved design in the areas it influences. It therefore sets a frame for action. At this stage a detailed equality impact assessment has not been carried out. This process will be applied to each individual design to ensure that they comply with Council's duties under the legislation. These will be the subject of future consideration when actual proposals for design are proposed.

## **Privacy Impact Assessment**

21. This consultation will encourage public feedback. Information will be processed to support the production of the guide in accordance with the legislation. An assessment was carried out on the report to District Executive in November 2019 which is available on request which considers the information collected in detail. This is Appendix D of the November District Executive report.

## **Background Papers**

- Public Realm Design Guide – Appendix A1 and A2
- Shopfront Guide – Appendix B
- Consultation feedback – Appendix C
- Statutory Consultee Feedback – Appendix D , Historic England
- Draft Adoption Statement – Appendix E

# Agenda Item 7

## **SSDC Transformation Programme – Progress Report**

*Executive Portfolio Holder:* Tony Lock, Protecting Core Services incl Transformation

*Director:* Alex Parmley, Chief Executive

*Lead Officer:* Netta Meadows, Director – Strategy & Support Services

*Report Author* Toffer Beattie, Transformation Lead

*Contact Details:* [toffer.beattie@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:toffer.beattie@southsomerset.gov.uk) or 01935 462302

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. This progress report has been prepared in accordance with the Transformation Programme Governance arrangements agreed by Full Council in April 2017 where it was agreed that the District Executive would receive quarterly updates on the progress of the council's Transformation Programme.

### **Forward Plan**

2. This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of March 2020.

### **Public Interest**

3. The Council has been delivering an ambitious programme to totally transform the way it operates to ensure an improved experience for the customers and communities it serves, whilst at the same time reducing the cost to the tax payer. The programme is transforming the Council into a modern, more efficient, effective and commercially minded organisation. We have radically changed the way our services are structured to support service delivery and we are making more use of digital technology to support new ways of working and delivery.

Implementation of the agreed business case has delivered;

- Recurring net annual savings of £2,483,925 from an investment of up to £7,698,155
- A 'fit for purpose' organisation that will be in a position not only to drive continuous improvement but also to generate additional income to fund and support the council's future priorities.

### **Recommendation**

4. The District Executive is asked to note and comment on the report.

### **Overview**

5. The Transformation Programme (TP) aims to deliver on South Somerset District Council's strategic objectives, encapsulated in its vision statement: *One Team, Ambitious for South Somerset "Great to work for. Excellent to work with. Leading the way. Delivering for our communities"*.
6. The July 2019 Transformation Programme report invited the District Executive to approve a one off additional resource allocation to support Service Delivery during the extended period of transition. An update on Service Delivery is included in this report at paragraphs 31-48.
7. The November 2019 Transformation Programme report highlighted progress against a range of non-financial benefits. Progress continues to be made in these areas, but to avoid repetition they will not be reported again in this document.
8. **Release 28.** The November 2019 report mentioned Release 28, a major software upgrade that was being installed at the time of writing. The release was a success and resolved a number of underlying technical issues. It enabled package manager (the capability to copy completed process builds between test and live environments); contact filtering (the ability to filter out non-active



accounts from the Contact Manager user interface); incremental improvements to Mobile 360; and other systems reliability and performance issues.

## **Customer Service.**

9. **Online Services.** There continues to be a steady 'channel shift' as more customers opt to transact online. Over the period September – December 2019 approximately 72% of available services<sup>1</sup> were completed by self-service via the website.
10. **Public Website.** The public SSDC website is continuously improved in response to customer feedback. As well as enhancements to the look and feel, the functionality on line is continuously improving.
11. In addition to a wealth of searchable information, news and links to third party providers the website gives users the ability to apply and pay for a number of council services and to report environmental issues. The majority of these services are supported by newly designed forms and those that are not (generally lower demand services) will be updated soon.
  - 32 'report it' options are now available online. Most have fully redesigned web forms, can be tracked by the customer through My Account, and automatically kick off 'back office' processes, thereby delivering business efficiencies as well as an improved customer experience.
  - Customers can apply for 24 separate services on line. A number of the forms are due to be redesigned, but with the exception of 8 licence application (which require the customer to print off paper forms), all facilitate on-line/paperless application. A number of applications have been fully redesigned leading to both business efficiencies and improved customer journey. Soon after going live online with Single Persons Council Tax Discount, a user successfully made a claim within 7 minutes – from opening the form to receiving the award. The time taken to process such a claim has previously been measured in weeks.
  - 11 out of 12 customer payments can be made on line. This service is being expanded.
12. Work is in hand to reduce to zero any paper transactions.
13. A full list of available online services, with accompany notes, is at Appendix A.
14. **Connect 360 (Contact Management).** Connect 360 is now being deployed live in a limited capacity. All Customer Connect Officers will need to be trained and familiarised on this new system and the Customer Connect Manager has chosen to delay the full introduction until after the annual garden waste renewals (an annual spike has been made even more problematic by the adoption of an entirely new IT platform by Somerset Waste Partnership). But a small number of CCOs are using Connect 360 to deliver EH and Street Scene to help prepare for the full launch.
15. Testing on Connect 360 has exposed some concerns over the response speed which is being investigated with our digital partner Civica.
16. **My Account.** As at 26 Feb 2020, we have 8,199 account holders<sup>2</sup>.
17. A data cleansing system was implemented towards the end of 2019 and this appears to have solved the high rate of account mismatching and duplication that we had been experiencing.
18. **Annual Billing Channel Shift.** We now have sufficient confidence in the account registration and authentication process to use the ongoing round of annual billing for a major channel shift campaign. The bills being sent out are accompanied by information pointing out the cost to the tax payer of annual paper billing and the environmental impact of using so much paper and offering paperless/e-billing as an alternative. Customers will have to be signed up to an account to take up e-billing and so, in line with the messaging, we are designing a paperless authentication process. The aim is

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<sup>1</sup> Services available on both phone and website.

<sup>2</sup> 20 Feb figure – 7983.

that customers will no longer be sent a print PIN in the post. Instead they will be e-mailed a link to access their account.

19. Potential Benefits:

- A 50% take-up of paperless billing by the targeted audience would result in an annual recurring saving in the order of £18000<sup>3</sup>.
- Sending out PIN letters to customers on a 50% sign-up to My Account by the targeted audience would previously cost in the order of £38400<sup>4</sup>. By using the new system of e-mail authentication, this cost will be avoided.
- The non-financial environmental benefits of a significant take up would be considerable. They would be hard to measure but demonstrably consistent with SSDC's environmental strategy.

20. **Localities.** The implementation of fully redesigned EH and Street Scene processes has allowed us to use Mobile 360 operationally, rather than just in a test environment. The results have been good. Where 4G coverage is available the system has provided Locality Officers with mobile functionality. The lack of off-line capability is an identified capability shortfall which is on the Civica development roadmap.

## Service Redesign.

21. **Planning.** Introducing efficiencies to planning processes has been challenging. The business area depends on a mix of human judgement and rules based decision making; it is constrained by legislation and local policy decisions, it relies on a number of interconnected yet distinct IT platforms; it needs a workforce with specific skills and qualifications; and it attracts the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders including individual citizens, community groups, agents and building professionals. There is not a simple single fix to modernising planning; rather it requires a range of incremental efficiencies that together will improve the service overall.

- **Process Automation.** Work is ongoing to automate steps in the 'Report a Breach' process. The concept is being developed in the test environment and will be validated soon. Success with this will pave the way similar technical improvements to other planning processes, such as Planning Application. As these steps are proven in operational use further automation will, where technically feasible, be introduced.
- **Electronic Document Management (EDM).** Improved document management will make the internal movement and handling of planning related information more efficient, thus saving time and freeing up officer capacity. The existing EDM system is deemed fit for purpose and a package of additional training and advice is being rolled out to optimise its use.
- **Communication and Informing.** Greater use is going to be made of the public access portal where stakeholders will be directed to find information. This is in contrast to the current default of the council sending out information to individual stakeholders. The additional effort needed to maintain the portal will be offset by the savings made by not using point to point communications (letters, emails etc), but to be successful it will require behaviour change from all involved. Citizens, community groups, agents and building professionals will have to get used to finding information relevant to them, but in so doing they will enjoy a better service and will free up precious officer resource.
- **Fees and Payments.** We are currently reviewing Planning Fees and Charges to maximise income and support the services we provide. Once agreed by Members, any changes will be

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<sup>3</sup> Based on a 50% reduction of scalable costs (postage and envelopes) and a negotiated 25% reduction in non-saleable costs (e.g. print set up).

<sup>4</sup> Based on an estimated 96000 potential sign-up, a 48 000 (50%), and a postage rate of 80p.

supported by a fully automated on-line payment service, which is currently under development.

- **Staffing Levels.** Even with the application of technology, much of planning requires human intervention. Recruitment of qualified planning officers is critical and has proved challenging due to the highly competitive market. Indirectly transformation has a role to play in this, as one of the strategic aims of the programme is to make SSDC 'great to work for'. Becoming an employer of choice will help us recruit and retain the talent we need.
- **Policy and Procedures.** We are currently reviewing a number of policy and procedural areas across Planning to improve the service for our customers, while still ensuring a clear and transparent process. These include the validation guide, Pre-App Service, Fees and Charges and the Scheme of Delegation. We will look to engage with Members to seek input as proposals are developed.

## **Revenues**

22. **Single Persons Discount.** As mentioned above, a fully integrated Single Persons Discount (SPD) application process has now gone live on the web. In addition to increased customer convenience and speed of response, the processes uses a high degree of automation, integration with the Northgate back office system and a logic engine to reduce, sometimes to zero, the need for human intervention. SPD is a high volume transactions, so as the online claim becomes more widely used, the business efficiencies will be considerable. The success of this development has also proved techniques that will have utility in the redesign of other processes.
23. **Move in/out.** As a new SPD claim often involves a move, the deployed SPD process is being expanded to cater to register a related move too. As well as increasing the efficiency of delivering SPD application, the development will prove the integrations required for a full move in/out report process (not just SPD related). As another high volume transaction, considerable efficiencies stand to be gained from this.

## **Environmental Health and Street Scene.**

24. High volume EH processes are not only now live on the web, but are also being delivered by via Customer Connect Officers on Connect 360. The information gained, either from a telephone caller or the web form, kicks off processes in the back office, automatically tasking relevant actors and passing information instantaneously.
25. Locality officers are included in a number of EH processes and their work is now being successfully supported by Mobile 360, notwithstanding the continuing off-line capability gap.

## **Support Services.**

26. More of the Support Service functions are being digitised – initially be redesigning standardised digital forms to replace a wide range of input methods and to save officer time. The forms bring an amount of immediate efficiencies, but are designed in such a way that as EDM and workflow is rolled out these forms can be readily incorporated.
27. Efficiencies are being sought in Finance by reviewing the process of internal payments. A new procurement card provider is being looked into, one that will reduce the need for some of the manual accounting burden.

## **Service Delivery Recovery Plan update for Transformation Board: 3 February 2020**

28. In recognition of the delays in delivering all the benefits of the transformation programme, District Executive Committee agreed to additional funding to relieve the pressures and reduce service waiting and processing times.
29. Funding was agreed for £494,990 in 2019/20 and £240,230 in 2020/21 to be funded from additional business rate income existing reserves, increased income targets, and a commitment against the 2020/21 budget.

30. In November 2019 an update was given to members on progress. This report gives a further update.
31. The plan provides for additional staffing capacity for a temporary period utilising a mixture of existing staff and where necessary external staff. We have also invested in external support targeted specifically at service backlogs.
32. The full impact of this new resource is starting to take effect, which is reflected in the performance figures. Overall, there have been improvements across service delivery as a result of this recruitment.
33. In this quarter, the following service delivery improvements have taken place:

#### 34. **Planning**

- Overall services are within standards for determination of planning applications within government targets
- Validation time now reduced from a baseline of **29 days to 15 working days.**
- The backlog of applications in the system over 8/13 weeks without an extension of time has reduced from **309 to 296 since August. 2019**
- The overall number of **planning applications in the system has been marginally reduced from a baseline of 558 to 522.**
- We are currently using three experienced agency staff to support the existing team in addition to 3 agency staff secured as part of the original funding in order to improve the service to our customers and bring down workloads to a manageable level within the Planning Team
- We have trialled the use of an external agency **who are processing 100 planning applications** which will be removed from the planners' high caseload.
- We are also working with an experienced recruitment agency to analyse employment offers to planners in order to attract permanent team members
- Enforcement cases have increased from 563 to 580. This is because resource has been directed at closing older cases, and being used for priority new cases
- **Extensions of Time have gone down from 90 in August to 43 in the first week of October**
- Several current planning approval procedures namely pre-app protocol, validation and the Scheme of Delegation and Area Committees are being reviewed in order to yield efficiencies.
- All Parish Clerks have been offered 1:1 assistance in navigating the new website.
- There remain significant negative perceptions of customer service delivery while direct access to officers is restricted, and delayed decisions applications causing personal and financial costs

#### 35. **Benefits**

- 6025 items of backlogged Universal Credit related Council Tax Support work have been outsourced since mid-August 2019. The age of this backlog has reduced from 27 weeks at the end of August to 4 weeks at the end of December. **The average time taken to process new Council Tax Support application forms in this area of work has fallen from a peak of 98 days in October to 38 days in December.**
- With some additional resource we have reduced the **Housing Benefit work backlog from 14 weeks in August to 4 weeks** at the end of December.
- **New Housing Benefit claims and are now being looked at within 5 days of receipt.**
- The average time taken to process new **Housing Benefit application forms has reduced from a peak of 55 days in August to less than 21 days in December.**

- There is still a little way to go to clear the backlog of work completely but anticipate that our performance targets will be met at the end of Q1 2020/21

### 36. Revenues

- Backlog of council tax and business rates reminders and summons were cleared during October and November and a regular programme of issuing them have been maintained since. In all we issued 11,700 reminders and summons between 1st October when backlog clearance started and end of December. We have sent a further 3000 notices in January as at 23/01/20.
- 3860 items of backlogged revenues work have been outsourced. **The age of the backlog of council tax move work items has reduced from 15 weeks in August to 4 weeks at the end of December and now sits at 2 weeks as at 23/01/20.**
- In December, **single person discounts processing has reduced from 13 weeks in August to 3 weeks in December and 2 weeks as at 23/01/20.**
- The backlog of business rates reliefs has been cleared.
- There is still some way to go to clear the backlog of work and return the collection performance to target but good progress continues to be made by the team on both fronts.
- As a result of the headway we have made on reducing the backlog of work outstanding and clearing the backlog of reminder and summons notices the **variation in the council tax collection performance between current year and 2018/19 has narrowed by 26%** from 1.11% in November to 0.82% in December.

### 37. Connect (Customer Focused) Team

- Our average call wait time has **reduced from 5 ½ mins to 4 ½ mins.**
- Our longest wait time was 25 mins during January; this does not occur very often and is predominately over the lunch period when we are still finding demand exceeds our resources.
- We are currently looking at how we can improve this by introducing staggered working patterns and continue to promote our customer self-serve channels so we can reduce this demand over this period.
- Across the council great progress with backlogs have led to **failure demand phone calls going through the Connect Team reduce from 28% to 5%.**
- Enquiries the team are able to deal with over the phone at the first point of contact has continued to rise from **70% to 87%** due to the investment in training. There remain many calls coming to DDI numbers across the council.
- Customer Connect officers are the first point of contact for any housing queries and now able to help with a range of enquiries. Any that cannot be resolved are referred to the Case team.
- Call backs are working. We received around **600 call back requests** in the last quarter which is half the previous quarter demonstrating more customers as satisfied with the wait they incur on our phones. We have in all cases returned these voicemails within 2 days.
- Over **1700 web enquiries** have been submitted by customers. All these customers have received an initial response from the Customer Connect team within 5 days and in many cases much quicker. We want to improve this response time further in the next quarter to encourage more of your customers to contact us this way.
- The Connect space at Petters House and Community Access Points at Chard and Crewkerne continues to thrive with the **self-serve scanner used over 1300** times during the last quarter.

- Channel shift has reached a high with 72% of customers using our digital channels for transactions instead of the telephone for services that are available through both channels
- There remain significant issues over customer expectations for telephone access where customer expectations are still as they were in the past despite customers having options now that they did not have before i.e. the web and leaving a voice mail.

#### 38. Housing

- Our waiting time for housing registering applications has been reduced and is now **down from 29 days in October to 8 days** and a new system for appointments introduced with the Connect team undertaking the initial Triage.
- There is now **a one day wait** to be placed on the housing waiting list against over a month in October last year.
- For changes of circumstances the wait time is now **15 days against a target of 28 days**.
- Overall, by adjusting the way in which work is received and appointments made under the Homelessness Reduction Act the service is achieving **good outcomes in line with service standards**.

#### 39. Land Charges

- The length of time taken to process property searches which had **reduced from 28 to 20 days in October is now 3 days** following deployment of additional resources which started on 14/10/19. These results represent a significant step forwards in service standards.

#### 40. Licensing

- The length of time taken to process licences for lotteries, street collections and taxis has **reduced from 7 days in August to 3 days** with the injection of additional resources; well within expected service standards.

#### 41. Environmental Health

- A backlog of 31 unrated food premises inspections has been outsourced and measures in place to upskill localities team to create in house capacity to manage this going forward.
- A backlog of 26 Environmental permit inspections has been outsourced. We have now successfully recruited to a vacant post providing capacity going forward.
- The 2019 Air Quality report was not complete, however agreement was reached with Defra to submit this as a joint report for 2019/20. This has been outsourced and will be completed. The recruitment to the vacant post will provide capacity to complete this work moving forwards.
- The waiting time for disabled facility grant applications has **reduced from 7 months to 4 months**, equating to 25 applications. Additional resource through Better Care Funding has been effective in this reduction and will continue in place. In addition changes to the tendering of contractors is in progress to increase efficiencies which is expected to make further improvements in the next couple of months.
- All reactive work is currently **within service standards with no backlogs**.
- **12 redesigned processes went live this month** and are expected to deliver increased efficiencies and better customer experience.

#### Service Delivery Summary

42. There has been tremendous effort since last July by the Service Delivery Management Team to deliver the recovery plan as agreed. The Steering Group has met weekly and actions cascaded down to teams. As well as applying the additional resource effectively, constant iterations in ways

of working have been discussed and applied to achieve better outcomes, consistent with demand management and devolving work to the Connect and Case teams.

43. Further improvements are expected in the next quarter with most backlogs cleared. Substantial efforts will continue to be made on percentile improvements in efficiency, channel shift, and new ways of working.
44. Despite the above there remains more work to be completed in order to ensure sustained improvements after summer 2020 when additional resource is removed.

### **Financial Implications**

45. There are no financial implications as a result of this report. Transformation funding is being monitored against the budget.

### **Council Plan Implications**

46. Our Council Plan 2016/21 includes an annual action plan for 2019/20 identifying 5 key themes and areas of focus. The theme most relevant to the transformation programme is;

- Protecting core services

Within this, priority project 1 is to complete and fully realise the benefits of Transformation and implement the Commercial Strategy

### **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

47. The move towards more online transactions, particularly in areas such as council tax e-billing, results in significant reductions in paper usage, will have a positive environmental effect. As well as the actual saving in paper and consumables, the council will be seen to be acting in a more environmentally responsible manner.
48. Though not yet measured, it is clear that agile working is allowing more officers to work from home when appropriate, so reducing vehicle usage for commuting.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

49. There are no implications arising from this report.
50. An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken in 2017 prior to commencing the selection process for the repositioning of roles in the organisation. This deemed there was no inequitable impact for any group as a result of the reorganisation proposals as sufficient measures had been taken to address any potential areas of risk.

### **Privacy Impact Assessment**

51. There are no implications arising from this report.

### **Background Papers**

Quarterly reports to District Executive

## Appendix A to Mar 20 Transformation Update

### CUSTOMER SERVICES AVAILABLE ON SSDC WEBSITE

Service	Status
<b>Report Something</b>	
Abandoned vehicle	Redesigned webform with back office automation.
Accumulation of waste	
Bin collection missed	
Broken glass	
Damage to Council property	
Dead animal	
Dog attack or dangerous dog	
Dog fouling	
Dog found or stray dog	
Dog lost	
Dog mess bin issue	
Drug litter	
Fly-posting	
Fly-tipping	
Graffiti	
Grass requires cutting	
Leaves require sweeping	
Litter	
Litter bin issue	
Nuisance light, noise, odour, smoke, bonfire	
Overgrown hedge	
Overgrown shrub, flower bed	
Tree issue	
Vehicle parked on grass verge	
Vomit or human faeces	
Drains or sewer issue	Customer is directed to Wessex Water on-line reporting page.
Benefits change in circumstances	Redesigned webform to improve customer experience. Further automation of back office to follow
Council tax change in circumstances	Existing online form. To be redesigned.
Moving in, out or within the area	Process redesign in progress
Appeal housing benefit decision	Existing online form. To be redesigned.
Upload evidence to support benefits application	Redesigned webform.
Bereavement	Service available via .gov Tell Us Once. To be redesigned to enable integration with SSDC systems.
<b>Apply for Something</b>	
Council tax discount or exemption	Redesigned SPD process with full integration. Other discounts WIP
Housing benefit and council tax support	Redesigned. Fully integrated form now available on web.
Careline	Customer is directed to Careline website to complete application.



Service	Status
Homefinder	Customer is directed to Homefinder website to complete application.
Backdated benefits	Existing online form. To be redesigned.
Business rate relief	Existing online. To be redesigned.
Planning permission	Application made via .gov.uk Planning Portal
Discharge planning conditions	Application made via .gov.uk Planning Portal
Report a planning breach	Redesign underway.
Appeal planning decision	Application made via .gov.uk Planning Portal
Clinical waste collection	Redesign complete. Integrated with SWP. Waiting for final test.
Bulky waste collection	Customer is directed to SWP website to complete application
Waste container	Existing online form. Redesign underway.
Sandbags	Redesigned webform.
Temporary event notice	Existing online form. To be redesigned.
Personal licence (link to printable form)	Low volume process. To be redesigned as online forms.
Premises licence (link to printable form)	
Alcohol and Entertainment licences (link to multiple printable forms)	
Animal licences (links to multiple printable forms)	
Gaming and Gambling licences (links to multiple printable forms)	
Scrap metal licences (links to multiple printable forms)	
Street trading licences (links to multiple printable forms)	
Taxis and private hire licences (links to multiple printable forms)	
Apply for vacancies, placements and volunteering opportunities	Application made via email.
<b>Make a payment</b>	
Building control copy charges	Existing online form integrated with payment app.
Building regulation fee	Existing online form integrated with payment app.
Planning application (for paper application)	Existing online form integrated with payment app. Online applications payable on planning portal.
Planning pre-application advice	Existing online form integrated with payment app.
Business rates	Existing online form integrated with payment app.
Council tax	Existing online form integrated with payment app.
Car park season ticket	Link to SSDC MiPermit Portal.
Parking fine	Existing online form integrated with payment app.

Service	Status
Council invoice	Existing online form integrated with payment app.
Garden waste sacks & sticker	Redesigned application and payment process. Fully integrated process now available via web.
Pest control	Existing online form integrated with payment app.
Street naming and numbering	Link to paper form.
<b>Search for something</b>	
Planning application	Available on SSDC via SSDC website
Information about your area	
Check council tax banding	
Business services, advice and support	
Commercial land and property	
News and events	
Information and links to council services, parks and entertainment centres	

# Agenda Item 8

## **Corporate Performance Report 2020-21 Key Performance Indicators**

*Executive Portfolio Holder:* Val Keitch, Strategy and Policy  
*Director:* Netta Meadows, Director of Strategy and Support Services  
*Lead Specialist:* Charlotte Jones, Lead Specialist People, Performance and Change  
*Lead Officer:* Cath Temple, Specialist - Performance  
*Contact Details:* Cath.temple@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462587

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. This report sets out the proposed key performance indicators for the 2020-21 reporting period.

### **Forward Plan**

2. This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of March 2020.

### **Public Interest**

3. The Council is accountable to the local community for its performance. We publish performance-monitoring information to demonstrate outcomes and to highlight opportunities to learn and improve for the future.

### **Recommendation**

4. The District Executive is asked to note and comment on the report.

### **Background**

5. The Council monitors a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) which are published on our [website](#).

### **Performance Reporting**

6. The attached report includes our proposed performance indicators for the 2020-21 period. It links with the delivery plans of each area of focus within the Council Plan.
7. Some additional KPIs have been included to cover the newly adopted Environmental Strategy, the remainder have been revised to align more closely with the areas of focus within the Council Plan 2020-24. Some measures are annual.
8. We have a committed group of leaders, managers and staff who are working hard to deliver services to our residents whilst also transforming what we do. Moving to our new ways of working presents some challenges, yet our teams have demonstrated commendable professionalism, dedication and hard work, and should be justifiably proud of all we have achieved over the past two years.
9. The changes we have to make are not yet complete and we have a good awareness of the considerable work that remains ahead for us as an organisation. This includes completing the redesign of our services and supporting our customers to take up new digital channels, together with embedding new ways of working within the 'One Team'.

## **Financial Implications**

10. There are no direct financial implications related to this report.

**Risk Matrix – this report is for information only – no risk profile.**

## **Council Plan Implications**

11. This report is consistent with the Council Plan 2020 – 2024

## **Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

12. There are no direct implications

## **Equality and Diversity Implications**

13. There are no direct implications

## **Privacy Impact Assessment**

14. There are no direct implications

## **Background Papers**

Council Plan 2020-2024



# South Somerset District Council

## Corporate Performance Monitoring

## Review of annual Key Performance Indicators



Page 20



**Protecting  
Core Services**



**Economy**



**Environment**



**Places where we live**



**Healthy, Self-reliant  
Communities**



This report highlights the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be reported upon for the 2020-2021 period.

Consultation has taken place with the Community of Practice (COP) Leads, the Lead Specialists for each area, Portfolio Holders, Senior Leadership Team and the Leader of the Council.

There have been KPIs added to the Environment area of focus following the adoption of the Environment Strategy.

In line with the Performance Management Framework, these KPIs link with the delivery plans for each Community of Practice.

# Protecting Core Services

Ref	Measure (frequency of reporting)	Description	Target 20/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Supporting information
PCS1	Number of on-line accounts activated – Household & Business (Quarterly)	The number of new Customer accounts during the quarter	10,000	3482	5132	2116		
PCS2	Number of accounts active at 6 month point – Household & Business (Quarterly)	The percentage of customer accounts in active use within the last 6 months	50%	*	**	68%		
PCS3	Service requests through on-line forms as a % of all requests (Quarterly)	% of transactions being completed using online service forms instead of other channels, for the same service e.g. phone/letter	70%	67%	71%	72%		
PCS4	% of property portfolio with a performance assessment (Quarterly)	The number of SSDC owned properties with an assessment in place	95%	50%	50%	50%		
PCS5	Council Tax Collection (Quarterly)	The % of council tax collected at 31 <sup>st</sup> March	98% (annual cumulative)	28.11%	55.56%	82.9%		
PCS6	NNDR collection (Quarterly)	The % of National Non Domestic Rates collected at 31 <sup>st</sup> March	97% (annual cumulative)	33%	56.29%	80.82%		

# Protecting Core Services

Ref	Measure	Description	Target 20/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Supporting information
PCS7	Speed of processing - Housing Benefit new claims (Quarterly)	The average (mean) number of days taken from receipt of application from the customer to notification of decision	21	37 days	41	25		
PCS8	Speed of processing - Housing benefit change of circumstance (Quarterly)	The average (mean) number of days taken from notification of change by the customer to notification of adjustment	7	8	16	9		
PCS9	Speed of processing - Council tax new claims (Quarterly)	The average (mean) number of days taken from receipt of application from the customer to notification of decision	30	67	63	69		
PCS10	Speed of processing – Council tax change of circumstance (Quarterly)	The average (mean) number of days taken from notification of change by the customer to notification of adjustment	7	15	51	34		



# Protecting Core Services

Ref	Measure	Description	Target 20/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Supporting information
PCS11	Speed of processing – planning applications – major (Quarterly)	The % of valid major planning applications determined within 13 weeks	60%	100%	89%	76.9%		
PCS12	Speed of processing – planning applications – minor (Quarterly)	The % of valid minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks	70%	97%	90%	92%		
PCS13	Speed of processing – planning applications – other (Quarterly)	The % of all valid other planning applications determined within 8 weeks	80%	99%	96%	96%		
PCS14	Planning appeals lost as a % of all decisions (Quarterly)	The number of appeals to the Planning Inspector lost (i.e. decision overturned) expressed as a % of all decisions	10% (max threshold)	3.52%	2.00%	0.88%		

NB: PCS14 The description provide by MHCLG (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) is 'The quality of decisions is the percentage of planning applications refused, for major development that have been overturned at appeal, once nine months have elapsed following the end of the assessment period' and its measured over years not quarters:- April 16\_March 18 – 7.38%, April 17\_March 19 – 4.23% and April 18\_March 20 2.00%

# Protecting Core Services

Ref	Measure	Description	Target 20/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Supporting information
PCS15	Planning – Extensions of time	The number of requests for extensions of time to determine planning applications	100					
PCS16	Planning - Validations	The number of days between receipt of applications and assessment for validation	3 days					
PCS17	Commercial property income yield (Annual)	The annual income from SSDC commercial property investments	£449k		Annual measure			
PCS18	Annual average yield increase of business services (%) (Annual)	The % and numerical value of income (yield) across all income generating services	5% or £250k		Annual measure			
PCS19	Employer of choice – Staff retention, sickness and feedback							
PCS20	Feedback from residents				Annual measure			



# Economy

Ref	Measure	Description	Target 20/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Supporting information
E1	% spend with local SMEs (bi-annual)	The proportion of SSDC purchasing through local SME suppliers (within the SSDC postcode area), as a % of total spend for goods and services. We assign SME status on the EU definition of SME. <250 employees, We base local status on SSDC postcodes, using CEDAR Vendor addresses.	10%	20%  Revised to 15%	13%  Revised to 14%	9%		
E2	Delivery of the Economic Development Strategy (EDS) (Quarterly)	The number of actions and priority projects which are in progress, aligned to the EDS delivery plan.	30 Milestones in progress	17 on target	21 on target	23 on target		

# Environment

Ref	Measure	Description	Target 20/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Supporting information
EN1	Number of trees planted	Trees planted across the District	*					*awaiting target
EN2	Number of environmental forums held	The number of events or opportunities to engage with our Customers to improve environmental awareness	*					*awaiting target
EN3	Carbon footprint reduction	The % reduction in the footprint across the SSDC estate	*	Annual measure				*awaiting target
EN4	% of household waste recycled (Quarterly)*	The % of all household waste recycled (Somerset wide)	53%	54.98%	54.95%	*		
EN5	Residual waste sent to landfill (Quarterly)*	The % of residual waste volume going to landfill (Somerset wide)	46%	43.69%	43.89%	*		
EN6	Waste recycled in the UK (Quarterly)*	The % of all waste collected which is recycled in the UK (Somerset wide)	90%	91.75%	88.61%	*		

\*SSDC is part of the Somerset Waste Partnership. The performance data relating to waste services is supplied by SWP and is not available at a district level. The data supplied by SWP relates to the previous quarter.



# Places where we live

Ref	Measure	Description	Target 20/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Supporting information
PWWL1	Number of cases of homelessness prevented/helped (Quarterly)	The number of households assisted by SSDC to prevent or relieve homelessness	30 per Quarter	68	74	63		
PWWL2	Length of stay in temporary accommodation (Quarterly)	The average (mean) number of days spent in temporary accommodation (B&B)	7 days	1	3	2		
PWWL3	Number of households in temporary accommodation (Quarterly)	The number of households in temporary accommodation as at the final day of the quarter	30	34	43	41		
PWWL4	Affordable housing completed (Annual)	The number of affordable homes completed for occupation	254 pa			Annual measure		
PWWL5	Affordable housing as a % of all housing completed (Annual)	Number of affordable homes completed as a % of all new housing completions	35%*			Annual measure		

# Healthy, Self Reliant Communities

The Council's area of focus for 'Healthy, Self-Reliant Communities' relies significantly on our work with partners through the design and delivery of a range of community based programmes. A small number of Key Performance Indicators are included below.

Ref	Measure	Description	Target 20/21	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Supporting information
HSRC1	Participation in Health Walks (Annual)	The number of residents participating in health walks supported by SSDC	10,500	Annual measure				
HSRC2	Volunteering at SSDC (Annual)	The number of days provided through volunteering at SSDC	2300	Annual measure				
HSRC3	Investment into local communities facilities (Annual)	The value of investment by SSDC into local facilities enabling cultural, leisure and sports activities	£464k	Annual measure				
Awaiting new measures from the HSRC Community of Practice								

# Agenda Item 9

## **Business Rates Relief**

*Executive Portfolio Holder:* Peter Seib, Finance and Legal Services  
*Director:* Martin Woods, Director – Service Delivery  
*Lead Officer:* Helen Morris, Revenues Specialist, - Service Delivery  
*Contact Details:* Helen.morris@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462033

## **Purpose of the Report**

1. To request that the District Executive approve the use of the Council's local discount powers to increase the Retail Rate Relief from one third to 50 percent in relation to Business Rates from 1 April 2020.
2. To request that the District Executive approve the extension of the Local Newspaper relief for an additional 5 years until 31 March 2025.
3. To request that the District Executive approve Pub relief in relation to Business Rates for 2020/2021.

## **Forward Plan**

4. This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of March 2020

## **Public Interest**

5. In the Autumn Budget of 2018, it was announced that the Government recognises that there is changing consumer behaviour on the high street and therefore announced a number of measures to help retailers during these challenging times. In January 2020 a Written Ministerial Statement was made, announcing a number of additional business rates measures to support businesses at no cost to the Council. This report outlines these, which are to be brought in from April 2020.

## **Recommendations**

6. That the District Executive:
  - a. Approve the use of the Councils local discretionary powers to increase Retail Rate Relief from one third to 50 percent from April 2020 for one year and to extend the relief to include cinemas and music venues with a Rateable Value of less than £51,000;
  - b. Approve the use of the Councils local discretionary powers to extend the Business Rate Relief Scheme for Local Newspapers, for an additional 5 years until March 2025;
  - c. Approve the use of the Councils local discretionary powers to re-introduce Pub relief of £1,000 to eligible pubs, with a Rateable Value of less than £100,000.

## **Background**

7. In the Autumn Budget of 2018, the Chancellor announced a package of business rate measures to help support retailers and to help the high street evolve. These measures were:
  - a. A one third discount for retail property with a rateable value below £51,000 for two years;

- b. Extension of the £1,500 business rates discount for local newspapers' office space in 2019/2020.
8. In January 2020 the Financial Secretary to the Treasury made a Written Ministerial Statement announcing additional business rates measures that will apply from the 1 April 2020. These are:
  - a. Increase of Retail Rate Relief from one third to 50 percent for 2020/2021 and to extend the relief to include cinemas and music venues.
  - b. The extension of the £1500 for office space occupied by local newspapers for an additional 5 years until 31 March 2025.
9. The introduction of a £1,000 Pub relief for 2020/2021.

### **Retail Rate Relief**

10. The Government has announced a new relief scheme for retail properties that have a rateable value of below £51,000. Under the scheme, eligible ratepayers will now receive a 50 percent discount on their daily chargeable amount. The definition of retail properties will follow that adopted from the previous retail relief scheme in 2014/15 and 2015/16. State Aid rules will apply to the retail relief.
11. Local Authorities are expected to use their discretionary relief powers (under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, as amended) to grant this new relief for retail properties in line with the relevant eligibility criteria. There is no new legislation required to deliver the scheme.
12. The value of the discount should be 50 percent of the bill and must be applied after mandatory reliefs and other discretionary reliefs funded by section 31 grants have been applied.
13. Properties that will benefit from the relief will be occupied hereditaments with a rateable value of £51,000 or less, that are wholly or mainly being used as shops, restaurants, cafes, drinking establishments, cinemas and live music venues and who do not already receive 100% business rate relief.
14. Government considers shops, restaurants, cafes and drinking establishments to mean: Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public:
 

Shops (such as: Florist, bakers, butchers, grocers, greengrocer, jewelers, stationers, off licence, chemists, newsagents, hardware stores, supermarkets etc)

  - Charity Shops
  - Opticians
  - Post Offices
  - Furnishing shops/display rooms (such as: carpet shops, double glazing, garage doors)
  - Car/ Caravan showrooms
  - Secondhand car lots
  - Markets
  - Petrol stations
  - Garden Centres
  - Art galleries (where art is for sale/hire)
15. Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public:



- Hair and beauty services (such as hairdressers, nail bars, beauty salons, tanning shops etc)
- Travel agents
- Ticket offices, e.g. for theatre
- Dry Cleaners
- Launderettes
- PC/TV/domestic appliance repair
- Funeral directors
- Photo Processing
- DVD/ Video rentals
- Tool Hire
- Car Hire

16. Hereditaments that are being used for the sale of food and or drink to visiting members of the public:

- Restaurants
- Takeaways
- Sandwich Shops
- Coffee Shops
- Pubs
- Bars

17. Types of business excluded, Hereditaments that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public:

Financial services (e.g. banks, building societies, cash points, bureau de change, payday lenders, betting shops, pawn brokers)

- Other services (e.g. estate agents, letting agents, employment agencies)
- Medical services (e.g. vets, dentists, doctors, osteopaths, chiropractors)
- Professional services (e.g. solicitors, accountants, insurance agents/financial advisors, tutors)
- Post office sorting offices
- Hereditaments that are not reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public.

18. Ratepayers that occupy more than one property will be entitled to relief for each of their eligible properties, subject to State Aid de minimis limits.

19. State Aid Law is how the European Union regulates state funded support to businesses. Discretionary Relief amounts to State Aid. The de minimus Regulations allow a business to receive up to €200,000 of de minimus aid in a three year period (the current financial year and the two previous financial years). It is our responsibility to ensure that a business has not received more than the limit of State Aid. Therefore we will require ratepayers to sign a declaration confirming this.

20. The application form is available on our website. We will send out communication via our social media pages encouraging Businesses to apply for the relief. We will follow up any outstanding declarations that are not returned with a visit from an officer within the Locality Team who would be able to help the customer complete the form.

21. We will continue to work closely with Economic Development and the regeneration programs for Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton to ensure that there is a maximum take up for this relief.

## **Local Newspaper Relief**

22. In the Budget announcement 2016, it was announced that the Government would introduce a £1500 business rate relief for office space occupied by local newspapers, up to a maximum of one discount per local newspaper title and per hereditament, up to state aid limits for 2 years from 1 April 2017.
23. Following the announcement in the autumn budget 2018, this relief was extended for a further year in 2019/20.
24. In January 2020 it was announced that this would be extended for an additional 5 years until 31 March 2025.
25. There is currently one local newspaper receiving this relief.

## **Pub Relief**

26. The Government recognises the important role that pubs play in urban and rural communities. In the Written Ministerial Statement on the 27 January 2020, it was announced that there would be £1000 business rate relief for public houses with a rateable value of less than £100,000, for one year, from the 1 April 2020.
27. Local Authorities are expected to use their discretionary relief powers (under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, as amended) to grant this new relief for retail properties in line with the relevant eligibility criteria. There is no new legislation required to deliver the scheme.
28. The scheme will be available to eligible occupied properties with a rateable value of less than £100,000. Where pubs are part of a chain, relief will be available for each eligible property in the chain, subject to meeting State Aid requirements.
29. The Governments policy intention is that eligible pubs should:
  - Be open to the general public
  - Allow free entry other than when occasional entertainment is provided
  - Allow drinking without requiring food to be consumed
  - Permit drinks to be purchased at a bar.
30. For these purposes it should exclude:
  - Restaurants
  - Cafes
  - Nightclubs
  - Hotels
  - Snack bars
  - Guesthouses
  - Sporting venues
  - Music venues
  - Festival sites
  - Theatres
  - Museums
  - Exhibition halls
  - Cinemas
  - Concert halls
  - Casinos

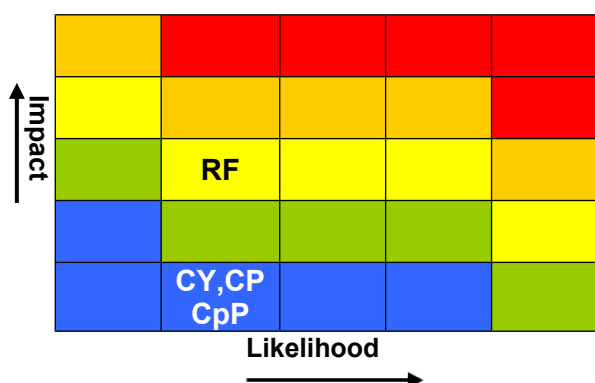
31. The £1,000 relief will be automatically applied to the identified eligible public houses. We will ask for a de minimis State Aid declaration to be completed only if ratepayers have received other public support which is de minimis State Aid. This may be particularly relevant to those premises that are part of a large pub chain.
32. The relief will be applied to bills after mandatory reliefs and other discretionary reliefs funded by section 31 grants have been applied, including retail relief.

## Financial Implications

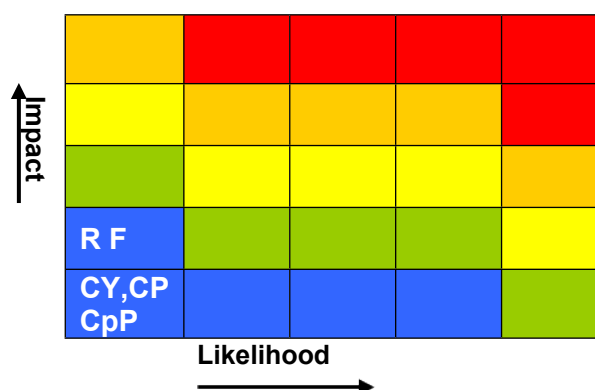
33. Where the Council uses its local discount powers to increase the Retail Relief Scheme, to extend the Local Newspaper Relief until the 31 March 2025 and to introduce Pub Relief, the cost will be reimbursed in full by Government via a section 31 grant.

## 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

34. The proposed policy supports the "Economy" Priority - To promote a strong economy with thriving urban and rural businesses.

## Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

35. None associated with this report

## Equality and Diversity Implications

36. There are no specific implications with this report.

### **Privacy Impact Assessment**

37. Consideration has been given to the Privacy impact assessment and as there is not direct marketing implications there is no impact. A privacy statement will be included with the application forms.

### **Background Papers**

38. The following background papers can be viewed on the council website [www.southsomerset.gov.uk](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk)
- Report to District Executive – March 2017 – item 8
  - Report to District Executive – April 2017 – item 8
  - Report to District Executive – March 2018 – item 8
  - Report to District Executive – January 2019 – item 12
-

# Agenda Item 10

## **District Executive Forward Plan**

*Executive Portfolio Holder:* Val Keitch, Leader, Housing and Strategy  
*Director:* Netta Meadows, Strategy and Support Services  
*Lead Officer:* Angela Cox, Democratic Services Specialist  
*Contact Details:* [angela.cox@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto: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:-

- a) approve the updated Executive Forward Plan for publication as attached at Appendix A
- b) 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)
April / May 2020	Proposal for supporting struggling families and helping to address child poverty and low rates of social mobility in the district	Portfolio Holder - Strategy & Housing	Director Service Delivery	Ian Potter, Lead Specialist (Vulnerable Customers)	District Executive
May 2020	Quarterly Corporate Performance Report	Portfolio Holder - Strategy & Housing	Director Strategy and Support Services	Cath Temple, Specialist (Performance)	District Executive
May 2020	Future funding of Access for All	Portfolio Holder - Health & Well-Being	Director Strategy and Support Services	David Crisfield, Specialist (Strategic Planning)	District Executive
May 2020	Allowenshay mains water connection	Portfolio Holder - Health & Well-Being	Director Strategy and Support Services	Tim Cook, Locality Team Manager	District Executive
June 2020	Transformation Update	Portfolio Holder - Strategy & Housing	Director Strategy and Support Services	Toffer Beattie, Specialist (Projects & Programmes)	District Executive
July 2020 July 2020	The Future of Local Government in Somerset – Business Case	Portfolio Holder - Strategy & Housing	Chief Executive	Alex Parmley, Chief Executive	District Executive South Somerset District Council
July 2020	Capital & Revenue Budget out-turn reports 2019/20	Portfolio Holder - Finance, Legal & Democratic Services	Director Strategy and Support Services	Nicola Hix, Interim Section 151 Officer	District Executive

Date of Decision	Decision	Portfolio	Service Director	Contact	Committee(s)
July 2020 July 2020	SSDC Annual Achievements Report 2019/20	Portfolio Holder - Strategy & Housing	Director Strategy and Support Services	Charlotte Jones, Lead Specialist (People, Performance & Change)	District Executive  South Somerset District Council
TBC	Recycle More - information on the extended recycling programme	Portfolio Holder - Environment	Director Commercial Services & Income Generation	Chris Cooper, Environment Services Manager	District Executive
TBC	Leisure Contracts	Portfolio Holder - Health & Well-Being	Director Service Delivery	Lynda Pincombe, Specialist - Strategic Planning	District Executive
TBC	Dualling of A303 from Sparkford to Ilchester	Portfolio Holder - Protecting Core Services	Director Strategy and Support Services	Lynda Pincombe, Specialist - Strategic Planning	District Executive

## APPENDIX B - Current Consultations – March 2020

Purpose of Document	Portfolio	Director	Response to be agreed by	Contact	Deadline for response
<p><b>First Homes</b></p> <p>This consultation seeks views on First Homes for local people, considering both the design of this policy and options for its implementation.</p> <p>It covers the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what First Homes are and who should be eligible for them</li> <li>• how the scheme should work in practice</li> <li>• how to deliver more of these homes through developer contributions</li> <li>• the requirement for delivering these homes through planning or legislation</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/first-homes?utm_source=1b6a4b25-8fa3-4099-9f57-e5aec0616556&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&amp;utm_content=daily">https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/first-homes?utm_source=1b6a4b25-8fa3-4099-9f57-e5aec0616556&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&amp;utm_content=daily</a></p>	Strategy and Housing	Director – Service Delivery	Officers in consultation with Portfolio Holder	Jo Wilkins/ Simon Fox/ Jo Calvert	3 April 2020



# Agenda Item 11

## **Date of Next Meeting**

Members are asked to note that the next scheduled meeting of the District Executive will take place on **Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2020** in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil commencing at 9.30 a.m.

This meeting will only take place if there is business to conduct.