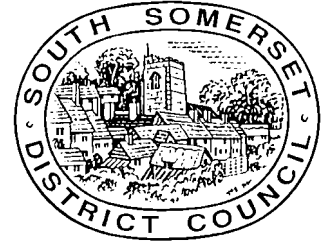


# South Somerset District Council

*Notice of Meeting*



## District Executive

*Making a difference where it counts*

### Thursday 6th November 2014

### 9.30 am

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

Disabled Access is 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 ring the Agenda Co-ordinator, **Angela Cox 01935 462148**

This Agenda was issued on Wednesday 29 October 2014.

*Ian Clarke, Assistant Director (Legal & Corporate Services)*

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



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

# District Executive Membership

Ric Pallister  
Tim Carroll  
Peter Gubbins  
Henry Hobhouse  
Shane Pledger  
Jo Roundell Greene  
Sylvia Seal  
Peter Seib  
Angie Singleton  
Nick Weeks

## 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](http://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.

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

## South Somerset District Council – Corporate Aims

**Our key aims are:** (all equal)

- **Jobs** - We want a strong economy which has low unemployment and thriving businesses
- **Environment** - We want an attractive environment to live in with increased recycling and lower energy use
- **Homes** - We want decent housing for our residents that matches their income
- **Health and Communities** - We want communities that are healthy, self-reliant, and have individuals who are willing to help each other

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# District Executive

**Thursday 6 NOVEMBER 2014**

## Agenda

**1. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the District Executive meeting held on 2nd October 2014.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

**3. Declarations of Interest**

**4. Public Question Time**

**5. Chairman's Announcements**

**6. Further Main Modifications to the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 - 2028)**  
(Pages 1 - 76)

**7. Report of Joint Scrutiny Task and Finish Group - Broadband** (Pages 77 - 86)

**8. Non Domestic Rates (NDR) – Discretionary Rate Relief Policy** (Pages 87 - 180)

**9. Superfast Broadband Extension Programme - Interim Report on Options and Requirements** (Pages 181 - 194)

**10. Adoption of Housing Strategy Implementation Plan** (Pages 195 - 276)

**11. Upgrade of E5 Financial System** (Pages 277 - 289)

**12. 2014/15 Capital Budget Monitoring Report for the Quarter ending 30th September 2014** (Pages 290 - 316)

**13. 2014/15 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for the Quarter ending 30th September 2014** (Pages 317 - 345)

**14. Wyndham Park Community Facilities** (Pages 346 - 350)

**15. Draft Proposals of the Community Governance Review of Lopen Parish Council** (Pages 351 - 354)

**16. District Executive Forward Plan** (Pages 355 - 357)

**17. Monthly Performance Snapshot** (Page 358)

**18. Date of Next Meeting**

Members are asked to note that the next scheduled meeting of the District Executive will take place on Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> December 2014 in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Brympton Way, Yeovil commencing at 9.30 a.m.

19. **Exclusion of Press and Public** (Page 359)
20. **Delivery of the Car Parking Strategy (Confidential)** (Pages 360 - 363)



# Agenda Item 6

## Further Main Modifications to the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 – 2028)

<i>Executive Portfolio Holder:</i>	<i>Tim Carroll, Finance and Spatial Planning</i>
<i>Strategic Director:</i>	<i>Rina Singh, Strategic Director, Place and Performance</i>
<i>Assistant Director:</i>	<i>Martin Woods, Assistant Director (Economy)</i>
<i>Service Manager:</i>	<i>Paul Wheatley, Principal Spatial Planner</i>
<i>Lead Officer:</i>	<i>Paul Wheatley, Principal Spatial Planner</i>
<i>Contact Details:</i>	<i>paul.wheatley@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462598</i>

### 1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to approve the four further Main Modifications (MMs) and minor amendments to the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 – 2028) and recommend their endorsement by SSSDC Full Council. The further MMs stem from the Planning Inspector's Preliminary Findings letter of 16<sup>th</sup> July 2014<sup>1</sup>.

### 2. Public Interest

- 2.1 An adopted Local Plan provides the mechanism to guide the development industry and inform the public about the future strategy for growth in South Somerset. The Local Plan is the principal planning tool for South Somerset District Council to encourage investment, protect the environment, create jobs, and deliver sustainable development.
- 2.2 The Council has prepared four further MMs to address the concerns raised by the Inspector following the resumed Examination Hearing Sessions held in June 2014. Addressing these concerns will allow the Council to progress towards an adopted Local Plan.

### Recommendations

That District Executive:

1. Approve the further Main Modifications (see Appendix A) and minor amendments and recommend they are approved by Full Council for submission to the Planning Inspectorate; and
2. Note that the further Main Modifications have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal, Habitat Regulations Assessment and Equality Analysis as required.

### 3. Background

- 3.1 The South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028) is currently subject to an Independent Examination carried out by the Planning Inspectorate. Examination Hearing Sessions were held from 07 May to 18 June 2013 and from 10 June to 13 June 2014. The resumed Examination Hearing Sessions held in June 2014 discussed the Council's proposed MMs<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Inspector's Preliminary Findings letter (16<sup>th</sup> July 2014):  
[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/674198/inspector\\_s\\_preliminary\\_findings\\_post\\_resumed\\_examination\\_hearing.pdf](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/674198/inspector_s_preliminary_findings_post_resumed_examination_hearing.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> South Somerset Local Plan (2006 – 2028) – Proposed Main Modifications (March 2014):  
[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/648229/south\\_somerset\\_local\\_plan\\_proposed\\_main\\_modifications\\_submission\\_to\\_pins.pdf](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/648229/south_somerset_local_plan_proposed_main_modifications_submission_to_pins.pdf)

- 3.2 The Inspector has now considered all of the evidence put forward by the Council and stakeholders, and has formally written to the Council setting out his 'Preliminary Findings' and proposed next steps relating to the resumed Examination Hearing matters. This communication has been distributed to all SSDC Members as well as being displayed on the SSDC Website.
- 3.3 In his letter, the Inspector identified that based on the evidence he has read and heard he considers there remain four "*small shortcomings...relating to soundness, which the Council should address through the agreement of Main Modifications (MMs)*".

#### 4. Report

- 4.1 The further MMs have been written to directly address the Inspector's remaining concerns. The Council's Project Management Board (PMB) has overseen the production of the further Main Modifications. On the 24 July 2014<sup>3</sup> PMB recommended the MMs for public consultation and on the 03 November 2014<sup>4</sup> recommend that they be formally submitted to the Inspector.
- 4.2 The further MMs proposed are related to the following policies:
- **Policy YV2: North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension** – is amended to include detail on landscape mitigation measures at the North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension.
  - **Policy YV3: East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone** – Policy YV3 is deleted, and in so doing removes the east Coker and North Coker buffer zone.
  - **Policy SS3: Delivering New Employment Land** – the specific employment land figure for Rural Settlements is deleted. An explanation of the Council's approach to employment proposals in Rural Settlements and Rural Centres is added, and reference to an early review of housing and employment provision Wincanton is added.
  - **Policy SS5: Delivering New Housing Growth** – is amended to improve clarity on housing delivery in Crewkerne and Wincanton. Reference to an early review of housing and employment provision at Wincanton is added.
- 4.3 These further MMs require consequential changes to supporting text, and in the case of Policy YV3, to the proposals map.
- 4.4 The further MMs have been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA), Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), and Equality Analysis (EqA). The SA and HRA have been undertaken by Enfusion Ltd. The documents are attached as Appendices B, C and D.

#### 5. Consultation on Further Main Modifications

- 5.1 The further MMs were subject to public consultation between 28 August 2014 and 10 October 2014. In total 54 respondents provided 101 comments to the public consultation. A breakdown of the number of comments received against each of the further Main Modification is set out in Table 1 below.

<sup>3</sup> PMB Workshop 32: Consideration of further Main Modifications (July 2014):  
[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-\(formerly-core-strategy\)-project-management-board-reports/pmb-24-july/](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-(formerly-core-strategy)-project-management-board-reports/pmb-24-july/)

<sup>4</sup> PMB Workshop 33: Consideration of further Main Modifications (November 2014):  
[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-\(formerly-core-strategy\)-project-management-board-reports/](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-(formerly-core-strategy)-project-management-board-reports/)

**Table 1: Number of Comments Received for each Main Modification**

Main Modification	Support	Object	Observation	Total
Introduction	2	6	3	11
MM9	3	30	2	35
MM10	4	35	0	39
MM11	1	3	1	5
MM12	2	7	2	11
Next Steps	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	12	81	8	101

5.2 All of the consultation responses have been reviewed and considered. Analysis of the consultation responses has highlighted a number of main issues. The Council's consideration of the main issues is set out in the PMB Report (November 2014)<sup>5</sup>. A detailed analysis and response to these main issues is set out in Appendix E.

## **6. Conclusion on Further Main Modifications**

6.1 The analysis of the consultation responses has resulted in two minor amendments to the further Main Modifications:

- i. To simplify the text within Main Modification 9 to better define the landscape mitigation requirements for the North East Sustainable Urban Extension as part of Policy YV2; and
- ii. To alter Main Modification 12 so that the early review of housing and employment provision in Wincanton will be completed within 3 years after the date of adoption of the Local Plan.

## **7. Next Steps**

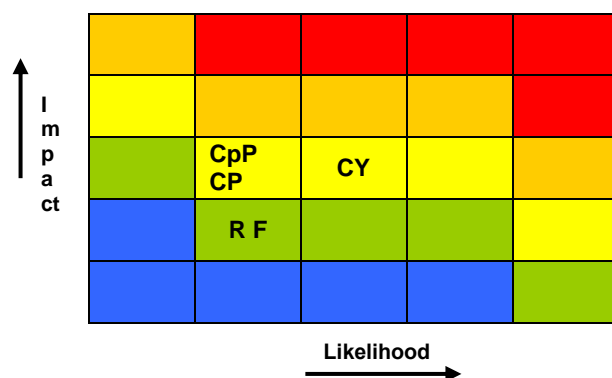
7.1 If the further Main Modifications are approved by Full Council, they will be submitted to the Inspector. The modifications will then feature in the Inspector's Report. Based upon the current timetable, it is anticipated that the Inspector's Report will be received by the end of 2014, and that the Local Plan could be adopted by early 2015.

## **8. Financial Implications**

8.1 If District Executive were minded to endorse the Main Modifications for consideration by Full Council, this would allow the Council to proceed towards adoption of the Local Plan. Financial resources would be allocated to complete the Local Plan, but these have been included within existing budgets.

<sup>5</sup> Project Management Board Workshop 33: Consideration of further Main Modifications (November 2014): [https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-\(formerly-core-strategy\)-project-management-board-reports/](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-(formerly-core-strategy)-project-management-board-reports/)

## 9. Risk Matrix



### 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

## 10. Corporate Priority Implications

10.1 Adopting the Local Plan is a high priority in the Council Plan “Our Plan - Your Future 2012 to 2015”. The progress of the Local Plan is important, principally to achieve adopted policies that will assist in realising the Council’s Corporate Aims relating to economic vitality and prosperity, improvement in the health and well-being of citizens, creation of safe, sustainable and cohesive communities and the promotion of a balanced natural and built environment.

## 11. Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

11.1 None.

## 12. Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 The Main Modifications have been prepared in accordance with the legislative and statutory requirements of an Equality Analysis, Habitats Regulations Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal.

## 13. Background Papers

Appendix A – South Somerset Local Plan (2006 – 2028) Further Main Modifications (November 2014)

Appendix B – Further Main Modifications Sustainability Appraisal Addendum Report (November 2014)

Appendix C – Further Main Modifications Habitats Regulation Assessment Addendum Report (November 2014)

Appendix D – Further Main Modifications Equality Analysis (November 2014)

Appendix E – Analysis of Consultation Responses on Main Modifications (November 2014)

Project Management Board – Workshop 32: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/pmb32>

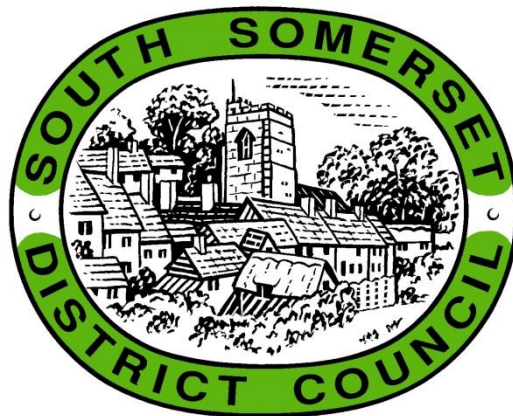
Project Management Board – Workshop 33: [https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-\(formerly-core-strategy\)-project-management-board-reports/](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-(formerly-core-strategy)-project-management-board-reports/)

Inspector’s Preliminary Findings Letter (16 July 2014):

[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/674198/inspector\\_s\\_preliminary\\_findings\\_post\\_resumed\\_examination\\_hearing.pdf](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/674198/inspector_s_preliminary_findings_post_resumed_examination_hearing.pdf)

# **Proposed Submission South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028**

## **Main Modifications**



**November 2014**

## Contents

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3.	Policy YV3: East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone	5
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5.	Policy SS5: Delivering New Housing Growth	12
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7.	Appendix 1: Final Version of Local Plan Policies	16

## 1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1. The Proposed Submission South Somerset Local Plan (2006 – 2028) was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for Independent Examination in January 2013. A series of Examination Hearing Sessions were held during May and June 2013, which resulted in the Inspector issuing a Preliminary Findings Letter<sup>1</sup> to the Council outlining some issues of concern. The Local Plan Examination was suspended whilst additional work was undertaken by the Council to address the Inspector's concerns.
- 1.2. Further evidence base work led to the Council creating proposed Main Modifications (MMs). These were subject to consultation between November 2013 and January 2014. Following consideration of the consultation responses, the MMs were submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in March 2014<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.3. Examination Hearing Sessions on the MMs took place from 10 – 13 June 2014. During these sessions the Inspector raised a number of issues where the Local Plan would benefit from additional clarification.
- 1.4. Some other matters were debated during the Examination Hearing Sessions and the Council produced a series of Mid-Hearing Statements to clarify their position. The documents have been subject to consultation and comments received have been considered by the Council and the Inspector.
- 1.5. The need for further MMs was formally confirmed by the Inspector in his letter from the 16<sup>th</sup> July 2014<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.6. As a result, the Council are proposing further Main Modifications (MMs) relating to:
  - Policy YV2: North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension;
  - Policy YV3: East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone;
  - Policy SS3: Delivering New Employment Land; and
  - Policy SS5: Delivering New Housing Growth.
- 1.7. The further MMs have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal, Equality Analysis and Habitats Regulation Assessment.
- 1.8. The further MMs were approved for consultation by District Executive on the 7<sup>th</sup> August 2014 and by Full Council on the 21<sup>st</sup> August 2014. The further MMs were subject to public consultation from 28<sup>th</sup> August – 10<sup>th</sup> October 2014.
- 1.9. The Council has sought to discharge its duties under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), and its own Statement of Community Involvement<sup>4</sup>, by making the further MMs available to both specific consultation bodies and general consultation bodies. It has also sought to discharge the "Duty to Co-operate" as prescribed under Regulation 4 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), by actively engaging with the "Prescribed Bodies"<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Inspector's Preliminary Findings Letter (July 2013):

[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/572193/inspector\\_s\\_preliminary\\_findings.pdf](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/572193/inspector_s_preliminary_findings.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> South Somerset Local Plan Proposed Main Modifications (March 2014):

[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/648229/south\\_somerset\\_local\\_plan\\_proposed\\_main\\_modifications\\_submission\\_to\\_pins.pdf](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/648229/south_somerset_local_plan_proposed_main_modifications_submission_to_pins.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Inspector's Preliminary Findings following the Resumed Hearing Sessions letter (July 2014):

<sup>4</sup> South Somerset District Council: Statement of Community Involvement, Appendix 2 (July 2007)

<sup>5</sup> A detailed account of the Duty to Co-operate process can be found here:

[http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/457227/10\\_duty\\_to\\_cooperate\\_report.pdf](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/457227/10_duty_to_cooperate_report.pdf), with an update note scheduled to be tabled to District Executive and Full Council for approval prior to use at the resumption of the Examination.

- 1.10. In total 54 respondents provided 101 comments to the public consultation. A breakdown of the number of comments received against each of the further Main Modification is set out in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Number of Comments Received for each Main Modification**

Main Modification	Support	Object	Observation	Total
<b>Introduction</b>	2	6	3	11
<b>MM9</b>	3	30	2	35
<b>MM10</b>	4	35	0	39
<b>MM11</b>	1	3	1	5
<b>MM12</b>	2	7	2	11
<b>Next Steps</b>	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	12	81	8	101

- 1.11. The consultation responses on the further MMs have been considered, and submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. This discharges the Council's duty to request under Section 20 (7C) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), for the Inspector to recommend Main Modifications to the Local Plan.
- 1.12. The Inspector will consider the further MMs in conjunction with the rest of the Main Modifications and will decide whether there is the need for any further Examination Hearing Sessions. If additional Hearing Sessions are not required, the Inspector will move towards finalising the formal 'Inspector's Report'.
- 1.13. Each of the further MMs is set out below. Where the Council has proposed new text, this is shown in **bold and underlined**; any deleted text shown with a ~~strikethrough~~.



## 2. Policy YV2: North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension

### Main Modification 9: Additional detail on mitigation required for North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension

#### Overview

- 2.1. During the Local Plan Examination Hearing Session for Issue 4, the Inspector noted that a planning application had already been submitted for the North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension. The Inspector requested that some additional text be added to Policy YV2 to provide greater certainty regarding mitigation of the landscape impact stemming from the North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension.
- 2.2. The Council has proposed additional text to ensure that the planning application process does not counter the intended masterplanning process, and also to ensure that appropriate mitigation is forthcoming through the development management process. The addition of landscape text to Policy YV2 was subject to initial consultation between 13<sup>th</sup> June and 27<sup>th</sup> June 2014.
- 2.3. In order to be consistent with the approach in Policy SS3: Delivering New Employment Land, a consequential amendment to Policy YV2 is also presented which refers to land for economic development in general, rather than 'B' use land specifically.

#### Analysis of Consultation Responses

- 2.4. There were 35 consultation responses made in relation to MM9, 3 in support, 30 in objection, and 2 observations. A detailed analysis of consultation responses can be found here: [https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-\(formerly-core-strategy\)-project-management-board-reports/pmb-3rd-november/](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-(formerly-core-strategy)-project-management-board-reports/pmb-3rd-november/)
- 2.5. In summary, the majority of comments received were objections to the modification on the basis that it should provide equivalent landscape mitigation for the South Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension. This suggestion is rejected on the basis that the landscape appraisal underpinning the decision-making on this issue does not support the need for specific mitigation for the South Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension.
- 2.6. Other comments noted that the modification text for the landscape mitigation for the North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension could be simplified to allow easier interpretation. It is agreed that this amendment is worthwhile to improve the way that this policy can be implemented. The Main Modification is altered accordingly.

**Implication for Policy**

2.7. As a result of the public consultation the final version of Main Modification 9, relating to Policy YV2 is set out as follows:

Ref	PSSSLP Page and Policy	Main Modification
MM9	Page 76; Policy YV2	<p>Amend the second paragraph of Policy YV2 with the following:</p> <p>The north east area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approximately 2.58 hectares of 'B' use class employment land <b><u>for economic development</u></b>;</li> <li>• Approximately 765 dwellings;</li> <li>• One primary school;</li> <li>• A health centre; and</li> <li>• A neighbourhood centre; <b><u>and</u></b></li> <li>• <b><u>Landscape mitigation to address:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b><u>Potential massing effects across the site's northward face; and</u></b></li> <li>○ <b><u>Potential visual dominance at the site's edge and skyline.</u></b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	Page 76; Policy YV2	<p>The south area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approximately 2.58 hectares of 'B' use class employment land <b><u>for economic development</u></b>;</li> </ul>

### 3. Policy YV3: East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone

#### Main Modification 10: Deletion of Policy YV3

##### Overview

- 3.1. The intention of the buffer zone set out in Policy YV3 was to preserve the character of North Coker and East Coker, and prevent coalescence with Yeovil. However, at the Local Plan Examination Hearing Session for Issue 3, the Inspector raised concerns regarding the continued justification for the buffer zone in light of the reduced scale and extent of the South Yeovil SUE.
- 3.2. The Council also notes how the recent Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 37-015-20140306) re-iterates Paragraph 77 of the National Planning Policy Framework in that Local Green Space designations should only be used where the green area concerned is not an extensive tract of land, and that the blanket designation of open countryside adjacent to settlements will not be appropriate. In particular, designation should not be proposed as a 'back door' way to try to achieve what would amount to a new area of Green Belt by another name.
- 3.3. Therefore, the Council is proposing to delete the East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone from the Local Plan. This involves a further Main Modification to delete Policy YV3 as set out in the table below; plus additional modifications to delete references to the buffer zone in the supporting text (paragraphs 5.34 and 5.50 – 5.54 of the Local Plan) and removing the buffer zone from Inset Map 15 (shown overleaf).

##### Analysis of Consultation Responses

- 3.4. There were 39 comments made in relation to MM10, 4 in support, 35 objections and 0 observations. A detailed analysis of consultation responses can be found here: [https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-\(formerly-core-strategy\)-project-management-board-reports/pmb-3rd-november/](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-(formerly-core-strategy)-project-management-board-reports/pmb-3rd-november/)
- 3.5. In summary, the majority of comments received were objections to the modification on the basis that the buffer zone should be reinstated, and indeed enhanced to protect heritage assets, areas of landscape value, and prevent the coalescence with North Coker and East Coker.
- 3.6. The buffer zone was discussed at length during the Examination. The revision to the scale of the Sustainable Urban Extension now removes any evidential basis for a buffer zone. Furthermore, the clarification provided by the PPG confirms that designating an area as a buffer zone would not be justified or in accordance with national policy.
- 3.7. Therefore no revision is made to Main Modification 10, and it is proposed that Policy YV3 is deleted.

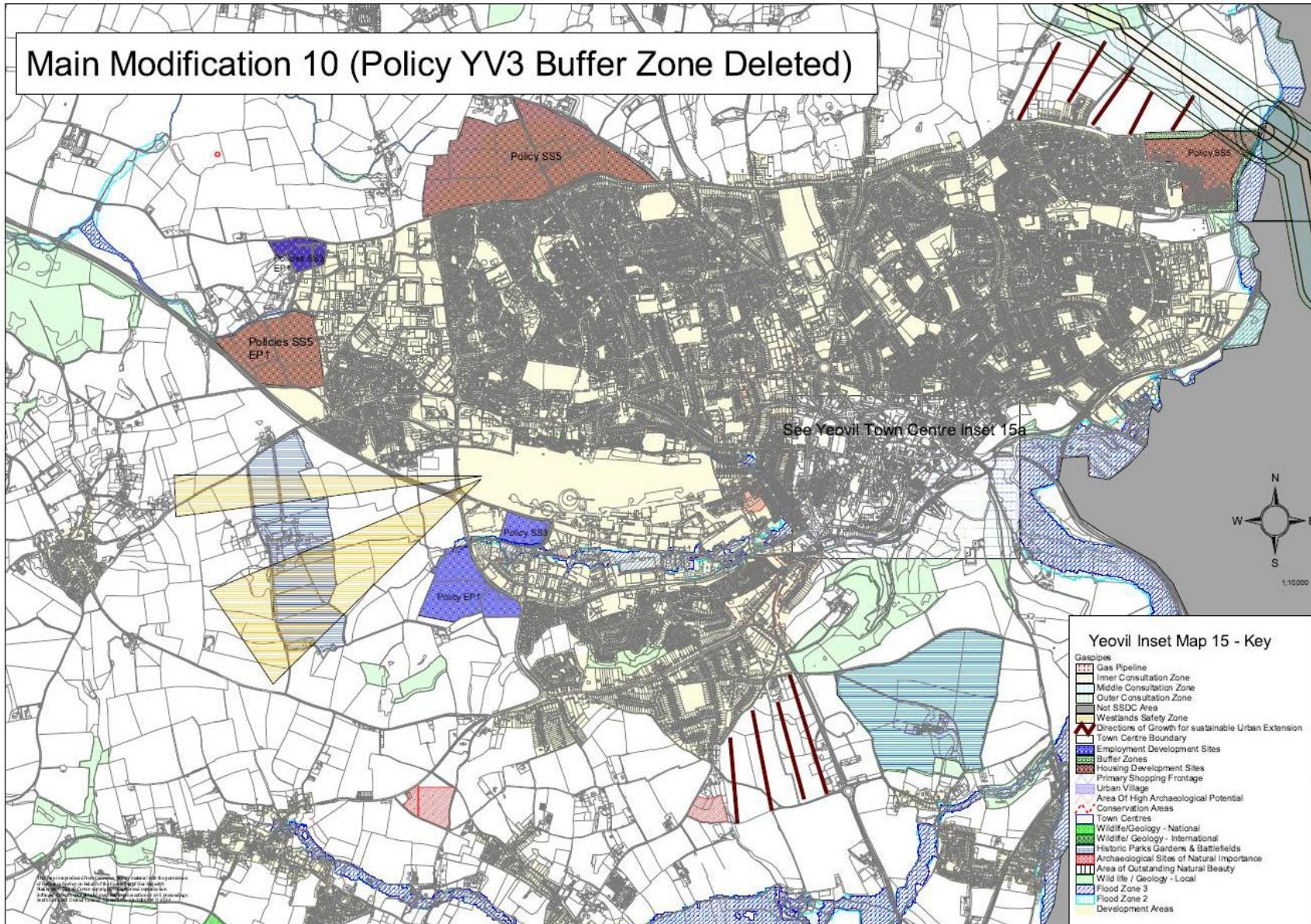
**Implication for Policy**

3.8. As a result of the public consultation the final version of Main Modification 10, relating to Policy YV3 is set out as follows:

Ref.	PSSSLP Page and Policy	Main Modification
MM10	Page 78; Policy YV3	<p><del><b>Policy YV3: East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone</b></del></p> <p><del>An East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone is identified to the west of the Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension, within which development that results in coalescence with the settlements of East Coker and North Coker and/or adversely affects the setting of historic assets is precluded. Development (not of a built form) within the Buffer Zone may be acceptable as long as the coalescence of settlements is not caused as a result nor the setting of historic assets adversely affected. Existing development within the buffer zone will require special justification to add built development beyond existing permitted development rights.</del></p> <p><del>The development is compatible with features supporting bat movement; that access between feeding areas and roosts is maintained and any proposed lighting is compatible with the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site unless it can be proven that there would be no significant effect by the proposal.</del></p>



Main Modification 10 (Policy YV3 Buffer Zone Deleted)



## 4. Policy SS3: Delivering New Employment Land

### Main Modification 11: Amendment to Policy SS3 to improve clarity on employment land delivery in Rural Centres and Rural Settlements

#### Overview

- 4.1. There are three parts to the proposed Main Modification 11 (MM11), which affect Local Plan Policy SS3 and its supporting text (Table 1). These clarify the Council's approach to delivering new employment land across the District.
- 4.2. The first two elements of MM11 relate to the figure for employment land in Rural Settlements included in Policy SS3 and Table 1.
- 4.3. In June 2014, concerns were raised during the resumed Examination Hearing Session for Issue 5 (Delivering New Employment Land) that having a target figure for the amount of employment land in the Rural Settlements could potentially result in large-scale, speculative development in the countryside. The Inspector requested the Council explain the reasons for the employment land figure. This work is set out in Hearing Document HD016<sup>6</sup>.
- 4.4. The Inspector's note to the Council (14 July 2014)<sup>7</sup> regarding Policy SS3 states that following consideration of the Council's response: "*the situation remains unclear*". As a result, the Inspector's Preliminary Findings letter (16 July 2014) invited the Council to make a further Main Modification to Policy SS3 to ensure that the plan is sound.
- 4.5. The Council proposes to remove the specific figure for the number of hectares of employment land in Rural Settlements. Together with a new reference to the policy framework provided by the NPPF and other Local Plan policies SS2, EP4, and EP5, this will continue to support the economic role and function of Rural Settlements. The Main Modification still allows for appropriate, sustainable employment opportunities in Rural Settlements to come forward.
- 4.6. The third part of MM11 relates to a text change required to give greater clarity for applicants and decision makers. This change makes it clear that development in Rural Centres needs to be adjacent to the existing development area of the settlement.
- 4.7. The Inspector also requested that the Council provide a stronger commitment to an early review of the policy framework for delivering growth in Wincanton. As a result, Policy SS5 is subject to a Main Modification (see Section 5 below). To ensure consistency and allow direct read-across between sections of the Local Plan a footnote has also been added to Policy SS3. The Council does not see this as a separate Main Modification, but a consequential change as a result of more detailed changes set out under Main Modification 12.

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<sup>6</sup> [http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/665107/explanation\\_of\\_policy\\_ss3\\_final.pdf](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/665107/explanation_of_policy_ss3_final.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Note to Council from Inspector, Policy SS3: Delivering New Employment Land – Rural Settlements (July 2014)



### Analysis of Consultation Responses

- 4.8. There were 5 comments made in relation to MM11, 1 in support, 3 objections and 1 observation. None of these comments make specific reference to the issues raised by the Inspector relating to economic growth in the Rural Settlements, and they do not directly address the Main Modification. However, for completeness an analysis of consultation responses can be found here:  
[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-\(formerly-core-strategy\)-project-management-board-reports/pmb-3rd-november/](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-(formerly-core-strategy)-project-management-board-reports/pmb-3rd-november/)
- 4.9. In summary, comments received were concerned that the modification did not improve the clarity on delivery of employment land in Crewkerne; whilst other comments suggested that the amount of employment land in Wincanton should be increased.
- 4.10. Main Modification 11 is targeting a very specific issue linked to the removal of the figure for the amount of employment land in Rural Settlements. The modification achieves this, and the comments received do not affect the proposed modification.

**Implication for Policy**

4.11. As a result of the public consultation the final version of Main Modification 11, relating to Policy SS3 and supporting text is set out as follows:

Ref.	PSSSLP Page and Policy	Main Modification					
MM11	Page 40-41, Table 1, Policy SS3	<p><u>Table 1 (Page 40)</u></p> <p>Delete reference to specific employment land requirement for Rural Settlements, and amend justification in Table 1 as follows:</p>					
		Location	Local Plan jobs growth (B Use jobs in brackets)	Employment Land Required (for B Use jobs growth (ha))	Existing Employment Land Commitments (ha)	Quantitative and Qualitative justification for employment land	Local Plan Additional Employment Land Requirement (ha)
		Rural Settlements	966-1,181 <del>(638)</del> (720)	4.20	7.86	<p>The additional employment land requirement will provide for the job growth (B Uses) identified for the Rural Settlements and given that the Rural Settlements are spread over a wide geographical area, the figure allows for some choice. Most development will be very small scale</p> <p><b><u>Any additional employment land required to support the jobs expected to come forward in the Rural Settlements will be small-scale and will be expected to accord with Local Plan Policies SS2, EP4 and EP5.</u></b></p>	4.50



Ref.	PSSSLP Page and Policy	Main Modification																		
MM11	Page 41, Policy SS3	<p><u>Policy SS3 (Page 41)</u></p> <p>Reference to a specific employment land requirement for Rural Settlements is deleted. Additional text clarifying the policy position in Rural Settlements is added. Subsequent amendments to the accompanying table showing employment land requirement figures (and totals) are also made.</p> <p>Policy SS3 is updated as follows:</p> <p><b>The Local Plan will assist the delivery of 11,250 jobs as a minimum, and <u>149.51</u> hectares of land for economic development between April 2006 and March 2028.</b></p> <p><b>The identification of B Use jobs and non B Use jobs for settlements establishes targets for growth in line with the Council’s forecast growth for the District and its settlements over the plan period. Economic development of a main town centre type will be expected to comply with Policy EP11.</b></p> <p><b>Prior to the adoption of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document, a permissive approach will be taken when considering employment land proposals in Yeovil (via the SUEs), and ‘directions of growth’ at the Market Towns. The overall scale of growth (set out below) and the wider policy will be key considerations in taking this approach, with the emphasis upon maintaining the established settlement hierarchy and ensuring sustainable levels of growth for all settlements. The same key considerations should also apply when considering <del>traditional</del>-employment land proposals (<del>wherever located</del>)-adjacent to <u>the development area at the Rural Centres</u></b></p> <p><b><u>The jobs target for Rural Settlements will be achieved through sustainable development, likely to be small-scale, which supports a prosperous rural economy and accords with Local Plan policies SS2, EP4 and EP5; and the NPPF.</u></b></p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Local Plan 2006-2028 Total Employment Land Requirement</th> <th>Existing Employment Land Commitments (as at April 2011)</th> <th>Additional Employment Land Provision Required (total employment land less existing commitments)</th> <th>Total Jobs to be encouraged 2006-2028</th> <th>B use jobs</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Rural Settlements</td> <td>42.36</td> <td>7.86</td> <td>4.5</td> <td>1,181</td> <td>720</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td><del>461.85</del> <b><u>149.51</u></b></td> <td><del>419.35</del> <b><u>96.54</u></b></td> <td><del>42.5</del> <b><u>52.97</u></b></td> <td>11,249</td> <td>6,861</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Local Plan 2006-2028 Total Employment Land Requirement	Existing Employment Land Commitments (as at April 2011)	Additional Employment Land Provision Required (total employment land less existing commitments)	Total Jobs to be encouraged 2006-2028	B use jobs	Rural Settlements	42.36	7.86	4.5	1,181	720	Total	<del>461.85</del> <b><u>149.51</u></b>	<del>419.35</del> <b><u>96.54</u></b>	<del>42.5</del> <b><u>52.97</u></b>	11,249	6,861
	Local Plan 2006-2028 Total Employment Land Requirement	Existing Employment Land Commitments (as at April 2011)	Additional Employment Land Provision Required (total employment land less existing commitments)	Total Jobs to be encouraged 2006-2028	B use jobs															
Rural Settlements	42.36	7.86	4.5	1,181	720															
Total	<del>461.85</del> <b><u>149.51</u></b>	<del>419.35</del> <b><u>96.54</u></b>	<del>42.5</del> <b><u>52.97</u></b>	11,249	6,861															

## 5. Policy SS5: Delivering New Housing Growth

### Main Modification 12: Amendment to Policy SS5 to improve clarity on housing delivery in Crewkerne and Wincanton

#### Overview

- 5.1. At the Local Plan Examination Hearing Session for Issues 6 and 7, the Inspector sought greater clarity on how applications for residential development and overall housing growth will be managed in the Market Towns of Crewkerne and Wincanton.
- 5.2. The Council recognises that given Crewkerne does not have an identified 'Direction of Growth' and that Wincanton's 'Direction of Growth' is only for economic development there is the need to be more definite on how applications for residential development will be considered. To improve clarity for the development industry and the local community, the text in Policy SS5 is amended as set out below.
- 5.3. It is also proposed to amend Policy SS5 (as has been done in SS3) to refer to 'Development Areas' at Rural Centres, as this gives greater clarity for applicants and decision makers, by making it explicitly clear that development in Rural Centres needs to be well related to the existing built settlement.
- 5.4. In his Preliminary Findings letter of 16 July 2014, the Inspector requested that the Council provide a stronger commitment to an early review of the policy framework for delivering housing and employment in Wincanton. It is therefore proposed that a specific reference to this early review is included in the Implementation and Monitoring chapter of the Local Plan and a footnote be added to both Policies SS3 and SS5 to highlight the Council's intention to carry out this early review of housing and employment policy for Wincanton.

#### Analysis of Consultation Responses

- 5.5. There were 11 comments made in relation to MM12, 2 in support, 7 objections and 2 observations. A detailed analysis of consultation responses can be found here: [https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-\(formerly-core-strategy\)-project-management-board-reports/pmb-3rd-november/](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/local-plan-(formerly-core-strategy)-project-management-board-reports/pmb-3rd-november/)
- 5.6. In summary, comments received were concerned that the modification as currently worded would allow unbounded growth around the Market Towns of Wincanton and Crewkerne; that the timescale proposed for the early review was too long; and Wincanton should have a 5 year moratorium from any large scale new housing.
- 5.7. The Council believes that the re-wording of Policy SS5 and Policy SS3 does not give rise to "unbounded growth" as the size of development needs to be commensurate with the scale of growth identified for the settlement and be in accordance with the settlement hierarch and the other policies in the Local Plan.
- 5.8. Whilst the Council accepts that there is likely to be a period of assimilation of housing development in Wincanton, it is not justified to have a housing moratorium as it is contrary to the policies in the NPPF.

- 5.9. In considering the notion of an 'early review' it is important to recognise that the process is complex. Legislative and statutory requirements, such as public consultation periods, the carrying out of a Sustainability Appraisal, and ensuring corporate sign-off all have an impact on the timeframe for delivery.
- 5.10. Any timetable for undertaking an early review needs to be realistic so that policies can be developed robustly and comply with the NPPF requirements to be evidence-based, justified and effective.
- 5.11. That being said, it is the Council's objective to bring about an early review of the policy approach in Wincanton. Recent examples from other Councils who have committed to an early review indicate that this process should take place in advance of the five-year period set out in the NPPG. Therefore, it is proposed that timescale is revised, so that the early review is achieved within three years of the date of adoption of the Local Plan.
- 5.12. The NPPG advises that Local Plan reviews can be carried out "in whole or in part". It is suggested that the early review for South Somerset would take the form of a review "in part". This will be carried out in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements.
- 5.13. As such, MM12 is amended in relation to both Chapter 13 – Implementation and Monitoring and Policy SS5 to state that the Council will undertake an early review of housing and employment proposals in Wincanton within three years of the date of adoption of the Local Plan.

### Implication for Policy

5.14. As a result of the public consultation the final version of Main Modification 11, relating to Policy SS3 and supporting text is set out as follows:

Ref.	PSSSLP Page and Policy	Main Modification
MM12	Page 53; Policy SS5	<p>Add the following in the third paragraph:</p> <p>“Prior to the adoption of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document, a permissive approach will be taken when considering housing proposals in Yeovil (via the SUEs), and ‘directions of growth’ at the Market Towns. The overall scale of growth (set out below) and the wider policy framework will be key considerations in taking this approach, with the emphasis upon maintaining the established settlement hierarchy and ensuring sustainable levels of growth for all settlements. The same key considerations should also apply when considering housing proposals (<del>wherever located</del>) adjacent to <b><u>the development area at Crewkerne, Wincanton and the</u></b> Rural Centres.</p>
	Chapter 13 – Implementation and Monitoring. Insert new paragraph (after current paragraph 13.5)	<p><b><u>“The Council will undertake an early review of Local Plan policy relating to housing and employment provision in Wincanton. This will be in accordance with statutory requirements and completed within three years of the date of adoption of the Local Plan.”</u></b></p>
	Page 54, Policy SS5	<p>****<b><u>“The Council will undertake an early review of Local Plan policy relating to housing and employment provision in Wincanton. This will be in accordance with statutory requirements and completed within three years of the date of adoption of the Local Plan.”</u></b></p>

## 6. Conclusion and Next Steps

### Overview

- 6.1. The further MMs have been subject to formal consultation for a period of over six weeks between 28<sup>th</sup> August and 10<sup>th</sup> October 2014.
- 6.2. Comments received have been considered and used to determine the final further MMs. These will now be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.
- 6.3. On receiving the further MMs and consultation responses the Inspector will consider whether any further Examination Hearing Sessions are required. If hearing sessions are required, these will be programmed for later in 2014. If no additional hearing sessions are required, the Inspector will draft his 'Inspector's Report' reflecting on all the Main Modifications.
- 6.4. For ease of reference, the Council has brought together the Main Modifications proposed in March 2014 and those proposed in November 2014. The effect of these modifications on the final state of the policies in the Local Plan is set out in full at Appendix A.
- 6.5. Strictly speaking the Examination into the Local Plan remains open whilst the Inspector is writing the report. In drafting the report, the Inspector will concentrate on:
  - Reaching clear conclusions, backed by reasoned judgements, on the compliance requirements within the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and Localism Act (2011); including the Duty to Co-operate, the regulations, and meeting the requirements of soundness; and
  - Setting out (where requested to do so by the LPA) precise main modifications to the policies or supporting text that are required to overcome any correctable aspect of unsoundness/legal non-compliance identified by the Inspector.
- 6.6. The Inspector will only make recommendations on the Main Modifications proposed by the Council that are necessary to make the Plan sound and legally compliant.
- 6.7. On receipt of the Inspector's Report the Council will make the necessary changes to the Local Plan and move towards adoption. The Council will need to have the final version of the Local Plan signed off by a full meeting of the Council. On adopting the Local Plan, the Council will make publicly available a copy of the plan, an adoption statement and Sustainability Appraisal in line with regulations 26 and 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

## Appendix 1: Effect of Main Modifications on Local Plan

### Overview

The implication of the Main Modifications (MM 1 through to MM 12) on the relevant policies of the Local Plan (2006 – 2028) is set out below. The policies are presented in their expected final form with any iteration between March 2014 and November 2014 capture in the final format.

The implication on supporting text is also shown where it is material to overall reading of the Local Plan. The remaining consequential changes to supporting text are not included, but will be completed as part of preparing the 'adoption' version of the Local Plan.

### Policy YV1 (stems from Main Modification 1)

#### **Policy YV1: Urban Framework and Greenfield Housing for Yeovil**

Within the overall provision of at least 7,441 dwellings at Yeovil, 5,876 dwellings are anticipated in the Urban Framework of the town, and 1,565 dwellings at the Sustainable Urban Extensions.

## Policy YV2 (stems from Main Modification 2)

### **Policy YV2: Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions**

The Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions should be located in two areas to the south and north-east of the town and should provide the following:

The south area:

- Approximately 2.58 hectares of land for economic development;
- Approximately 800 dwellings;
- One primary school;
- A health centre; and
- A neighbourhood centre.

The north-east area:

- Approximately 2.58 hectares of land for economic development;
- Approximately 765 dwellings;
- One primary school;
- A health centre;
- A neighbourhood centre; and
- Landscape mitigation to address:
  - Potential massing effects across the site's northward face; and
  - Potential visual dominance at the site's edge and skyline.

The Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions will be developed to the highest sustainability objectives and garden city principles, subject to viability.

Development within the Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions will be permitted where features supporting bat movement are not severed and that access between feeding areas and roosts is maintained unless it can be proven that there would be no significant effect by the proposal on such features.

## Policy YV3 (stems from Main Modification 10)

Note - the implication of the deletion of Policy YV3 is that Policy YV6 will become Policy YV5.

### **~~Policy YV3: East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone~~**

~~An East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone is identified to the west of the Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension, within which development that results in coalescence with the settlements of East Coker and North Coker and/or adversely affects the setting of historic assets is precluded. Development (not of a built form) within the Buffer Zone may be acceptable as long as the coalescence of settlements is not caused as a result nor the setting of historic assets adversely affected. Existing development within the buffer zone will require special justification to add built development beyond existing permitted development rights.~~

~~The development is compatible with features supporting bat movement; that access between feeding areas and roosts is maintained and any proposed lighting is compatible with the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site unless it can be proven that there would be no significant effect by the proposal.~~



## Policy YV5 (stems from Main Modification 2)

### **Policy YV5: Delivering Sustainable Travel at the Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions**

In order to deliver at least 30% of travel originating from the Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions by non-car modes, subject to viability, and in addition to the generic policies that support modal shift throughout the district and Yeovil, the Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions should seek to provide:

- i. Intrinsically linked well-designed infrastructure for footpaths and cycle ways ensuring filtered permeability that delivers journey times that are better or more comparable to those by car.
- ii. Car parking management at the Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions' facilities, employment sites and neighbourhood centre, which gives priority to electric vehicles, low emission and shared vehicles and non-car modes and which discourages car use for these short journeys.
- iii. Encouragement for a traffic-free immediate environment with residential parking separated from the residential areas where this is in accord with the wider design principles established for the Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions.
- iv. Contributions to a Quality Bus Partnership to deliver modern desirable bus routes with a frequent service that is designed to establish end to end journey times that are better or more comparable to those by private car together with clean vehicle technology and improvements to public transport information.

Planning obligations will be used to ensure proper phasing of transport provision to maximise provision prior to first occupation of individual elements of the development.

These sustainable links shall be designed to enable easy access from the Yeovil Sustainable Urban extensions to the town centre, main employment sites, transport interchanges, health and educational establishments and other community facilities.

Proposals for infrastructure designed to support these measures will ensure that features supporting these measures will ensure that features supporting bat movement are retained and that access between feeding areas and roosts is not severed and any proposed lighting is compatible with the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 a site unless it can be proven that there would be no significant effect.

### **Policy PMT3 (stems from Main Modification 3)**

**Policy PMT3: Ilminster Direction of Growth**

The direction of strategic growth will be to the south west of the town.

### **Policy SS3 (stems from Main Modification 4, Main Modification 6 & Main Modification 11)**

**Policy SS3: Delivering New Employment Land**

The Local Plan will assist the delivery of 11,250 jobs as a minimum, and 149.51 hectares of land for economic development between April 2006 and March 2028.

The identification of B Use jobs and non B Use jobs for settlements establishes targets for growth in line with the Council's forecast growth for the District and its settlements over the plan period. Economic development of a main town centre type will be expected to comply with Policy EP11.

Prior to the adoption of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document, a permissive approach will be taken when considering employment land proposals in Yeovil (via the SUEs) 'directions of growth' at the Market Towns. The overall scale of growth (set out below) and the wider policy will be key considerations in taking this approach, with the emphasis upon maintaining the established settlement hierarchy and ensuring sustainable levels of growth for all settlements. The same key considerations should also apply when considering traditional employment land proposals adjacent to the development area at the Rural Centres.

<b>Policy SS3: Delivering New Employment Land (continued)</b>					
<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Local Plan 2006-2028 Total Employment Land Requirement</b>	<b>Existing Employment Land Commitments (as at April 2011)</b>	<b>Additional Employment Land Provision Required (total employment land less existing commitments)</b>	<b>Total Jobs to be encouraged 2006-2028</b>	<b>B Use Jobs</b>
<b>Strategic Town</b>					
Yeovil Town*	44.84	39.84	5.0	3,948	2,408
Yeovil Urban Extensions	5.16	0.0	5.16	1,565	955
<b>Market Towns</b>					
Chard*	17.14	4.14	13.0	1,083	661
Crewkerne*	10.10	10.10	0.0	577	352
Ilminster*	23.05	23.05	0.0	419	256
Wincanton***	7.94	3.56	4.38	599	365
Somerton	6.63	1.56	5.07	307	187
Ansford/Castle Cary	18.97	10.07	8.9	273	167
Langport/Huish Episcopi	4.01	0.34	3.67	284	173
<b>Rural Centres</b>					
Bruton	3.06	0.56	2.5	156	95
Ilchester	1.02	0.02	1.0	433	264
Martock/Bower Hinton	3.19	1.45	1.74	163	99
Milborne Port	0.84	0.04	0.80	77	47
South Petherton	2.47	1.81**	0.66	141	86
Stoke sub Hamdon	1.09	0.0	1.09	43	26
<b>Other</b>					
Rural Settlements				1,181	720
<b>Total</b>	<b>149.51</b>	<b>96.54</b>	<b>52.97</b>	<b>11,249</b>	<b>6,861</b>

**Policy SS3: Delivering New Employment Land (continued)**

The remaining 1,181 jobs for the plan period are expected to come forward in the Rural Settlements, through small-scale, sustainable developments which accord with Policies SS2, EP4 and EP5.

\*Yeovil, Crewkerne and Ilminster have strategic employment sites which are saved from the previous South Somerset Local Plan and Chard's strategic allocation based around Chard Regeneration Plan also includes employment provision. These sites combined equate to a total of 46.35 hectares, and this figure has been included in the overall floorspace figure cited in Policy SS3 above.

\*\*This figure relates to Lopen Head Nursery.

\*\*\* The Council will undertake an early review of Local Plan policy relating to housing and employment in Wincanton. This will be in accordance with statutory requirements and completed within three years of the date of adoption of the Local Plan.

**Policy SS5 (stems from Main Modification 1, Main Modification 5 & Main Modification 12)****Policy SS5: Delivering New Housing Growth**

Housing requirement will make provision for at least 15,950 dwellings in the plan period 2006 - 2028 of which at least 7,441 dwellings will be located within or adjacent to Yeovil, including two sustainable urban extensions totalling 1,565 dwellings.

This provision will include development and redevelopment within development areas, greenfield development identified within this Plan or to come forward through conversions of existing buildings, residential mobile homes and buildings elsewhere in accordance with the policy on development in rural settlements.

Prior to the adoption of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document, a permissive approach will be taken when considering housing proposals in Yeovil (via the SUEs), and 'directions of growth' at the Market Towns. The overall scale of growth (set out below) and the wider policy framework will be key considerations in taking this approach, with the emphasis upon maintaining the established settlement hierarchy and ensuring sustainable levels of growth for all settlements. The same key considerations should also apply when considering housing proposals adjacent to the development area at Crewkerne, Wincanton and the Rural Centres.

The distribution of development across the settlement hierarchy will be in line with the numbers below:

**Policy SS5: Delivering New Housing Growth (continued)**

Settlement	Local Plan 2006-2028 Total Housing Requirement	Existing Housing Commitments 2006-2011 (as at April 2012)	Additional Housing Provision required (Total Housing Less Existing Commitments) (as at April 2012)
<b>Strategic Town</b>			
Yeovil	7,441	3,951	3,490
<b>Market Towns</b>			
Chard	1,852	1,750*	102
Crewkerne	961	916	45
Ilminster	496	181	315
Wincanton**	703	698	5
Somerton	374	286	88
Ansford/Castle Cary	374	156	218
Langport/Huish Episcopi	374	289	85
<b>Rural Centres</b>			
Bruton	203	103	100
Ilchester	141	1	140
Martock	230	106	124
Milborne Port	279	202	77
South Petherton	229	151	78
Stoke sub Hamdon	51	7	44
<b>Other</b>			
Rural Settlements	2,242	1,331	911
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,950</b>	<b>10,128</b>	<b>5,822</b>

\* 1,750 commitments at Chard reflects built and committed sites and that part of the strategic allocation proposed for Chard that is expected to be built out in the plan period. This latter is shown as committed as it is currently part of the saved proposal from South Somerset Local Plan 1991 – 2011. The additional provision is windfall development prior to April 2017 not currently consented (April 2012). The strategic allocation provides for 2,716 dwellings of which 1,220 are anticipated in the Plan period with the rest, 1,496 expected post 2028.

\*\* The Council will undertake an early review of Local Plan policy relating to housing and employment provision in Wincanton. This will be in accordance with statutory requirements and completed within three years of the date of adoption of the Local Plan.

## Supporting Text for Wincanton (stems from Main Modification 7 & Main Modification 12)

### Paragraph 6.95

The Market Town of Wincanton is different from the other Market Towns by virtue of its high level of commitments compared to the overall level of housing requirement considered appropriate for the settlement. As a consequence and given the expected build rates set out in the Housing trajectory, the latter years of the Plan offer limited levels of housing provision. It is considered given the front loading of development in Wincanton that the town will experience a subsequent period of assimilation of housing growth and slowing down of the local housing market. Should the housing market however remain locally strong and underpinned by employment growth then the housing provision would need to be supplemented.

Such a circumstance would be possible to evidence through the Council's on-going monitoring process which includes assessing housing and employment land delivery on a settlement by settlement basis. This will be reported six monthly via the Council's Authorities Monitoring Report. In addition, the Council has committed to undertake an early review of Local Plan policy relating to housing and employment provision in Wincanton. This will be completed within three years of the date of adoption of the Local Plan.

## Policy HG7 (stems from Main Modification 8)

### **Policy HG7: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople**

The accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople will be met by ensuring that they are accommodated in sustainable locations where essential services are available.

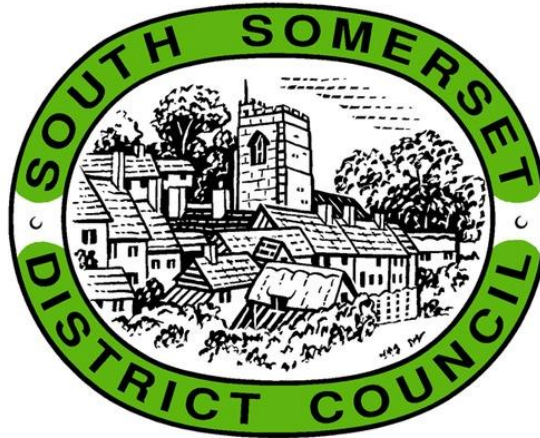
Site allocations will be made to accommodate at least:

- 23 Residential Pitches (from 2013 onwards);
- 10 Transit Pitches; and
- 6 Travelling Showpeople plots.

The following criteria will guide the location of sites:

- Significantly contaminated land should be avoided;
- Development should not result in an adverse impact on internationally and nationally recognised designations (for example: Natura 2000 sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty)
- The development should not have a significant adverse impact on the landscape character and visual amenity of the area;
- The site is reasonably well related to schools and other community facilities;
- The health and safety of occupants and visitors will not be at risk through unsafe access to sites, noise pollution or unacceptable flood risk;
- There should be adequate space for on site parking, servicing and turning of vehicles; and
- The option of mixed residential and business use on sites will be considered where appropriate.

The number of pitches provided should be appropriate to the size of the site and availability of infrastructure, services and facilities in accordance with the general principles set out in the settlement hierarchy.



# **South Somerset District Council Local Plan:**

## **Sustainability Appraisal Addendum Report**

**August 2014  
(with November 2014 update)**

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# South Somerset District Council Local Plan: Sustainability Appraisal Addendum Report

<i>date:</i>	<i>v1 Draft 28 July 2014</i> <i>v2 Final Draft 29 July 2014</i> <i>v3 Issue 22 August 2014</i> <i>v4 Update 22 October 2014</i>	
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## South Somerset District Council Local Plan: SA Addendum Report

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## 1.0 Introduction

### Purpose of this SA Addendum Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this Addendum Report is to detail the findings of the screening of the further Main Modifications (MMs) being proposed by the Council and their significance with regard to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA). This Addendum Report builds on the previous SA work and should be read in conjunction with the Yeovil Strategic Growth Options SA Report (Oct 2013)<sup>1</sup>, Local Plan Proposed Modifications SA Report (Nov 2013)<sup>2</sup> and SA Addendum Report (March 2014)<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.2 This Addendum Report will accompany the further MMs on public consultation from 28 August to 10 October 2014.

### Background

- 1.3 South Somerset District Council (SSDC) has been undertaking Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) since 2009 to inform the preparation of the South Somerset Local Plan. The SA and Local Plan progress to date may be summarised as follows:

**Table 1.1: Local Plan and SA activities and published documents to date**

Local Plan Documents & Consultation	SA Documents & Consultation
Core Strategy Issues and Options (March 2008) Public consultation 7 March to 25 April 2008	SA Scoping Report Sent to statutory consultees and wider stakeholders 29 April to 03 June 2009
Area Based Workshops (Members, Town and Parish Councillors and other stakeholders) July 2009, Nov/Dec 2009, Jan 2010 & July 2010	SA Scoping Report (Sept 2009) incorporated changes as a result of consultation
Draft Core Strategy (incorporating Preferred Options) Public consultation 08 October to 03 December 2010	SA Report (Oct 2010) Public consultation 08 October to 03 December 2010
Proposed Submission Local Plan Public consultation 08 June to 10 August 2012	SA Report (June 2012) Public consultation 08 June to 10 August 2012
The Local Plan was Submitted to the Secretary of State on 21 January 2013	SA Addendum (Jan 2013) accompanied the Local Plan on Submission
Submission of Proposed Main	SA Addendum Report (March

<sup>1</sup> Core Document 161b: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/submission-local-plan/statutory-documents/>

<sup>2</sup> Core Document 161c: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/submission-local-plan/statutory-documents/>

<sup>3</sup> Core Document 161d: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/submission-local-plan/statutory-documents/>

Modifications Submitted to the Secretary of State March 2014	2014) Submitted alongside the Proposed Main Modifications to the Secretary of State March 2014
Main Modifications Consultation Document (August 2014) Public consultation 28 August to 10 October 2014	SA Addendum Report (August 2014) Public consultation 28 August to 10 October 2014

- 1.4 The Proposed Submission Local Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 21 January 2013. As part of the Independent Examination of the Local Plan, a number of Hearing Sessions were held between 07 May and 18 June 2013. Based upon the conclusions reached during these Hearing Sessions and consideration of the evidence base to support the Local Plan, the Inspector issued a Preliminary Findings letter on 03 July 2013.
- 1.5 The Inspector's Preliminary Findings identified six issues of concern - three significant issues of concern relating to soundness, and three points of clarification. The Inspector concluded that further comprehensive work was required in order to enable the Local Plan to be found sound. Based upon these findings the Council requested a six-month suspension to the Independent Examination on 15 July 2013 in order to rectify the issues raised.
- 1.6 The additional work undertaken by the Council to address the Inspector's Preliminary Findings formed the basis for the Proposed Main Modifications (PMMs). This included a fresh and independent SA of reasonable alternatives for strategic growth in Yeovil and Ilminster as well as the screening of the PMMs. The findings of this work were presented in the Yeovil Strategic Growth Options SA Report (Oct 2013), Proposed Main Modifications SA Report (Nov 2013) and the updated Non-Technical Summary (November 2013). These documents were placed on public consultation alongside the PMMs between November 2013 and January 2014.
- 1.7 Representations were received on the SA Reports, indicating that further clarity was required to explain the purpose of, and relationship between, the Yeovil Strategic Growth Options and Local Plan Proposed Modifications SA Reports. It was also necessary to more clearly present and better distinguish between the SA work that has been carried out in relation to Soundness Issues 1 and 2 and the proposed changes to the Local Plan. To address the responses a SA Addendum Report (March 2014) was prepared and submitted to the Planning Inspectorate alongside the PMMs in March 2014<sup>4</sup>.
- 1.8 Examination Hearing Sessions on the PMMs took place from 10 - 13 June 2014. During these sessions the Inspector raised a number of issues where the Local Plan would benefit from additional clarification. The need for further Main Modifications (MMs) was formally confirmed by the Inspector in his letter from

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<sup>4</sup> South Somerset Local Plan Proposed Main Modifications (March 2014):  
[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/648229/south\\_somerset\\_local\\_plan\\_proposed\\_main\\_modifications\\_submission\\_to\\_pins.pdf](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/648229/south_somerset_local_plan_proposed_main_modifications_submission_to_pins.pdf)

16 July 2014<sup>5</sup>. As a result, the Council is proposing further MMs relating to Policies YV2, YV3, SS3 and SS5.

- 1.9 It is important to ensure that the further MMs are screened through the SA process to determine if they significantly affect the findings of the previous SA work. The Council commissioned independent consultants Enfusion Ltd in July 2014 to ensure that the implications of all the proposed changes have been sufficiently considered through the SA process.

### **Structure of this SA Addendum Report**

- 1.10 Following this introductory Section, Section 2 provides a summary of the proposed changes to the Local Plan and the findings of the SA screening of the further MMs. Section 3 summarises the findings of the further SA work and sets out the next steps.

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<sup>5</sup> Inspector's Preliminary Findings following the Resumed Hearing Sessions letter (July 2014): [https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/674198/inspector\\_s\\_preliminary\\_findings\\_post\\_resumed\\_examination\\_hearing.pdf](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/674198/inspector_s_preliminary_findings_post_resumed_examination_hearing.pdf)

## 2.0 SA of Proposed Main Modifications to the Local Plan

### Introduction

- 2.1 The key changes proposed by the Council through the further MMs are as follows:
- **Policy YV2:** The inclusion of detail on landscape mitigation measures at the North East Yeovil SUE;
  - **Policy YV3:** Deletion of the East Coker and North Coker buffer zone;
  - **Policy SS3:** Deletion of a specific employment land figure for rural settlements, with the inclusion of an explanation of the Council's approach to such proposals in these settlements; and
  - **Policy SS5:** Amendment to improve clarity regarding housing delivery in Crewkerne and Wincanton and reference in an appropriate section of the LP to an early review of housing and employment provision at Wincanton.
- 2.2 Each of these further MMs is considered in turn below.

### Policy YV2

- 2.3 The Council is proposing additional text to Policy YV2 to ensure that appropriate landscape mitigation is forthcoming through the development management process for the North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE). It is considered that the proposed changes will help to strengthen the Policy and help to reduce the potential negative effects on landscape as a result of the North East Yeovil SUE. The proposed modification therefore, does not significantly affect the findings of the revised appraisal of Policy YV2, presented in Appendix IV of the SA Addendum Report (March 2014).

### Policy YV3

- 2.4 The Inspector raised concerns regarding the continued justification for the buffer zone in light of the reduced scale and extent of the South Yeovil SUE. In response to this the Council is proposing to delete the East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone from the Local Plan.
- 2.5 The original purpose of the buffer zone was to preserve the character of North Coker and East Coker and prevent coalescence with Yeovil as a result of the previously proposed the single and larger scale southern SUE. Given the reduction in the scale of proposed development, the distance of the South Yeovil SUE from the villages now means that there is no longer a need for the buffer zone. The appraisal of Policy YV3 presented in Appendix 7 of the SA Report published in June 2012 is therefore superseded. It is considered that the deletion of the buffer zone does not significantly affect the overall findings of the SA, given the distance (approx over 800 metres) between the currently proposed South Yeovil SUE and the villages of East and North Coker.

### **Policy SS3**

- 2.6 The proposed changes to this Policy seek to clarify the Council's approach to delivering new employment land across the District. The Council is proposing the removal of a specific employment hectarage figure for the rural settlements along with additional text to provide further clarification as to how employment land will be delivered in Rural Centres and Rural Settlements.
- 2.7 It is considered that the modifications do not significantly affect the findings of the appraisal of Policy SS3 in Appendix 7 of the Local Plan SA Report (June 2012). The sustainability effects of employment land will be further considered when more precise locations for development are proposed for each settlement through the Site Allocations DPD.

### **Policy SS5**

- 2.8 The proposed changes seek to provide greater clarity on how applications for residential development and overall housing growth will be managed in the Market Towns of Crewkerne and Wincanton. It is considered that the modifications do not significantly affect the findings of the appraisal of Policy SS5 in Appendix 7 of the Local Plan SA Report (June 2012). The sustainability effects of residential development will be further considered when more precise locations for development are proposed for Crewkerne and Wincanton through the Site Allocations DPD.

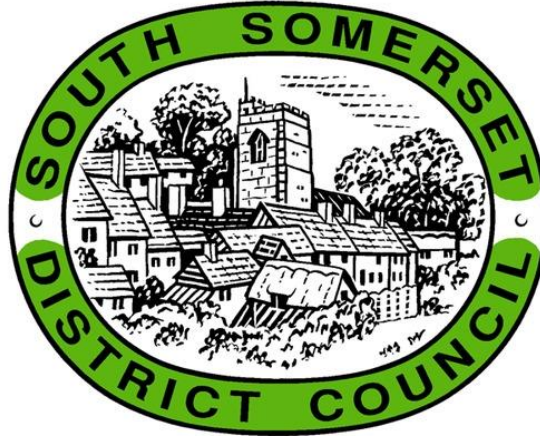
### **3.0 Summary and Next Steps**

- 3.1 The Council has proposed a number of further Main Modifications to the Local Plan as a result of discussions during the Hearing Sessions in June 2014 and the Inspector's Preliminary Findings (July 2014). These changes have been considered to determine if they significantly affect the findings of the previous SA work.
- 3.2 The screening of the further MMs concluded that proposed changes do not significantly affect the findings of the SA. The nature and significance of the effects identified through the SA during the life of the Plan therefore remain the same. The sustainability effects of residential and employment development will be further considered when more precise locations for development are proposed for settlements through the Site Allocations DPD.
- 3.3 This Addendum Report will accompany the further Main Modifications on public consultation from 28 August to 10 October 2014. Any further changes to the Local Plan that arise as a result of the consultation or any further hearing sessions should be subject to further screening to consider their significance with regard to the SA.

#### **Update – November 2014**

- 3.4 No consultation responses were received on the SA Addendum Report. However, in response to comments received on the Main Modifications themselves, minor amendments are being proposed to Policies YV2 and SS5. These relate to simplifying the landscape mitigation text for the NE Yeovil SUE (YV2), and amending the early review at Wincanton to be complete within three years, rather than five (SS5). It is considered that the modifications do not significantly affect the findings of the appraisal of Policy YV2 presented in Appendix IV of the SA Addendum Report (March 2014) or the appraisal of Policy SS5 in Appendix 7 of the Local Plan SA Report (June 2012). The sustainability effects of residential development will be further considered when more precise locations for development are proposed for Crewkerne and Wincanton through the Site Allocations DPD.





# **South Somerset District Council Local Plan:**

## **Habitats Regulations Assessment Addendum Report**

**August 2014 (with November  
2014 update)**

*enfusion*



# South Somerset District Council Local Plan: Habitats Regulations Assessment Addendum Report

<i>date:</i>	<i>v1 Draft 28 July 2014</i> <i>v2 Final Draft 29 July 2014</i> <i>v3 Issue 22 August 2014</i> <i>v4 Update 22 October 2014</i>	
<i>prepared for:</i>	<i>South Somerset District Council</i>	
<i>prepared by:</i>	<i>Alastair Peattie</i>	<i>Enfusion</i>
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## South Somerset District Council Local Plan: HRA Addendum Report

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## 1.0 Introduction

### Purpose of this HRA Addendum Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this Addendum Report is to detail the findings of the screening of the further Main Modifications (MMs) being proposed by the Council. As the 'competent authority' under the Habitats Directive<sup>1</sup> and Regulations<sup>2</sup> the Council have a responsibility to ensure that the changes being proposed to the Local Plan do not have significant effects on European sites<sup>3</sup>. This Addendum Report builds on the previous HRA work and should be read in conjunction with the HRA Report published in June 2012<sup>4</sup> as well as the Further Addendum Reports published in January 2013<sup>5</sup>, November 2013<sup>6</sup> and March 2014<sup>7</sup>.
- 1.2 This Addendum Report will accompany the further MMs on public consultation from 28 August to 10 October 2014.

### Background

- 1.3 South Somerset District Council (SSDC) has been undertaking HRA since 2008 to inform the preparation of the South Somerset Local Plan. The HRA and Local Plan progress to date may be summarised as follows:

**Table 1.1: Local Plan and HRA activities and published documents to date**

Local Plan Documents & Consultation	HRA Documents & Consultation
Core Strategy Issues and Options (March 2008) Public consultation 7 March to 25 April 2008	Screening Report for Bracket's Coppice SAC (Oct 2008) Sent to Natural England who responded stating the study is very thorough and concurred with the conclusions <sup>8</sup>
Area Based Workshops (Members, Town and Parish Councillors and other stakeholders) July 2009, Nov/Dec 2009, Jan 2010 & July 2010	Appropriate Assessment for Somerset Authorities Core Strategies: Somerset Levels and Moors and Severn Estuary (Bridgwater Bay) Natura 2000 sites Scoping Report Volume 1 Main

<sup>1</sup> European Directive (92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna [the Habitats Directive].

<sup>2</sup> The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) [the Habitats Regulations]

<sup>3</sup> Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar Sites. The NPPF (Para 118) gives the same protection to potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

<sup>4</sup> Core Document 8: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/submission-local-plan/statutory-documents/>

<sup>5</sup> Core Document 8a: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/submission-local-plan/statutory-documents/>

<sup>6</sup> Proposed Main Modification Habitats Regulation Assessment Report (November 2013): [http://consult.southsomerset.gov.uk/consult.ti/Proposed\\_Main\\_Mods/view?objectId=11178501](http://consult.southsomerset.gov.uk/consult.ti/Proposed_Main_Mods/view?objectId=11178501)

<sup>7</sup> Core Document 8b: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/submission-local-plan/statutory-documents/>

<sup>8</sup> Email from Melanie Heath (Natural England) to Larry Burrows (Somerset County Council Ecologist) on 26.03.09

	Report (Oct 2009) Consultation with Natural England and Environment Agency identified a number of key issues <sup>9</sup>
Draft Core Strategy (incorporating Preferred Options) Public consultation 08 October to 03 December 2010	Update Report for Bracket's Coppice SAC (Sept 2010) Sent to Natural England and placed on public consultation from 08 October to 03 December 2010
	HRA for the Somerset Levels and Moors International Sites (Oct 2010) Consultation with Natural England and other key stakeholders <sup>10</sup> , then placed on public consultation from 08 October to 03 December 2010
Proposed Submission Local Plan Public consultation 08 June to 10 August 2012	HRA Report (June 2012) Sent to Natural England and placed on public consultation from 08 June to 10 August 2012
The Local Plan was Submitted to the Secretary of State on 21 January 2013	Appropriate Assessment: HRA of emerging South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028 Further Addendum (Jan 2013) accompanied the Local Plan on Submission – Natural England submitted Examination hearing statement. <sup>11</sup>
Proposed Main Modifications Consultation Document (Nov 2013) Public consultation 28 November 2013 to 10 January 2014	Proposed Main Modifications HRA (Nov 2013) Public consultation 28 November 2013 to 10 January 2014
Submission of Proposed Main Modifications Submitted to the Secretary of State March 2014	HRA Addendum Report (March 2014) Submitted alongside the Proposed Main Modifications to the Secretary of State March 2014
Main Modifications Consultation Document (August 2014) Public consultation 28 August to 10 October 2014	HRA Addendum Report (August 2014) Public consultation 28 August to 10 October 2014

<sup>9</sup> Section 2.4 of Appropriate Assessment for Somerset Authorities Core Strategies: Somerset Levels and Moors and Severn Estuary (Bridgwater Bay) Natura 2000 sites Scoping Report Volume 1 Main Report (Oct 2009).

<sup>10</sup> Section 2.6 of draft Core Strategy incorporating preferred options HRA for the Somerset Levels and Moors International Sites (Oct 2010).

<sup>11</sup> [http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/474674/natural\\_england\\_017\\_.pdf](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/474674/natural_england_017_.pdf)

- 1.4 The Proposed Submission Local Plan was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 21 January 2013. As part of the Independent Examination of the Local Plan, a number of Hearing Sessions were held between 07 May and 18 June 2013. Based upon the conclusions reached during these Hearing Sessions and consideration of the evidence base to support the Local Plan, the Inspector issued a Preliminary Findings letter on 03 July 2013.
- 1.5 The Inspector's Preliminary Findings identified six issues of concern - three significant issues of concern relating to soundness, and three points of clarification. The Inspector concluded that further comprehensive work was required in order to enable the Local Plan to be found sound. Based upon these findings the Council requested a six-month suspension to the Independent Examination on 15 July 2013 in order to rectify the issues raised.
- 1.6 The additional work undertaken by the Council to address the Inspector's Preliminary Findings formed the basis for the Proposed Main Modifications (PMMs). The PMMs were placed on public consultation between November 2013 and January 2014. Following the consideration of the consultation responses, the PMMs were submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in March 2014<sup>12</sup>.
- 1.7 As the 'competent authority' under the Habitats Directive and Regulations the Council screened the proposed changes to the Local Plan and found that they were unlikely to have significant effects on European sites or affect the findings of the previous HRA work. The findings of this work were presented in the Proposed Main Modifications HRA Report (Nov 2013), which was published for consultation alongside the PMMs Consultation Document in November 2013. Over 1,000 representations were received on the PMMs Consultation Document (Nov 2013) and these along with updated evidence resulted in some minor further changes to the PMMs.
- 1.8 The final PMMs were then subject to further screening by Enfusion Ltd, with the findings presented in a HRA Addendum Report, which was submitted alongside the PMMs in March 2014. The Report concluded that the Local Plan, as modified by the Council, will not have significant effects either alone or in-combination on European sites, given the mitigation proposed in the HRA Report (June 2012) and through Local Plan Policies.
- 1.9 Examination Hearing Sessions on the PMMs took place from 10 - 13 June 2014. During these sessions the Inspector raised a number of issues where the Local Plan would benefit from additional clarification. The need for further Main Modifications (MMs) was formally confirmed by the Inspector in his letter from 16 July 2014<sup>13</sup>. As a result, the Council is proposing further MMs relating to Policies YV2, YV3, SS3 and SS5.

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<sup>12</sup> South Somerset Local Plan Proposed Main Modifications (March 2014):  
[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/648229/south\\_somerset\\_local\\_plan\\_proposed\\_main\\_modifications\\_submission\\_to\\_pins.pdf](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/648229/south_somerset_local_plan_proposed_main_modifications_submission_to_pins.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Inspector's Preliminary Findings following the Resumed Hearing Sessions letter (July 2014):  
[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/674198/inspector\\_s\\_preliminary\\_findings\\_post\\_resumed\\_examination\\_hearing.pdf](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/674198/inspector_s_preliminary_findings_post_resumed_examination_hearing.pdf)

- 1.10 It is important to ensure that the further MMs are screened through the HRA process to determine if they have the potential for likely significant effects and significantly affect the findings of the previous HRA work. The Council commissioned independent consultants Enfusion Ltd in July 2014 to ensure that the implications of all the proposed changes have been sufficiently considered through the HRA process.

**Structure of this HRA Addendum Report**

- 1.11 Following this introductory Section, Section 2 provides a summary of the proposed changes to the Local Plan and the findings of the screening of the further MMs. Section 3 summarises the findings of the further HRA work and sets out the next steps.

## 2.0 Screening of Proposed Main Modifications to the Local Plan

### Introduction

- 2.1 The key changes proposed by the Council through the further MMs are as follows:
- **Policy YV2:** The inclusion of detail on landscape mitigation measures at the North East Yeovil SUE;
  - **Policy YV3:** Deletion of the East Coker and North Coker buffer zone;
  - **Policy SS3:** Deletion of a specific employment land figure for rural settlements, with the inclusion of an explanation of the Council's approach to such proposals in these settlements; and
  - **Policy SS5:** Amendment to improve clarity regarding housing delivery in Crewkerne and Wincanton and reference in an appropriate section of the LP to an early review of housing and employment provision at Wincanton.
- 2.2 Each of these further MMs is considered in turn below.

### Policy YV2

- 2.3 The Council is proposing additional text to Policy YV2 to ensure that appropriate landscape mitigation is forthcoming through the development management process for the North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension. The HRA Report published in June 2012 and subsequent Addendum Reports (Jan 2013, Nov 2013 & March 2014) found that this Policy is not likely to have significant effects on European sites.
- 2.4 The proposed MM does not change the location or scale of proposed development; it is therefore concluded that the proposed change to this Policy will not have significant effects on European sites and the findings of the previous HRA work are still valid.

### Policy YV3

- 2.5 The Inspector raised concerns regarding the continued justification for the buffer zone in light of the reduced scale and extent of the South Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension. In response to this the Council is proposing to delete the East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone from the Local Plan.
- 2.6 The HRA Report published in June 2012 found that this Policy is not likely to have significant effects on European sites as no development is being proposed. It is considered that the removal of the buffer zone will not have significant effects on European sites and the findings of the previous HRA work are still valid.

### Policy SS3

- 2.7 The proposed changes to this Policy seek to clarify the Council's approach to delivering new employment land across the District. The Council is proposing



the removal of a specific employment hectarage figure for the rural settlements along with additional text to provide further clarification as to how employment land will be delivered in Rural Centres and Rural Settlements.

- 2.8 The HRA Report published in June 2012 found that this Policy has the potential for likely significant effects on European sites as a result of the location and overall quantum of proposed employment growth. The HRA concluded that there is appropriate mitigation available through Local Plan policies and available at the project level to ensure that there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites. As there are no changes being proposed to the location or scale of employment growth; it is considered that that the further modifications to this Policy will not have significant effects on European sites and the findings of the previous HRA work are still valid.

### **Policy SS5**

- 2.9 The proposed changes seek to provide greater clarity on how applications for residential development and overall housing growth will be managed in the Market Towns of Crewkerne and Wincanton. The modification seeks to provide further clarification and there are no changes proposed to the location or scale of housing growth.
- 2.10 The HRA Report published in June 2012 found that this Policy has the potential for likely significant effects on European sites as a result of the location and overall quantum of proposed housing growth. The HRA concluded that there is appropriate mitigation available through Local Plan policies and available at the project level to ensure that there will be no adverse effects on the integrity of European sites. As there are no changes being proposed to the location or scale of employment growth; it is considered that that the further modifications to this Policy will not have significant effects on European sites and the findings of the previous HRA work are still valid.

### 3.0 Summary and Next Steps

- 3.1 The Council has proposed a number of further Main Modifications to the Local Plan as a result of discussions during the Hearing Sessions in June 2014 and the Inspector's Preliminary Findings (July 2014). These changes have been considered to determine if they are likely to have significant effects on European sites and therefore affect the findings of the HRA Report published in June 2012<sup>14</sup> and the Addendums published in January 2013<sup>15</sup>, November 2013<sup>16</sup> and March 2014<sup>17</sup>.
- 3.2 A screening of the key changes concluded that the Local Plan, as modified by the Council, will not have significant effects either alone or in-combination on European sites, given the mitigation proposed in the HRA Report (June 2012) and through Local Plan Policies. South Somerset District Council has been undertaking HRA iteratively since 2008, with HRA recommendations and consultation advice from Natural England influencing the development of the Local Plan. Given this approach, Natural England has stated that they are satisfied that the Local Plan is in compliance with the Habitats Directive and Regulations<sup>18</sup>.
- 3.3 This Addendum Report will accompany the further Main Modifications on public consultation from 28 August to 10 October 2014. Any further changes to the Local Plan that arise as a result of the consultation or any further hearing sessions should be considered through the HRA to ensure that there are no likely significant effects on European sites.

#### **Update – November 2014**

- 3.4 One consultation response on the HRA Addendum Report was received from Natural England, supporting the HRA findings. However, in response to comments received on the Main Modifications themselves, minor amendments are being proposed to Policies YV2 and SS5. These relate to simplifying the landscape mitigation text for the NE Yeovil SUE (YV2), and amending the early review at Wincanton to be complete within three years, rather than five (SS5). As there are no changes being proposed to the location or scale of employment growth; it is considered that that the further modifications to this Policy will not have significant effects on European sites and the findings of the previous HRA work are still valid.

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<sup>14</sup> Core Document 8: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/submission-local-plan/statutory-documents/>

<sup>15</sup> Core Document 8a: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/submission-local-plan/statutory-documents/>

<sup>16</sup> Proposed Main Modification Habitats Regulation Assessment Report (November 2013):

[http://consult.southsomerset.gov.uk/consult.ti/Proposed\\_Main\\_Mods/view?objectId=11178501](http://consult.southsomerset.gov.uk/consult.ti/Proposed_Main_Mods/view?objectId=11178501)

<sup>17</sup> Core Document 8b: <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-2006-2028/submission-local-plan/statutory-documents/>

<sup>18</sup> Letter (10 August 2012) from NE (Laura Horner) to SSDC (Andy Foyne).



# Proposed Submission South Somerset Local Plan 2006 – 2028

## Main Modifications Equality Analysis (EqA)

November 2014

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## **Equality Analysis (EqA) of Main Modifications to the Proposed Submission South Somerset Local Plan 2006 - 2028**

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### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Following the conclusion of the resumed Local Plan Examination Hearing Sessions in June 2014 and the receipt of the Examination Inspector's Preliminary Findings in July 2014 a number of further Main Modifications are proposed to be made to the Proposed Submission South Somerset Local Plan. In accordance with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 EqA has been carried out of the further Main Modifications.
- 1.2 The Proposed Main Modifications were subject to consultation between 28 August and 10 October 2014 and formally approved for submission by South Somerset District Council's Full Council on the 6 November 2014.

### **2. Main Modifications Consultation Document, August 2014**

- 2.1 A Stage 1: Screening and Summary Statement EqA was carried out of the following Policies:
  - Policy YV2: North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension – inclusion of detail on landscape mitigation measures at the North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension.
  - Policy YV3: East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone – deletion of the East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone.
  - Policy SS3: Delivering New Employment Land: deletion of a specific employment land figure for rural settlements, the inclusion of an explanation of the Council's approach to such proposals in these settlements and reference to an early review of housing and employment provision at Wincanton.
  - Policy SS5: Delivering New Housing Growth – amendment to improve clarity on housing delivery in Crewkerne and Wincanton and reference to an early review of housing and employment provision at Wincanton.
- 2.2 This initial screening process identified that no Stage 2: Full Equality Analysis Assessment was required. The Stage 1 screening is shown in Table 1 of this document.

### **3. Response to Main Modifications Consultation Document**

- 3.1 In response to the representations received during the consultation period a number of minor amendments have been made to the Proposed Main Modifications. A Stage 1: Screening and Summary Statement EqA has been carried out of the further amended policies:
  - YV2: Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions
  - SS5: Delivering New Housing Growth
- 3.2 This initial screening process has indicated that no Stage 2 Assessments are required and no potential negative equalities impacts have been identified. The Stage 1 screening is shown in Table 2.

#### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 The further Main Modifications to the Proposed Submission South Somerset Local Plan 2006 - 2028 have undergone a robust process of Equality Analysis. Analysis which at this stage has not highlighted any issues and no new mitigations were identified. Due regard has been given to the General Equality Duty and the further Main Modifications to the Local Plan is sound in that respect.

**Table 1: Stage 1 Screening of Main Modifications (August 2014)**

<b>Policy Number</b>  <b>Policies where Main Modifications are proposed</b>	<b>Is this a change to service delivery? (including, withdrawal or reduction of services)</b>	<b>Does the *policy/strategy/function/service / affect our workforce or employment practices</b>	<b>Is this a financial or budget decision that may affect any of the protected groups differently?</b>	<b>Could this policy or service and the way we deliver it affect some groups in society differently?</b>	<b>Does the policy / strategy / function service affect service users or the wider community?</b>	<b>Summary Statement and Comments</b>
Policy YV2: North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension	No	No	No	No	Yes	<p>Proposed Submission Local Plan Policy YV2 underwent full Equality Analysis (EqA) as part of its formulation. The Policy underwent Stage 1 screening as a result of Proposed Modification M95 in January 2013 and the Proposed Main Modifications submitted in March 2014 (PMM2). This comprised a screening and summary statement, and at this stage it was considered that a Stage 2 Equalities Impact Assessment was not required. <b>The revised Policy has no impact to equality. No negative impacts were identified and a full Equality Analysis is not required.</b></p> <p>To address the issues raised by the Inspector in his Preliminary Findings of 16 July 2014 additional text is to be added to strengthen Policy YV2 regarding mitigation of the landscape impact of the North East Yeovil SUE. This additional text can then be used to inform masterplanning consideration through the development management process.</p> <p>A Stage 1 Equalities Impact Assessment of this Main Modification has been undertaken, and at this stage it is considered that a Stage 2 Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. <b>The revised Policy has no impact to equality.</b></p>

Policy Number  Policies where Main Modifications are proposed	Is this a change to service delivery? (including, withdrawal or reduction of services)	Does the *policy/strategy/function/service / affect our workforce or employment practices	Is this a financial or budget decision that may affect any of the protected groups differently?	Could this policy or service and the way we deliver it affect some groups in society differently?	Does the policy / strategy / function service affect service users or the wider community?	Summary Statement and Comments
						<b>No negative impacts were identified and a full Equality Analysis is not required.</b>
Policy YV3: East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone	No	No	No	No	Yes	<p>Proposed Submission Local Plan Policy YV3 underwent Equality Analysis (EqA) as part of its formulation. The Policy underwent Stage 1 screening as a result of Proposed Modification M102 in January 2013. This comprised a screening and summary statement, and at this stage it was considered that a Stage 2 Equalities Impact Assessment was not required. <b>The revised Policy has no impact to equality. No negative impacts were identified and a full Equality Analysis is not required.</b></p> <p>The intention of the buffer zone was to preserve the character of North Coker and East Coker, and prevent coalescence with Yeovil. However, at the Local Plan Hearing Sessions held in June 2014 (and confirmed in his Preliminary Findings of July 2014) the Inspector had concerns regarding the continued justification for the buffer zone in light of the reduced scale and extent of the South Yeovil SUE. The National Planning Practice Guidance re-iterates the advice in the NPPF that Local Green Space designations should only be used where the green area is not a large tract of land. The Council is therefore proposing to delete the East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone from the</p>



<p><b>Policy Number</b></p> <p><b>Policies where Main Modifications are proposed</b></p>	<p><b>Is this a change to service delivery? (including, withdrawal or reduction of services)</b></p>	<p><b>Does the *policy/strategy/function/service / affect our workforce or employment practices</b></p>	<p><b>Is this a financial or budget decision that may affect any of the protected groups differently?</b></p>	<p><b>Could this policy or service and the way we deliver it affect some groups in society differently?</b></p>	<p><b>Does the policy / strategy / function service affect service users or the wider community?</b></p>	<p><b>Summary Statement and Comments</b></p>
						<p>Local Plan. This involves deleting Policy YV3 and consequential modifications to delete references to the buffer zone in the supporting text (paragraphs 5.34 and 5.50-5.54) and removing the buffer zone from Inset Map15.</p> <p>A Stage 1 Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken of this Main Modification, and at this stage it is considered that a Stage 2 Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. <b>The revised Policy has no impact to equality. No negative impacts were identified and a full Equality Analysis is not required.</b></p>

Policy Number  Policies where Main Modifications are proposed	Is this a change to service delivery? (including, withdrawal or reduction of services)	Does the *policy/strategy/function/service / affect our workforce or employment practices	Is this a financial or budget decision that may affect any of the protected groups differently?	Could this policy or service and the way we deliver it affect some groups in society differently?	Does the policy / strategy / function service affect service users or the wider community?	Summary Statement and Comments
SS3: Delivering new Employment Land	No	No	No	No	Yes	<p>Proposed Submission Local Plan Policy SS3 underwent Equality Analysis (EqA) as part of its formulation. The Policy underwent Stage 1 screening as a result of Proposed Modification M34 in January 2013 and the Proposed Main Modifications submitted in March 2014 (PMM4.) This comprised a screening and summary statement, and at this stage it was considered that a Stage 2 Equalities Impact Assessment was not required. <b>The revised Policy has no impact to equality. No negative impacts were identified and a full Equality Analysis is not required.</b></p> <p>At the Local Plan Examination Hearing Sessions held in June 2014 (and confirmed in the Inspector's Preliminary Findings of 16 July 2014) there is concern regarding the inclusion of a target figure for employment land in Rural Settlements. The Council is therefore proposing the deletion of the figure for Rural Settlements as this would provide a more flexible approach. It is considered that this modification would not significantly threaten the balance between housing and employment across the District. Additional text is proposed to be added to Policy SS3 explaining that the remaining jobs in Rural Settlements will be expected to come forward through other Local Plan policies (SS2, EP4 and EP5). A footnote is also proposed to be added</p>

<b>Policy Number</b>  <b>Policies where Main Modifications are proposed</b>	<b>Is this a change to service delivery? (including, withdrawal or reduction of services)</b>	<b>Does the *policy/strategy/function/service / affect our workforce or employment practices</b>	<b>Is this a financial or budget decision that may affect any of the protected groups differently?</b>	<b>Could this policy or service and the way we deliver it affect some groups in society differently?</b>	<b>Does the policy / strategy / function service affect service users or the wider community?</b>	<b>Summary Statement and Comments</b>
						<p>to the policy to ensure consistency with Policy SS5 (early review of housing and employment policy at Wincanton).</p> <p>A Stage 1 Equalities Impact Assessment of this Main Modification has been undertaken, and at this stage it is considered that a Stage 2 Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. <b>The revised Policy has no impact to equality. No negative impacts were identified and a full Equality Analysis is not required.</b></p>

Policy Number  Policies where Further Main Modifications are proposed	Is this a change to service delivery? (including, withdrawal or reduction of services)	Does the *policy/strategy/function/service / affect our workforce or employment practices	Is this a financial or budget decision that may affect any of the protected groups differently?	Could this policy or service and the way we deliver it affect some groups in society differently?	Does the policy / strategy / function service affect service users or the wider community?	Summary Statement and Comments
SS5: Delivering New Housing Growth	No	No	No	No	Yes	<p>Proposed Submission Local Plan Policy SS5 underwent an Equality Analysis (EqA) as part of its formulation, as did the Policy as modified by Proposed Modification M74 in January 2013 and the Proposed Main Modifications PMM1 and PMM5 in March 2014. A Stage 1 Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken, which comprised a screening and summary statement, and as this stage it was considered that a Stage 2 Equalities Impact Assessment was not required. <b>The revised Policy has no impact to equality. No negative impacts were identified and a full Equality Analysis is not required.</b></p> <p>At the Local Plan Examination Hearing Sessions held in June 2014 (and confirmed by his Preliminary Findings of 16 July) the Inspector sought greater clarity on how planning applications for residential development and overall housing growth will be managed in Wincanton and Crewkerne. The Council recognises that given Crewkerne does not have an identified 'Direction of Growth' and that Wincanton's 'Direction of Growth' is only for economic development there is the therefore a need to be more definite for how applications for residential development will be considered.</p>

<b>Policy Number</b>  <b>Policies where Further Main Modifications are proposed</b>	<b>Is this a change to service delivery? (including, withdrawal or reduction of services)</b>	<b>Does the *policy/strategy/function/service / affect our workforce or employment practices</b>	<b>Is this a financial or budget decision that may affect any of the protected groups differently?</b>	<b>Could this policy or service and the way we deliver it affect some groups in society differently?</b>	<b>Does the policy / strategy / function service affect service users or the wider community?</b>	<b>Summary Statement and Comments</b>
						<p>To improve clarity for the development industry and the local community it is proposed that Policy SS5 (third paragraph) now makes direct reference to Crewkerne and Wincanton (and to development areas at Rural Centres). In response to the Inspector's Preliminary Findings it is also proposed to add a footnote to Policy SS5 to explain that an early review of housing and employment delivery in Wincanton will be undertaken as part of the Site Allocations Development Plan Document process, this will commence within two years of the date of adoption of the Local Plan (for consistency this footnote is also to be added to Policy SS3). Additionally, a new paragraph will be added after paragraph 13.5 of the Local Plan explaining this intention.</p> <p>A Stage 1 Equalities Impact Assessment of this Main Modification has been undertaken, and at this stage it is considered that a Stage 2 Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. <b>The revised Policy has no impact to equality. No negative impacts were identified and a full Equality Analysis is not required.</b></p>

Table 2: Stage 1 Screening of Main Modifications (November 2014)

Policy Number  Policies where Further Main Modifications are proposed	Is this a change to service delivery? (including, withdrawal or reduction of services)	Does the *policy/strategy/function/service / affect our workforce or employment practices	Is this a financial or budget decision that may affect any of the protected groups differently?	Could this policy or service and the way we deliver it affect some groups in society differently?	Does the policy / strategy / function service affect service users or the wider community?	Summary Statement and Comments
YV2: North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension	No	No	No	No	Yes	<p>As a result of the representations received during the Proposed Main Modifications consultation, in order to simplify the additional text on landscape mitigation amendments are proposed to be made to Policy YV2 by deleting the draft sixth bullet point relating to landscape mitigation for the North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension and replacing with the following bullet point criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Landscape mitigation to address:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b><u>Potential massing effects across the site's northward face; and</u></b></li> <li>○ <b><u>Potential visual dominance at the site's edge and skyline.</u></b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>A Stage 1 Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken, and at this stage it is considered that a Stage 2 Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. <b>The revised Policy has no impact to equality. No negative impacts were identified and a full Equality Analysis is not required.</b></p>

<p>SS5: Delivering New Housing Growth</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>In response to concerns regarding the timescale for the proposed early review of housing and employment policy at Wincanton, in the light of the advice in the NPPG, it is accepted that to be considered genuinely 'early' the proposed review of the situation in Wincanton could be completed within a shorter timescale. It is therefore proposed that Policy SS5 (and the proposed new paragraph after Section 13.5 of the Local Plan) is amended to state that a review will be completed within three years of the date of adoption of the Local Plan:</p> <p><b><u>The Council will undertake an early review of Local Plan policy relating to housing and employment in Wincanton. This will be in accordance with statutory requirements and completed within three years of the date of adoption of the Local Plan.</u></b></p> <p>A Stage 1 Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken, and at this stage it is considered that a Stage 2 Equalities Impact Assessment is not required. <b>The revised Policy has no impact to equality. No negative impacts were identified and a full Equality Analysis is not required.</b></p>
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## **South Somerset District Council – Detailed Analysis of Consultation Responses to Further Main Modifications**

The following table provides a summary analysis of responses received during the consultation process for the further Main Modifications to the South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028). It is important to note that these tables do not provide a response to all of the consultation responses received. Instead they focus on those main issues which require clarification or analysis. The responses have been grouped by each of the further Main Modifications and also by theme.

### **Introduction and Background**

<b>Issue – Miscellaneous</b>	<b>SSDC Response</b>
Object to building on Grade 1 agricultural land.	This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. This issue has been discussed and addressed through the resumed Examination Hearing Sessions and through the Sustainability Appraisal of growth options.  <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
Should prioritise development on brownfield sites.	This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. Policy SS7 addresses this issue, and is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).  <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
Object to development at Keyford due to traffic impact.	This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. This issue has been discussed and addressed through resumed Examination Hearing Sessions.  <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
Infrastructure, employment potential and the town centre cannot sustain the Keyford urban extension.	This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. This issue has been discussed and addressed through the Proposed Main Modifications and resumed Examination hearing sessions.  <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
The expectation of one person per household working in the urban extension is unrealistic.	This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. The provision of one job opportunity per dwelling is consistent with the sustainability intentions of the Yeovil Sustainable



	Urban Extensions. <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
East Coker should be defined as a Rural Centre and more development should be allowed here. The policy for controlling development in Rural Settlements is too restrictive.	This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. The settlement hierarchy has been debated through the Examination Hearing Sessions and has not been questioned by the Inspector in terms of soundness of the Local Plan. <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
The North East Yeovil sustainable urban extension suffers from anthrax contamination.	This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. This issue has been discussed and addressed through the Proposed Main Modifications and resumed Examination hearing sessions. <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
Taking samples from the NE Yeovil SUE may be too expensive for the developer and could be dangerous for builders, nearby residents and future residents.	This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. Any potential safety issues will be considered through the development management process.
Natural England are satisfied with the HRA addendum report.	Support noted. <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
Environment Agency reiterate that plan is sound and Policy EQ1 ensures flood risk issues will be addressed. There will be an engineering solution to surface water runoff, but consider undertaking a Flood Risk Management Strategy to provide further detail.	Support noted. <b>Recommendation: No change</b>

### **Main Modification 9: Policy YV2 – North East Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension**

<b>Issue – Economic Development</b>	<b>SSDC Response</b>
The amendment gives a much wider and less controlled scope for inappropriate development – a more limited definition of employment use should be included within the policy.	The amendment is required to be consistent with Policy SS3 and to be consistent with the NPPF. This was considered through the original Examination Hearing Sessions in May-June 2013 and debated in the resumed Examination Hearing Sessions in Jun 2014.  <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
Support the change from ‘B’ use class employment land, to land for economic development.	Support noted.  <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
<b>Issue – Landscape</b>	<b>SSDC Response</b>
Landscape mitigation text should also be added to the South Yeovil SUE to limit the skyline dominance of built form, particularly from properties to the south and west, and the potential for visual intrusion as viewed from the southern approach to Yeovil. The Peripheral Landscape Study Addendum indicates landscaping is required for both sustainable urban extensions.	Evidence in the Peripheral Landscape Study indicates that the South Yeovil SUE is located in an area of mostly ‘moderate-high’ capacity to accommodate built development, albeit there is a small area of lower capacity in the north east corner of the site. This evidence indicates that the South Yeovil SUE is less sensitive in terms of landscape impact than the North East SUE, and therefore the inclusion of additional detail on landscape mitigation measures at the South Yeovil SUE is not considered to be justified.  The landscape mitigation impacts generated by any development proposal can be resolved through the development management process.  <b>Recommendation – No change.</b>
The landscape impact of the South Yeovil SUE would be greater than in the North East due to beautiful rolling hills, the nearby Dorset AONB and historic buildings, yet it does not require landscape mitigation measures. Development on the north east edge will be highly visible. Therefore, landscape mitigation text should be added to the South SUE.	
Structural landscaping should also be included to mitigate the visual intrusion from the east of the proposed North East Yeovil SUE, to preserve views from villages in the area.	
Support the text on the mitigation of the landscape impact of the North East SUE.	
The landscape impact of developing the North East Yeovil SUE cannot be mitigated due to the slope and views from the Somerset Levels, Cadbury Castle and Dorset Hills.	The justification for proposing the North East Yeovil SUE is set out in the Proposed Main Modifications and resumed Examination hearing sessions. It is considered that mitigation measures can minimise landscape impact.

	<p><b>Recommendation – No change.</b></p> <p>Noted and agree with simplification of text.</p> <p><b>Recommendation –Amend Policy YV2 by deleting the draft sixth bullet point relating to landscape mitigation for the North East Yeovil sustainable Urban Extension and replace with the following bullet point criteria:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Landscape mitigation to address:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b><u>Potential massing effects across the site’s northward face; and</u></b></li> <li>○ <b><u>Potential visual dominance at the site’s edge and skyline.</u></b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Issue – Other</b>	<b>SSDC Response</b>
Badgers are present in the location of the North East Yeovil SUE, and a corridor should be included to protect wildlife from new development.	<p>This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. The policy context as set out in the NPPF and Local Plan Policy EQ4 will ensure that impacts upon wildlife are adequately addressed through the development management process.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
The North East SUE conflicts with the Mudford Neighbourhood Plan, and therefore contravenes Government policy on “localism”.	<p>Mudford does not have a formally recognised Neighbourhood Plan, agreed with the Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>The decision to identify a North East SUE is evidence-based and has been examined thoroughly through the Examination Hearing Sessions.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
The North East area designated for development should be used to establish a community wood to mitigate the impacts of urban sprawl and provide community benefits.	<p>This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. The justification for the North East Yeovil SUE was set out through the Proposed Main Modifications and resumed Examination hearing sessions.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
Object to development as it will ruin East Coker because of additional traffic and light pollution.	<p>This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. The impacts of the South Yeovil SUE were considered</p>

	through the Proposed Main Modifications and resumed Examination hearing sessions.  <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
No objection to the further detailed changes being proposed to Policy YV2.	Noted.  <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
Concerned about water run-off from the NE Yeovil SUE causing flooding downstream at Mudford and other villages. Surface water containment will be ineffective when there is non-stop rain like last winter.	This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. This issue has been discussed and addressed the Examination Hearing Sessions. The policy context provided by the NPPF and Policy EQ1 provide will ensure that flood risk is adequately addressed through the development management process.  <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
At the NE Yeovil SUE should contain a surgery as existing GPs are overstretched.	This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. The context provided by the NPPF and Policy HW1 will address this issue, which will be considered in more detail through the development management process.  <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
At the NE Yeovil SUE, there should be provision for cricket and tennis, and the football pitch should be full sized.	This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. The context provided by the NPPF and Policy HW1 will address this issue, which will be considered in more detail through the development management process.  <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
Should not develop to the south because it is adjacent to St Margaret's Hospice.	This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. The justification for the South Yeovil SUE was set out through the Proposed Main Modifications and resumed Examination hearing sessions.  <b>Recommendation: No change</b>
Housing and employment figures should be expressed as "up to", as the word "approximately" indicates a potential greater take up of land.	This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. The justification for the SUEs was set out through the Proposed Main Modifications and resumed Examination hearing

	<p>sessions. The inclusion of the words “up to” would be contrary to Policies SS3 and SS5.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
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**Main Modification 10: Policy YV3 – East Coker and North Coker Buffer Zone**

<b>Issue – Deletion of Buffer Zone</b>	<b>SDDC Response</b>
<p>Support the deletion of Policy YV3 as the smaller scale urban extension will not lead to coalescence with North and East Coker, and will not harm the character and historic environment. Retaining the policy would be contrary to the NPPF para 77 and Planning Practice Guidance.</p>	<p>Support noted.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
<p>Support the deletion of the buffer zone based upon the previous Local Plan Inspector saying of the Keyford site: “I do not believe that development on this land would lead to actual or perceived coalescence between the main built-up area of Yeovil and nearby villages. Sufficient physical and visual separation would remain.” (pg 459, LP Inspector’s Report, June 2003)</p>	<p>Support noted.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
<p>Object to the deletion of the buffer zone as there is a need to protect the wealth of heritage assets in the area (there are 89 listed heritage assets in East Coker parish).</p>	<p>Heritage assets will be adequately conserved and enhanced through the NPPF and Policy EQ3. There is a lack of justification for the buffer zone in light of the reduced scale and extent of the South Yeovil SUE, and it is no longer considered to be consistent with national policy (NPPF para 76, 77) and guidance (PPG Ref ID 37-015-20140306).</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
<p>Object to the deletion of the buffer zone as it is needed to protect East Coker from future development. The Council’s Five Year Housing Land Supply paper (June 2014) and Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) indicate further sites will be developed to the south of Yeovil towards East/North Coker.</p>	<p>There is a lack of justification for the buffer zone in light of the reduced scale and extent of the South Yeovil SUE, and it is no longer considered to be consistent with national policy (NPPF para 76, 77) and guidance (PPG Ref ID 37-015-20140306).</p> <p>The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is a technical document providing an appraisal of potential sites. It does not serve to allocate these sites or grant them planning permission, and each will be</p>

	<p>required to demonstrate they can achieve sustainable development and mitigate their impacts before receiving planning permission.</p> <p>The Five Year Housing Land Supply is also a technical document, providing an account of sites that can be shown to be deliverable within the next five years. It represents a 'snap-shot' in time and is subject to change and review. Where sites with planning permission are included these have been shown to represent sustainable development and are in accordance with national and local policy.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
The buffer zone should remain in order to protect Grade 1 agricultural land from development.	<p>Agricultural land quality has been discussed and addressed through the Proposed Main Modifications and resumed Examination hearing sessions. The use of a buffer zone to protect Grade 1 agricultural land would be contrary to national policy.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
The buffer zone should be increased to the edge of the South Yeovil SUE to protect the area from development, due to the impact upon wildlife and archaeology.	<p>Wildlife and archaeological impacts have been discussed and addressed through the Proposed Main Modifications and resumed Examination hearing sessions. There is a lack of justification for the buffer zone in light of the reduced scale and extent of the South Yeovil SUE, and it is no longer considered to be consistent with national policy (NPPF para 76, 77) and guidance (PPG Ref ID 37-015-20140306).</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
The buffer zone should be increased to cover the whole of the Keyford area as the housing proposals are based upon outdated ONS data and therefore not required.	<p>The scale of housing is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. This topic was discussed and addressed through the Proposed Main Modifications and resumed Examination Hearing Sessions.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
Policy YV3 should be amended to establish a new Green Belt, extending through the Coker vale to the border with Dorset, and set an appropriate policy for development of settlements within the Green Belt. This is required to protect the preserve heritage	<p>The establishment of Green Belt to the south of Yeovil is not considered to be justified, effective or consistent with national policy (NPPF para 182). New Green Belt should only be established in exceptional circumstances (NPPF para 82) – it is not considered that these</p>

assets, landscape and high quality agricultural land.	<p>circumstances apply to the south of Yeovil.</p> <p>There is a lack of justification for the buffer zone in light of the reduced scale and extent of the South Yeovil SUE, and it is no longer considered to be consistent with national policy (NPPF para 76, 77) and guidance (PPG Ref ID 37-015-20140306).</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
Placket Lane should be the boundary for the South Yeovil SUE.	<p>This issue is not specifically relevant to the Main Modifications consultation. The location of the South Yeovil SUE was discussed and addressed through the Proposed Main Modifications and resumed Examination hearing sessions.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>

### **Main Modification 11: Amendment to Policy SS3 to improve clarity on employment land delivery in Rural Centres and Rural Settlements**

Five comments were received in response to MM11. None raised any main issues in relation to the improved clarity on the delivery of employment land in Rural Centres and Rural Settlements. A number of other issues were raised and these are briefly addressed below:

<b>Issue - Employment land in Crewkerne</b>	<b>SDDC Response</b>
Approach to Crewkerne is unclear and will allow growth that is inconsistent with the strategic approach set out in the Local Plan (Policies EP1 and HG1). MM11 should cross refer to Policy EP1.	<p>This issue is not specifically relevant to MM11.</p> <p>In any effect, the Local Plan, through Policy SS3, Policy SS5, Policy EP1, and Policy HG1 does provide the policy framework through which to make decisions on future growth in Crewkerne. Policy SS3 includes a footnote reference to its relationship with Policy EP1.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
It is unclear that the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies to Policy EP1.	<p>This issue is not specifically relevant to MM11.</p> <p>Paragraph 14 of the NPPF states that for decision taking the presumption in favour of sustainable development means "...approving development</p>

	<p>proposals that accord with the development plan without delay". Local Plan Policy SD1 reflects this guidance.</p> <p>As already adopted and saved Local Plan allocations forming part of the development plan, those allocations listed within Policy EP1 can come forward at any time.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
<b>Issue - Employment allocation at Wincanton</b>	<b>SSDC Response</b>
<p>It was agreed with the inspector, that the initial area of employment would be the two areas of land on each side of the Lawrence Hill Road, from the Long Close site to the Anchor Hill roundabout. The land specified was between Lawrence Hill and the A303, and between Lawrence Hill and the stream to the north, which would form the buffer between employment and existing residential.</p>	<p>This issue is not specifically relevant to MM11.</p> <p>The Inspector did not discuss the specific boundary or area of employment land within Wincanton. The proposed Direction of Growth set out in Policy PMT4 sets out the broad extent of the employment area. This will help facilitate the employment growth advocated in Policy SS3.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
<p>The employment land provision at Wincanton should be increased to 6 hectares.</p>	<p>This issue is not specifically relevant to MM11.</p> <p>Main Modification 4 (March 2014) sets out the justification and evidence for the amount of employment land in Wincanton. This was debated during the Examination Hearing Sessions in June 2014 and has not been raised again as a matter of soundness by the Inspector.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>



**Main Modification 12: Amendment to Policy SS5 to improve clarity on housing delivery in Crewkerne and Wincanton**

<b>Issue - Growth adjacent the Development Area at Crewkerne and Wincanton</b>	<b>SSDC Response</b>
<p>The effect of this modification as currently worded is for a period of time, to allow unbounded growth around the Market Towns of Wincanton and Crewkerne which will include land of high environmental value. The failure to define (adequately or otherwise) a Strategic Direction for housing growth is at the heart of the issue.</p>	<p>The revision to Policy SS5 provides an NPPF compliant approach to dealing with planning applications for housing growth until such time as the Site Allocations DPD is adopted and/or there is an early review of growth proposals in Wincanton.</p> <p>Decisions on growth will be taken in light of the policy framework provided by SS5 and other policies within the Local Plan (e.g. SD1, SS1, HG1, etc). It is not correct to state that this growth will be unbounded as future planning proposals will need demonstrate they are commensurate with the scale of growth set out in SS5, will not have a significant negative impact on the role and function of the settlement, and can achieve sustainable development in line with the policy principles set out in the NPPF.</p> <p>In accordance with paragraph 14 of the NPPF where a proposal would result in any adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole it should be refused.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
<b>Issue – Growth adjacent the Development Area - Crewkerne</b>	<b>SSDC Response</b>
<p>The CLR Key Site (Policy HG1) is proposed to meet the housing need over the plan period, so promoting development that is outside of this area is inconsistent with the Local Plan policy for strategic growth proposed for this town.</p>	<p>Policy SS5 identifies an additional housing requirement of <u>at least</u> 45 dwellings in Crewkerne over the plan period. This is in addition to the saved CLR Key Site allocation (Policy HG1).</p> <p>As such, and to ensure compliance with the NPPF, it is appropriate that Policy SS5 (through MM12) allows for planning applications to be submitted and considered to meet the housing requirement in Crewkerne. This is not an inconsistent approach, nor should it result in over-development, as future application(s) will still need to be in accordance with the Local Plan, overcome any significant negative impacts, and meet</p>

	<p>the policy tests for sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
<p>The proposed approach moves the emphasis away from the delivery of the Key Site. Main Modification should be amended as follows:</p> <p>The same key considerations should also apply when considering housing proposals <u>in Crewkerne including the strategic housing site, Wincanton and (wherever located) adjacent to the development area at Crewkerne, Wincanton and the Rural Centres.</u></p>	<p>The Main Modification has been put forward to improve the clarity for how planning applications can be considered within Crewkerne to help realise the levels of growth set out in Policy SS5.</p> <p>The Local Plan, which should be read as a whole, has clear reference to Council's stated ambition to deliver the Crewkerne Key Site, especially through policies EP1 and HG1.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
<p>An additional sentence should be included in the supporting text to Policy SS5 or HG1 to confirm that the Council will work in collaboration with developers of the CLR Key Site to secure a deliverable scheme.</p>	<p>Paragraph 8.16 of the submitted Local Plan affirms the Council's commitment to supporting economic development and promoting the sites within Policy EP1. The same commitment to delivering Policy HG1 is stated in paragraph 9.8 it is therefore considered that the proposed amendment is unnecessary.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
<b>Issue - Growth adjacent the Development Area - Wincanton</b>	<b>SSDC Response</b>
<p>The wording should limit housing development to brownfield land within the existing town's development boundaries. Failure to define the limitations on housing provision would make the work on a sustainable policy pointless and contrary to the NPPF.</p>	<p>The approach set out in MM12 accords with that discussed with the Inspector at the Examination hearing sessions held in June 2014. The principle of development within the Development Area of Wincanton will continue to be supported but to limit growth to within that area alone would be contrary to the NPPF. As stated above development proposals will be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development, overall scale of growth and wider policy framework set out in the Local Plan.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
<p>The text should be amended to confirm that the permissive approach to housing proposals extends to Wincanton.</p>	<p>The Main Modifications have been drafted to specifically ensure that the permissive approach applies in Wincanton.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>

Issue - Early review at Wincanton	
<p>The proposed timeframe of commencement within two years and completion in five years for the early review of housing and employment policy at Wincanton is unjustifiably long.</p> <p>Suggested that commencement within one year and completion with 3 years might be appropriate.</p>	<p>On the matter of reviewing local plans, the NPPG states the following:</p> <p><i>“local planning authority should review the relevance of the Local Plan at regular intervals to assess whether some or all of it may need updating. Most Local Plans are likely to require updating in whole or in part at least every five years. Reviews should be proportionate to the issues in hand. Local Plans may be found sound conditional upon a review in whole or in part within five years of the date of adoption.”</i> Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 12-008-20140306</p>
<p>Concerned regarding the proposal to undertake the housing review as part of the Site Allocations DPD process. In the event that this review concludes that more homes and therefore sites are needed, there is insufficient time to include further sites to accommodate this need within the Site Allocations Document. This will result in further uncertainty and delay to housing provision within Wincanton.</p>	<p>The review of housing and employment policy at Wincanton is a potentially complex issue and is likely to give rise to further revisions of policy elsewhere within the Local Plan. A period of assimilation and monitoring is required in order to reflect on how the existing policy is translating into built development, and to ensure that there is a robust evidence base to underpin any future growth proposals.</p> <p>In the light of the advice in the NPPG it is accepted that to be considered genuinely ‘early’ the proposed review of the situation in Wincanton could be completed within a shorter timescale. It is therefore proposed that Policy SS5 and the proposed new paragraph after Section 13.5 of the Local Plan be amended to state a review will be completed within three years of the date of adoption of the Local Plan.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: Amend Policy SS5 and new paragraph after Section 13.5 of the Local Plan as follows:</b>  <b><u>The Council will undertake an early review of Local Plan policy relating to housing and employment provision in Wincanton. This will be in accordance with statutory requirements and be completed within three years of the date of adoption of the Local Plan.”</u></b></p>
Issue - Other	
<p>Redefinition of the current Strategic Direction of growth for Employment at Wincanton as mixed-use.</p>	<p>This issue was addressed during the Examination Hearing sessions of June 2014.</p>

<p>Please include a "Preferred area for housing growth" in the Wincanton element of the plan. The preferred area of housing growth should be the area adjacent New Barns Farm between Lawrence Hill and West Hill and the area between Common Road and Devonish Lane.</p>	<p>Wincanton has a high level of existing planning permissions for sites which are expected to be built out over the Local Plan period. The Main Modifications facilitate other planning applications being considered on their merits.</p> <p>The early review of housing and employment in Wincanton will provide the appropriate opportunity to examine monitoring data on housing and employment delivery, appraise the scale of future need, and identify locations for growth in Wincanton.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change.</b></p>
<p>Wincanton should have a 5 year moratorium from any large scale new housing following the allocation being front loaded in the first half of the plan period.</p>	<p>A moratorium would be contrary to Paragraph 14 of the NPPF. In practice, it would also be unachievable and unenforceable in light of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change</b></p>
<p>Policy SS5 is in direct conflict with national housing policy. No policy exists within the Main Modifications that complies with NPPF directives, NPPG interpretation, the Localism Act 2011 or any ministerial and central Government promotion encouraging individual Custom Build solutions to the housing shortage. As such there is no means of utilising any portion of the thirty million pounds grant subsidy that has been made available to those wishing to build their own accommodation.</p>	<p>This is not specifically relevant to MM12.</p> <p>The Local Plan does not prevent proposals for Custom Build housing solutions coming forward. Any Custom Build scheme will need to demonstrate that it represents sustainable development and is in accordance with national and local policy.</p> <p>The Homes and Communities Agency are responsible for the funding for Custom Build. Grant will be given to projects which meet their criteria.</p> <p><b>Recommendation: No change.</b></p>

# Agenda Item 7

## **Report of Joint Scrutiny Task and Finish Group - Broadband**

*Assistant Director:* Ian Clarke, Assistant Director – Legal and Corporate Services  
*Lead Officer:* Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager  
*Contact Details:* Emily.mcguinness@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462566

### **Purpose of the Report**

To present District Executive with the findings of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group conducted jointly with East Devon District Council looking into the Connecting Devon and Somerset Broadband project.

### **Forward Plan**

This report appeared/ with an anticipated Committee date of November 2014.

### **Public Interest**

Providing improved rural broadband is an issue that is important to the communities of both South Somerset and East Devon. This report outlines a review of the Connecting Devon and Somerset Broadband project conducted by Scrutiny Councillors from both East Devon District Council and South Somerset District Councils.

### **Recommendations**

District Executive are recommended to endorse the report of the Joint Scrutiny Task and Finish Group as attached to this report and consider the following recommendations as contained in that report:

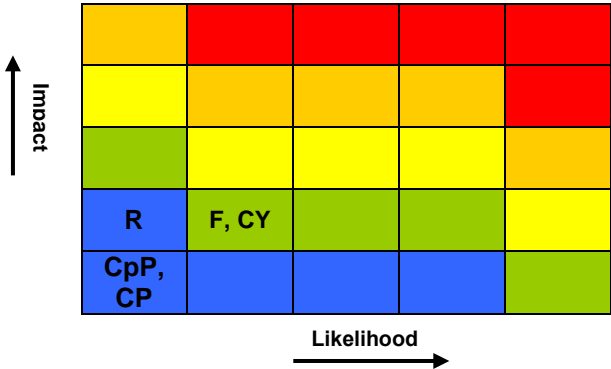
1. That clarification is sought from relevant sources, including Connecting Devon and Somerset, and reported to members, at the earliest opportunity as to whether the SSDC/EDDC element of the potential £22.75 million SEP funding can be redirected to an alternative provider outside of the Connecting Devon and Somerset Programme.
2. That clarification is sought from relevant sources including Connecting Devon and Somerset, and reported to members on the original objectives of the BDUK project...was it to provide improved access for rural residents to Superfast Broadband, in recognition of the fact that such access is now seen as essential in modern domestic and business life, or was it also to support cheaper provision to SME's in more urban areas? Members would also like to have the position on state aid to business clarified in relation to this point.
3. That whatever decisions are taken corporately to address providing Superfast Broadband to 'the final 10%', there is a commitment to openness, transparency and accountability from all those involved and there will be no further use of Non-disclosure Agreements or similar.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

**Risk Matrix**

This matrix only identifies the risk associated with taking the decision as set out in the report as the recommendation(s). Should there be any proposal to amend the recommendation(s) by either members or officers at the meeting then the impact on the matrix and the risks it identifies must be considered prior to the vote on the recommendation(s) taking place.



**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

## **Broadband Task and Finish Forum**

### **Chairman's introduction**

This TaFF on the provision of High Speed Broadband in Devon and Somerset has been the most disappointing TaFF in which I have been involved while in Local Government.

The importance of providing high speed broadband has been recognised by all and it is quite apparent that this provision is at least as important in rural areas as in urban ones.

BTs approach to the matter appears to have been aggressively commercial and the organisation has pressed the case for non-disclosure agreements with considerable force. East Devon and South Somerset District Councils declined to sign such an agreement for very principled reasons. As a result, the two authorities, unlike other district councils in Devon and Somerset, have been excluded from discussions that might have been helpful to their residents. We have seen no justifiable evidence to suggest that the withholding of information has been to the benefit of residents. Indeed the lack of information has made it more difficult for rural residents to seek possibly viable alternative solutions to their internet problems.

In regard to the meetings of the TAFF there was one large meeting that was remarkably revealing. The meeting was attended by BT, County Councillors, some of those involved in the project and several parish and other councillors. The meeting demonstrated a completed failure for minds to meet. There was negligible willingness for those who knew more information to reveal it and there was an air of frustration and anger on the part of those who felt their residents were being kept in the dark despite huge quantities of taxpayers' money being spent on the project. In this instance, it was not Whitehall but BT who knew best but for the ordinary person it was better that they were ignorant.

When BT was denationalised in the 1980s there was a serious endeavour made to ensure that BTs operations were subject to significant competition. The way the roll-out of high speed broadband has been undertaken has regrettably allowed BT to a virtual monopoly of the activity. The use of NDAs has made the entry of competing operators in difficult rural areas extraordinarily risky.

As has been indicated by others there are strong suspicions that BT has also been able to use public monies to finance the introduction of high speed broadband in localities where its introduction could in any case have been a highly profitable commercial venture.

Councillor Tim Wood  
East Devon District Council

## **Broadband Scrutiny review**

This report sets out the findings of the Task and Finish Group jointly established by EDDC and SSDC to look into the issue of providing rural access to Superfast Broadband via the Connecting Devon and Somerset Project.

The report will briefly outline the background to this topic and the review methodology used, before drawing a series of conclusions.

### **Review Background:**

#### **Connecting Devon and Somerset Joint Task and Finish Group**

The issue of rural broadband now has a high national profile, thanks mainly to a report recently published by the Public Accounts Select Committee <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmselect/cmpublicacc/474/47402.htm> This report mainly focuses on the impact of BT having been awarded all the Rural Broadband contracts and the inherent lack of competition and transparency in the process.

The guiding principles of the Rural Broadband project are to provide superfast broadband to 90% of the country and 100% by 2020, and these objectives should be welcomed and celebrated. However well-intentioned the project may be, there are concerns with how Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) are implementing it. The CDS project involves over £90 million of tax-payers money and as such members felt that the issue warranted thorough and detailed Scrutiny.

Nationally, concerns have been raised about the openness and transparency of Broadband UK (BDUK) and the various regional models and this issue should form the primary focus of this review.

### **Background**

The BDUK aims to provide 90% of UK households with superfast broadband by 2016 – it is important to note that this 90% is based on population not geographical location. There are concerns that this means in reality, the project is essentially becoming an urban broadband connection project as opposed to the intended outcome of improved rural connections.

A particular issue for EDDC and SSDC was the use of Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA) by the Connecting Devon and Somerset Project Team. The CDS team asked all Devon and Somerset local authorities to sign a NDA – signing such an agreement would essentially mean that EDDC and SSDC officers and members could attend meetings and briefings with BT as the CDS service provider, but would be prevented from sharing any information with other members, officers or the public. A decision was taken by EDDC and SSDC not to sign the agreement as doing so did not sit comfortably with our established principles of openness and transparency. It was felt that signing such a document would undermine the democratic accountability of the both us as local authorities and the wider CDS project. This decision not to sign the NDA has nonetheless disadvantaged both authorities as the project has progressed as both authorities have been outside of any discussions about the planned roll out of Superfast Broadband, and as such have not been able to influence the programme to meet specific local demands.



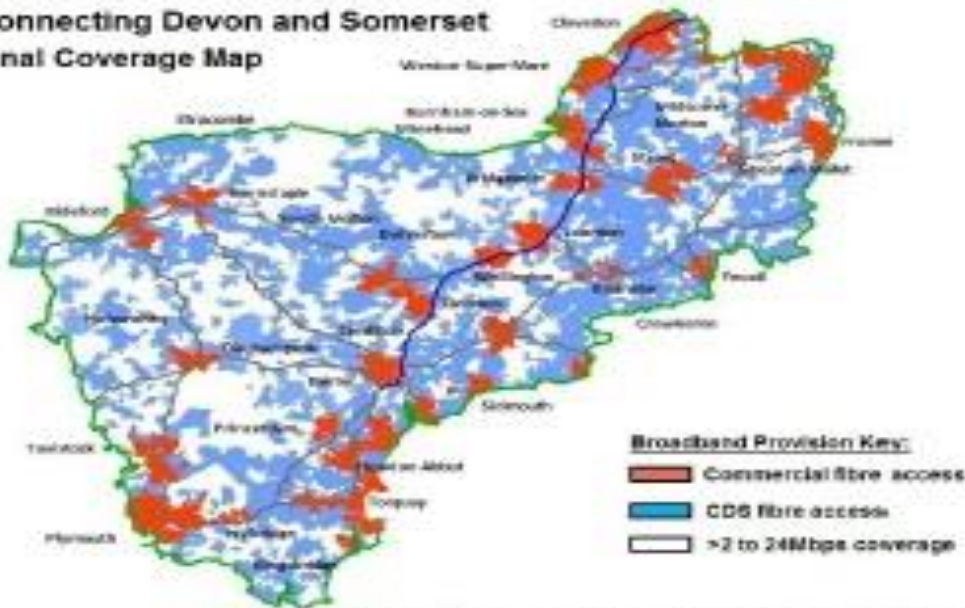
In the initial stages of the project, the Economic Development officers at SSDC put a considerable amount of effort into supporting the CDS project, they actively encouraged all sectors of the community to register their demand for superfast broadband and provided detailed mapping data to the CDS project team. This complex work was undertaken in the belief that the district council would remain an active partner in the CDS project, promoting the needs of EDDC and SSDC communities and businesses, in fact, we were held as a best practice example of how to effectively engage with the rural broadband programme. At no stage was it stated that future involvement in the project would be dependent on signing the NDA. The decision not to sign the NDA effectively ended meaningful two way dialogue between our authorities and the CDS project team. As local authorities, EDDC and SSDC positively embraced the principles of providing superfast broadband to our rural communities and publically supported the project – we are now not able to either further the needs of our residents or respond to queries.

The main concern for our communities is identifying what is known as the 'final 10%' – those households/ properties that will not be covered by the CDS project. This lack of information is having a significant impact. In SSDC there have been several instances of businesses contacting our Economic Development teams to ask if and when their broadband connectivity will be improved as the current poor Broadband provision was having a negative impact on their businesses. Knowledge of when they would be upgraded, or if indeed they would fall into the 'final 10%' would influence their future business decisions.

CDS have argued that they don't want to publish information in a piecemeal fashion, and want to wait until they have completed all survey work before publishing a detailed coverage map. To some extent, this position has been challenged by Maria Miller MP, the then Secretary of State for Culture and Media. She wrote to all local authority Chief Executives on 19<sup>th</sup> July asking for coverage information to be published stating that, "*... this information will help other broadband projects to fill in gaps in coverage...*".

CDS initially produced a more detailed coverage map (below)

## Connecting Devon and Somerset Final Coverage Map



Created using OAD from OS Open Space – © Crown copyright and database rights 2013 Ordnance Survey

### Understanding the map:

This map shows a preliminary estimate of the likely broadband coverage resulting from the Connecting Devon and Somerset Programme's investment. The maps are indicative and should not be relied on or otherwise treated as a guarantee of current or future provision.

There are a number of things to be aware of when interpreting the map:

- It is not necessarily the case that all premises within an upgraded area will receive an upgrade – different premises within that area may be served by different infrastructure.
- Although an area may be served by upgraded infrastructure, the distance to this infrastructure from any particular premises in that area may mean that speeds for those premises are below 'superfast' levels of 24 Mbps.
- The modelling which informed the maps is based upon a number of assumptions which may change following a detailed on the ground assessment of local conditions. Before commencing work on an identified area, BT will conduct a planning survey and design study. Any issues encountered during this stage may result in changes to the roll-out plan.
- Since the project was approved in January 2013, Openreach has been working on survey work to improve the accuracy of the rollout. Changes to the map are therefore expected and these will be published at six month intervals.
- Other funding streams have been announced by the government and applications will or have already been made to these to extend coverage beyond the areas shown.

However, this map is not detailed enough to provide communities and business with relevant information. By contrast, the Connecting Dorset project produced an interactive map, allowing residents to find out coverage proposals down to individual post codes as did many other projects teams nationally such as Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire, showing that it was indeed possible to produce more meaningful data at an earlier stage.

Finding out which areas fall into the 'final 10%' was considered crucial by members of the Task and Finish Group. There have been three rounds of DEFRA funding available to support communities within the 'final 10%' to source alternative solutions such as satellite broadband or 4G technology. In order to access this funding, communities were asked to submit expressions of interest based on a 'strong indication' that their area would fall into the 'final 10%'. The final round of funding closed on 17<sup>th</sup> June and obviously, Devon and Somerset communities were disadvantaged by the refusal of CDS to state which communities they anticipated would fall into the 'final 10%'. Other BDUK projects have successfully caveated along the lines of....*this information may be subject to change based on the more detailed findings of our survey work and should therefore be treated as indicative until final confirmation is published...*."

By being outside of the process by virtue of not signing the NDA, EEDC and SSDC were effectively outside of the Connecting Devon and Somerset Process and could not influence any part of the roll out programme, even though the CDS team were using the significant amount of data we supplied to them in the early stages. Despite us supplying this data, we

were now not in a position to help interpret it, thus not enabling us to make the best case for our residents.

The whole premise for this project was to provide fibre optic broadband to rural communities where it would not otherwise have been commercially viable to do so. The project is heavily publically subsidised and there is little evidence publically available, that this money is not being used to fund work that BT would have done anyway, providing superfast broadband to the most populated rural communities.

### **Scrutiny objectives**

As with all Scrutiny reviews the work of this Task and Finish Group needed maintain a strong focus on some key points. Nationally there are high level discussions on the nature of the procurement process used by BDUK and whilst it was agreed that the Task and Finish Group should keep a watching brief on this issue, members agreed that this review should focus on the following specific questions:

- The validity of the Non-Disclosure Agreement – bearing in mind the recent call for openness and transparency from the Secretary of State responsible for this project. **I have written to her office asking for her view on the use of NDA's and her comments will be reported to the Task and Finish Group.**
- How do we ensure that SSDC and EDDC are positively engaged in the roll out process in the future, with no restricted access to information beyond usual arrangements.
- How can we identify the final 10% as a matter of urgency and what can EDDC and SSDC do to actively support those communities which fall into this category?

The priority for this Task and Finish had to be finding out how to gain access to relevant and timely information and identifying the final 10% as a matter of urgency – this is what will be of the greatest benefit to our communities.

If appropriate, the Task and Finish Group can then go on to look at lessons that could/should be learnt from the CDS project experience.

### **Review methodology / process**

A series of meetings were held to progress this review ( the minutes of which are attached as appendices to this report).

In addition to the formal meetings a considerable amount of research was conducted which contributed to the following conclusions:

### **Conclusions**

It may appear that after considering this issue for some considerable time, this Task and Finish report does not contain many substantial recommendations, but this would be to underestimate the dynamic nature of the Connecting Devon and Somerset project.

The frustrations and difficulties faced by members on this Task and Finish Group characterise those faced by communities seeking to influence the delivery of the programme.

This Task and Finish Group was established with the aim of seeking to ensure that the delivery of the CDS project met the needs and expectations of communities in both South Somerset and East Devon. From the outset, we were aware of the constraints represented by the Non-disclosure Agreement, but members of the T&F adopted an approach of looking for pragmatic ways forward rather than looking to revisit the issue of the appropriateness of such an agreement in connection with a public funded project. From the outset, those conducting this review were keen to adopt a positive approach, looking to secure the best possible outcome for their residents.

Members have involved the community at all stages of this review and it quickly became apparent that there was some genuine (and well informed) concern amongst certain communities.

Whilst members of the T&F may have sought to set aside the issue of the NDA in the interest of securing the best possible outcome for residents, over the course of their meetings with the public, it became clear that the issue of openness and transparency or (the perceived lack thereof) within the CDS project was an overriding concern amongst communities. Concluding this matter, members adopted a 'we are where we are' attitude to the issue of the EDDC/SSDC decision not to sign the NDA. Members agree with the stance taken over the NDA compromising democratic accountability and are disappointed to note that despite assurances that our not signing the NDA would in no way disadvantage our residents, the subsequent exclusion of EDDC and SSDC from discussions led to precisely that.

This was all the more disappointing given the fact that officers at both authorities gave a considerable amount of time and effort in the early stages of the project to determine local demand and to promote the project and at no point did CDS mention that continued involvement in the delivery phase of the project would be dependent on the signing of an unduly restrictive NDA. Pragmatically, both authorities would have been better placed to influence the delivery of the CDS if they had signed the agreement, and members of this review feel that future stages of this project and indeed any similar projects in the future should allow such a situation to arise again – local authorities deal with highly confidential and commercially sensitive information on a regular basis and have mechanisms in place to ensure this – NDA's have no place in a democratic process.

The issue was raised with representatives from the CDS Project team (*as referenced in the minutes from meeting*) but the position remained intractable.

Other work going on at the same time – various FOI requests meant that the CDS project team could defend a position of not releasing any of the information we requested pending the outcome of the Information Commissioner's assessment. There were also several other discussions taking place between other members of the Council and CDS which made co-ordination of effort and avoiding duplication increasingly difficult.

The primary outcome of this Task and Finish Exercise should be a recognition of where the project to date has been less than successful (effective communication both between CDS and partners organisations and communities) and the undue influence given to a private sector business delivering a publically funded project. The recognition of these shortcomings must be translated into better partnering arrangements and agreements for future stages of superfast broadband delivery projects across Devon and Somerset.

The next phase is already underway with the announcement on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2014 that the government was making an £250 million available to bring UK Superfast Broadband coverage up to 95% by the end of 2017. Members of the Task and Finish Group strongly

recommend that those conducting any future discussions must be mindful of the need to ensure openness and transparency every step of the way. The next phase asks each local authority to contribute significant sums of money to secure central government match funding to deliver Superfast Broadband to the remaining 10%. Discussions to date bear worrying similarities to earlier stages of the project in that there is a lack of clarity/information forthcoming as to exact locations and delivery methods. Members of this Task and Finish Group strongly recommend that no decisions are taken by either authority about further involvement or potential financial contributions until there are robust agreements in place to ensure full democratic accountability and guaranteed local authority influence as to how the next phase of the project is delivered.

The Task and Finish Group also discussed the issue of Superfast Broadband and the local economy. Following their discussions, members recommend that clarity is sort ( and consequently communicated) as to the relationship between delivery Superfast Broadband to residential properties and delivering it to business properties.

The initial project aims and objectives from Broadband UK looked to address the inequality of access between rural and urban communities in an increasingly digital age. Whilst the need to provide good communication links for businesses is vital to rural economies, the BDUK project was always more about enabling community access and thus making a substantial contribution to addressing rural deprivation.

The next phase of the project Superfast Extension Programme (SEP) recognises that there remain some properties ( in the final 10%) that present additional technical difficulties due to geographical location and that alternative technological solutions are required. Such alternative technologies exist and the SEP project looks to bring this new learning to the CDS project area.

There are legitimate concerns that urban areas have Superfast Broadband access issues that are impacting on SME's but it is the understanding of this T&F that the CDS project is designed to deliver vital communications to rural communities and the other options should be explored to support more urban SME's. Members ask for clarification on the use of public funds as represented by the SEP and CDS projects to provide a subsidised service for private enterprise. In urban areas, the infrastructure for SFB is there, but the market is structured in such a way that SME's can find the costs prohibitive. Members also seek clarification at the earliest opportunity as to whether the SSDC and/or EDDC elements of the £22.75 million can, under the terms of the SEP Government funding be redirected to an alternative provider outside of the Connecting Devon and Somerset programme.

The BDUK Project was, as far as members have been able to determine, intended to provide the actual infrastructure to rural areas rather than influence service provision in more urban areas. Members ask that this position is definitively clarified before progressing with future phases of the CDS Project.

One of the key objectives of this review was to encourage the CDS team to make the same information available to communities as their counterparts elsewhere in the Country. At the conclusion of the review, it is now possible for residents to obtain information down to 7 digit postcode level, and whilst this success cannot be solely attributed to this review, it should be noted nonetheless.

Whilst this review may have been characterised by frustration and disappointment that those charged with delivering a high value and high profile publically funded project have adopted a very narrow view of openness, accountability and transparency, the success of the project should not be diminished – more rural communities can now access what is widely

concerned to a necessary part of modern living and thus, our rural communities are more sustainable than before. Members of this Task and Finish Group hope that by addressing some of the points raised in this report, the project will go on to deliver much needed outcomes, in a more publically acceptable manner.

Members request that all current and future work looking into all aspects of Superfast Broadband across both local authority areas are reported for consideration by Scrutiny members in both EDDC and SSDC as appropriate. Over the course of this review, members have developed an in-depth understanding of the complexities involved.

## **Recommendations**

- 1. That clarification is sought, and reported to members, at the earliest opportunity as to whether the SSDC/EDDC element of the potential £22.75 million SEP funding can be redirected to an alternative provider outside of the Connecting Devon and Somerset Programme.**
- 2. That clarification is sought, and reported to members on the original objectives of the BDUK project...was it to provide improved access for rural residents to Superfast Broadband, in recognition of the fact that such access is now seen as essential in modern domestic and business life, or was it also to support cheaper provision to SME's in more urban areas? Members would also like to have the position on state aid to business clarified in relation to this point.**
- 3. That whatever decisions are taken corporately to address providing Superfast Broadband to 'the final 10%', there is a commitment to openness, transparency and accountability from all those involved and there will be no further use of Non-disclosure Agreements or similar.**

# Agenda Item 8

## **Non Domestic Rates (NDR) – Discretionary Rate Relief Policy**

*Executive Portfolio Holder:* Tim Carroll, Finance and Spatial Planning  
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### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To request that the District Executive recommend the Discretionary Rate Relief Policy to Council for approval.

### **Forward Plan**

2. This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan for November 2014.

### **Public Interest**

3. A range of Mandatory and Discretionary Rate Reliefs exist to reduce (in some cases to Nil) the amount of Non-Domestic Rates (commonly known as business rates) a business or organisation has to pay. The qualifying rules and levels of relief for Mandatory Reliefs are set by Government and are the same throughout the country. The rules and levels of award for Discretionary Rate reliefs are set by each Council and as such may vary from Council to Council. The current policy was introduced in 2000 with a number of amendments having been made to it since. A full review and updating of the policy will ensure the key principles for applying NDR Relief continue to meet with the Council's own Council Plan 2012 – 2015 and all relevant strategies.

### **Recommendation(s)**

The District Executive is requested to recommend to Council:

- (a) the attached draft Discretionary Rate Relief Policy and Schedule 1 at Appendix A for approval;
- (b) the policy implementation date of 1 April 2015;
- (c) a transitional period on one year for current recipients to ensure that they have sufficient time to manage any financial impact from the changes;
- (d) to note the recommendations from the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group attached at Appendix C;
- (e) to consider the Equalities Impact Assessment at Appendix D in approving (1) above;
- (f) to consider the public consultation responses at Appendix B in approving (1) above;

### **Background**

4. The Local Government Finance Bill 2012 introduced the Business Rates Retention Scheme. The scheme is designed to help achieve two of Government's key priorities: economic growth and localism. The scheme enables the retention of a proportion of the business rates revenue generated in a local area by the relevant local authorities. Business rates retention is intended to provide incentives for local authorities to drive economic growth, as the authorities will be able to retain a share of the growth that is generated in business rates revenue in their areas, as opposed to the current system where all business rates revenues are held centrally. The government has announced that the share to be paid to central government from business rates collected will be 50%. Therefore 50% of business rates will be retained locally (40% District, 9% County, 1% Fire authorities). However, in reality only 5% is retained by SSDC once other deductions are made.

As part of the Retention Scheme Government changed the contribution it makes to the various rate reliefs. Reliefs were previously broken down into mandatory support (support set by central Government) that was repaid to the local authority in full from the Government on the basis that local authorities had no choice but to award it under set criteria. The remaining discretionary relief (support set through SSDC) that the authority had to pay either in full or a proportion of but allocation was based on the authority's own criteria.

Under the new Government rules SSDC has to contribute 40% towards all reliefs even those that it has no choice about awarding. It has therefore been important to recognise the financial risk of applying reliefs when considering the new policy. The financing of reliefs need to be both affordable and balance the needs of the business and those of the local tax payer.

A public consultation process was carried out during the summer on the proposed Discretionary Rate Relief Policy.

### **The Scrutiny Task and Finish Group**

5. The findings of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group are attached at Appendix C and include the notes of the Scrutiny meeting held on the 5<sup>th</sup> August 2014. The Task and Finish Group is to be congratulated for the excellent detailed work and analysis they have undertaken over the past months in what is a very complex area.
6. The Task and Finish Group set out to ensure that the new policy would:-
  - Work in harmony with the Council Plan, all relevant Council Strategies and subsequent countywide collaborative work;
  - That the policy and application process is accessible and not too complex for both the applicant and officers to administer;
  - Effectively utilise relevant expertise and skill across SSDC;
  - Have adequate measures to provide stability to the recipients of NNDR relief;
  - Have adequate flexibility and could evolve i.e. to meet new requirements, to ensure that it keeps up with any changes Council objectives, and to allocate annual awards;
  - Take into account the financial risks of applying the new policy.

### **The Proposed Discretionary Rate Relief Policy**

7. The Discretionary Rate Relief Policy is attached at Appendix B. It takes into account the key principles agreed as:



- a. Provide assistance when there is evidence of financial need;
- b. The policy should support business, charities, organisations and groups that help to retain services in rural areas;
- c. Help and encourage business, charities, organisations, groups and communities to become self-reliant;
- d. Awarding discretionary relief should not distort competition; and
- e. Every business/ organisation should contribute something towards the provision of local services.

## **Policy Implementation Date and Transitional Scheme**

8. It is proposed that the policy will come into effect from 1 April 2015. This means that all Discretionary Rate Relief applications received on or after this date will be subject to the rules contained therein.

Businesses and organisations in receipt of a Discretionary Rate Relief prior to the annual billing process (March 2014) were given the statutory one full financial year notice period that their award would come to an end on 31 March 2015.

However it is proposed that a transitional scheme be applied to those recipients. The effect of this scheme is that the recipient will receive the same level of award in 2015/16 as in the 2014/15 financial year (unless they cease to qualify for the relief). This will enable recipients to take steps to mitigate any reduction in the level of relief awarded.

Businesses and organisations who have been awarded a Discretionary Rate Relief during the 2014/15 financial year will also have the transitional scheme applied.

## **Proposed Discretionary Rate Relief criteria**

9. In applying the principles the following proposals were consulted upon with recipients and other interested parties:-

- Sole Rural Pubs

10. It is proposed that a sole rural pub in receipt of 50% mandatory relief (those with a rateable value of up to £8,500) can also receive either or both of the following reliefs potentially awarding the pub 90% support towards business rates:-

- 20% discretionary relief for the provision of community facilities and activities not provided elsewhere in the community;
- 20% if they can demonstrate they are making significant efforts to help the business succeed.

11. A number of sole rural pubs do not receive mandatory relief but can receive discretionary relief (those with a rateable value between £8501 and £16,500). It is proposed that they can receive either, or both, of the following which potentially awards up to 40% support:-

- 20% discretionary relief for the provision of community facilities and activities not provided elsewhere in the community;
- 20% if they can demonstrate they are making significant efforts to help the business succeed.

12. Provide up to 10% discretionary relief to the following in addition to 80% Mandatory Relief (providing a total of 90% relief from business rates):-
- Village Halls
  - Community centres and meeting rooms
  - Scout, Guide and Youth Organisations
  - Pre-Schools/ Play Groups and Nurseries with charitable status
  - Local charity office where charitable service is being provided
  - Sports Clubs/recreational facilities where the bar is ancillary and is not offering discounted alcohol
  - Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) where the bar is ancillary and is not offering discounted alcohol
  - Museum/Heritage or Arts centre,
  - Theatres
13. In addition to the 80% mandatory relief awarded to the following groups the proposal is that further support is awarded of up to 10% discretionary relief for helping to achieve the ambitions of the Council plan and related strategies or up to 10% for helping to retain services in rural areas for:-
- Village Halls, Community Centres, and meeting rooms
  - Scout, Guide and Youth Groups
  - Rural Pre-Schools, Play Groups and Nurseries with Charitable status
14. The following Organisations receive 80% mandatory relief. It is proposed that SSDC provide up to a further 20% discretionary relief (i.e. 100% in total):-
- Local Charity office that provides a service that SSDC would have to provide if the Charity didn't;
  - Sports Club/Recreational facility, no bar, open to all, satisfying community need, run by a committee;
  - Hospice/end of life care provider;
  - Lifesaving/rescue organisations.
15. In addition to the 50% mandatory relief awarded the proposal is that further support of up to 40% discretionary relief is awarded to the following types of business, organisation and group (i.e. a maximum of 90%).
- Rural Post Office Rateable Value up to £8,500
  - Rural General Store Rateable Value up to £8,500
  - Rural Post Office and General Store Rateable Value up to £8,500
16. Under the principle Support business, charities, organisations and groups that helps the Council to achieve the ambitions of the Council Plan and related strategies including Health and Wellbeing. The proposal is to award up to 90% discretionary relief to the following:-
- Community Interest Company (or not for profit) where they operate similar to a charity with minimal costs and reinvest profit in the company up to a maximum Rateable Value of £8,500
  - Sports Club / Recreational facility which where the bar is ancillary and is not offering discounted alcohol, Rateable Value up to £8,500

Note SSDC's current policy does not accommodate CICs. A CIC can vary from a small "kitchen table" type organisation to multimillion pound turnover organisations employing thousands of people. They must hold their assets for applications for the good of the community and there are limitations applied to the dividend and interest payments made to shareholders.

Sports and Recreational Clubs over £8,500 would be allocated relief on a sliding scale and dependant on meeting set criteria.

17. It is proposed that the 10% discretionary funding for Animal Trusts is removed. This financial aid does not fit with the objectives of the Council Plan or any related strategy.
18. Local Charity Offices receive mandatory relief of 80%. At present a further 10% is awarded for charity administration offices and the proposal is to remove the 10% where the office is solely for administration purposes
19. The Task and Finish Group propose that it is not appropriate for SSDC to financially support any charity or club if the primary source of income is from the sale of alcohol or if there is a bar offering alcohol at discounted or reduced prices to its members or the general public.
20. It is not a statutory duty to provide an appeals process for discretionary rate relief. The proposal is that SSDC include an appeals process in the new policy to demonstrate openness and transparency.
21. The following reliefs were also discussed and consulted upon but have not gone out for public consultation as they do not impact on any current recipients.

<b>TYPE OF RELIEF</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>NUMBER OF CASES</b>	<b>CURRENT RELIEF %</b>	<b>PROPOSED RELIEF %</b>
Charitable	Schools/education & Academy's with charitable status, including private schools	59	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary
Charitable	National charity shop	23	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary
Charitable	National charity Administration office	10	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary
Charitable	Housing Association Office	5	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary
Rural Rate Relief	Petrol filling Station up to £12,500 RV	7	50% Mandatory 0% Discretionary	50% Mandatory 0% Discretionary

Rural Rate Relief	Dentist, hairdresser, up to £16,500 RV	1	Up to 100% Discretionary	Up to 50% Discretionary
Charitable	Religious Groups	7	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary

22. SSDC currently operates a Hardship Scheme where businesses in “temporary hardship” can apply for short term support for their business rates. Hardship Relief cannot be used for “start-up companies” as companies must have been trading for at least two years before being able to apply. This ensures that companies that start up show that they are self-reliant and self-sustaining and do not rely on public finances. The feedback that the Task and Finish Group received was that relief should only be awarded as a last resort. They also discussed how hard it was to assess whether a company in difficulty would be able to continue as a going concern through temporary financial support. It was agreed that each case should be assessed and considered by the Economic Development Team. This would utilise the skills of the team and ensure that any relief met with the aims and objectives of Economic Development Strategy. The Task and Finish Group also received feedback that advice in many instances is of greater help than financial assistance.
23. Through the Localism Act SSDC is now able to introduce Local Discounts to reduce the business rates payable either for an individual or through setting up a policy to do so for instance to encourage new businesses to start up in SSDCs area. If SSDC were to agree these local discounts it would have to fund 40% of the costs but the remaining 60% would be funded by the Government, Somerset County Council, and Somerset and Devon Fire and Rescue. The Task and Finish Group agreed that this should be considered on a case by case or through an Economic Development Team incentive based on SSDC’s Economic Development Strategy and the Council Plan. This could include attracting specific types of business, regenerating high streets through incentives such as “Meanwhile Use” and “Pop up Shops.”
24. Evidence from other authorities has shown that those authorities that were quick to adopt a policy are already amending them. Those that we contacted said that they had run out of funds quickly and it was difficult to gauge the success of the scheme. The Task and Finish Group were concerned that if funds were limited there would be a risk of challenge from a business meeting the criteria but the set aside funding had run out. The most successful schemes appeared to be very targeted at very specific issues e.g. regenerating a named street.

### Public Consultation

25. The consultation that was carried out by the Task and Finish Group with external groups gave the following feedback:-
- That businesses usually don’t take incentives into account as part of their decision making with regard to where to locate a business or to expand it in an area - transport links and communications i.e. broadband were more important.
  - A package providing relief, advice, and support to bring entrepreneurs to bring something new to the area rather than one specific measure.

- That advice would be of more use to new businesses
  - That long leases required by landlords was considered one of the issues
26. The Task and Finish Group also undertook some internal consultation to gauge members and officers views on the principles and proposals of the new policy before public consultation. This showed that there was broad support for the principles and proposals.
27. The Council received 147 responses to the public consultation, 93.2% of these were from current Discretionary Rate Relief recipients. Not all respondents answered every question. The responses showed broad support for the Principles underpinning the policy and the Proposals for levels of support to be provided. A table showing the response to each of the Principles and Proposals is contained in Appendix A.

### **Localism Act related discounts**

28. Although SSDC would gain in the business rates retained under the Government's new scheme the gain is minimal compared to the discount given. As an example a business that is given £100,000 reduction to locate in South Somerset would cost SSDC £40,000 in relief in the first year. It would gain £9,250 in per annum in additional business rates. If the company was not sustainable and ceased to trade or moved out of the District after the first year SSDC would then lose £18,500 per annum in business rates. It would therefore be key to any future scheme that the businesses receiving the assistance were sustainable and remained in the district over the longer term.

In conclusion the Task and Finish Group agreed that specific project based schemes led by the Economic Development Team would be of greater benefit than a blanket policy approach in achieving the aims of the Council Plan.

### **Empty Premises**

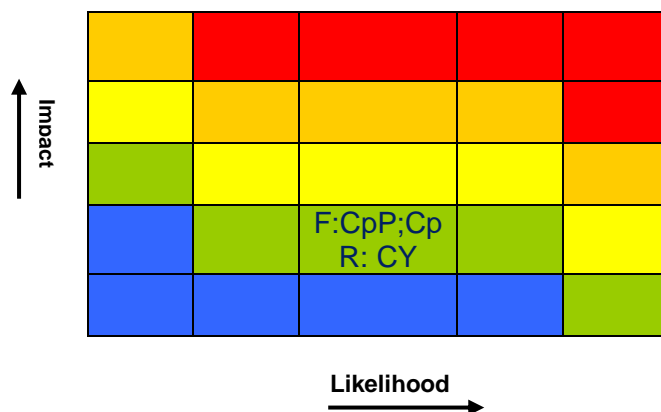
29. The Task and Finish Group also considered empty business properties. The Task and Finish Group assessed that there should be no reliefs given by SSDC (other than the mandatory reliefs currently in place) while a business property was empty to encourage owners to bring the property back into use.

### **Financial Implications**

30. If the recommendations are approved SSDC would reduce its cost for discretionary relief for current recipients by approximately £7,570 per annum. This would go some way to offsetting the risks to the Council of having to fund 40% of mandatory reliefs without any ability to amend the assessment criteria for their award. The loss in assistance to current recipients would be approximately £18,926 per annum. The review of the policy was not led by a requirement to make savings but to ensure that SSDC continues to manage its application of Discretionary Rate Relief in line with its objectives and manage its financial risks. The policy will also look to restrict awards to organisations with over £50,000 RV that currently fall within the current policy.
31. It is proposed to allow a period of transition for those impacted financially by the new policy. They will be given notice that the new policy will take financial effect from April 2016. The saving of £7,570 per annum will be reflected in the NDR budget set for 2016/17.

## Risk Matrix

32. This matrix only identifies the risk associated with taking the decision as set out in the report as the recommendation(s). Should there be any proposal to amend the recommendation(s) by either members or officers at the meeting then the impact on the matrix and the risks it identifies must be considered prior to the vote on the recommendation(s) taking place.



### 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

## Corporate Priority Implications

Council Plan 2012 – 2015

## Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

None associated with this report

## Equality and Diversity Implications

An equalities impact is included within the Scrutiny papers at Appendix D.

## Background Papers

Appendix A - Discretionary Rate Relief Policy and Schedule 1

Appendix B - Public consultation responses

Appendix C - Recommendations from the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group

Appendix D - Equalities Impact Assessment

**South Somerset District Council  
Policy for the granting of Discretionary  
Non-Domestic Rate Relief**

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## Version Control

<i>Version</i>	<i>Version date</i>	<i>Revised by</i>	<i>Description</i>
1	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2014	DA / LM	Policy

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## **1.0 Purpose of the Policy**

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to determine the level of discretionary relief to be granted to certain defined ratepayers within the Council's area.
- 1.2 The Local Government Finance Act 1988 and subsequent legislation requires the Council to grant mandatory relief for premises occupied by Charities and similar organisations that own or occupy them wholly or mainly for charitable purposes. Likewise certain premises situated within a rural settlement area will be eligible for mandatory relief. Powers have also been granted under the Localism Act 2011, which allow for the granting of discretionary rate relief to any premises where the Council feels the granting of such relief would be of benefit to the local community.
- 1.3 Further guidance has also been received from Central Government in respect of the granting of relief for:
- Unoccupied new structures (from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013);
  - Retail relief (£1000) (from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014);
  - Flood Relief; and
  - Retail reoccupation relief (from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014).
- 1.4 Whilst the Council is obliged to grant relief to premises, which fall within the mandatory category, the Council also has powers to grant discretionary relief to ratepayers subject to certain criteria being met. In the case of new reliefs, guidance has been issued by Central Government outlining actions expected to be taken by local authorities.
- 1.5 Full details of the legislative requirements for both mandatory and discretionary relief are given within the following sections of this report.
- 1.6 This document also outlines the following areas:
- Details of the criteria for receiving Discretionary Relief for all relevant areas;
  - The Council's policy for granting of all types of Discretionary Relief;
  - Guidance on granting and administering the relief;
  - European Union requirements including provisions for State Aid; and
  - The Scheme of Delegation.
- 1.7 This policy covers all aspects of discretionary rate relief (subject to changes in legislation). Where organisations apply for relief they will be granted (or not granted) relief in line with the following policy.
- 1.8 This policy has been created after extensive work by the Council's Task & Finish group and in consultation with both internal and external (business stakeholders).

## 2.0 Mandatory Relief - Legislative Background

### Charity Relief

- 2.1 The powers relating to the granting of mandatory<sup>1</sup> and discretionary relief are given to the Council under the Local Government Finance Act 1988<sup>2</sup>. Charities and Trustees for Charities are only liable to pay one fifth of the Non Domestic Rates that would otherwise be payable where property is occupied and used wholly or mainly for charitable purposes. This amounts to mandatory relief of 80%. For the purposes of the Act a charity is an organisation or trust established for charitable purposes, whether or not it is registered with the Charity Commission. The provision has recently been extended under the Local Government Act 2003 (effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004) to registered Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs).
- 2.2 The Council has discretion to grant relief of up to a further 20% for these cases under the discretionary provisions.

### Rural Rate Relief

- 2.3 From 1<sup>st</sup> April 1998, under powers originally granted to the Council under the Local Government and Rating Act 1997<sup>3</sup>, certain types of business in rural settlements, with a population below 3000 may qualify for mandatory rate relief of 50 per cent. Businesses that qualify for this relief are the sole general store and the sole post office in the village, provided it has a Rateable Value of up to £8500; any food shop with a Rateable Value of up to £8500; and the sole pub and the sole petrol station in the village provided it has a Rateable Value of up to £12500.
- 2.4 The Council has discretion to grant up to a further 50% relief of the remaining rates on such property.
- 2.5 In addition to this the Council may decide to give up to 100 per cent relief to any other business (not in receipt of mandatory relief) in such a rural settlement, with a Rateable Value of up to £16,500, if it is satisfied that the business is of benefit to the community and having regard to the interests of its Council Taxpayers.

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<sup>1</sup> S43 & S45 Local Government Finance Act 1988

<sup>2</sup> S47 & S48 Local Government Finance Act 1988

<sup>3</sup> LGFA 1988, s.47, as amended by Sch. 1 to the Local Government and Rating Act 1997

## 3.0 Discretionary Relief – Legislative Background

### Introduction

- 3.1 The original purpose of discretionary relief was to provide assistance where the property does not qualify for mandatory relief, or to ‘top’ up cases where ratepayers already receive mandatory relief.
- 3.2 Over recent years and particularly since 2011, the discretionary relief provisions have been amended to allow authorities the flexibility to provide assistance to businesses and organisations. Recent announcements by Central Government have also allowed for relief:
- to be targeted to certain business ratepayers;
  - to encourage building of business premises even though the developer may not be able to sell or let the premises immediately;
  - to alleviate the effects of the recession; and
  - to encourage the use of retail premises which have been unoccupied for a period of time.
- 3.3 The range of bodies, which are eligible for discretionary rate relief, is wide and not all of the criteria laid down by the legislation will be applicable in each case.
- 3.4 Unlike mandatory relief, ratepayers are obliged to make a written application to the Council.
- 3.5 The Council is obliged to consider carefully every application on its merits, taking into account the contribution that the organisation makes to the amenities of the area. There is no statutory appeal process against any decision made by the Council although as with any decision of a public authority, decisions can be reviewed by Judicial Review.
- 3.6 Granting of the relief falls broadly into the following categories:
- a. Discretionary Relief – Charities who already receive mandatory relief.
  - b. Discretionary Relief – Premises occupied by organisations not established or conducted for profit whose main objects are charitable or are otherwise philanthropic or religious or concerned with education, social welfare, science, literature or the fine arts;
  - c. Discretionary Relief – Premises occupied by organisations not established or conducted for profit and wholly or mainly used for purposes recreation;
  - d. Discretionary Relief – Rural Rate relief - premises that already receive mandatory relief (not applicable to the Council);
  - e. Discretionary Relief – Rural Rate relief - premises not receiving mandatory relief but of benefit to the local community and less than £16,500 RV.(not applicable to the Council);
  - f. Discretionary Relief – Granted under the Localism Act 2011 provisions
  - g. Discretionary Relief – Unoccupied New Structures (available from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013);
  - h. Discretionary Relief - Retail relief (available from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014);
  - i. Discretionary Relief – Flooding;
  - j. Discretionary Relief - Reoccupation Relief (available from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014).

- 3.7 The decision to grant or not to grant relief is a matter purely for the Council although the general principles are a matter of concern to Central Government and in the case of e., f., and g. above, Central Government has provided specific guidance and finance.

### **The Council's approach to granting Discretionary Relief**

- 3.8 In deciding which organisations should receive discretionary Rate relief, the Council has taken into account the following factors and priorities:
- a. Provide assistance when there is evidence of financial need;
  - b. The policy should support business, charities, organisations and groups that help to retain services in rural areas;
  - c. Help and encourage business, charities, organisations, groups and communities to become self-reliant;
  - d. Awarding discretionary relief should not distort competition; and
  - e. Every business/ organisation should contribute something towards the provision of local services.

## 4.0 Effect on the Council's Finances

- 4.1 The granting of discretionary relief will, in all circumstances, involve a cost to the Council. Since the change to the funding for Non Domestic Rating in April 2013, the effect of the relief is complex.
- 4.2 Any amounts granted prior to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 and continuing since that date will be included in the Council's baseline within the Business Rates Retention Scheme. Any amounts granted for similar cases after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013, the costs of the relief will be borne in accordance with the Business Rates Retention Scheme share namely 50% borne by Central Government and 40% by the Council. The remaining cost is borne by the major Precepting authorities.
- 4.3 The new areas for relief namely;
- Discretionary Relief – Unoccupied New Structures (available from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013);
  - Discretionary Relief - Retail relief (available from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014);
  - Discretionary Relief – Flooding
  - Discretionary Relief - Reoccupation Relief (available from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014).
- are to be financed wholly by Central Government by direct grant under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003. A summary of the financial situation is given below.

	Relief Type	Granted after 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2013
	<b>Charity Relief</b>	
a.	Discretionary relief granted to Mandatory Relief recipients	40% borne by the Council
b.	Non profit Making Organisations	40% borne by the Council
c.	Sports Clubs and societies	40% borne by the Council
	<b>Rural Rate Relief</b>	
d.	Discretionary relief granted to Mandatory Relief recipients	40% borne by the Council
e.	Other premises within a rural settlement under £16500 RV	40% borne by the Council
	<b>Localism</b>	
f.	Discretionary Relief granted to ratepayers generally and not covered by any other section	40% borne by the Council
	<b>Unoccupied New Structures</b>	
g.	Granted after 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2013	Funded in full by Central Government under S31 Local Government Act 2003
	<b>Retail Relief</b>	
h.	Granted after 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2014	Funded in full by Central Government under S31 Local Government Act 2003
	<b>Flooding Relief</b>	
i.	Granted after 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2014	Funded in full by Central Government under S31 Local Government Act 2003

	<b>Re-occupation Relief</b>	
i.	Granted after 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2014	Funded in full by Central Government under S31 Local Government Act 2003

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## 5.0 Charity Relief – Mandatory Relief recipients

### General Explanation

- 5.1 S43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 allows mandatory relief (80%) to be granted on premises if the ratepayer is a charity or trustees for a charity and the premises are wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes. No charge is made in respect of unoccupied premises where it appears that *when next in use* it will be used wholly or mainly for those purposes.
- 5.2 The legislation has been amended by the Local Government Act 2003 (effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004) to include registered<sup>4</sup> Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASC). These organisations can now receive the mandatory (80%) relief.

### Charity registration

- 5.3 Charities are defined within the legislation as being an institution<sup>5</sup> or other organisation established for charitable purposes only or by persons administering a trust established for charitable purposes only.
- 5.4 The question as to whether an organisation is a charity may be resolved in the majority of cases by reference to the register of charities maintained by the Charity Commissioners under s.4 of the Charities Act 1960. Entry in the register is conclusive evidence. By definition, under the Non Domestic Rating legislation, there is no actual need for an organisation to be a registered charity to receive the relief and this has been supported by litigation<sup>6</sup>, however in all cases the organisation must fall within the following categories:
- trusts for the relief of poverty;
  - trusts for the advancement of religion;
  - trusts for the advancement of education; and
  - trusts for other purposes beneficial to the community, but not falling under any of the preceding heads.
- 5.5 Certain organisations are exempted from registration generally and are not required to make formal application to the Charity Commissioners these are:
- the Church Commissioners and any institution administered by them;
  - any registered society within the meaning of the Friendly Societies Acts of 1896 to 1974 ;
  - units of the Boy Scouts Association or the Girl Guides Association; and
  - voluntary schools within the meaning of the Education Acts of 1944 to 1980
- 5.6 The Council would consider charitable organisations, registered or not, for mandatory relief.

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<sup>4</sup> Registered with HMRC as a CASC

<sup>5</sup> S67(10) Local Government Finance Act 1988

<sup>6</sup> Income Tax Special Commissioners v Pemsell (1891)



## **Use of Premises – wholly or mainly used**

- 5.7 Irrespective of whether an organisation is registered as a charity or not, the premises must be wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes. This is essential if any relief (either mandatory or discretionary) is to be granted. In most cases this can be readily seen by inspection but on occasions the Council has had to question the actual use to which the premises are to be put.
- 5.8 Guidance from the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has stated that in the case of 'mainly', at least 51% must be used for charitable purposes whether of that charity or of that and other charities
- 5.9 The following part of this section gives details on typical uses where relief may be given plus additional criteria that have to be satisfied. The list is not exhaustive but gives clear guidance on premises for which mandatory relief can be granted *and therefore* premises which could be equally considered for discretionary rate relief.

## **Offices, administration and similar premises**

- 5.10 Premises used for administration of the Charity including:
- Offices
  - Meeting Rooms
  - Conference Rooms

## **Charity shops**

- 5.11 Charity shops are required to meet additional legislative criteria if they are to receive mandatory relief. Section 64(10) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 provides that a property is to be treated as being wholly or mainly used for charitable purposes at any time if, at the time, it is wholly or mainly used for the sale of goods donated to a charity and the proceeds of the sale of the goods (after any deduction of expenses) are applied for the purposes of the charity.
- 5.12 In order to ascertain whether an organisation meets these requirements, inspections may be made by staff when an application is received

## **Charity Relief – Mandatory Relief recipients, the Council's Policy for granting discretionary relief.**

- 5.13 The Council has resolved to grant the following discretionary relief where the applicants already receives mandatory charity relief:

**Discretionary Relief where the organisation receives Mandatory Charity Relief**

	Organisation	Mandatory Relief	Criteria	Situated within a Rural Settlement	Amount of Discretionary Relief
1	Village Halls, Community centres and meeting rooms with charitable status	80%	Where helping to achieve the ambitions of the Council plan and related strategies	No	10%
				Yes	20%
2	Scout, Guide and Youth Organisations with charitable status	80%	Where helping to achieve the ambitions of the Council plan and related strategies		10%
			Where helping to achieve the ambitions of the Council plan and related strategies <b>and</b> where it is helping to retain services in rural areas	Yes	20%
3	Pre-Schools/ Play Groups and Nurseries	80%	Where helping to achieve the ambitions of the Council plan and related strategies	No	10%
			Where helping to achieve the ambitions of the Council plan and related strategies <b>and</b> where it is helping to retain services in rural areas	Yes	20%
4	Schools/education & Academy's with charitable status, including private schools	80%		N/A	Nil
5	Local charity office	80%	Where solely an administration office	N/A	Nil
			Where Charitable service is also delivered from same premises	N/A	10%
			Where the charitable service is being delivered from the same premises and the work of the organisation helps SSDC meet its Council Plan and objectives to such an extent that if the organisation did not operate SSDC would have to do the work or contract another provider	N/A	20%

	Organisation	Mandatory Relief	Criteria	Situated within a Rural Settlement	Amount of Discretionary Relief
6	Local Charity Shop	80%		N/A	Nil
7	National charity shop	80%		N/A	Nil
8	National Charity Administration office	80%		N/A	Nil
9	Sports Clubs/recreational facilities (with charity status)	80%	Where there is a bar offering alcohol at discounted or reduced prices to its members or the general public	N/A	Nil
			Where the bar is ancillary and is not offering discounted alcohol	N/A	10%
			Where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is no bar; and</li> <li>• The club / facilities are open to all; and</li> <li>• Satisfies community need; and</li> <li>• Is run by a committee.</li> </ul>	N/A	20%
10	Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC)	80%	Where there is a bar offering alcohol at discounted or reduced prices to its members or the general public	N/A	Nil
			Where the bar is ancillary and is not offering discounted alcohol	N/A	20%
11	Hospice/end of life care provider with charitable status	80%		N/A	20%
12	Lifesaving/rescue organisations with Charitable Status	80%		N/A	20%
13	Museum/Heritage or Arts centre with charitable status	80%		N/A	10%
14	Theatres with charitable status	80%		N/A	10%
15	Housing Association Offices	80%		N/A	Nil
16	Religious Organisations and groups with charitable status	80%		N/A	Nil

## **6.0 Rural Rate Relief – Mandatory Relief recipients**

### **What are the qualifying criteria for Mandatory Relief?**

- 6.1 For a Post Office or General Store to be entitled to 50% Mandatory Relief, all the following criteria must be met:
- The Rateable Value of the property must not exceed £8,500 (from 1 April 2010);
  - The property must be used as a Post Office or a General Store (see below for definition), or both;
  - The property must be the only Post Office or the only General Store within the Rural Settlement.
- 6.2 For a Public House or Petrol Filling Station to be entitled to 50% Mandatory Relief, all the following criteria must be met:
- The Rateable Value of the property must not exceed £12,500 (from 1 April 2010);
  - The property must be used as a Public House (see below for definition) or a Petrol Filling Station (see below for definition); and
  - The property must be the only Public House or the only Petrol Filling Station within the Rural Settlement.
- 6.3 For a village food shop to be entitled to 50% Mandatory Relief, all the following criteria must be met:
- The Rateable Value of the property must not exceed £8,500 (from 1 April 2010); and
  - The property must be used as a shop selling mainly food (see below for definition).

### **What is the definition of a General Store?**

- 6.4 For the purposes of Rural Rate Relief, 'General Store' means a business or trade, which wholly or mainly sells by retail both food (other than confectionery) for human consumption and general household goods. Where there are two or more General Stores within the same Rural Settlement, none can qualify for Mandatory Relief on that basis, although if one of them functions as a Post Office or a Food Shop relief may be claimed independently on that ground. However, both a General Store and a Post Office in the same Rural Settlement will qualify for Mandatory Relief, provided that they both meet the criteria. Although a General Store or a Post Office may not meet the criteria for Mandatory Relief, they may still be eligible to apply for Discretionary Relief.

### **What is the definition of a Public House?**

- 6.5 For the purposes of Rural Rate Relief, 'Public House' means any premises as defined in the Licensing Act 2003, which has a premises license authorising sale by retail of alcohol for consumption on the premises. In addition the premises must be used principally for

retail sales of alcohol to members of the public for consumption on the premises, and sales must not be subject to the condition that buyers reside at or consume food on the premises.

### **What is the definition of a Petrol Filling Station?**

- 6.6 For the purposes of Rural Rate Relief, 'Petrol Filling Station' means premises where petrol or other automotive fuels are sold retail to the general public for fuelling motor vehicles intended or adapted for use on roads

### **What is the definition of a Food Shop?**

- 6.7 For the purpose of Rural Rate Relief, "Food Shop" means a trade or business consisting wholly or mainly of the sale by retail of food for human consumption (excluding confectionery and catering – in this context catering means any supply of food for consumption on the premises on which it is supplied and any supply of hot food for consumption off the premises). Thus, this definition may also include shops, which sell mainly household foods and which may partly also sell hot take away food or food consumed on the premises. But shops whose main business is a restaurant, tea-room, take-away, or confectionery sales are not Food Shops and so will not qualify for Mandatory Relief.

### **What are the qualifying criteria for Discretionary Relief?**

- 6.8 The Council may grant up to 50% Discretionary Relief in respect of any property which qualifies for 50% Mandatory Relief and the Council may also grant up to 100% Discretionary Relief to any rural business which does not meet the mandatory provisions (see Section 7).

### **Rural Rate Relief – Mandatory Relief recipients, the Council's Policy for granting discretionary relief.**

- 6.9 The Council has resolved to grant the following discretionary relief where the applicants already receive mandatory rural rate relief:

**Discretionary Relief where the organisation receives Mandatory Rural Rate Relief**

	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Mandatory Relief</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Situated within a Rural Settlement</b>	<b>Amount of Discretionary Relief</b>
1	Rural Public House (£12,500 RV or less)	50%	Discretionary relief for the provision of community facilities and activities not provided elsewhere in the community	Yes	20%
			If they can demonstrate they are making significant efforts to help the business succeed	Yes	20%
2	Rural Post Office up to £8500 RV	50%		Yes	40%
3	Rural General Store up to £8500 RV	50%		Yes	40%
4	Rural Post Office and General Store up to £8,500 RV	50%		Yes	40%
5	Rural Food Shops up to £8500 RV	50%		Yes	Nil
6	Rural Petrol Filling Stations up to £12,500 RV	50%		Yes	Nil

## **7.0 Discretionary Relief – Premises within Rural Settlements**

- 7.1 In addition to having the ability to grant discretionary relief to those in receipt of mandatory relief, the Local Government and Rating Act 1997 allows discretionary relief of up to 100% to be granted where the rateable value is £16500 or less and:
- a. property is used for purposes which are of benefit to the local community, and
  - b. it would be reasonable for the billing authority to award relief, having regards to the Council's Council Taxpayers
- 7.2 As with all discretionary relief, part of the cost, is met by Central Government and the balance from local sources. In line with the Business Rates Relief principles, outlined earlier in this policy.
- 7.3 The main criteria for granting discretionary relief in respect of rural rate relief is that premises are used to benefit the local community.

### **Benefit to the local community**

- 7.4 Whilst each application for the relief will be considered on its own merits there are certain factors which weigh heavily in the decision making process. It is this Council's belief that the spirit of the legislation is to assist businesses and amenities, which contribute significantly to the quality of life of the people who have their main home in the Rural Settlement.
- 7.5 To be successful for consideration, a business must show that its existence is a significant benefit to the local community with the majority of local residents directly benefiting from services or facilities provided by that business

### **Rural Rate Relief – the Council's Policy for granting discretionary relief.**

- 7.6 The Council has resolved to grant the following discretionary relief where the applicants are not already in receipt of mandatory rural rate relief:

**Discretionary Relief - where the organisation is not in receipt of Mandatory Rural Rate Relief**

	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Mandatory Relief</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Situated within a Rural Settlement</b>	<b>Amount of Discretionary Relief</b>
1	Rural Public House	No	Discretionary relief for the provision of community facilities and activities not provided elsewhere in the community	Yes	20%
			If they can demonstrate they are making significant efforts to help the business succeed	Yes	20%
2	Dentist, hairdresser, up to £16,500 RV	No		Yes	Up to 50%

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## 8.0 Discretionary Relief – Non Profit Making Organisations including Recreation

### General explanation

#### Non-Profit

- 8.1 The legislation<sup>7</sup> allows the Council to grant discretionary relief where the property is not an *excepted* one and all or part of it is occupied for the purposes of one or more institutions or other organisations none of which is established or conducted for profit and each of whose main objects are charitable or are otherwise philanthropic or religious or concerned with education, social welfare, science, literature or the fine arts.
- 8.2 Relief cannot be granted to any premises occupied by the Council, or any town, parish council or major Precepting Authority (*excepted premises*).
- 8.3 A number of issues arise from the term 'not established or conducted for profit'. This requires the Council to make enquiries as to the overall purpose of the organisation although if surpluses and such amounts are directed towards the furtherance or achievement of the objects of the organisation then it does not necessarily mean that the organisation was established or conducted for profit.<sup>8</sup>

#### Recreation Clubs

- 8.4 Ideally all recreation clubs should be encouraged to apply for CASC status, which would automatically entitle them to 80% relief.
- 8.5 Recreation Clubs can also apply to the Charity Commissioners for registration as a Charity (thereby falling under the mandatory provisions for 80% relief) where they meet the following conditions:
- a. The promotion of community participation in healthy recreation and by the provision of facilities for the playing of particular sports; and
  - b. The advancement of the physical education of young people not undergoing formal education.
- 8.6 Where sports clubs do not meet the CASC requirement, and are not registered charities, discretionary relief can be granted (0-100%) where the property is not an *excepted* one, it is wholly or mainly used for purposes of recreation and all or part of it is occupied for the purpose of a club, society or other organisation not established or conducted for profit.

### Definition of Recreation

- 8.7 Recreation is clearly defined by the Sports Council as any of the following<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> S47 Local Government Finance Act 1988

<sup>8</sup> National Deposit Friendly Society v Skegness Urban District Council (1958)<sup>1</sup> and Guinness Trust (London Fund) v West Ham County Borough Council (1959)

<sup>9</sup> Definition last reviewed by Sport England in 2002

Aikido	Croquet	Kabaddi	Real Tennis	Tang Soo Do
American Football	Crossbow	Karate	Roller Hockey	Tenpin Bowling
Angling	Curling	Kendo	Roller Skating	Trampoline
Archery	Cycling	Korfball	Rounders	Triathlon
Arm Wrestling Association	Disability Sport	Lacrosse	Rowing	Tug of War
Football	Dragon Boat Racing	Lawn Tennis	Rugby League	Unihoc
Athletics	Equestrian	Life Saving	Rugby Union	Volleyball
Australian Rules Football	Fencing	Luge	Sailing	Water Skiing
Badminton	Fives	Modern Pentathlon	Sand/Land Yachting	Weightlifting
Balloon	Flying	Motor Cycling	Shinty	Wrestling
Baseball	Gaelic Football	Motor Sports	Shooting	Yoga
Basketball	Gliding	Mountaineering	Skateboarding	
Baton Twirling	Golf	Movement, Dance, Exercise & Fitness	Skiing	
Biathlon	Gymnastics	Netball	Skipping	
Bicycle Polo	Handball	Orienteering	Snowboarding	
Billiards and Snooker	Hang/Para Gliding	Parachuting	Softball	
Bobsleigh	Highland Games	Petanque	Sombo	
Boccia	Hockey	Polo	Wrestling	
Bowls	Horse Racing	Pony Trekking	Squash	
Boxing	Hovering	Pool	Skater/Street Hockey	
Camogie	Hurling	Quoits	Sub-Aqua	
Canoeing	Ice Hockey	Racketball	Surf Life Saving	
Caving	Ice Skating	Rackets	Surfing	
Chinese Martial Arts	Jet Skiing	Raquetball	Swimming & Diving	
Cricket	Ju Jitsu	Rambling	Table Tennis	
	Judo		Taekwondo	

### Access to clubs

- 8.8 Guidance issued by the DCLG also requires the Council to consider access to clubs within the community before granting discretionary relief.
- 8.9 Membership should be open to all sections of the community. There may be legitimate restrictions placed on membership which relate for example to ability in sport or to the achievement of a standard in the field covered by the organisation or where the capacity of the facility is limited, but in general membership should not be exclusive or restrictive.
- 8.10 Membership rates should not be set at such a high level as to exclude the general community. However, membership fees may be payable at different rates that distinguish the different classes of membership such as juniors, adults, students, pensioners, players, non-players, employed and unemployed. In general, the club or organisation must be prepared to show that the criteria by which it considers applications for membership are consistent with the principle of open access.

- 8.11 The Council also asks the following question to help establish the level of access ‘Does the organisation actively encourage membership from particular groups in the community e.g. young people, women, older age groups, persons with disability, ethnic minorities’ etc?’ – Where an organisation encourages such membership, the Council looks more sympathetically at their application. Likewise where facilities are made available to people other than members e.g. schools, casual public sessions etc. the Council will generally grant relief.

### **Provision of facilities**

- 8.12 Clubs which provide training or education are encouraged as are those who provide schemes for particular groups to develop their skills e.g. young people, the disabled, retired people.
- 8.13 A number of organisations run a bar. The mere existence of a bar should not in itself be a reason for not granting relief. However the Council focuses on the main purpose of the organisation. The Council is encouraged to examine the balance between playing and non-playing members. Likewise the level of bar profits is considered to be a gauge of how much relief should be given and the need for assistance.
- 8.14 Within this area the Council also considers whether the facilities provided relieve the Council of the need to do so, or enhance and supplement those that it does provide.

### **Discretionary Relief - Non-Profit Organisations including Recreation – the Council’s Policy**

- 8.15 Applications will be considered from non-profit making organisations, which can demonstrate the following:
- a. That the activities of the organisation are consistent with the Council's core values and priorities;
  - b. That they are non-profit making associations, groups, clubs which are accessible to all potential users, possess a representative management group and are clearly accountable to users, beneficiaries and members (e.g. evidence of constitution, membership and/or participation are required); and
  - c. That the membership comprises mainly residents of South Somerset or that activities are of direct benefit to residents of the District;
- 8.16 The current policy for granting relief is as follows:

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	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Mandatory Relief</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Situated within a Rural Settlement</b>	<b>Amount of Discretionary Relief</b>
1	Community Interest Company (or not for profit)	No	Where they operate similar to a charity with minimal costs and reinvest profit in the company up to a maximum Rateable Value of £8,500	No	90%
2	Sports Club / Recreational facility	No	Where the bar is ancillary and is not offering discounted alcohol, Rateable Value up to £8,500 (note not charities or CASCs)	No	90%
3	Sports Club / Recreational facility	No	Where the bar is ancillary and is not offering discounted alcohol, Rateable Value over £8,500 (note not charities or CASCs)	No	Sliding Scale

## 9.0 Discretionary Relief – Localism Act 2011

### General explanation

- 9.1 Section 69 of the Localism Act 2011 amended Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. These provisions allow all Councils to grant discretionary relief in **any** circumstances where it feels fit having regards to the effect on the Council Tax payers of its area.
- 9.2 The provisions are designed to give authorities flexibility in granting relief where it is felt that to do so would be of benefit generally to the area and be reasonable given the financial effect to Council Tax payers.

### Discretionary Relief – Localism – the Council's Policy

- 9.3 Applications will be considered from any ratepayer who wishes to apply however, where a ratepayer is suffering hardship or severe difficulties in paying their rates liability then relief can be granted under the existing provisions as laid down by Section 49 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. There will be no requirement to grant relief in such cases under the Council's discretionary relief policy.
- 9.4 Any ratepayer applying for discretionary rate relief under these provisions and who does not meet the criteria for existing relief (charities, non profit making organisations or rural premises) must meet **all** of the following criteria and the amount of relief granted will be dependant on the following key factors:
- a. The ratepayer **must not** be entitled to mandatory rate relief (Charity or Rural Rate Relief);
  - b. The ratepayer **must not** be an organisation that could receive relief as a non profit making organisation or as a sports club or similar;
  - c. The ratepayer **must** occupy the premises (no discretionary rate relief will be granted for unoccupied premises);
  - d. The premises and organisation **must** be of *significant* benefit to residents of the District;
  - e. The premises and organisation **must** relieve the Council of providing similar facilities;
  - f. The ratepayer **must**;
    - a. Provide facilities to certain priority groups such as elderly, disabled, minority groups, disadvantaged groups; **or**
    - b. Provide *significant* employment or employment opportunities to residents of the District; **or**
    - c. Provide the residents of the area with such services, opportunities or facilities that cannot be obtained locally or are not provided locally by another organisation;
  - g. The ratepayer **must** demonstrate that assistance (provided by the discretionary rate relief) will be for a *short time only* **and** that any business / operation is financially viable in the medium and long term; **and**
  - h. The ratepayer **must** show that the activities of the organisation are consistent with the Council's core values and priorities.

- 9.5 Where a ratepayer can demonstrate that **all** of the above criteria are met, relief will be considered for a period of one year.
- 9.6 A formal application from the ratepayer will be required in each case and any relief will be granted in line with State Aid requirements.

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## 10.0 Discretionary Relief – Unoccupied New Structures

### General explanation

- 10.1 Central Government announced in December 2012 that, it would exempt all newly built unoccupied commercial property completed between 1st October 2013 and 30th September 2016 from empty property rates for the first 18 months, up to the state aids limits.
- 10.2 As this is a temporary measure, the Government are not changing the rules on when a property becomes liable for empty property rates (which would be charged at 100%). Instead they are providing the exemption by reimbursing local authorities that use their discretionary relief powers (under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988) to grant relief in prescribed circumstances.
- 10.3 It will be for the Council to decide to grant relief under section 47 but Central Government will fully reimburse local authorities for the local share of the discretionary relief (using a grant under s31 of the Local Government Act 2003) based on outturn of relief granted in the circumstances specified. Through this mechanism, central government will guarantee to reimburse local within the rates retention system.
- 10.4 In order to receive the relief, the premises will be all unoccupied non-domestic properties that are **wholly or mainly** comprised of qualifying **new structures**.
- ‘Structures’ means:
- a) foundations ;and/or
  - b) permanent walls; and/ or
  - c) permanent roofs.
- The definition of ‘new’ means;
- a. Completed less that 18 months previously; and
  - b. Completed after 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 and before 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016.
- 10.5 New structures are to be considered completed when the building or part of the building of which they form part is ready for occupation for the purpose it was constructed unless a completion notice has been served in respect of such a building or part of a building – in which case it would be the date specified in that notice.
- 10.6 The relief runs with the property rather than the owner so subsequent owners may also qualify.
- 10.7 In all cases the relief will be subject to State Aid requirements as mentioned later in this policy.
- 10.8 In all cases, an inspection of the premises shall be made by an officer of the Council, prior to granting any relief

## **Discretionary Relief – Unoccupied New Structures – the Council’s Policy.**

- 10.9 The relief is designed to provide an incentive to owners, developers etc. to build new non-domestic premises without the fear of facing unoccupied property rate charges. Central Government is also prepared to finance the relief through the Business Rates Retention scheme. In view of this the Council will grant the relief in accordance with Central Government guidance for all qualifying new structures.
- 10.10 An application from the ratepayer will be required in each case and any relief will be granted in line with State Aid requirements.
- 10.11 This exemption is available for unoccupied new structures that were completed between 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016 and will be granted for a period of 18 months to include existing empty property exempt periods.

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## 11.0 Discretionary Relief – Retail Relief

### General explanation

- 11.1 The Government announced in the Autumn Statement in December 2013 that it would allow for a relief of up to £1000 to all **occupied** retail properties with a rateable value of £50,000 or less in each of the years 2014/15 and 2015/16.
- 11.2 As this is a temporary measure only, the Government is not changing the legislation around the reliefs available to properties. Instead local authorities will use their discretionary relief powers, introduced by the Localism Act (under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, as amended) to grant relief. It will be for individual authorities to adopt a local scheme and decide in each individual case when to grant relief under section 47.
- 11.3 Central government will fully reimburse local authorities for the local share of the discretionary relief (using a grant under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003).
- 11.4 The Government expects local government to grant relief to qualifying ratepayers.
- 11.5 Properties that will benefit from the relief will be occupied properties with a rateable value of £50,000 or less that are **wholly or mainly** being used as:
- Shops;
  - Restaurants;
  - Cafes; and
  - Drinking establishments
- 11.6 This policy will follow Government guidance that considers shops, restaurants, cafes and drinking establishments to mean:
- i. Properties that are being used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public:**
- Shops (such as: florist, bakers, butchers, grocers, greengrocers, jewellers, 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 show rooms
  - Second hand car lots
  - Markets
  - Petrol stations
  - Garden centres
  - Art galleries (where art is for sale/hire)
- ii. Properties that are being used for the provision of the following services to visiting members of the public:**

- Hair and beauty services (such as: hair dressers, nail bars, beauty salons, tanning shops, etc)
- Shoe repairs/ key cutting
- 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

**iii. Properties 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

11.7 To qualify for the relief the property should be wholly or mainly being used as a shop, restaurant, cafe or drinking establishment. In a similar way to other reliefs (such as charity relief), this is a test on use rather than occupation. Therefore, properties which are occupied but not wholly or mainly used for the qualifying purpose will not qualify for the relief.

11.8 The list set out above is not intended to be exhaustive as it would be impossible to list the many and varied retail uses that exist. There will also be mixed uses. However, it will be used as a guide as to the types of uses that government considers for this purpose to be retail. Properties not listed above which are broadly similar in nature to those above will be considered for the relief. Conversely, properties that are not broadly similar in nature to those listed above would not be eligible for the relief.

11.9 The list below sets out the types of uses that government does not consider to be retail use for the purpose of this relief. Again, it is for local authorities to determine for themselves whether particular properties are broadly similar in nature to those below and, if so, to consider them not eligible for the relief under their local scheme.

**i. Properties 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 advisers, tutors)
- Post office sorting office

**ii. Properties that are not reasonably accessible to visiting members of the public**

- 11.10 Central Government guidance gives a range of premises that may benefit from the relief and the Council will use this when deciding entitlement. It is acknowledged that this is guidance and each application will be looked at on its own merits.
- 11.11 The total amount of relief available for each eligible property for each of the years under this scheme is up to £1000. The amounts will not vary with rateable value and there is no taper. There is no relief available under this scheme for properties with a rateable value of more than £50,000. The eligibility for the relief and the relief itself will be assessed and calculated on a daily basis for each day of occupation. It will be granted after the application of any other relief, which may be applicable and also be granted for all properties meeting the criteria.
- 11.12 Any amounts granted will be subject to State Aid requirements.

**Discretionary Relief – Retail Relief – the Council's Policy.**

- 11.13 The relief is designed primarily to assist businesses during the recession. Central Government is prepared to finance the relief through the Business Rates Retention scheme. In view of this the Council will grant the relief in accordance with Central Government guidance for all qualifying premises.
- 11.14 An application from the ratepayer will be required in each case.
- 11.15 This relief will only be available during the financial years 2014/15 and 2015/16

## 12.0 Discretionary Relief – Reoccupation Relief

### General explanation

- 12.1 Central Government has introduced a 50% discount from non-domestic rates for new occupations of previously empty retail premises. The discount will last for 18 months and be available from 1st April 2014 until 31st March 2016.
- 12.2 The relief, which is available from 1st April 2014, can be granted for all occupations of premises, which meet the following criteria:
- The premises, when last in use were wholly or mainly used for retail purposes (see Section 8.6 above for definition of retail purposes);
  - The premises have been unoccupied for a period of 12 months or more immediately before their reoccupation;
  - The premises become reoccupied between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2016; and
  - The premises are being used for any purpose (although it should be noted that the Government will only reimburse the Council for any relief granted so long as it is for any type of occupation except for those wholly or mainly being used as betting shops, payday loan shops, and pawn brokers).
- 12.3 There is no rateable value limit for the hereditament in respect of either the previous or reoccupied use and the amount of the relief is limited to 50% of the rate charge after taking into account all other mandatory and discretionary reliefs that may be available to the ratepayer.
- 12.4 The relief will run with the property rather than the ratepayer. So if premises are in receipt of the relief and a new ratepayer becomes liable for the property they will benefit from the remaining term of the relief.
- 12.5 The definition of retail premises is identical to that given within the retail relief provisions within this policy.
- 12.6 As this is a temporary measure only, the Government is not changing the legislation around the reliefs available to properties. Instead local authorities will use their discretionary relief powers, introduced by the Localism Act (under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, as amended) to grant relief. It will be for individual authorities to adopt a local scheme and decide in each individual case when to grant relief under section 47.
- 12.7 Central government will fully reimburse local authorities for the local share of the discretionary relief (using a grant under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003).
- 12.8 The Government expects local government to grant relief to qualifying ratepayers and any amounts granted will be subject to State Aid requirements.

## **Discretionary Relief – Reoccupation Relief – the Council’s Policy**

- 12.9 The relief is designed primarily to assist businesses during the recession and particularly in this case, to encourage the re-occupation of vacant retail premises. Central Government is prepared to finance the relief through the Business Rates Retention scheme. In view of this the Council will grant the relief in accordance with Central Government guidance for all qualifying premises.
- 12.10 An application from the ratepayer will be required in each case. This relief is available for a maximum of 18 months as long as it is claimed prior to 31st March 2016.

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## 13.0 Discretionary Relief – Flooding Relief

### General explanation

- 13.1 Central Government has introduced a new business rates relief for properties that have been flooded. It does not replace existing legislation or any other relief.
- 13.2 The Government will fund 100% rate relief for three months, for those properties, which meet the following criteria:
- For any day between 1st December 2013 and 31st March 2014:
- i. the property has been flooded in whole or in part as a result of adverse weather conditions; and
  - ii. on that day, as a result of the flooding at the property, the business activity undertaken at the property was adversely affected; and
  - iii. the rateable value of the property on that day was less than £10 million.
- 13.3 The impact of the flooding will be considered in the full context of all business activities undertaken at the hereditament. Very small or insignificant impacts will not attract this relief.
- 13.4 As this is a temporary measure only, the Government is not changing the legislation around the reliefs available to properties. Instead local authorities will use their discretionary relief powers, introduced by the Localism Act (under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, as amended) to grant relief. It will be for individual authorities to adopt a local scheme and decide in each individual case when to grant relief under section 47.
- 13.5 Central government will fully reimburse local authorities for the local share of the discretionary relief (using a grant under section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003).
- 13.6 The Government expects local government to grant relief to qualifying ratepayers.

### Definition of Flood

- 13.7 The funding is for the impacts of flooding from the adverse weather conditions between 1st December 2013 and 31st March 2014, and not, for instance, from the failure of a water main, internal water systems or the failure of a sewerage system (unless the failure was itself caused by the adverse weather conditions).
- 13.8 A flood is defined in Section 1 of the Flood & Water Management Act 2010:
- 1(1) "Flood" includes any case where land not normally covered by water becomes covered by water.
- (2) It does not matter for the purpose of subsection (1) whether a flood is caused by—

- (a) heavy rainfall,
- (b) a river overflowing or its banks being breached,
- (c) a dam overflowing or being breached,
- (d) tidal waters,
- (e) groundwater, or
- (e) anything else (including any combination of factors).

(3) But “flood” does not include—

- (a) a flood from any part of a sewerage system, unless wholly or partly caused by an increase in the volume of rainwater (including snow and other precipitation) entering or otherwise affecting the system, or
- (b) a flood caused by a burst water main (within the meaning given by section 219 of the Water Industry Act 1991).

### **Discretionary Relief – Flooding Relief – the Council’s Policy**

- 13.9 An application from the ratepayer will be required in each case.
- 13.10 The scheme applies to all types and uses of non-domestic hereditaments (other than those occupied by the Council).
- 13.11 Funding will be provided to authorities for the 3 months of relief granted starting on the day the hereditament first met the criteria set out in paragraph 8. The 3 months relief will apply irrespective of how long the flooding or adverse business impacts last.
- 13.12 Where a hereditament has been flooded more than once and business activities are adversely impacted, only one period of 3 months relief will be funded and will be applied from the first date on which the criteria were met.
- 13.13 This flooding relief will be applied after any other relief has been applied, e.g. retail relief.
- 13.14 This relief will be calculated ignoring any prior year adjustments in liabilities, which fall to be liable on the day.
- 13.15 Ratepayers that occupy more than one property may be granted relief within the scheme for each of their eligible properties.
- 13.16 Funding for rate relief will continue to be given following a change of ratepayer. The relief will run with the property rather than the ratepayer.
- 13.17 Where a new hereditament is created as a result of a split or merger from a hereditament, which for the day immediately prior to the split or merger met the criteria above, funding will be provided to allow relief to be given for the remaining balance of the three months.

- 13.18 The scheme does not cover relief for any hereditament, which was empty at the time it was flooded as there was no business activity on the premises at the time.
- 13.19 Where a hereditament becomes empty after the flood then it will receive the normal 3 or 6 months (as applicable) empty property rate free period or will continue to receive the balance of the flooding relief.
- 13.20 Funding for the relief will be granted by Central Government as a Section 31 grant.

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## 14.0 Discretionary Relief – EU State Aid requirements

- 14.1 European Union competition rules generally prohibit Government subsidies to businesses. Relief from taxes, including non-domestic rates, can constitute state aid. The Council must bear this in mind when granting discretionary rate relief.
- 14.2 Rate relief for charities and non-profit making bodies is not generally considered to be state aid, because the recipients are not in market competition with other businesses. However, where other bodies receive relief and are engaged in commercial activities or if they are displacing an economic operator or if they have a commercial partner, rate relief could constitute state aid.
- 14.3 Relief will be State Aid compliant where it is provided in accordance with the De Minimis Regulations (1407/2013)<sup>10</sup>. The De Minimis Regulations allow an undertaking to receive up to €200,000 of De Minimis aid in a three year period (consisting of the current financial year and the two previous financial years).
- 14.4 Where the relief to any one business is greater than the De Minimis level then permission will need to be obtained from the European Commission. In such cases the matter will be referred to the DCLG for advice and then referred back to the Council for consideration. It will be for the ratepayer to provide confirmation as to whether the State Aid provisions apply to them.
- 14.5 In all cases, when making an application, ratepayers will be required to provide the Council with sufficient information to determine whether these provisions are applicable in their case.

<sup>10</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:352:0001:0008:EN:PDF>

## 15.0 Administration of Discretionary Relief

15.1 The following section outlines the procedures followed by officers in granting, amending or cancelling discretionary relief. This is essentially laid down by legislation<sup>11</sup>

### Applications and Evidence

15.2 Discretionary rate relief must be applied for in writing by the ratepayer. Application forms are produced within the Council and issued to all ratepayers requesting the relief.

15.3 Organisations are required to provide a completed application form plus any such evidence, documents, accounts, financial statements etc. necessary to allow the Council to make a decision. Where insufficient information is provided, despite reminders, then no relief will be granted.

### Granting of relief

15.4 In all cases, the Council will notify the ratepayer of decisions made.

15.5 Where an application is successful, then the following is notified to them in writing:

- The amount of relief granted and the date from which it has been granted;
- If relief has been granted for a specified period, the date on which it will end;
- The new chargeable amount;
- The details of any planned review dates and the notice that will be given in advance of a change to the level of relief granted; and
- A requirement that the applicant should notify the Council of any change in circumstances that may affect entitlement to relief.

15.6 Where relief is not granted then the following information is provided, again in writing:

- An explanation of the decision within the context of the Council's statutory duty; and
- An explanation of the appeal rights (see below).

15.7 Relief is to be granted from the beginning of the financial year in which the decision is made. Since 1997 decisions can be made up to 6 months after the end of the financial year for which the application was made. Where the relief is only available for a limited period as defined by Central Government then it will only be granted for that period.

15.8 A decision to award discretionary relief and how much relief is given is only applicable to the financial year for which the application is made.

15.9 A fresh application for discretionary relief will be necessary for each financial year.

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<sup>11</sup> The Non-Domestic Rating (Discretionary Relief) Regulations 1989

## Variation of a decision

15.10 Variations in any decision will be notified to ratepayers as soon as practicable and will take effect as follows:

- Where the amount is to be increased due to a change in rate charge – from the date of the increase in rate charge;
- Where the amount is to increase for any other reason (other than a general termination of relief under Central Government guidelines)– takes effect at the expiry of a financial year, and so that at least one year’s notice is given;
- Where the amount is to be reduced due to a reduction in the rate charge – from the date of the decrease in rate charge;
- Where the amount is to be reduced for any other reason (other than a general termination of relief under Central Government guidelines) – takes effect at the expiry of a financial year, and so that at least one year’s notice is given

15.11 A decision may be revoked at any time and the change will take effect at the expiry of a financial year (other than a general termination of relief under Central Government guidelines).

## **16.0 Scheme of Delegation**

### **Granting, Varying, Reviewing and Revocation of Relief**

- 16.1 Under powers given to the Council by section 223 of the Local Government Act 1992, all permissions for the granting, varying, reviewing and revocation of discretionary relief given under the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Local Government and Rating Act 1997, the Local Government Act 2003 and the Localism Act 2011 be delegated to the Head of Revenues and Benefits.
- 16.2 The method of administration shall be that laid down within this policy document. The level of the discretionary relief shall be calculated in accordance with guidance given within this policy and determined by the Head of Revenues and Benefits
- 16.3 The policy for granting relief will be reviewed where there is a substantial change to the legislation or funding rules. At such time a revised policy will be brought before the relevant committee of the Council.
- 16.4 The amount of funding to be provided by the Council in respect of discretionary relief granted shall be determined by the S151 Officer and approved by Council in the normal budgeting process.

### **Appeals**

- 16.5 Where the Council receives an appeal from the ratepayer regarding the granting non-granting or the amount of any discretionary relief, in line with DCLG guidelines, the case will initially be reviewed by the Head of Revenues and Benefits in conjunction with the s151 Officer. Where a decision is revised then the ratepayer shall be informed likewise if the original decision is upheld.

## Schedule 1 - Discretionary Rate Relief Policy

### Statutory Rateable Value limits

Sole village general store with RV up to £8,500  
 Sole Post Office with RV up to £8,500  
 Food Shop (butchers, bakers etc) with RV up to £8,500  
 Sole public house with RV up to £12,500  
 Sole petrol station with RV up to £12,500

Discretionary relief of up to 100% can be applied if there is a community benefit and in the interest of the local tax payer. RV limit is £16,500.

### Large assessments over £50,000 Rateable Value

Name of Business	Rateable Value £	Property Reference	Type of Relief
St Margaret's Hospice	£122,000	809 071785	Charity – 80% Mandatory & 20% Discretionary
Leisure East Devon Ltd	£163,000	701 067546	Charity – 80% Mandatory & 20% Discretionary
Crewkerne Leisure Management Ltd	£133,000	301 070324	Charity – 80% Mandatory & 20% Discretionary
Somerset Leisure Ltd	£69,000	101 052933	Charity – 80% Mandatory & 20% Discretionary
Wincanton Community Sports Centre	£170,000	630 071605	Charity – 80% Mandatory & 20% Discretionary
Huish Episcopi Association	£58,000	514 069291	100% Disc (current entitlement)

### All Assessments that come under number 13 of the report (80% Mandatory Charity Relief, 20% discretionary)

Name of Business	Rateable Value	Property Reference
Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance	£23,500	613 073684
St Johns Ambulance	£19,250	803 069374
St Margaret's Hospice	£122,000	809 071785
Leisure East Devon Ltd	£163,000	701 067546
Crewkerne Leisure Management Ltd	£133,000	301 070324
Somerset Leisure Ltd	£69,000	101 052933
Wincanton Community Sports Centre	£170,000	630 071605

## Sliding Scale

<b>Rateable value band</b>	<b>Level of relief</b>
£8,501 to £13,499	80%
£13,500 to £18,499	70%
£18,500 to £23,499	60%
£23,500 to £28,499	50%
£28,500 to £33,499	40%
£33,500 to £38,499	30%
£38,500 to £43,499	20%
£43,500 to £49,999	10%
£50,000 and over	NIL

## Public Consultation Responses

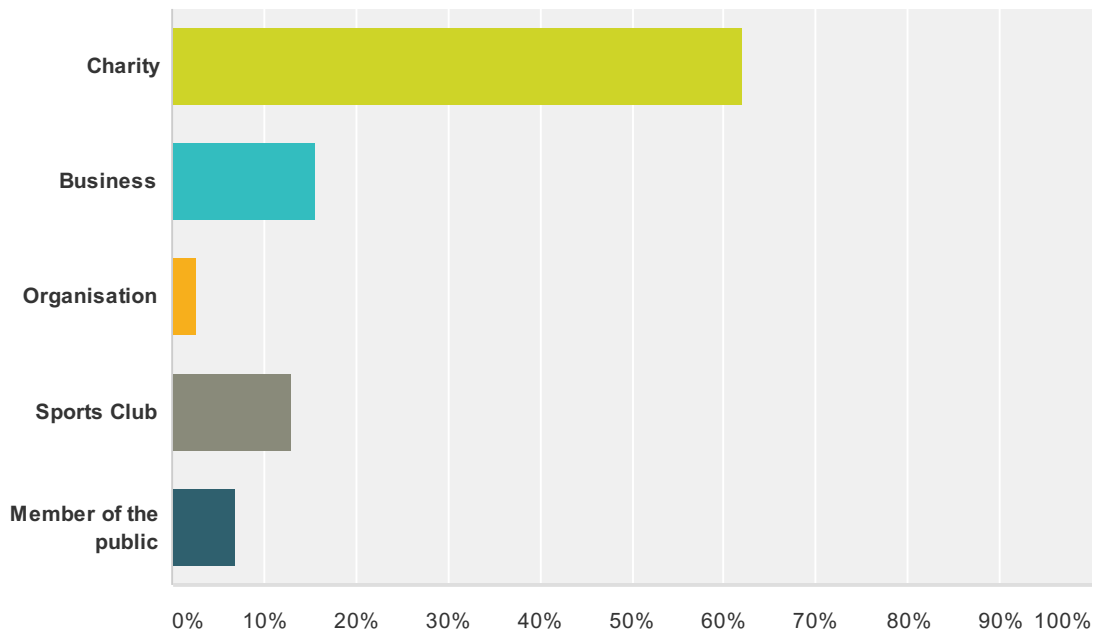
<b>Principles</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Principle 1. Provide assistance only where there is evidence of financial need.	46% strongly agree or agree
Principle 2. Support business, charities, organisations and groups that help to retain services in rural areas.	87% strongly agree or agree
Principle 3. Help and encourage business, charities, organisations, groups and communities to become self-reliant.	79.5% strongly agree or agree
Principle 4. Awarding discretionary relief should not distort competition.	85% strongly agree or agree
Principle 5. Every business/organisation should contribute something towards the provision of local services.	51% strongly agree or agree
<b>Proposals</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
<p>Proposal 1. A sole pub in a rural settlement in receipt of 50% mandatory relief can also receive either, or both of the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 20% discretionary relief for the provision of community facilities and activities not provided elsewhere in the community</li> <li>b) 20% if they can demonstrate they are making significant efforts to help the business succeed</li> </ul>	<p>a) 77% strongly agree or agree</p> <p>b) 77% strongly agree or agree</p>
<p>Proposal 2. A number of sole pubs in rural settlements do not receive mandatory relief. However they can receive either, or both of the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 20% discretionary relief for the provision of community facilities and activities not provided elsewhere in the community</li> <li>b) 20% if they can demonstrate they are making significant efforts to help the business succeed</li> </ul>	<p>a) 81% strongly agree or agree</p> <p>b) 77% strongly agree or agree</p>
<p>Proposal 3. Provide up to 10% discretionary relief (in addition to the 80% mandatory relief) for the following organisations/groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Village Hall, Community Centres and meeting rooms</li> <li>b) Scout, Guide and Youth organisations</li> <li>c) Pre-schools, Play Groups and Nurseries with charitable status</li> <li>d) Local Charity Office where charitable service being delivered</li> <li>e) Sports Clubs/Recreational facilities where the bar is ancillary and no discounted alcohol</li> <li>f) Community Amateur Sports Clubs where the bar is ancillary and no discounted alcohol</li> <li>g) Museums / Heritage or Arts Centres</li> <li>h) Theatres</li> </ul>	<p>a) 56% strongly agree or agree</p> <p>b) 70% strongly agree or agree</p> <p>c) 76% strongly agree or agree</p> <p>d) 78% strongly agree or agree</p> <p>e) 79% strongly agree or agree</p> <p>f) 59% strongly agree or agree</p> <p>g) 70% strongly agree or agree</p> <p>h) 64% strongly agree or agree</p>

<p>Proposal 4. Provide up to 20% discretionary relief (in addition to the 80% mandatory relief) for the following organisations/groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Local Charity office that provides a service that SSDC would otherwise have to provide</li> <li>b) Sports Club/Recreational facility, no bar, open to all, satisfying community need, run by a committee</li> <li>c) Hospice/end of life care provider</li> <li>d) Life Saving/Rescue organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 97% strongly agree or agree</li> <li>b) 93% strongly agree or agree</li> <li>c) 98% strongly agree or agree</li> <li>d) 100% strongly agree or agree</li> </ul>
<p>Proposal 5. In addition to the 80% mandatory relief awarded to the following groups the proposal is that further support is awarded of up to 10% discretionary relief for helping to achieve the ambitions of the Council plan and related strategies or up to 10% for helping to retain services in rural areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Village Hall, Community Centres and meeting rooms</li> <li>b) Scout, Guide and Youth organisations</li> <li>c) Pre-schools, Play Groups and Nurseries with charitable status</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 61% strongly agree or agree</li> <li>b) 68% strongly agree or agree</li> <li>c) 68% strongly agree or agree</li> </ul>
<p>Proposal 6. In addition to the 50% mandatory relief awarded the proposal is that further support of up to 40% discretionary relief is awarded to the following types of business, organisation and group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Rural Post Office – Rateable Value up to £8500</li> <li>b) Rural General Store – Rateable Value up to £8500</li> <li>c) Rural Post Office and General Store – Rateable Value up to £8,500</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 80% strongly agree or agree</li> <li>b) 81% strongly agree or agree</li> <li>c) 81% strongly agree or agree</li> </ul>
<p>Proposal 7. Under the principle - Support business, charities, organisations and groups that helps the Council to achieve the ambitions of the Council Plan and related strategies including Health and Well-being. The proposal is to award up to 90% discretionary relief to the following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Community Interest Company where they operate similar to charity minimal costs and re-invest profit, Rateable Value up to £8,500</li> <li>b) Sports Club / Recreational facility which where the bar is ancillary and is not offering discounted alcohol, Rateable Value up to £8,500</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) 75% strongly agree or agree</li> <li>b) 74% strongly agree or agree</li> </ul>



**Q1 In what capacity are you completing this survey? Choose the closest option.**

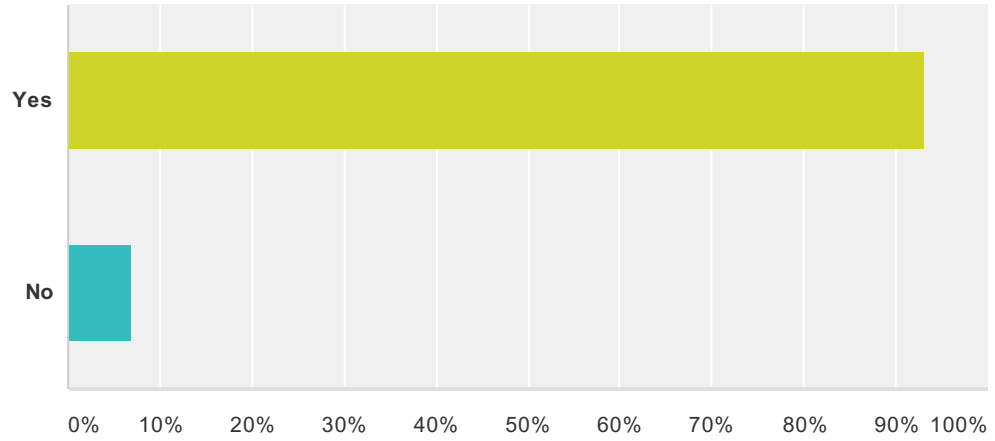
Answered: 147 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Charity	61.90% 91
Business	15.65% 23
Organisation	2.72% 4
Sports Club	12.93% 19
Member of the public	6.80% 10
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>

## Q2 Do you currently receive Discretionary Rate Relief?

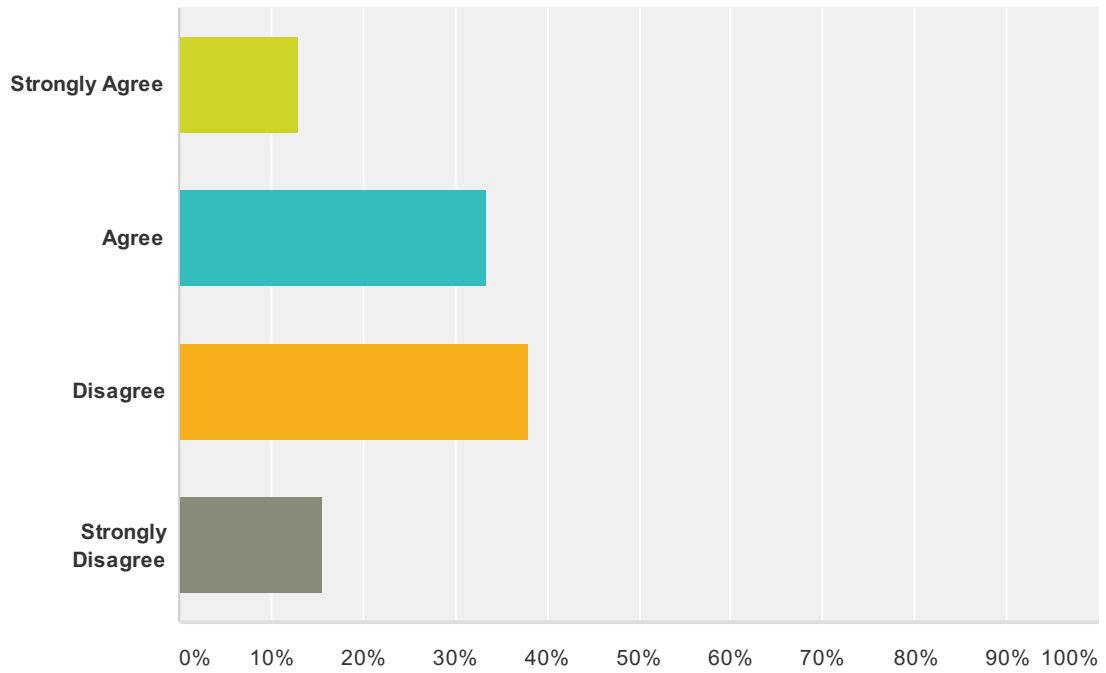
Answered: 147 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	93.20% 137
No	6.80% 10
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>

**Q3 Principle 1. Provide assistance only where there is evidence of financial need.**  
**In respect of this principle do you:**

Answered: 147 Skipped: 0

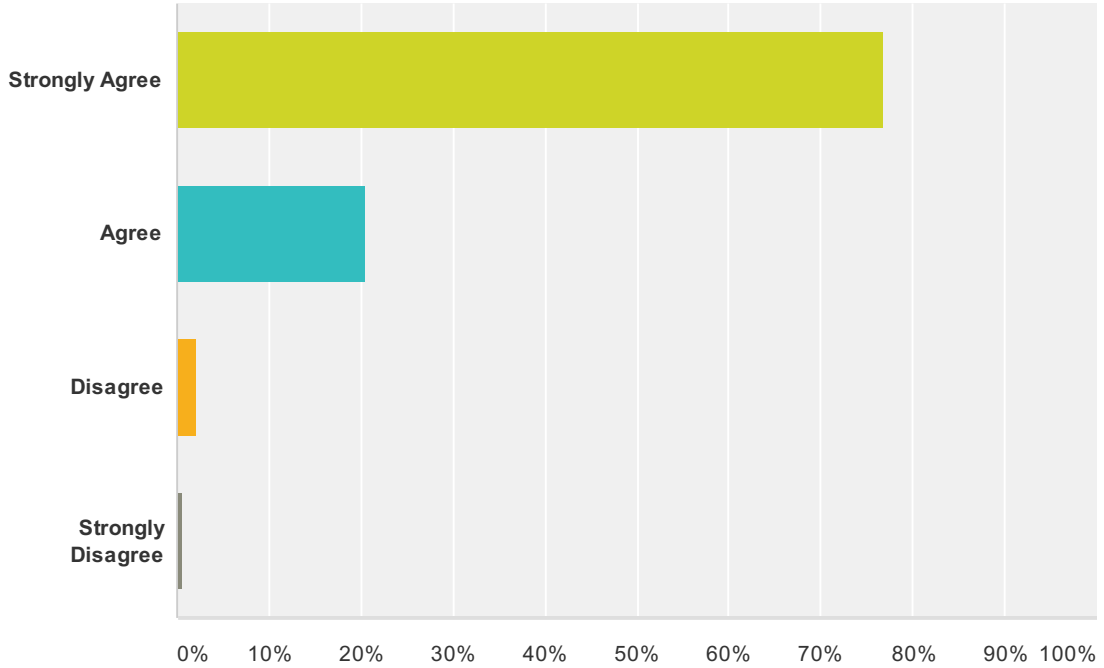


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	12.93%	19
Agree	33.33%	49
Disagree	38.10%	56
Strongly Disagree	15.65%	23
<b>Total</b>		<b>147</b>



**Q4 Principle 2. Support business, charities, organisations and groups that help to retain services in rural areas. In respect of this principle do you:**

Answered: 147 Skipped: 0

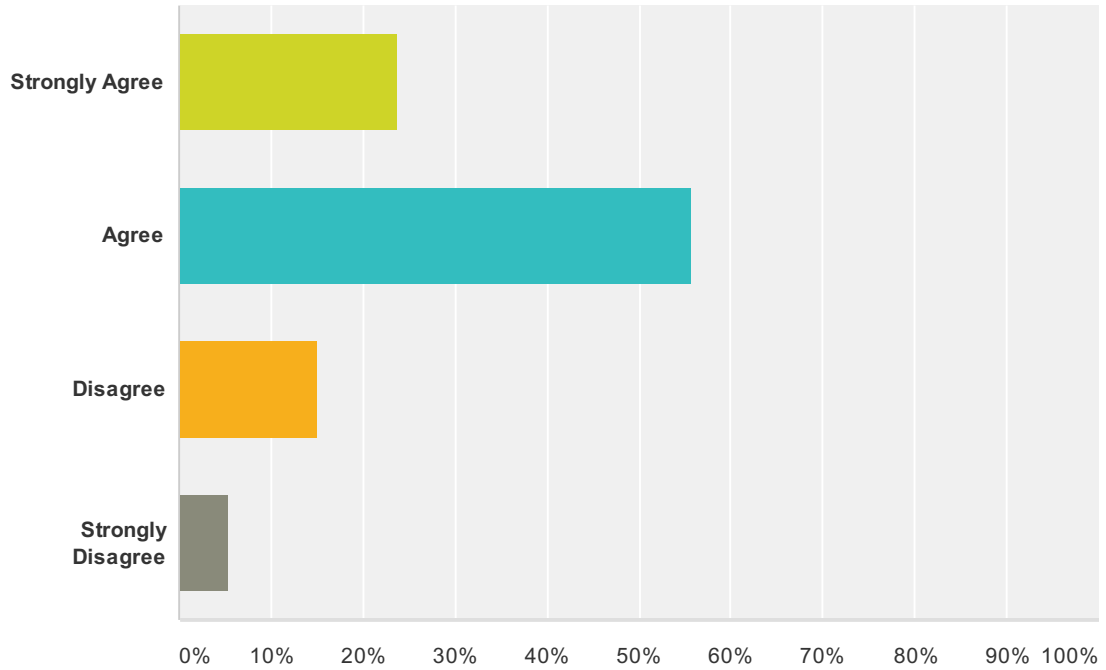


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Agree	76.87% 113
Agree	20.41% 30
Disagree	2.04% 3
Strongly Disagree	0.68% 1
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>



**Q5 Principle 3. Help and encourage business, charities, organisations groups and communities to become self-reliant. In respect of this principle do you:**

Answered: 147 Skipped: 0

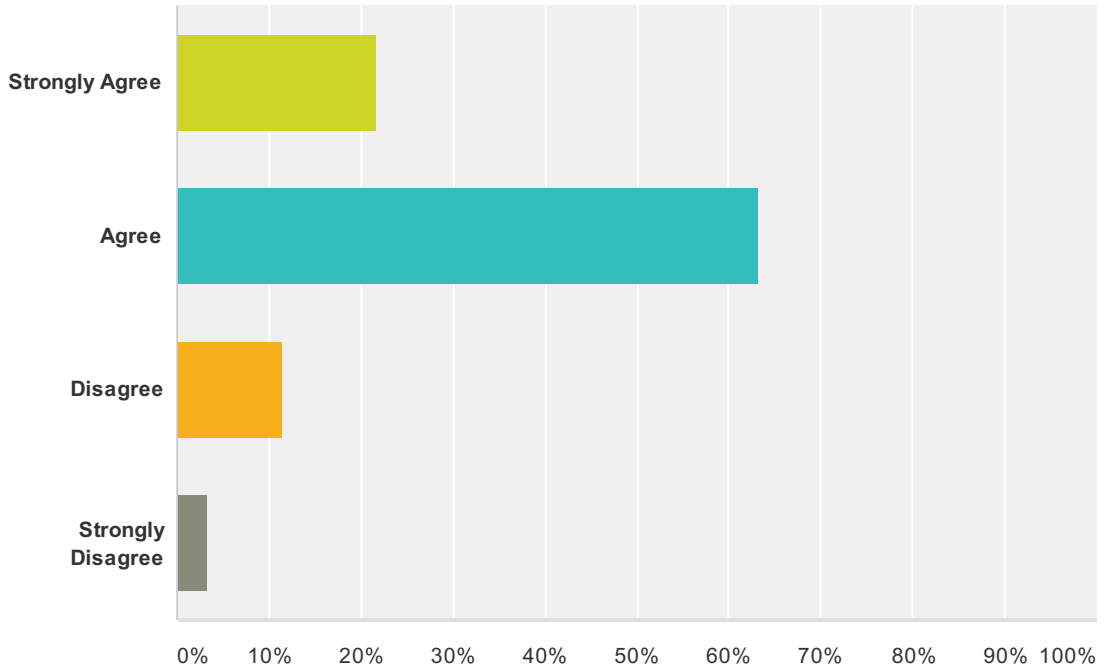


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	23.81%	35
Agree	55.78%	82
Disagree	14.97%	22
Strongly Disagree	5.44%	8
<b>Total</b>		<b>147</b>



**Q6 Principle 4. Awarding discretionary relief should not distort competition. In respect of this principle do you:**

Answered: 147 Skipped: 0

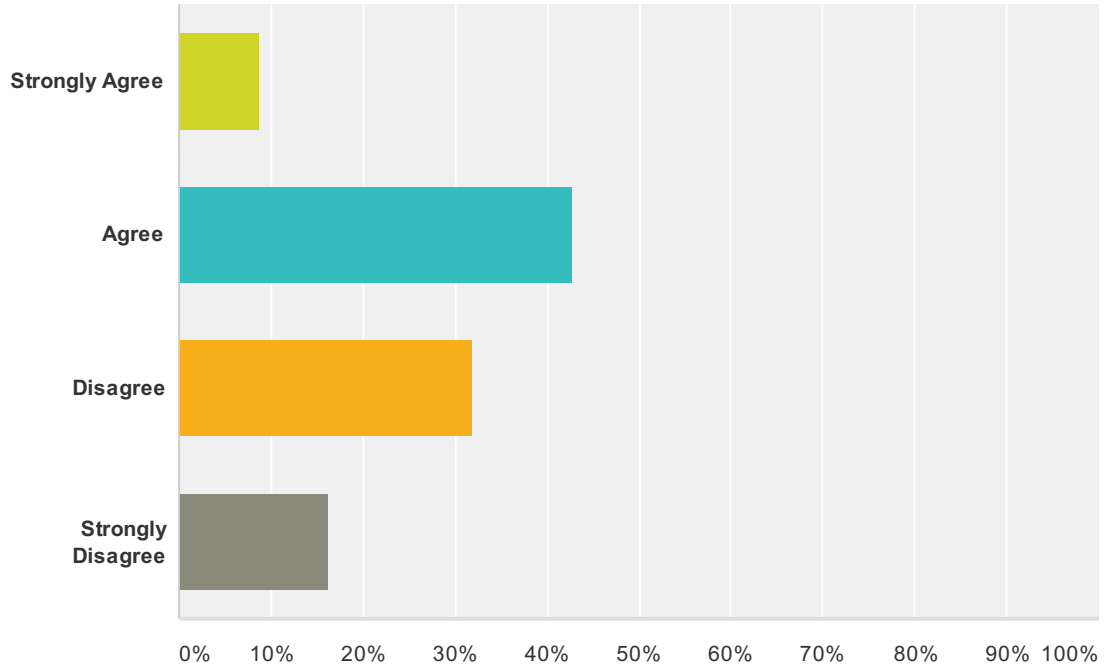


Answer Choices	Responses
Strongly Agree	21.77% 32
Agree	63.27% 93
Disagree	11.56% 17
Strongly Disagree	3.40% 5
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>



**Q7 Principle 5. Every business/organisation should contribute something towards the provision of local services. In respect of this principle do you:**

Answered: 147 Skipped: 0

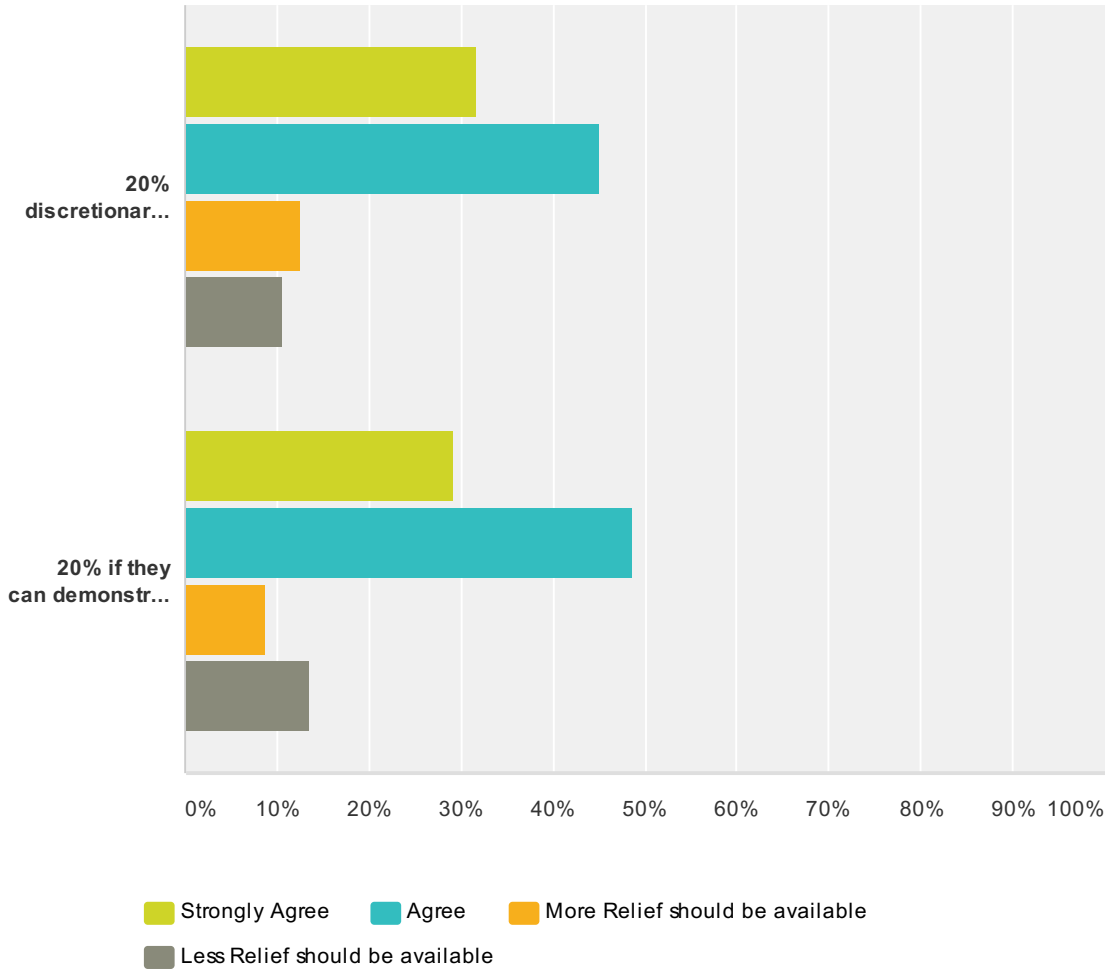


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	8.84%	13
Agree	42.86%	63
Disagree	31.97%	47
Strongly Disagree	16.33%	24
<b>Total</b>		<b>147</b>



**Q8 Proposal 1. A sole pub in a rural settlement in receipt of 50% mandatory relief can also receive either, or both, of the following which potentially awards up to 90% support. In respect of the following do you:**

Answered: 111 Skipped: 36



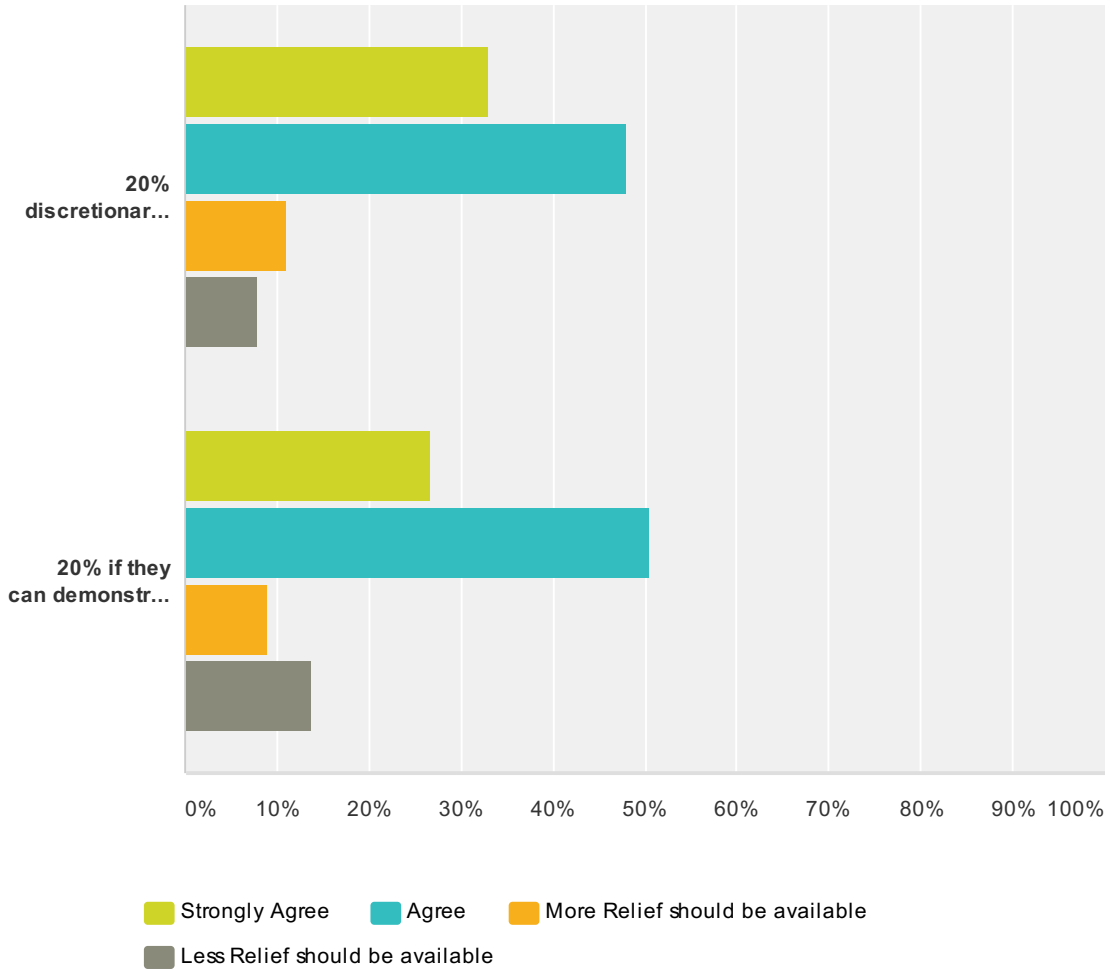
	Strongly Agree	Agree	More Relief should be available	Less Relief should be available	Total
20% discretionary relief for the provision of community facilities and activities not provided elsewhere in the community	31.73% 33	45.19% 47	12.50% 13	10.58% 11	104
20% if they can demonstrate they are making significant efforts to help the business succeed	29.13% 30	48.54% 50	8.74% 9	13.59% 14	103





**Q9 Proposal 2. A number of sole pubs in rural settlements do not receive mandatory relief. However, they can receive either, or both, of the following which potentially awards up to 40% support. In respect of the following do you:**

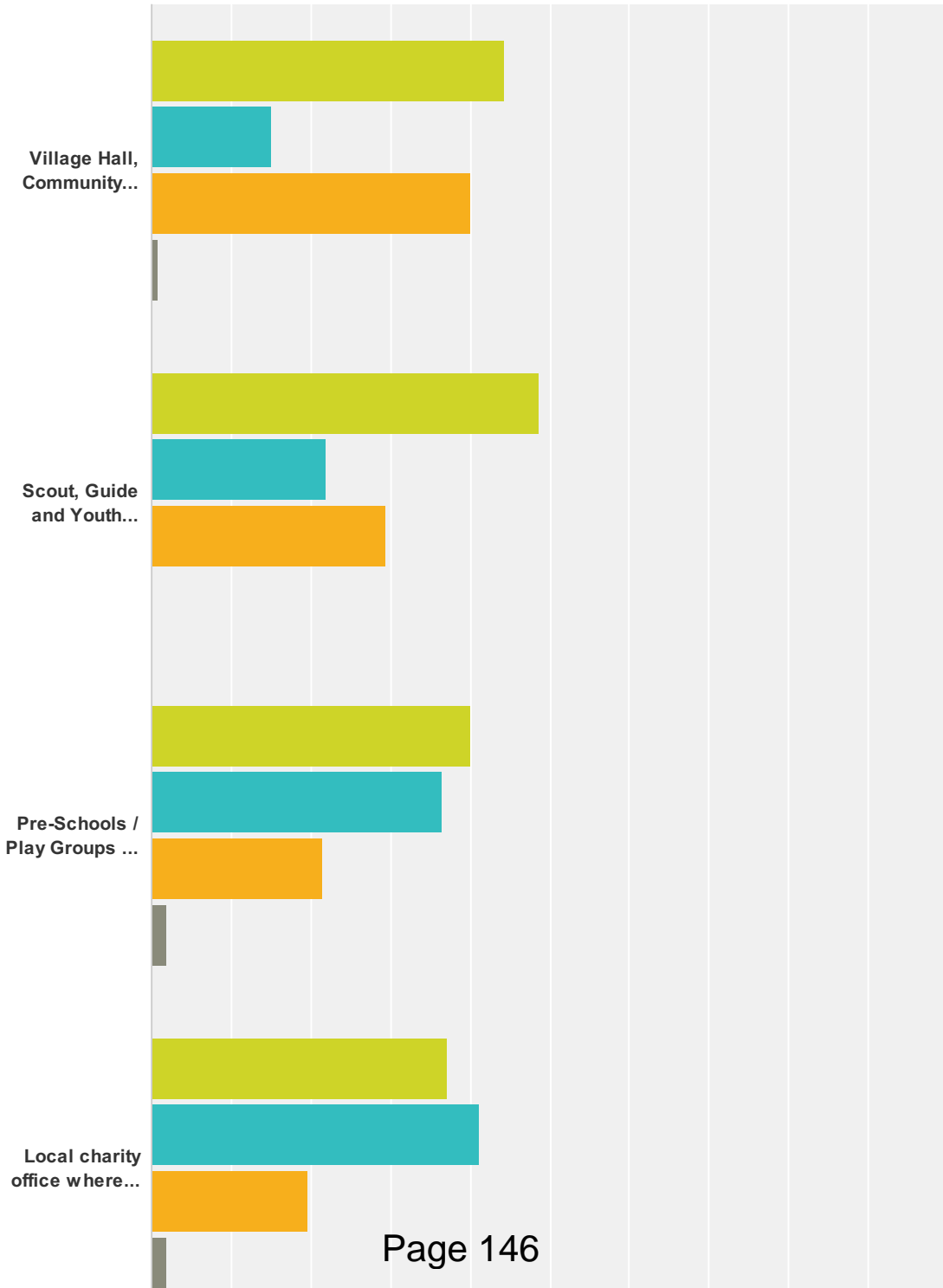
Answered: 107 Skipped: 40



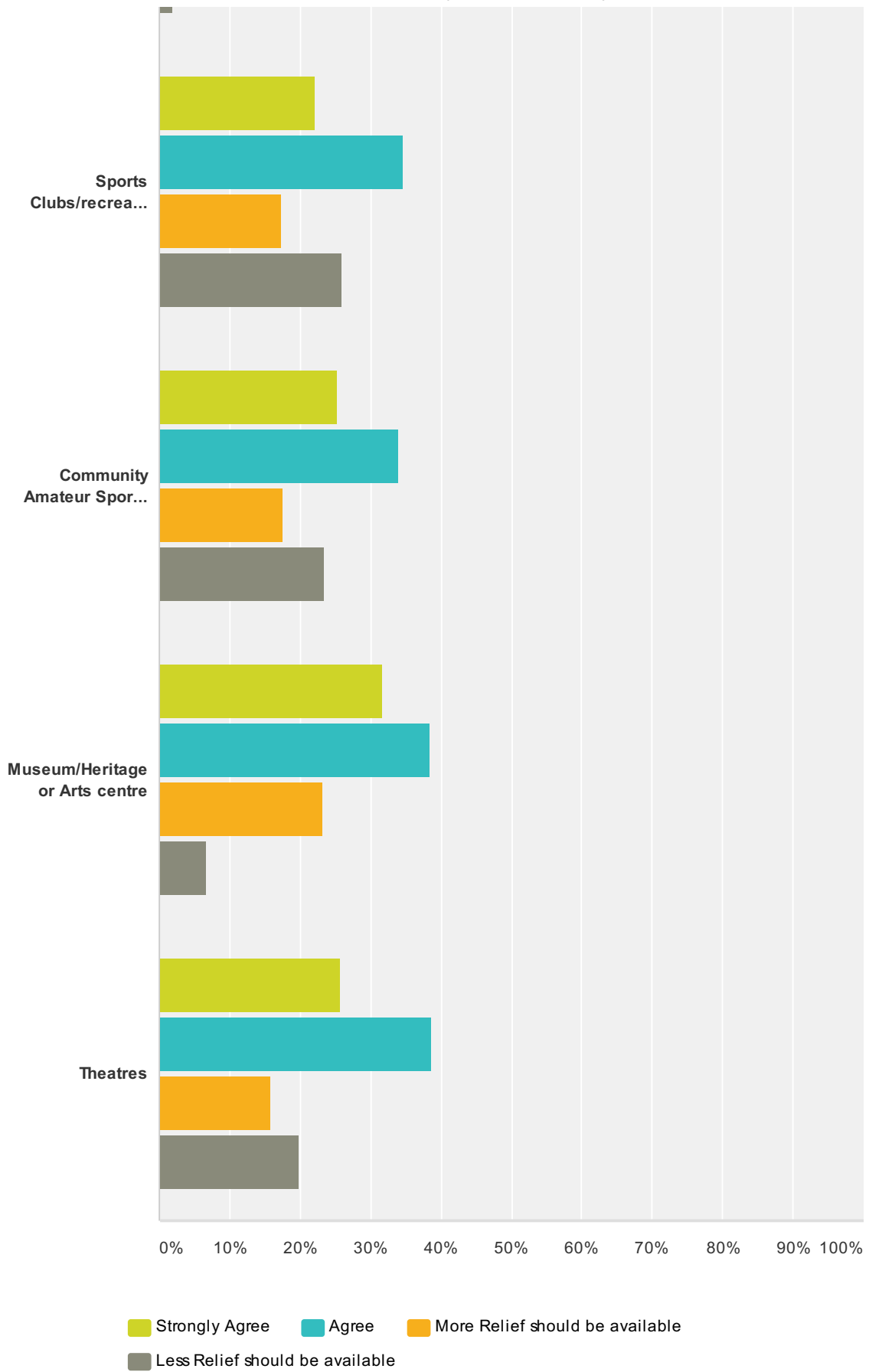
	Strongly Agree	Agree	More Relief should be available	Less Relief should be available	Total
20% discretionary relief for the provision of community facilities and activities not provided elsewhere in the community	33.00% 33	48.00% 48	11.00% 11	8.00% 8	100
20% if they can demonstrate they are making significant efforts to help the business succeed	26.73% 27	50.50% 51	8.91% 9	13.86% 14	101

**Q10 Proposal 3. Provide up to 10% discretionary relief to the following types of business, charity, organisation and group. (The discretionary relief would be awarded in addition to 80% Mandatory Relief providing a total of 90% relief from business rates). In respect of this proposal for any of the following do you:**

Answered: 123 Skipped: 24



# NDR Discretionary Relief Survey



	Strongly Agree	Agree	More Relief should be available	Less Relief should be available	Total
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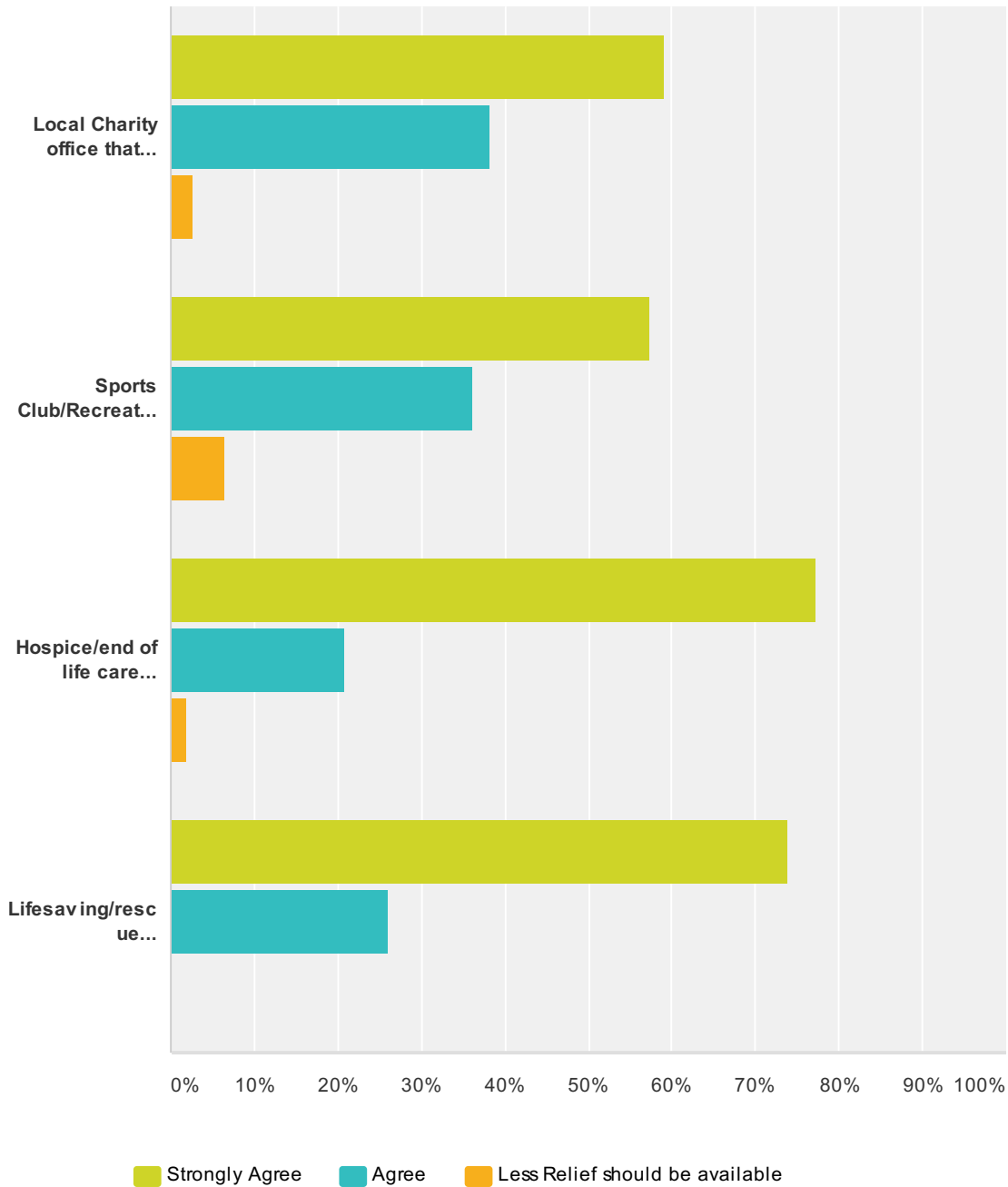
## NDR Discretionary Relief Survey

Village Hall, Community centre and meeting rooms	<b>44.17%</b> 53	<b>15.00%</b> 18	<b>40.00%</b> 48	<b>0.83%</b> 1	120
Scout, Guide and Youth organisations	<b>48.57%</b> 51	<b>21.90%</b> 23	<b>29.52%</b> 31	<b>0.00%</b> 0	105
Pre-Schools / Play Groups and Nurseries with charitable status	<b>40.19%</b> 43	<b>36.45%</b> 39	<b>21.50%</b> 23	<b>1.87%</b> 2	107
Local charity office where charitable service is being provided	<b>37.25%</b> 38	<b>41.18%</b> 42	<b>19.61%</b> 20	<b>1.96%</b> 2	102
Sports Clubs/recreational facilities where the bar is ancillary and is not offering discounted alcohol	<b>22.12%</b> 23	<b>34.62%</b> 36	<b>17.31%</b> 18	<b>25.96%</b> 27	104
Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) where the bar is ancillary and is not offering discounted alcohol	<b>25.24%</b> 26	<b>33.98%</b> 35	<b>17.48%</b> 18	<b>23.30%</b> 24	103
Museum/Heritage or Arts centre	<b>31.73%</b> 33	<b>38.46%</b> 40	<b>23.08%</b> 24	<b>6.73%</b> 7	104
Theatres	<b>25.74%</b> 26	<b>38.61%</b> 39	<b>15.84%</b> 16	<b>19.80%</b> 20	101



**Q11 Proposal 4. The following Organisations receive 80% mandatory relief. Proposal is to provide up to a further 20% discretionary relief (i.e. 100% in total). In respect of this proposal for any of the following do you:**

Answered: 116 Skipped: 31



	Strongly Agree	Agree	Less Relief should be available	Total
Local Charity office that provides a service that SSDC would have to provide if the Charity didn't	59.09% 65	38.18% 42	2.73% 3	110

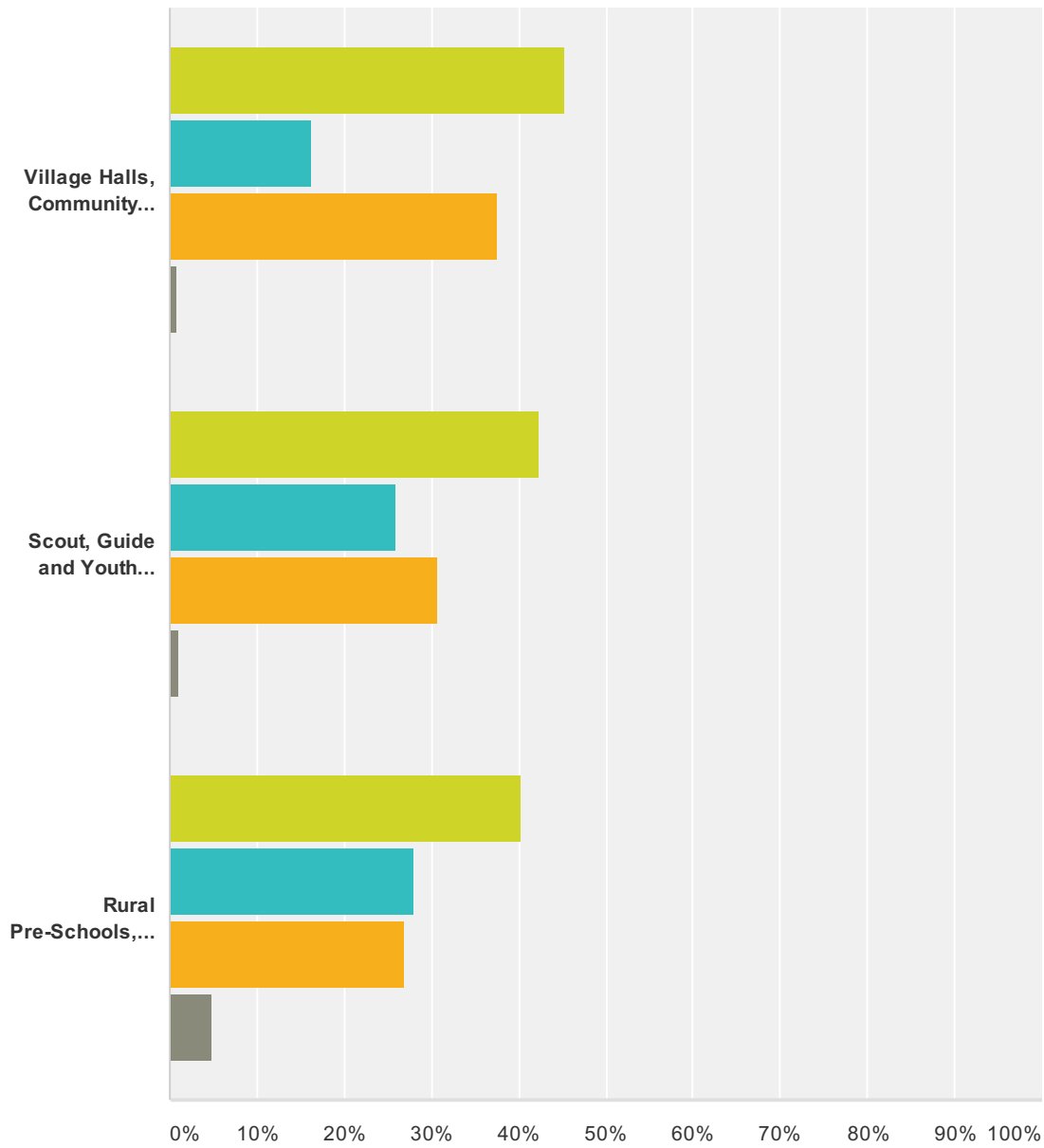
## NDR Discretionary Relief Survey

Sports Club/Recreational facility, no bar, open to all, satisfying community need, run by a committee	<b>57.41%</b> 62	<b>36.11%</b> 39	<b>6.48%</b> 7	108
Hospice/end of life care provider	<b>77.27%</b> 85	<b>20.91%</b> 23	<b>1.82%</b> 2	110
Lifesaving/rescue organisations	<b>73.83%</b> 79	<b>26.17%</b> 28	<b>0.00%</b> 0	107



**Q12 Proposal 5. In addition to the 80% mandatory relief awarded to the following groups the proposal is that further support is awarded of up to 10% discretionary relief for helping to achieve the ambitions of the Council plan and related strategies or up to 10% for helping to retain services in rural areas (i.e. a maximum of 90% in support). In respect of this proposal for any of the following do you:**

Answered: 117 Skipped: 30



■ Strongly Agree 
 ■ Agree 
 ■ More Relief should be available 
 ■ Less Relief should be available

## NDR Discretionary Relief Survey

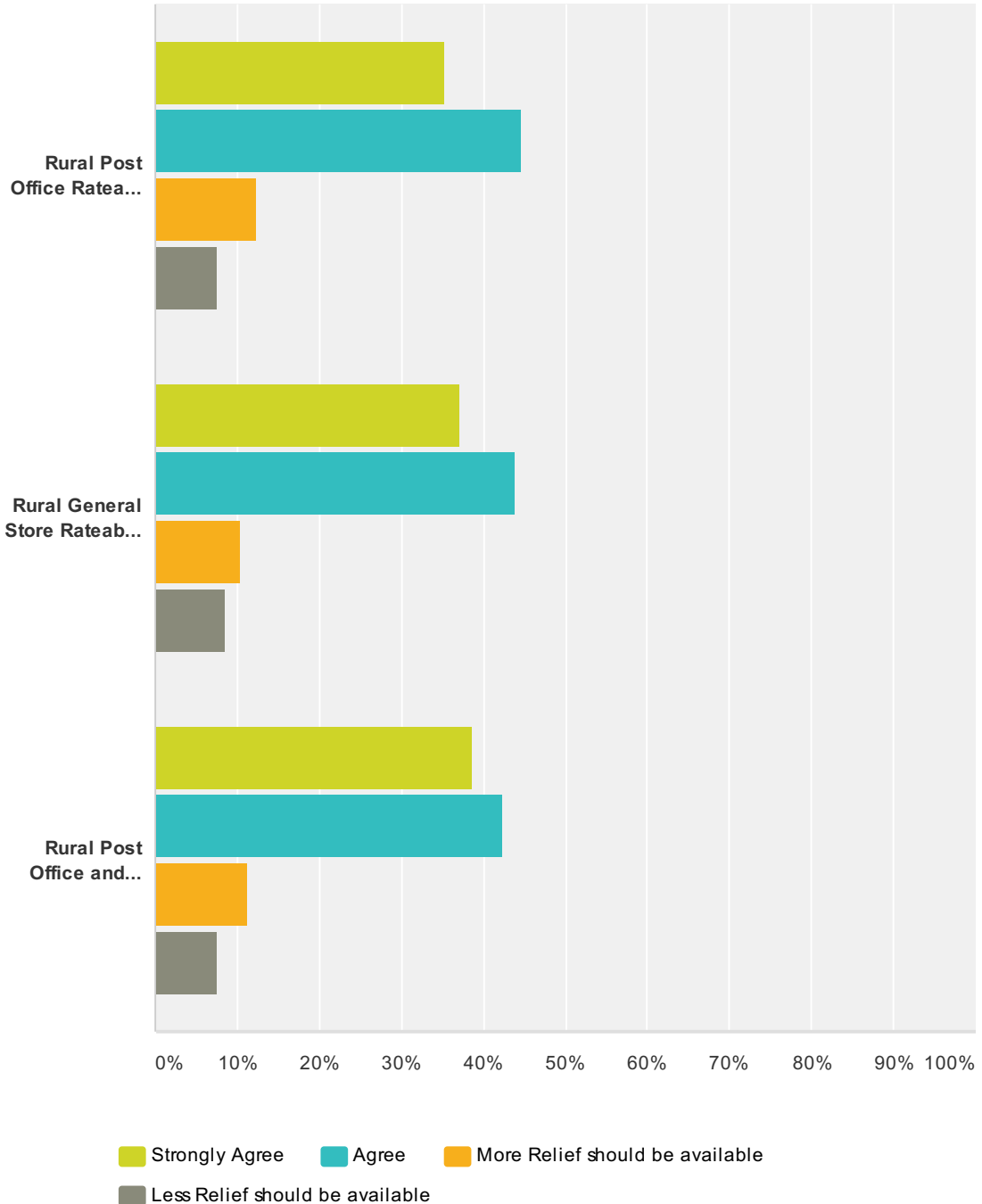
	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>More Relief should be available</b>	<b>Less Relief should be available</b>	<b>Total</b>
Village Halls, Community Centres and meeting Rooms	<b>45.30%</b> 53	<b>16.24%</b> 19	<b>37.61%</b> 44	<b>0.85%</b> 1	117
Scout, Guide and Youth Groups	<b>42.31%</b> 44	<b>25.96%</b> 27	<b>30.77%</b> 32	<b>0.96%</b> 1	104
Rural Pre-Schools, Play Groups and Nurseries with Charitable status	<b>40.38%</b> 42	<b>27.88%</b> 29	<b>26.92%</b> 28	<b>4.81%</b> 5	104





**Q13 Proposal 6. In addition to the 50% mandatory relief awarded the proposal is that further support of up to 40% discretionary relief is awarded to the following types of business, organisation and group (i.e. a maximum of 90%). In respect of this proposal for any of the following do you:**

Answered: 106 Skipped: 41



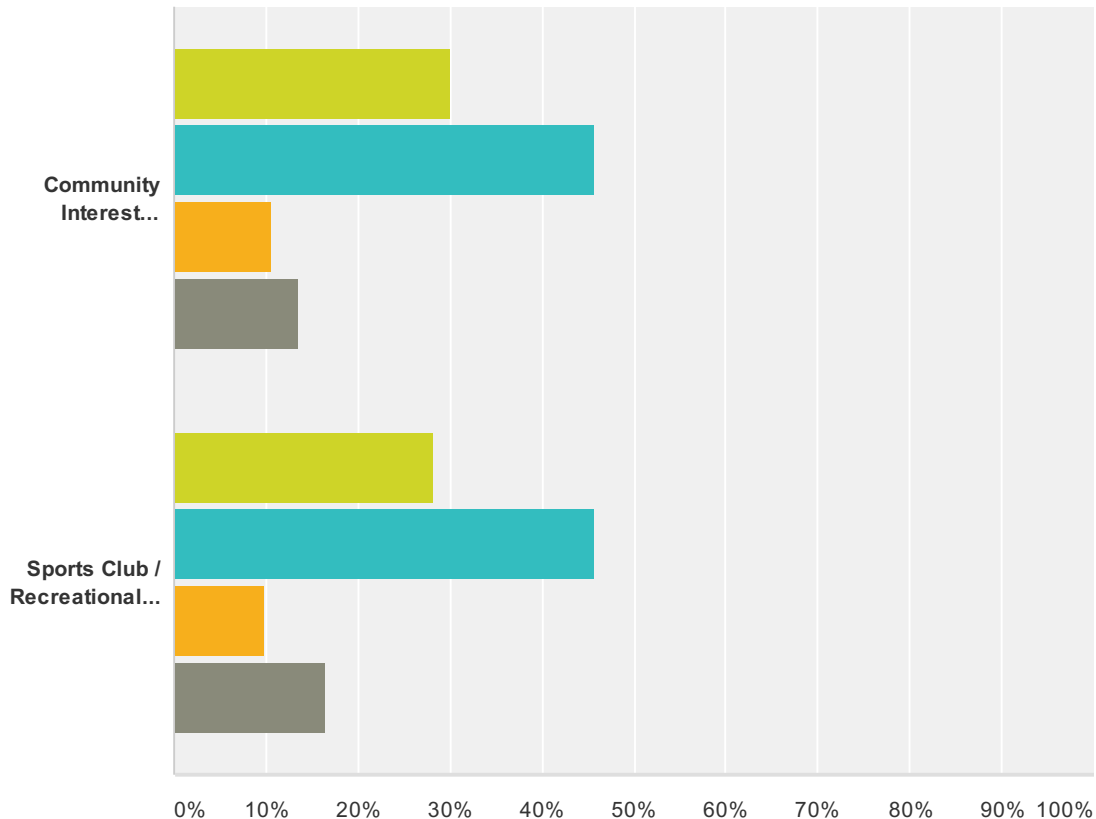
## NDR Discretionary Relief Survey

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>More Relief should be available</b>	<b>Less Relief should be available</b>	<b>Total</b>
Rural Post Office Rateable Value up to £8500	<b>35.24%</b> 37	<b>44.76%</b> 47	<b>12.38%</b> 13	<b>7.62%</b> 8	105
Rural General Store Rateable Value up to £8500	<b>37.14%</b> 39	<b>43.81%</b> 46	<b>10.48%</b> 11	<b>8.57%</b> 9	105
Rural Post Office and General Store Rateable Value up to £8500	<b>38.68%</b> 41	<b>42.45%</b> 45	<b>11.32%</b> 12	<b>7.55%</b> 8	106



**Q14 Proposal 7. Under the principle - Support business, charities, organisations and groups that helps the Council to achieve the ambitions of the Council Plan and related strategies including Health and Well-being. The proposal is to award up to 90% discretionary relief to the following. In respect of this proposal do you:**

Answered: 104 Skipped: 43



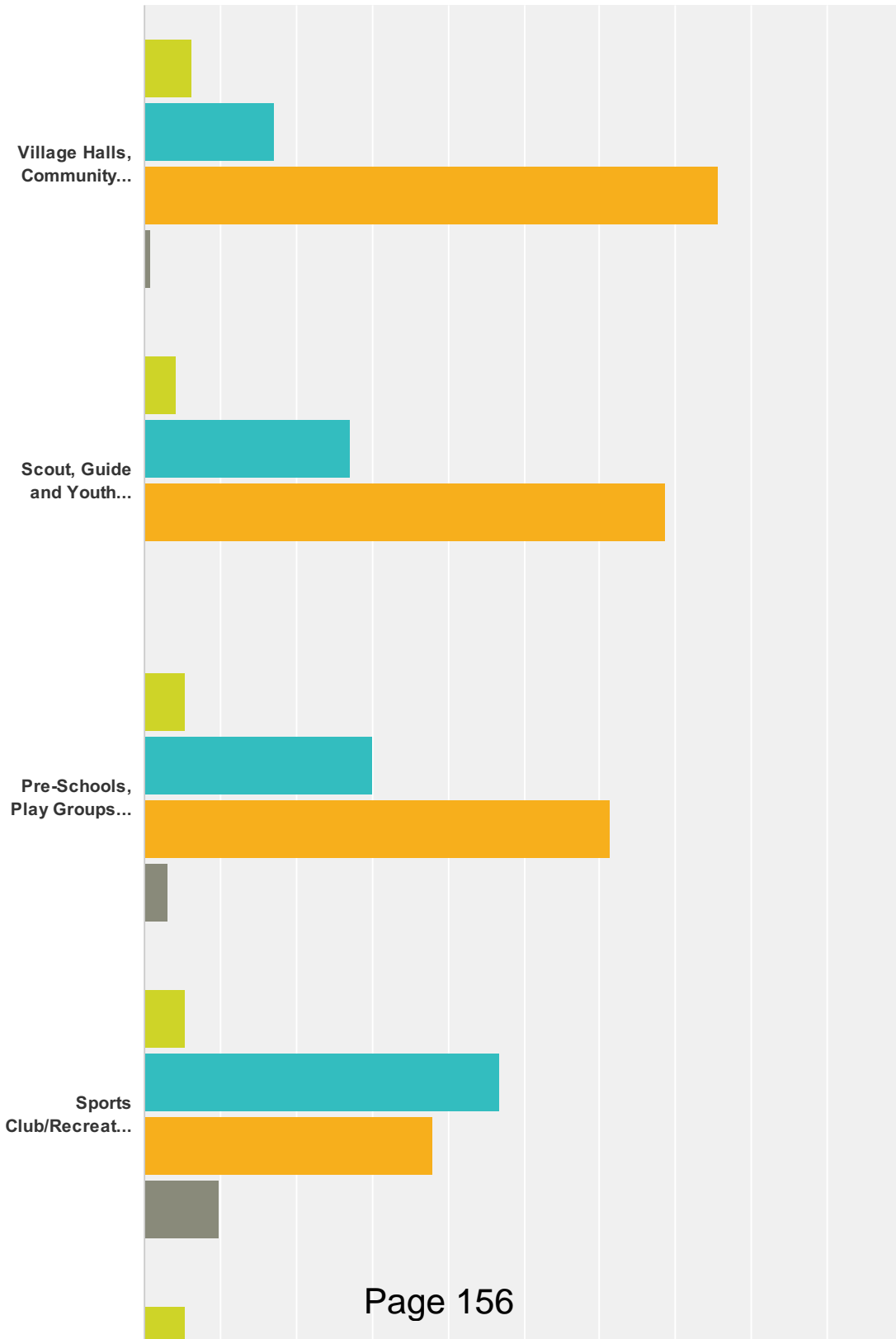
■ Strongly Agree   
 ■ Agree   
 ■ More Relief should be available   
 ■ Less Relief should be available



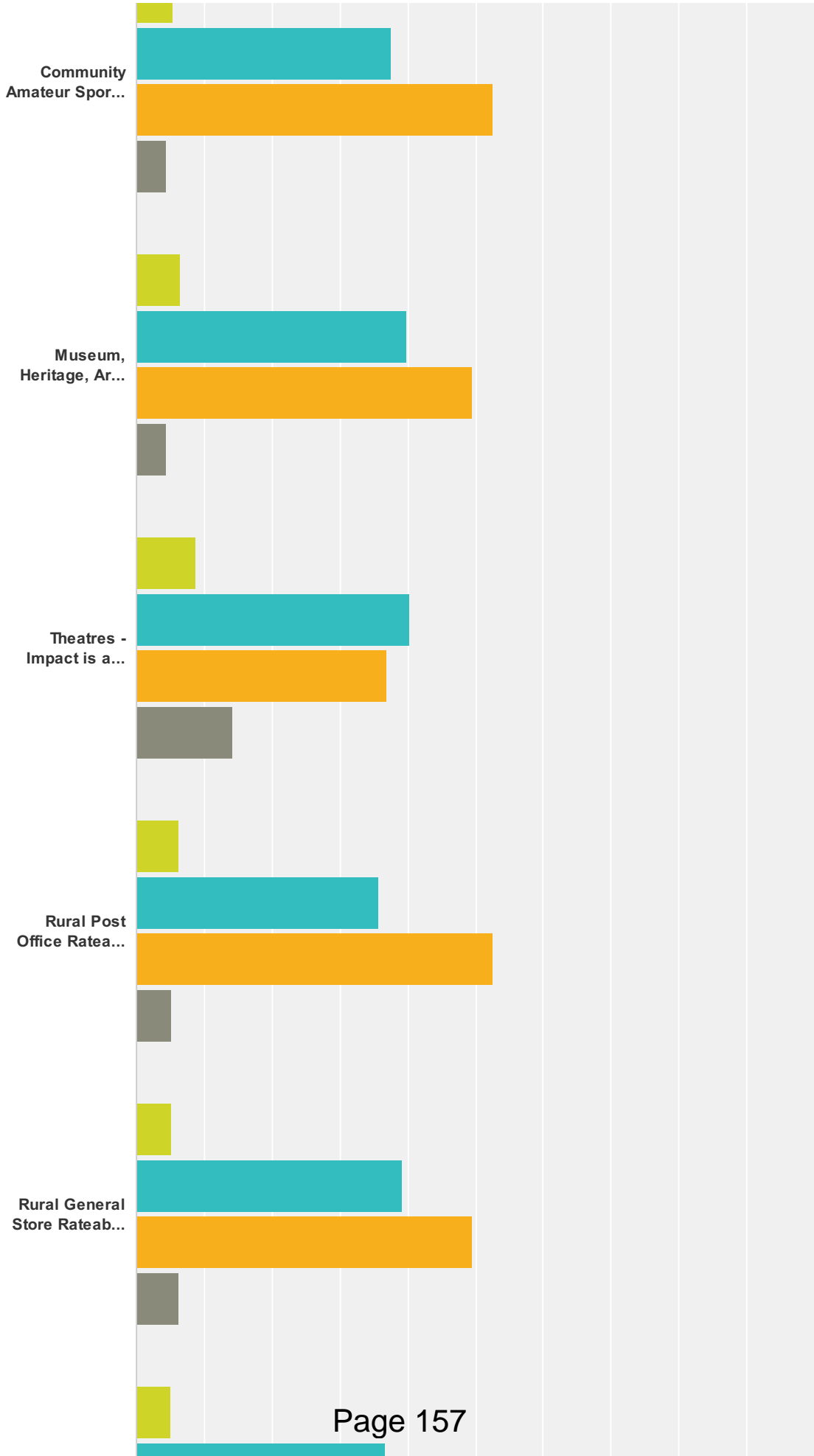
	Strongly Agree	Agree	More Relief should be available	Less Relief should be available	Total
Community Interest Company where they operate similar to charity minimal costs and re-invest profit, Rateable Value up to £8,500	30.10% 31	45.63% 47	10.68% 11	13.59% 14	103
Sports Club / Recreational facility which where the bar is ancillary and is not offering discounted alcohol, Rateable Value up to £8,500	28.16% 29	45.63% 47	9.71% 10	16.50% 17	103

**Q15 Impact of the proposals. The principles of the new scheme could have the impacts listed below for different organisations and businesses. Do you support the following impacts as assessed for each one:-**

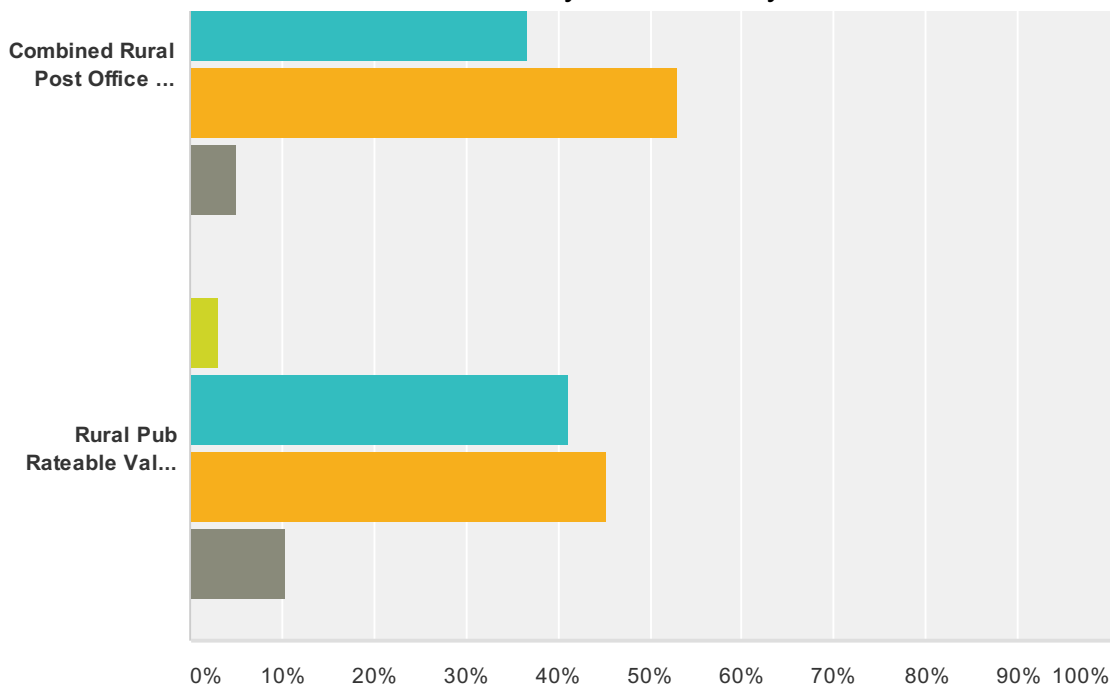
Answered: 117 Skipped: 30



# NDR Discretionary Relief Survey



## NDR Discretionary Relief Survey



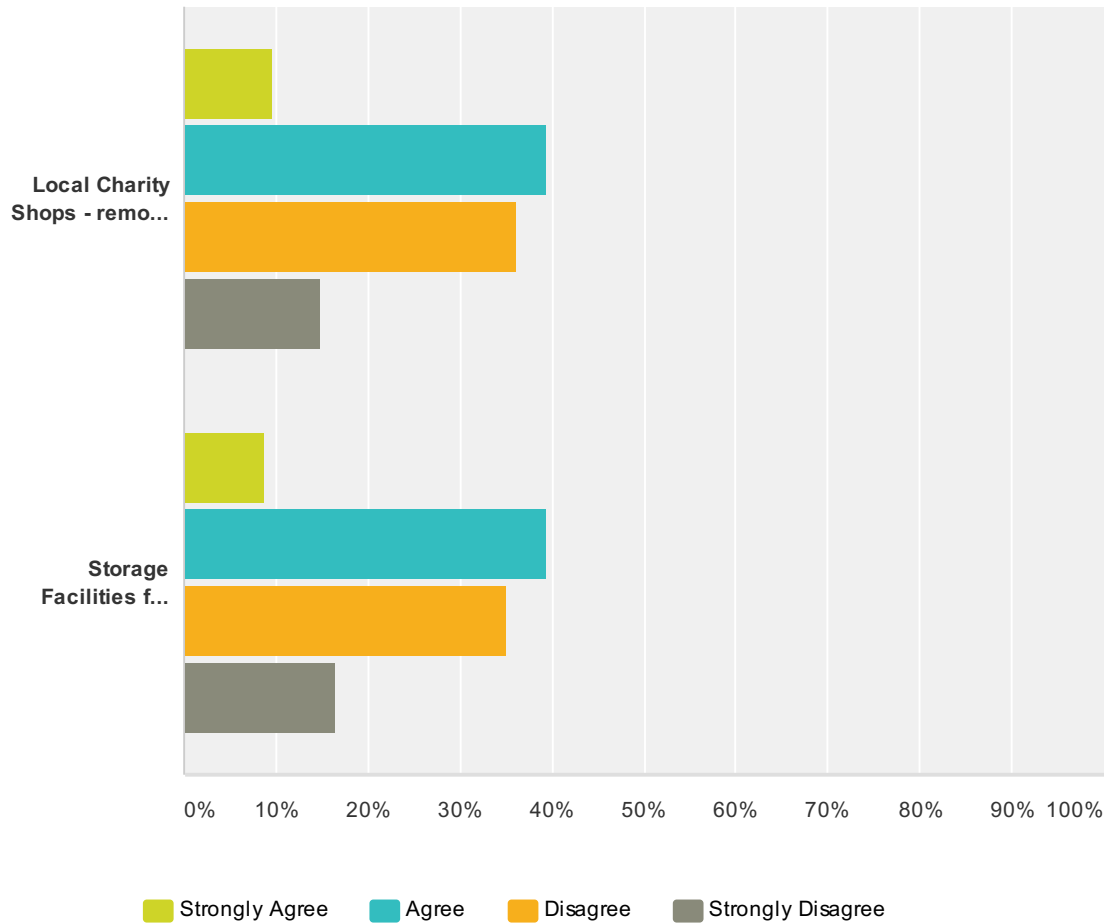
■ Strongly Agree   
 ■ Agree   
 ■ More Relief should be available   
 ■ Less Relief should be available



	Strongly Agree	Agree	More Relief should be available	Less Relief should be available	Total
Village Halls, Community Centres, meeting Rooms - Impact is a charge of between £23.08 and £682.95	6.31% 7	17.12% 19	75.68% 84	0.90% 1	111
Scout, Guide and Youth Groups - Impact is a charge of between £35.80 and £405.96	4.17% 4	27.08% 26	68.75% 66	0.00% 0	96
Pre-Schools, Play Groups etc. with Charitable status - Impact is a charge between £94.20 and £1601.40	5.38% 5	30.11% 28	61.29% 57	3.23% 3	93
Sports Club/Recreational facility with a bar that is ancillary - Impact is a charge between £4.69 and £2731.80	5.43% 5	46.74% 43	38.04% 35	9.78% 9	92
Community Amateur Sports Club with no bar or it is ancillary - Impact is a charge of between £100.09 and £1471.88	5.38% 5	37.63% 35	52.69% 49	4.30% 4	93
Museum, Heritage, Arts centres - Impact is a charge of between £33.44 and £1036.20	6.45% 6	39.78% 37	49.46% 46	4.30% 4	93
Theatres - Impact is a charge of between £136.59 and £146.01	8.70% 8	40.22% 37	36.96% 34	14.13% 13	92
Rural Post Office Rateable Value up to £8500 - Impact is a charge of between £70.65 and £315.57	6.32% 6	35.79% 34	52.63% 50	5.26% 5	95
Rural General Store Rateable Value up to £8500 - Impact is a charge of between £124.82 and £337.12	5.15% 5	39.18% 38	49.48% 48	6.19% 6	97
Combined Rural Post Office and General Store Rateable Value up to £8500 - Impact is a charge of between £64.76 and £244.92	5.10% 5	36.73% 36	53.06% 52	5.10% 5	98
Rural Pub Rateable Value up to £12500 - Impact is a charge between £235.50 and £2649.37	3.16% 3	41.05% 39	45.26% 43	10.53% 10	95

**Q16 Impact of the proposals. Awarding discretionary relief should not distort competition. In respect of this principle the proposal is to change the current relief policy for charities. This could have the impacts listed below for different premises. Do you support the following impacts as assessed for each one:-**

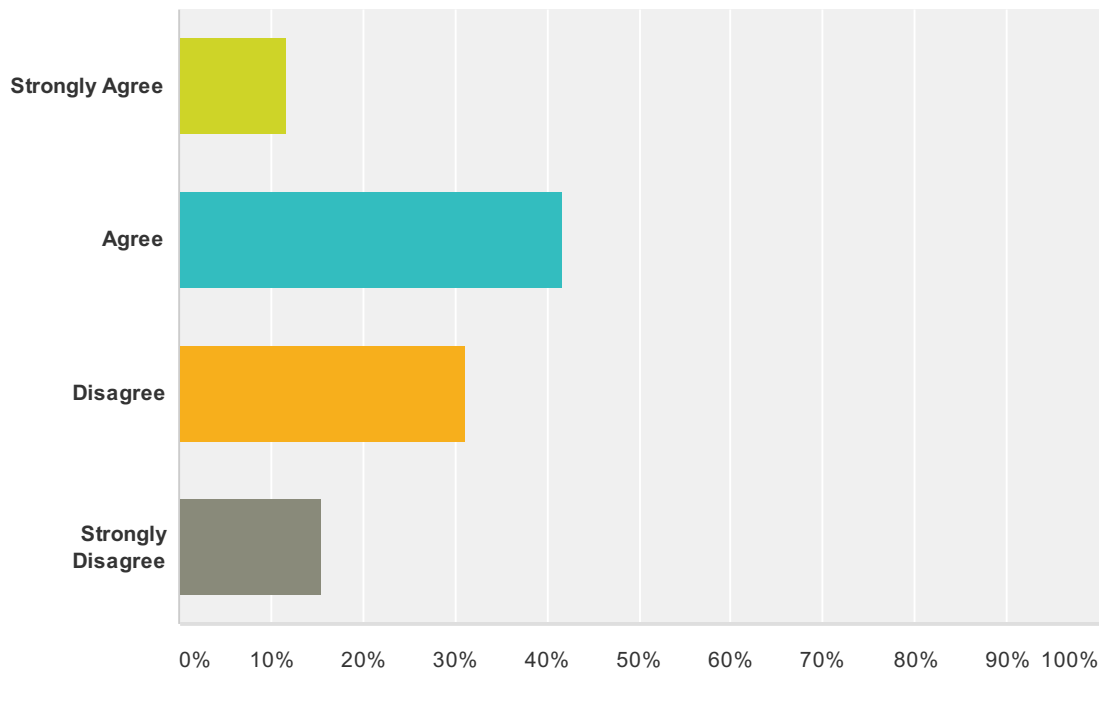
Answered: 95 Skipped: 52



	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Local Charity Shops - remove the 10% relief - Impact of between £68.30 and £1672.05	9.57% 9	39.36% 37	36.17% 34	14.89% 14	94
Storage Facilities for Charities - Remove the relief (maximum of 20%) - Impact of between £14.32 and £7350.00	8.79% 8	39.56% 36	35.16% 32	16.48% 15	91

**Q17 The proposal is to remove the 10% discretionary funding for Animal Trusts. This financial aid does not fit with the objectives of the Council Plan or any related strategy. The Impact of this would be a charge of between £800.70 and £1448.33 a year based on current recipients and the current annual charge. In respect of this proposal do you:**

Answered: 103 Skipped: 44

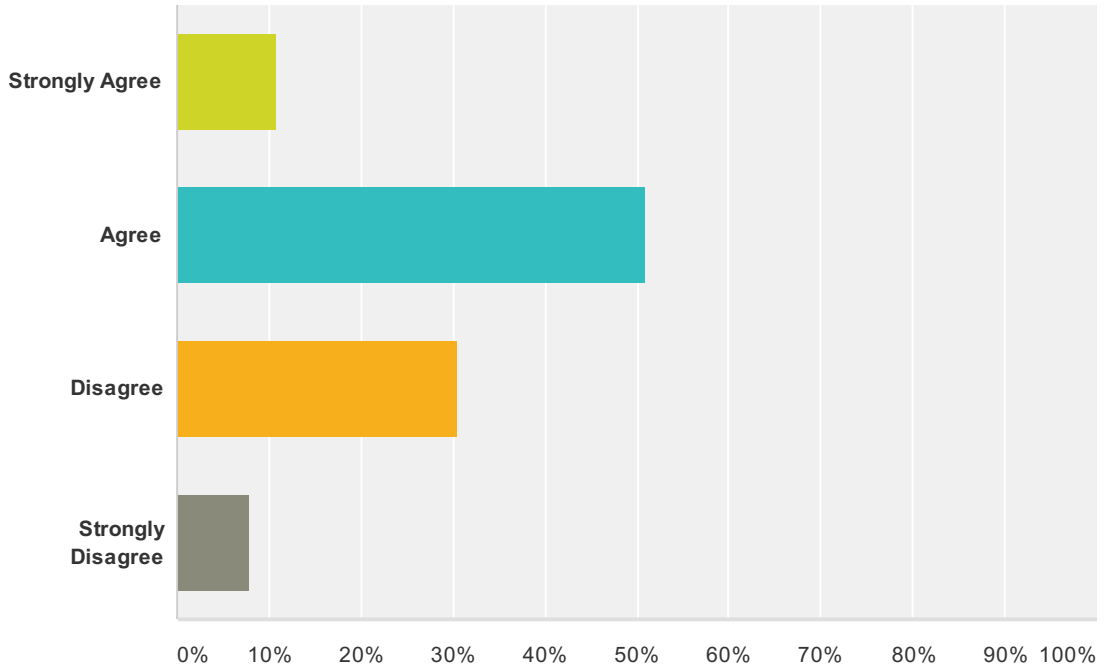


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	11.65%	12
Agree	41.75%	43
Disagree	31.07%	32
Strongly Disagree	15.53%	16
<b>Total</b>		<b>103</b>



**Q18 Charity Offices: Charities receive a mandatory relief of 80%. At present a further 10% is awarded for charity administration offices - proposal is to remove the 10% where the office is solely for administration purposes. In respect of this proposal do you:**

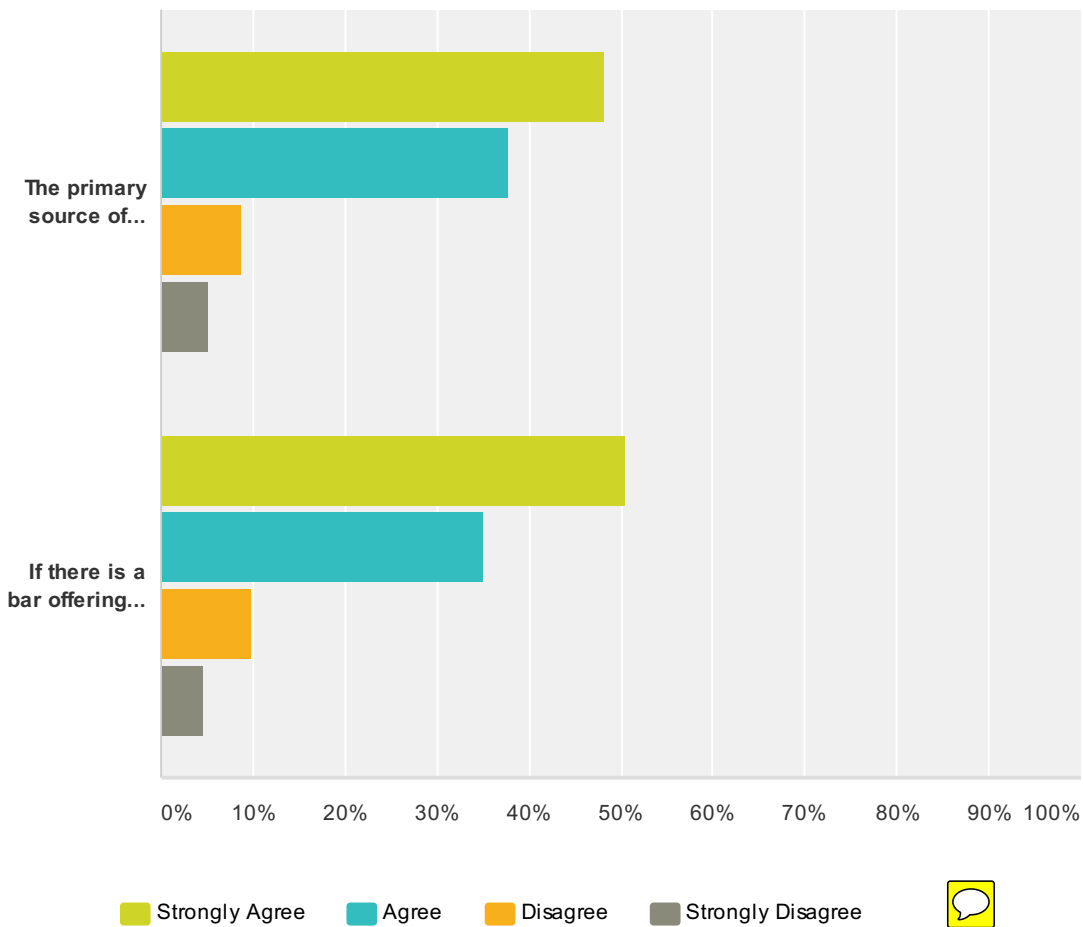
Answered: 102 Skipped: 45



Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	10.78%	11
Agree	50.98%	52
Disagree	30.39%	31
Strongly Disagree	7.84%	8
<b>Total</b>		<b>102</b>

**Q19 Do you agree that it is not appropriate for SSDC to financially support any charity or club if:**

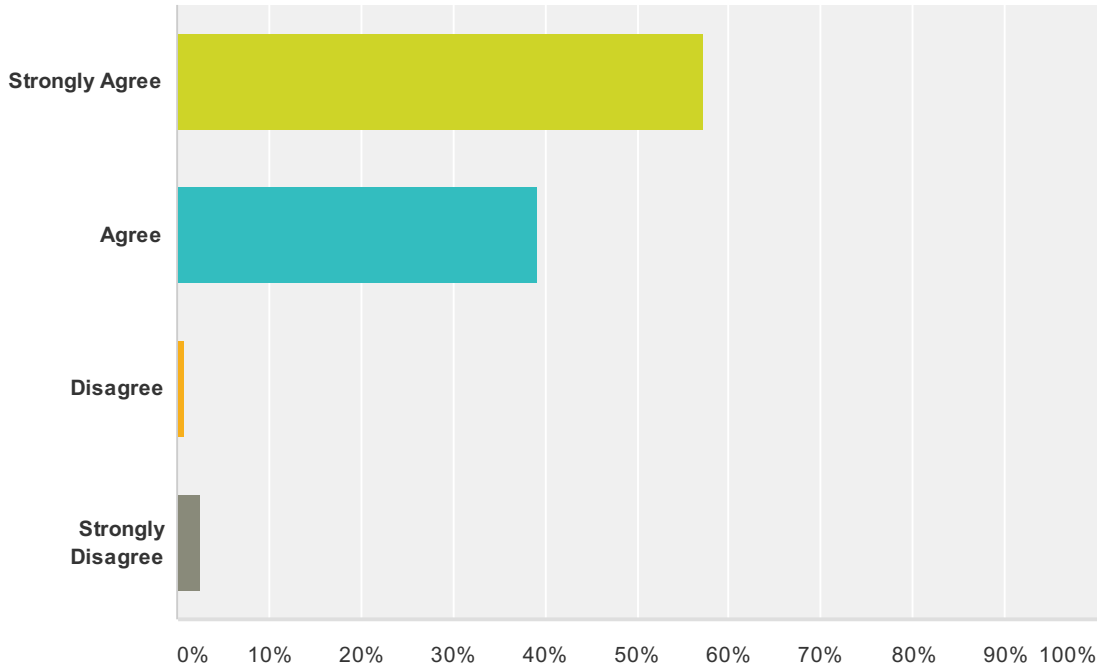
Answered: 116 Skipped: 31



	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
The primary source of income is from the sale of alcohol	48.25% 55	37.72% 43	8.77% 10	5.26% 6	114
If there is a bar offering alcohol at discounted or reduced prices to its members or the general public	50.45% 56	35.14% 39	9.91% 11	4.50% 5	111

**Q20 Appeals Process It is not a statutory duty to provide an appeals process for discretionary rate relief. The proposal is that SSDC include an appeals process in the new policy to demonstrate openness and transparency. In respect of this proposal do you:**

Answered: 117 Skipped: 30



Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	57.26%	67
Agree	39.32%	46
Disagree	0.85%	1
Strongly Disagree	2.56%	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>117</b>

# Non Domestic Rates – Discretionary Relief

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**A Summary of Findings from the Task and Finish Group**

**July 2014**

## **Chairman's Introduction**

The Task and Finish Group recognises the major contribution made by the voluntary and community sector to the economy and health and wellbeing of the people that live and work in South Somerset. One of our key aims was to ensure that any revised policy met with the needs of the Council Plan and related strategies to support the Council's objectives for South Somerset and to support the essential and widely varied voluntary and non profit making organisations that make South Somerset a great place to live and work in. However, we had to recognise that a proportion of the assistance given through Discretionary Rate Relief is paid by the local taxpayer and as such the Council has a duty to ensure public funds are spent wisely and that there is transparency and accountability in the decisions made.

Our overall aim was to advise on key policy principles and proposals to be included within the revised policy taking into account the impact and risks of doing so. This is an enormously complex and technical subject and my thanks goes to my Task and Finish Group colleagues for their perseverance and dedication over the last year.

## **Introduction**

The Task and Finish Group consisted of the following members (at various meetings):-

Sue Steele (Chairman)

Pauline Lock

Sue Osborne

Carol Goodall

David Norris

Cathy Bakewell

Patrick Palmer

Paul Maxwell

Mike Lewis

David Bulmer

Tim Carroll - observer

The Group set out to review the key principles for applying NDR Relief that met with the Council's own Council Plan 2012 – 2015 and strategies. The key links to the Council Plan are:-

- We want our services to be accessible to all our residents;
- Our district is made up of diverse and dispersed communities. It is therefore important for us to make sure our services are fair and accessible;
- We will do everything in our power to enable employment growth in a balanced and managed way in order to maintain stability, attract new business, and help existing business expand.

We will:

- Provide targeted support for start-ups and small business and those with aspiration to expand.
- Enhance the vitality of town centres and discourage large scale out of town retail development that has a negative impact on local centres.
- Ensuring that we have facilities for culture, sport, swimming, and informal recreation to meet the needs of all age groups is vital to help improve physical and mental health. We will continue to provide country parks, the Octagon Theatre, support local play areas and community buildings.
- Ensure that the strategic priorities of the Somerset Health and Well-being board reflect local needs and align council resources to deliver projects to address those needs.

The Task and Finish group also asked Service Managers what was needed to deliver service priorities and businesses and groups about their needs, requirements, and priorities.

### **Discretionary NDR Relief (Non Domestic Rate Relief)**

Applying NDR relief reduces the amount of NDR (business rates) that a company or group has to pay. Types of businesses and groups that benefit from these reliefs are:-

- Charity Shops
- Village Halls
- Some Village Stores and Pubs
- Animal Sanctuaries
- Pre-schools and Playgroups
- Community Amateur Sports Clubs

- Recreation Facilities
- Theatres

The Government has changed the contribution it makes to those reliefs. Reliefs were broken down into mandatory support (support set by central Government) that was repaid to the local authority in full from the Government on the basis that local authorities had no choice but to award it under set criteria. The remaining discretionary relief (support set through SSDC) that the authority had to pay either in full or a proportion of but allocation was based on the authority's own criteria. Under the new Government rules SSDC has to contribute 40% towards all reliefs even those that it has no choice about awarding. It has therefore been important for the Task and Finish Group to recognise the financial risk of applying reliefs.

In 2013/14 (as at 2<sup>nd</sup> September) 315 awards were made totalling £370k. SSDC had to fund 40% of this i.e. £148k in addition to 40% of the mandatory relief applied.

## Types of Reliefs Available

- Transitional Relief – this phases in increases and decreases in new rating lists, it is automatically calculated and applied.
- Charity Relief (Mandatory & Discretionary) – for registered charities 80% mandatory relief is awarded provided the premises are used for charitable purposes. This also applies to Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCS). It can be applied to empty premises if certain conditions are met.

Up to 20% discretionary top up relief can be awarded in line with the current policy.

- Rural Rate Relief (Mandatory & Discretionary) – 50% mandatory relief for certain types of businesses in a rural settlement with a population of under 3,000.
  - Sole village general store with RV up to £8,500
  - Sole Post Office with RV up to £8,500
  - Food Shop (butchers, bakers etc) with RV up to £8,500
  - Sole public house with RV up to £12,500
  - Sole petrol station with RV up to £12,500

Discretionary relief of up to 100% can be applied if there is a community benefit and in the interest of the local tax payer. RV limit is £16,500.

Some businesses are entitled to other types of Business Rate Relief.

- Small Business Rate Relief - funded fully by central Government. 'Small Business' refers to the premises occupied not the size of the business, it is linked to the rateable value. Premises with a rateable value of up to £6,000 normally receive 50%

relief, but this currently has been extended to 100%. For premises with a rateable value of between £6,001 and £12,000 there is a sliding scale of relief. For premises with a rateable value of between £12,000 and £17,999 they receive the lower multiplier. The business must be in occupation and other mandatory reliefs take precedence.

- Hardship Relief – can be awarded if the business is viable and that granting of the relief would ensure the future of the business, it must be in the interest of the local tax payer and the business must be of community benefit. It should not distort competition nor should the Ratepayer sustain hardship if not awarded. Hardship is not to be awarded for new businesses.
- Retail Rate Relief – we have the discretion to discount business rate bills by up to £1,000 in each of the next two financial years (2014-15 & 2015-16) for retail premises with a rateable value of £50,000 or less. Retail premises must be occupied and wholly or mainly used to sell goods, services or food and drink to visiting members of the public.

As a guide the types of qualifying businesses may include: Shops, for example butchers, bakers, grocers, florists, jewellers, off-licences, chemists, newsagents, opticians, markets, petrol stations, post offices. Premises used to sell food and/or drink to visiting members of the public: restaurants, pubs, takeaways, coffee shops, bars. Premises used to provide the following services to visiting members of the public: hair & beauty services, such as hairdressers, nail bars, tanning shop. Shoe repairs, key cutting, dry cleaners or launderettes, car hire, and travel agents.

- Temporary Re-occupation Relief Scheme – from 1 April 2014 to 1 April 2016 we are able to grant a 50% discount from business rates to those occupying retail premises that have been vacant for at least 12 months. The relief will last for 18 months for those moving into such properties. The expectation is that this will encourage the take up of vacant retail premises.

## **Ambitions of the Task and Finish Group**

The Task and Finish Group sought to agree the key principles that should apply to a revised Discretionary Rate Relief policy. The Group invited officers and external interested parties to meet with them to discuss reliefs. Internal Teams that met with the Task and Finish Group were given some initial questions to consider as follows:

- **Community Health and Leisure**
  - Explain what attracts businesses and organisations to set up or move to a specific area.
  - Explain what, if anything SSDC could provide in the form of Discretionary rate relief or otherwise that could assist the Council in meeting its Health and



Communities related ambitions or result in a greater provision of services and facilities to the SSDC Community.

- Provide example cases where you think rate relief or other business support could have made a difference to attracting or helping businesses/organisations to grow or diversify.
  - Help identify what elements if any of the strategies' and policies your team works with need to be reflected or could be complimented by an effective NNDR Discretionary rate relief policy.
  - Provide suggestions on how best to assess the community value or need of a particular business or organisation.
  - Explain what the impact could be if relief was removed or reduced for some of the organisations and businesses that potentially help us maintain and enhance the South Somerset network of leisure and cultural facilities
- **Area Development**
    - Help identify, what elements if any, of the strategies' and policies your team works with need to be reflected or could be complimented by an effective NNDR Discretionary rate relief policy.
    - Explain what it if anything, SSDC could provide in the form of Discretionary rate relief or otherwise, that could help attract sustainable businesses/organisations to the area and encourage existing business/organisations to expand appropriately.
    - Explain what outcomes you feel could and or should be achieved giving business and organisations assistance in the form of Discretionary rate relief.
    - Explain how business and organisations in the area can benefit from alternative financial assistance and other forms of help.
    - Provide example cases where you think rate relief or other business support could have made a difference to attracting or helping businesses/organisations to grow or diversify in the area.
    - Provide suggestions on how best to assess the community value or need of a particular business or organisation.
    - Explain what the impact could be if relief was removed or reduced for some of the organisations and businesses in your area.
    - In addition to the above, the group felt it would be helpful if collectively with your Area Development Manager colleagues you could consider the relationship between NNDR Discretionary rate relief and
      - Regeneration

- The work of Market Towns Investment Groups
- Yeovil Vision and the town teams
- Rural business/service provision

to provide members with suggestions of how an NNDR Discretionary rate relief policy could recognise and compliment the authorities work in these areas.

- **Economic Development**

- Help identify what elements of the Economic Development Strategy and associated action plan needs to be reflected or could be complimented by an effective NNDR Discretionary rate relief policy.
- Explain what attracts businesses and organisations to set up or move to a specific area.
- Explain what it if anything, SSDC could provide in the form of Discretionary rate relief or otherwise, that could help attract sustainable businesses/organisations to the area and encourage existing business/organisations to expand appropriately.
- Provide example cases where you think rate relief or other business support could have made a difference to attracting or helping businesses/organisations to grow.
- Explain how business and organisations in the area can benefit from alternative financial assistance and other forms of help.

### **External Groups and interested parties**

Included:-

- Somerset Business Agency
- Into Somerset

Both Groups were asked to consider the following questions:-

- Learn what businesses consider and need as a priority when choosing where to locate – is there anything as a council we could do to help attract sustainable business to the area?
- Better understand what existing and potential new businesses commonly need to help them succeed or develop
- Appreciate the set up and running costs of different businesses, specifically with regard to running costs how much of businesses outgoings are required for Business Rates – how might having to pay Business Rates affect the viability of some businesses?
- Understand how rate relief and/or other assistance can help existing and potential new businesses across South Somerset

- Establish what other financial assistance and advice is available to existing and new businesses across South Somerset
- Recognise what most commonly causes businesses to cease trading
- Identify relevant, research information and evidence to inform the policy
- Appreciate what the impact could be for some businesses if relief was reduced or removed
- Consider what and how financial assistance or advice for individual businesses, organisations and charities could distort competition on the high street.

In addition a NDR Relief expert David Airey talked to the Group about what was achievable and the legal requirements for inclusion in any policy.

The Task and Finish Group also reviewed case studies of the various reliefs awarded. It also studied the NDR Relief policies of other Local Authorities.

The Task and Finish Group set out to ensure that the new policy would:-

- Work in harmony with the Council Plan, all relevant Council Strategies and subsequent Countywide collaborative work;
- That the policy and application process is accessible and not too complex for both the applicant and officers to administer;
- Effectively utilise relevant expertise and skill across SSDC;
- Have adequate measures to provide stability to the recipients of NNDR relief;
- Have adequate flexibility and could evolve i.e. to meet new requirements, to ensure that it keeps up with any changes Council objectives, and to allocate annual awards;
- Take into account the financial risks of applying the new policy.

The Task and Finish Group undertook some internal consultation to gauge members and officers views on the principles and proposals of the new policy before public consultation. This showed that there was broad support for the principles and proposals.

## **The Principles of the New Policy**

Once the Task and Finish Group had considered all of the evidence available it was agreed to consult on the following principles:-

- 1. Provide assistance when there is evidence of financial need.**

The Group took into account that in most cases the ability to pay is not considered and therefore it is questionable as to whether public funds are being used in the best way. It was also agreed that awards of relief should be proportionate to income. The recipient in some cases should demonstrate that appropriate effort was being made to make the business/group sustainable.

**2. The policy should support business, charities, organisations and groups that help to retain services in rural areas.**

It was agreed that SSDC should support retaining services in rural areas to prevent the potential detrimental effects of rural isolation on business organisations, charities and communities. The Group outlined the importance of enabling services to be locally accessible to residents especially in areas with limited public transport.

**3. Help and encourage business, charities, organisations, groups and communities to become self-reliant.**

The Task and Finish Group concluded that for some recipients there was an expectation and a dependency on the local authority for NDR Reliefs. Many of these businesses and Groups could become more self-reliant with some advice and assistance. Any recipient should demonstrate that appropriate effort was being made to make the business/group sustainable.

**4. Awarding discretionary relief should not distort competition**

The Task and Finish Group agreed that it was important to maintain competition on the high street, and there should not be an unfair advantage given to some over others. The Task and Finish Group did take into consideration the advantages of charity shops in that they have filled empty shops, their recycling agenda, and that they have created employment. However, they do currently create a distortion in competition because of their ability over other shops to considerably lower their overheads through NDR Relief. It was also noted that Charity Shops receive 80% mandatory relief at present and it was agreed that this support is sufficient without additional support from SSDC's taxpayers.

**5. Every business/ organisation should contribute something towards the provision of local services.**

The policy should be fair for all persons liable to pay NDR and considers the interest and needs of the residents/tax payers of South Somerset. This principle also brings businesses, organisations, and charities in line with the principle agreed as part of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme that every household should contribute to the cost of local services.

## **The Proposals of the New Policy**

In applying the principles the following proposals were consulted upon with recipients and other interested parties:-

1. It is proposed that a sole rural pub in receipt of 50% mandatory relief can also receive either or both of the following reliefs potentially awarding the pub 90% support towards business rates:-
  - 20% discretionary relief for the provision of community facilities and activities not provided elsewhere in the community;
  - 20% if they can demonstrate they are making significant efforts to help the business succeed

The principles applied to this were 1,2,3, 4, and 5. The impact of this would be a reduction in relief of between £100.08 and £264.93 for recipients currently receiving 50% discretionary rate relief and currently do not pay. This is assuming they would qualify under both elements to receive 40%. The impact of the reduction in relief for the group currently receiving 25% discretionary rate relief would be between £47.10 and £294.35. This is assuming that they would only receive one element of 20%.

2. A number of sole rural pubs do not receive mandatory relief. However, it is proposed that they can receive either, or both, of the following which potentially awards up to 40% support:-
  - 20% discretionary relief for the provision of community facilities and activities not provided elsewhere in the community;
  - 20% if they can demonstrate they are making significant efforts to help the business succeed

The principles applied to this were 1,2,3,4, and 5. The impact of this would be a reduction in relief of between £600.60 and £762.30 for this group of recipients if they received the maximum 40% relief. The impact if they received 20% relief would be between £1801.80 and £2286.90.

3. Provide up to 10% discretionary relief to the following in addition to 80% Mandatory Relief (providing a total of 90% relief from business rates):-
  - Village Halls
  - Community centres and meeting rooms
  - Scout, Guide and Youth Organisations
  - Pre-Schools/ Play Groups and Nurseries with charitable status
  - Local charity office where charitable service is being provided
  - Sports Clubs/recreational facilities where the bar is ancillary and is not offering discounted alcohol (to be specified in the policy schedule)
  - Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) where the bar is ancillary and is not offering discounted alcohol
  - Museum/Heritage or Arts centre,
  - Theatres

The principles applied to this were 1,2,3,4 and 5. The impact of this would be a reduction in relief of between £18.00 and £405.96 per annum for this group of recipients

4. In addition to the 80% mandatory relief awarded to the following groups the proposal is that further support is awarded of up to 10% discretionary relief for helping to achieve the ambitions of the Council plan and related strategies or up to 10% for helping to retain services in rural areas (i.e. a maximum of 100% in support) for:-
- Village Halls, Community Centres, and meeting rooms
  - Scout, Guide and Youth Groups
  - Rural Pre-Schools, Play Groups and Nurseries with Charitable status

The principles applied to this were 1,2,3,4, and 5. There will be no impact on the groups listed if those groups meet the criteria.

5. The following Organisations receive 80% mandatory relief. It is proposed that SSDC provide up to a further 20% discretionary relief (i.e. 100% in total):-
- Local Charity office that provides a service that SSDC would have to provide if the Charity didn't;
  - Sports Club/Recreational facility, no bar, open to all, satisfying community need, run by a committee (to be specified in the policy schedule);
  - Hospice/end of life care provider;
  - Lifesaving/rescue organisations.

The principles applied to this were 1 and 2. These are the only organisations/groups/charities that the Task and Finish Group felt should continue to be fully supported and given the nature of their provision to the public and achieving the Council's own aims and objectives and be exempt from principle 5.

6. In addition to the 50% mandatory relief awarded the proposal is that further support of up to 40% discretionary relief is awarded to the following types of business, organisation and group (i.e. a maximum of 90%).
- Rural Post Office Rateable Value up to £8,500
  - Rural General Store Rateable Value up to £8,500
  - Rural Post Office and General Store Rateable Value up to £8,500

The principles applied to this were 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. The impact of this would be a reduction in relief of between £64.76 and £315.57 per annum for this group of recipients

7. Under the principle Support business, charities, organisations and groups that helps the Council to achieve the ambitions of the Council Plan and related strategies including Health and Wellbeing. The proposal is to award up to 90% discretionary relief to the following:-
- Community Interest Company (or not for profit) where they operate similar to a charity with minimal costs and reinvest profit in the company up to a maximum Rateable Value of £8,500
  - Sports Club / Recreational facility which where the bar is ancillary and is not offering discounted alcohol, Rateable Value up to £8,500 (note not charities or CASCs)

Note SSDC's current policy does not accommodate CICs. A CIC can vary from a small "kitchen table" type organisation to multimillion pound turnover organisations employing thousands of people. They must hold their assets for applications for the good of the community and there are limitations applied to the dividend and interest payments made to shareholders.

Sports and Recreational Clubs over £8,500 would be allocated relief on a sliding scale and dependant on meeting set criteria (as set out in the policy schedule).

The principles applied to this were 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. This does not impact currently on any CICs. The impact on Sports and Recreational clubs will be dependent on the agreed sliding scale.

8. It is proposed that the 10% discretionary funding for Animal Trusts is removed.

This financial aid does not fit with the objectives of the Council Plan or any related strategy.

The principles applied to this were 1, 2, 3, and 5. The impact of this would be a reduction in relief of between £800.70 and £1,448.33 per annum for this group of recipients.

9. Local Charity Offices receive mandatory relief of 80%. At present a further 10% is awarded for charity administration offices and the proposal is to remove the 10% where the office is solely for administration purposes

The principles applied to this were 1, 2, 3, and 5. The impact of this would be a reduction in relief of between £57.10 and £3,391.20 for this group of recipients

10. The Task and Finish Group propose that it is not appropriate for SSDC to financially support any charity or club if the primary source of income is from the sale of alcohol or if there is a bar offering alcohol at discounted or reduced prices to its members or the general public.

The principles applied to this were 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. The impact of this is unknown as we do not have this data on current recipients.

11. It is not a statutory duty to provide an appeals process for discretionary rate relief. The proposal is that SSDC include an appeals process in the new policy to demonstrate openness and transparency.

12. The following reliefs were also discussed and consulted upon but have not gone out for public consultation as they do not impact on any current recipients.

<b>TYPE OF RELIEF</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>NUMBER OF CASES</b>	<b>CURRENT RELIEF</b> %	<b>PROPOSED RELIEF</b> %
Charitable	Schools/education & Academy's with charitable status, including private schools	59	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary
Charitable	National charity shop	23	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary
Charitable	National charity Administration office	10	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary
Charitable	Housing Association Office	5	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary
Rural Rate Relief	Petrol filling Station up to £12,500 RV	7	50% Mandatory 0% Discretionary	50% Mandatory 0% Discretionary
Rural Rate Relief	Dentist, hairdresser, up to £16,500 RV	1	Up to 100% Discretionary	Up to 50% Discretionary
Charitable	Religious Groups	7	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary	80% Mandatory 0% Discretionary

13. SSDC currently operates a Hardship Scheme where businesses in “temporary hardship” can apply for short term support for their business rates. Hardship Relief cannot be used for “start-up companies” as companies must have been trading for at least two years before being able to apply. This ensures that companies that start up



show that they are self-reliant and self-sustaining and do not rely on public finances. The feedback that the Task and Finish Group received was that relief should only be awarded as a last resort. They also discussed how hard it was to assess whether a company in difficulty would be able to continue as a going concern through temporary financial support. It was agreed that each case should be assessed and considered by the Economic Development Team. This would utilise the skills of the team and ensure that any relief met with the aims and objectives of Economic Development Strategy. The Task and Finish Group also received feedback that advice in many instances is of greater help than financial assistance.

14. SSDC is now able through Localism Act reliefs/ Local Discounts to reduce the business rates payable either for an individual or through setting up a policy to do so for instance to encourage new businesses to start up in SSDCs area. If SSDC were to agree these local discounts it would have to fund 40% of the costs but the remaining 60% would be funded by the Government, Somerset County Council, and the Somerset and Devon Fire and Rescue Service. The Task and Finish Group agreed that this should be considered on a case by case or through an Economic Development Team incentive (or jointly with the Area Development Teams) based on SSDC's Economic Development Strategy and the Council Plan. This could include attracting specific types of business, regenerating high streets through incentives such as "Meanwhile Use" and "Pop up Shops."

Evidence from other authorities has shown that those authorities that were quick to adopt a policy are already amending them. Those that we contacted said that they had run out of funds quickly and it was difficult to gauge the success of the scheme. The Task and Finish Group were concerned that if funds were limited there would be a risk of challenge from a business meeting the criteria but the set aside funding had run out. The most successful schemes appeared to be very targeted at very specific issues e.g. regenerating a named street.

The consultation that was carried out by the Task and Finish Group gave the following feedback:-

- That businesses usually don't take incentives into account as part of their decision making with regard to where to locate a business or to expand it in an area - transport links and communications i.e. broadband were more important.
- A package providing relief, advice, and support to bring entrepreneurs to bring something new to the area rather than one specific measure.
- That advice would be of more use to new businesses
- That long leases required by landlords was considered one of the issues

Although SSDC would gain in the business rates retained under the Government's new scheme the gain is minimal compared to the discount given. As an example a business that is given £100,000 reduction to locate in South Somerset would cost SSDC £40,000 in relief in the first year. It would gain £9,250 in per annum in

additional business rates. If the company was not sustainable and ceased to trade or moved out of the District after the first year SSDC would then lose £18,500 per annum in business rates. It would therefore be key to any future scheme that the businesses receiving the assistance were sustainable and remained in the district over the longer term.

In conclusion the Task and Finish Group agreed that specific project based schemes led by the Economic Development Team would be of greater benefit than a blanket policy approach in achieving the aims of the Council Plan.

15. The Task and Finish Group also considered empty business properties. The Task and Finish Group assessed that there should be no reliefs given by SSDC (other than the mandatory reliefs currently in place) while a business property was empty to encourage owners to bring the property back into use.

## **Financial Implications**

If the recommendations are approved SSDC would reduce its cost for discretionary relief for current recipients by approximately £7,570 per annum. This would go some way to offsetting the risks to the Council of having to fund 40% of mandatory reliefs without any ability to amend the assessment criteria for their award.

The loss in assistance to current recipients would be approximately £18,926 per annum.

The review of the policy was not led by a requirement to make savings but to ensure that SSDC continues to manage its application of Discretionary Rate Relief in line with its objectives and manage its financial risks.

The policy will also look to restrict awards to organisations with over £50,000 RV that currently fall within the current policy.

## **Recommendations**

The Task and Finish Group recommends that Scrutiny Committee:

1. Endorses the principles recommended at 1 to 5 and the importance of the revised policy meeting the aims of the council Plan.
2. Endorses the proposals outlined and numbered 1 to 15.

## Stage 1 Equality Analysis - NDR Discretionary Rate Relief Policy

<b>Date of EqA</b>	22/8/14	<b>EqA Lead Officer</b>	Ian Potter
<b>Is this a change to service delivery?</b>			Yes
<b>Does the policy/strategy/service affect our workforce or employment practices?</b>			No
<b>Is this a financial or budget decision that may affect any of the protected groups differently?</b>			No
<b>Could this policy or service and the way we deliver it affect some groups in society differently?</b>			Yes
<b>Does this policy/strategy/service affect service users or the wider community?</b>			Yes
<b>Outcome</b>	Low Impact		
<b>Summary Statement</b>	<p>A range of Mandatory and Discretionary Rate Reliefs exist to reduce (in some cases to Nil) the amount of Non-Domestic Rates (commonly known as business rates) a business or organisation has to pay. The qualifying rules and levels of relief for Mandatory Reliefs are set by Government and are the same throughout the country. The rules and levels of award for Discretionary Rate reliefs are set by each Council and as such may vary from Council to Council.</p> <p>The current policy was introduced in 2000 with a number of amendments having been made to it since that time. However, not all types of organisation are adequately recognised within the policy, and the introduction of the Business Rates Retention Scheme in April 2013 has changed the financial landscape for councils and implications for local tax payers.</p> <p>A full review and updating of the policy will ensure the key principles for applying NDR Relief continue to meet with the Council's own Council Plan 2012 – 2015 and all relevant strategies.</p> <p>A Scrutiny Task and Finish Group made up of members from across the political parties has been working with officers on a revised policy to review the Non Domestic Rate (NNDR) Discretionary Relief Policy and consider if additional forms of Discretionary Relief should be given under the Localism Act 2011.</p>		

	<p>It was vitally important for members undertaking policy development work to have all the necessary facts and information. We wanted to ensure that the policy created was fair and took into consideration all the possible impacts on the community. We also had to ensure that the policy did not put at risk the reputation and the good work of this authority. The introduction to the Task and Finish Group's final report is set out below.</p> <p>The Task and Finish Group recognises the major contribution made by the Voluntary and Community Sector to the economy, health and wellbeing of the people that live and work in South Somerset. One of our key aims was to ensure that any revised policy met with the needs of the Council Plan and related strategies to support the Council's objectives for South Somerset and to support the essential and widely varied voluntary and non-profit making organisations that make South Somerset a great place to live and work in. However, we had to recognise that a proportion of the assistance given through Discretionary Rate Relief is paid by the local taxpayer and as such the Council has a duty to ensure public funds are spent wisely and that there is transparency and accountability in the decisions made. The full report can be found in the agenda and minutes for the August 2014 Scrutiny Committee. <a href="http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&amp;MId=1376&amp;Ver=4">http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&amp;MId=1376&amp;Ver=4</a></p> <p>Reasons for a full EqA not being required are as follows - No impact on those with protected characteristics - Low impact on wider service users (i.e. users/customers of organisations/businesses affected by the policy review outcome) - internal and external consultation carried out (particularly with current recipients) - Involvement of Scrutiny Committee - Policy checked for legal compliance by external expert</p>		
<b>Equalities Officer Approval Comments</b>	Jo Morgan	<b>Status</b>	Approved 18/09/2014

# Agenda Item 9

## **Superfast Broadband Extension Programme - Interim Report on Options and Requirements**

*Executive Portfolio Holder: Jo Roundell Greene, Environment and Economic Development*  
*Strategic Director: Rina Singh, Strategic Director (Place and Performance)*  
*Assistant Director: Martin Woods, Assistant Director (Economy)*  
*Service Manager: David Julian, Economic Development Manager*  
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### **1. Purpose of the Report**

To present options available to SSDC for enhancing the delivery of broadband beyond the 90% covered by the Devon and Somerset Superfast Broadband Project (Connecting Devon and Somerset).

Also to present some examples of broadband issues based on the existing information available from the Areas.

### **2. Public Interest**

The provision of High Speed Broadband has become a necessity for attracting and retaining business to South Somerset. It is therefore a vital element of business infrastructure required in order to maintain and create jobs and fulfil South Somerset's economic potential. High Speed Broadband is also essential for most walks of life as digital and online transactions become essential aspects of health, education, and dealing with government, social services and welfare. Comprehensive coverage of High Speed Broadband is essential if South Somerset residents and businesses are not to be disadvantaged.

### **3. Recommendations**

Members are asked to note:

- the initial assessment of different options available and advise officers on further action.
- options cannot be comprehensively considered and compared until the information requested of Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) is provided.
- significant resource is required to comprehensively investigate options for capital investment in models of alternative provision.

### **4. Background**

On the 19<sup>th</sup> June 2014, South Somerset District Council District Executive agreed in principle to a capital funding commitment of £0.64m to deliver Superfast Broadband connectivity to an additional 5% of the district (6,290 premises) by the end of 2017 through the Superfast Extension programme (SEP). This would mean delivery to 95% of the district, since 90% will already be delivered under the current Connecting Devon and Somerset (CDS) programme.

The June District Executive agreed:

1. to contribute in principle a maximum of £640,000 as match funding to expand the provision of superfast broadband in South Somerset subject to:
  - Satisfactory provision of a detailed assessment of the superfast broadband roll out programme from which it is clear that it is favourable and beneficial to businesses in South Somerset
  - A satisfactory partnering agreement and governance arrangement to ensure this Council is fully engaged and involved in the delivery of superfast broadband
  - A satisfactory return can be agreed from the investment
2. the details of any proposed negotiation/agreement are reported back to District Executive for their decision
3. requested a wider report be presented to District Executive on the alternative options/providers

The 'in-principle' agreement is subject to the provision of detailed information still outstanding - in particular:

- Detailed assessment of the superfast broadband roll out programme
- A satisfactory partnering agreement and governance arrangement
- Confirmation that a satisfactory return can be agreed from the investment

At that meeting members also requested that officers explore wider alternatives to the CDS superfast extension programme. The options available are described in section 5 with an outline comparison in section 6 and a more detailed analysis in Appendix 1 of this report.

Additionally work has been done in areas to find examples of the current issues relating to broadband availability through engagement with businesses locally. This is outlined in Appendix 2.

## **5. Report**

### **5.1 Current position**

Broadband continues to be a major issue for businesses and affects economic growth. Discussions with a small range of rural businesses in the district have shown that:

- lack of good broadband speed is impeding the growth of many businesses by reducing their efficiency and wasting their resources.
- good 3G and fast broadband are increasingly needed to deliver business competitively;
- those with office premises (that cannot access competitive broadband speeds) are finding these increasingly difficult to let. Poor broadband speeds are a key factor and when higher speeds are available in nearby areas, firms may choose to locate to those faster broadband areas;
- research in one area showed that demand for office space would be evident if superfast broadband was available;
- the cost of bespoke superfast broadband solutions are prohibitive to many businesses. Details are in Appendix 2.

Superfast broadband delivery began in 2011 with the BT funded commercial rollout. This has already taken superfast broadband coverage across the CDS area to 63% of premises. An interactive map has been published by the CDS team and this is available at [www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk/where-when](http://www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk/where-when)

It is clear from this map that towns identified as being covered within the 'commercial rollout' (in our case Yeovil and Ilminster) still have significant areas that remain 'under evaluation'. In particular there appears to be a lack of focus on business parks and these include much of Yeovil's employment land.

The cabinets serving these areas *may* be upgraded through the ongoing CDS programme by the end of 2016. Decisions on which cabinets are upgraded are primarily based on the results of ongoing BT civil engineering survey and CDS assessment.

Members will be aware that SSDC did not sign what was considered to be an unduly onerous non-disclosure agreement (NDA) with CDS/BT and so do not have access to this emerging delivery plan.

More recently, the Government SEP has made further funds available to CDS (if they secure 50% local authority match funding) to deliver to an additional 5% of premises by the end of 2017 (eventually increasing broadband coverage to 95%). It is this opportunity which has prompted the CDS team to request the £0.64m contribution from SSDC, though it remains unclear how they arrived at this figure.

At present, we have yet to be told which areas of South Somerset might benefit from our potential commitment. Moreover, SSDC have yet to receive any information in relation to the conditions of the 'in principle' SEP contribution stipulated by District Executive. We must ensure that these are provided prior to the required final CDS report to District Executive. Similarly, we have not been given a timescale for the SEP, though we are aware that CDS are awaiting Open Market Review (OMR) data to help determine future coverage prior to engaging potential suppliers. SSDC has requested an indicative timeframe, but this has not yet been provided.

Therefore a detailed option appraisal against other alternatives is not possible until we obtain that information. Only then will we have a benchmark with which the value of alternative options can be comprehensively examined.

Points to note

- That increasing levels of subsidy are required to deliver to more isolated premises
- At present there is no indication from central government for the final 5% of premises for whom delivery is currently unplanned
- No financial contribution from SSDC will still mean that 90% of premises including business ones will receive access to superfast broadband by Dec. 2016
- All premises i.e. 100% will receive at least 2 megabytes per second by Dec. 2016
- The CDS aim is for 100% of premises to be connected to SF broadband by 2020

It should be noted that both the District Executive Committee (and the Area Chairs following subsequent discussion) felt that SSDCs priority should be to direct its resources towards enabling affordable connection for businesses so that they can function effectively in their market place.

## **5.2. Alternative options to the CDS programme**

There are options which can be explored to deliver superfast broadband *above the 90%* - to premises that fall outside the current CDS Programme described above and in the report that was presented to District Executive on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

These would take the form of a co-investment model with alternative broadband providers with the aim of delivering to a higher percentage of premises in the district. Examples are cited below.

NB: In order to properly assess the following alternative SEP models to CDS we need to initiate a detailed scoping, feasibility and viability assessment. In the first instance, we would need to establish whether a public-private co-investment model outside of CDS would meet the BDUK gateway review criteria. This is essential if match funding is to be secured to effectively double our investment to £1.28m.

It should be noted that the Superfast Broadband Extension Programme will enable a maximum of 95% of premises in South Somerset to connect to Superfast Broadband. Homes and businesses are equally able to connect, but the final connection between an enabled junction box and a premises is chargeable.

### **5.2.1 Co-investment models**

#### **West Oxfordshire District Council**

There has been a growing interest in locally managed Superfast broadband delivery projects following West Oxfordshire DC's (WODC) decision to enter a public/private partnership agreement with Cotswolds Broadband and commit a loan of £1.6m to be match funded by BDUK and wider investors. Their aim is to become the first 100% superfast district though a combination of technologies such that all premises have access.

Views were taken from West Oxford and the following points were noted;

- The loan to Cotswold Broadband will be £1.6m for a 10 year period
- The loan is match funded by BDUK but only because of the long operational history between WODC, Cotswold Broadband and BDUK. The match funding was not the result of a speculative bid to BDUK but the development of a pre-existing option
- The anticipated return for WODC is 5% p.a. interest.
- The loan is high risk as there are no assets (to fix the loan against) until the system is installed and operational
- State Aid issues have been triggered and resolutions/outcomes are awaited
- The deal/ agreement is not yet signed off

#### **Eastbourne Borough Council**

Eastbourne is now benefitting from a high speed fibre optic broadband network along its coastal edge. This has been provided via a special arrangement involving Eastbourne Borough Council which invested £367,000 in a broadband infrastructure supply company, CloudConnX, which has developed the town's new broadband network. The investment in CloudConnX also stands to provide the local authority with a future return over the next five years over and above the £367,000 originally laid down.



Eastbourne's unique linear geography made this particular type of broadband provision possible and it is unlikely to represent a suitable model for South Somerset.

### **SSDC partner with an alternative ISP provider**

ED officers have had an exploratory discussion with a local Internet Service Provider. The firm provide 'line of sight' broadband to residential and business customers. They transmit from mast sites to transceivers on customers buildings. The technology is deemed adequate – achieving close to fibre broadband speeds, but as with all 'over ground' broadband, issues/problems do emerge and transmitters need realigning. Service drop outs are experienced and the business has limited capacity. This was SSDC's experience when the same technology was employed in the Chard Connect project.

Costs of market provision are competitive from £30 pcm for 10mbs residential. Businesses can pay between £25 to £100 pcm depending on usage. Further costs include the transceiver (C.£150 inc. base installation). Extra installation costs may be identified at survey.

As a small company, the ISP provider contacted is not yet in a position to provide to much wider geographies. If they were to work with us, they would investigate new mast sites. It was confirmed that if SSDC want to go as close to 100% coverage as is practicable, the company would need most financial help to fund provision to deeply rural premises (assuming they want to receive it).

For isolated areas with little prospect of CDS provision, we could investigate 'line of sight' connectivity, though to enable any realistic prospect of a return, this would need to be demand led with a guaranteed customer base. It would be most easily achieved from a mast on existing SSDC property, such as YIC serving identified businesses at Lufton Trading Estate.

### **Broadband on Business Parks**

At Yeovil Innovation Centre, SSDC worked with communications firm Elite Telecommunications to provide a market solution. Superfast Broadband is now supplied directly to the centre and on to 25 tenants. This illustrates that where a ready market exists, installation costs are low and financial returns are assured, then the private sector will deliver. It should be noted however that YIC is unusual in that many businesses are located in one building, the required fibre connection was already in place, the connection distances were shorter and the economy of scale is greater.

It may be possible to use this model of connecting several businesses in close proximity through a single 'package' arrangement. SSDC's role may be to enable clusters of businesses (perhaps on business parks) to create the economy of scale required to engage commercial providers in negotiations.

### **Community led solutions**

For communities that are outside the SEP area or for communities who want to take more control by bringing forward delivery of this service, then a community led initiative, procured & funded by subscribers, *may* be an option. In all instances, a bespoke approach would be required with its own business case to assess the issues and costs of taking the technology to those places. Initiating this work will

require an intensive amount of officer resource and we would need to ensure that it did not fall within the current CDS delivery or planned SEP.

SSDC could have a role in enabling these communities to work towards solutions. It would be possible to advise on any external funding sources and possibly offer our own grants and/or loans. There are many examples of “pioneer” communities who have decided to be proactive and deliver their own solutions. This solution is not mutually exclusive with the other options but would offer another method for remote communities who want to get connected.

## **6. Comparison of options**

The detailed comparison is provided in Appendix 1

### **Option 1**

- assumes that we subscribe to the CDS offer to take the SEP from 90% to 95% availability of superfast broadband to premises in South Somerset.
- Although we do not know the geographic extent of this coverage, we understand that it will extend coverage to an additional 6290 premises.
- The cost is clearly stated at £0.64M and it levers the same level of BDUK government funding.
- Needs to be assessed when information available.

### **Option 2**

- explores alternative ways in which SSDC can invest their capital in a superfast broadband roll-out.
- This option necessitates working with a commercial partner and as yet there is no worked-up business plan or scheme.
- This option might give greater control over the choice of premises covered, but is unlikely to achieve the stated outputs of the CDS programme although the outputs achieved may be better targeted. This option undoubtedly requires considerably more SSDC officer resource and is likely to involve far higher levels of risk.
- We would re-iterate that no sound comparison can be made until the full detail of the CDS programme is provided.

See Appendix 1 for detail.

## **7. Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report further to the ED officer resource associated with pursuing the information required to rigorously assess options for improved broadband delivery.

## **8. Risk**

At this stage an outline assessment of the risks are provided in the Options and Risk Analysis. This is provided in Appendix 1.

## **9. Corporate Priority Implications**

This report will enable the District Council to work towards the aim outlined within the SSDC Council Plan 2012-15 in Focus One: Jobs “Support early delivery of Super-Fast Broadband to rural areas by 2015”.

It will also enable the Council to contribute to the aspiration within the SSDC Economic Development Strategy 2012-15 “Work with partners to lobby for improvements to the A303 and provision of superfast broadband”.

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

There are no current implications associated with this report though the extension programme assists improvements in communication and the reduction of energy use.

## **11. Equality and Diversity Implications**

In preparing this report, due consideration has been given SSDC’s statutory Equality duties Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010.

An equality analysis of the broadband project is being undertaken with delivery anticipated to have a positive equalities impact.

The roll - out strategy will be determined by a range of factors including local requirements and commercial factors. The strategy should be screened to ensure communities (sharing a protected characteristic) are not inadvertently disadvantaged from accessing the service due to, for example, geographical factors.

Aspects of this project related to subsidising the rollout of broadband has a low relevance to equality, whilst implementation has a medium relevance to equality. The project is providing access to broadband and not connectivity. So the connection and use of the service will be between customer and retail provider.

## **12. Background Papers**

- District Executive Report 19<sup>th</sup> June 2014 – Match Funding for the Superfast Broadband Extension Programme
- Broadband Task and Finish Group Scrutiny Review, Sept, 2014

## Appendix 1: An analysis of the Options and Risk

The following table examines the wider implications of 1) supporting CDS through £0.64m SEP capital funding – or – 2) to use capital funds to partner with an alternative supplier of broadband with the aim of maximising delivery beyond the current CDS Programme.

Each option is evaluated in the tables below as a cost and benefit analysis.

<b>Option 1: Full SSDC commitment to contribute £0.64m match funding to support the CDS 95% Superfast Broadband Extension Programme (SEP)</b>			
<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Risks</b>
<p>1. Detailed information from CDS required to understand the detail of current, SEP and non-delivery areas.</p> <p>Details of eventual agreement are to be reported back to District Executive for decision (CDS)</p>	<p>Awareness of areas least likely to be covered, enabling alternative provision to be prioritised</p> <p>&gt;95% of premises in the district with access to SF by Dec, 2017.</p>	<p>£0.64m SSDC capital commitment</p> <p>Further investment of resources to address non-delivery areas</p>	<p>The information required to gauge value for money is not provided by CDS before SEP funds are requested</p> <p>If details of the eventual SEP supplier agreement are reported, SSDC may not be satisfied</p>
<p>2. That SSDC will be party to the discussions and negotiations with suppliers for the extension programme. SSDC to have voting powers in decisions based upon our high level of financial contribution</p>	<p>Minimum risk option overall.</p> <p>Will help to ensure maximum coverage to priority areas.</p> <p>Will allow local intelligence to shape eventual delivery</p>	<p>High degree of officer input required.</p> <p>Requires clear governance and clarity over procurement processes.</p>	<p>SSDC may feel under represented compared to our higher SEP contribution.</p> <p>Potential for conflict with other DC contributors committing less but getting stronger SEP delivery</p>
<p>3. That funding committed by SSDC would be ring-fenced to be spent on broadband within the SSDC area</p>	<p>Ensures local funds benefit local home and business premises to access superfast broadband</p>	<p>Officer time to liaise with CDS team, monitor and report back</p>	<p>Difficult to monitor and control.</p> <p>CDS may not provide detail on SEP spend.</p> <p>Existing NDA issues may remain a barrier</p>
<p>4. To work with a number of suppliers and a range of technologies to achieve the best deal for broadband coverage in all areas (District Executive Minutes June, 2014).</p>	<p>CDS are not tied into contracting BT for the SEP delivery.</p> <p>However, BT would represent the lowest risk option for the 95%.</p> <p>Procurement rules require an open tendering process.</p> <p>Best value promoted.</p> <p>CDS will begin a robust and state aid compliant procurement exercise</p>	<p>No further costs identified beyond the £0.64m requested</p>	<p>Reputational risk for SSDC in signing up to CDS in the knowledge the final 5% have no planned delivery.</p> <p>Potential risks in using less established and experienced providers.</p> <p>Potential conflict with existing CDS BT rollout if SEP element goes to others</p>
<p>5. District Executive support is subject to a</p>	<p>Potential for financial return.</p>	<p>Potential cost to SSDC of £0.64m with no</p>	<p>If no clarification is provided on how the</p>

<b>Option 1: Full SSDC commitment to contribute £0.64m match funding to support the CDS 95% Superfast Broadband Extension Programme (SEP)</b>			
<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Risks</b>
return on the investment. Clarity required on the calculation of the £640,000 funding level sought from South Somerset	Mechanism to be examined by CDS. Claw back clause in the current BT contract also to be explored. SSDC's £0.64m will be match funded by BDUK	actual return on investment. TBC by CDS as to whether/how this is possible. May not be possible for all stakeholders to be guaranteed an appropriate return since premises are most difficult to reach with lower commercial return	£0.64m contribution figure was identified, SSDC risk paying more than other DCs and benefiting less. Anticipated return on investment may not materialise if models are flawed and demand for SF low
<b>6.</b> That the investment maximise inward investment and local economic development (District Executive Minutes June, 2014).	Larger suppliers more likely to market additional delivery beyond existing CDS. CDS also have an active comms office. Investors likely to check CDS and major supplier website. Less likely to suffer adverse financial situation than newer, smaller providers	No way to guarantee increased investment. Potential for less efficient allocation of resource (and ultimate delivery) with larger suppliers. May see investment go to larger centres as SFB is improved.	We may see no actual increase in inward investment. CDS SEP will be improving SF in all districts in Somerset, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. SSDC will not stand out in terms of SFB alone. Inward investment in final 5% rural areas jeopardised.
<b>7.</b> District Executive requested delivery to is to be prioritised to all SSDC's business parks. District Executive support is subject to clear business benefits. A detailed assessment to this end is required from CDS	Maximises potential for inward investment, indigenous growth and job creation –	This is not possible to ensure through CDS SEP route. We are unlikely to be able to secure this without sacrificing delivery elsewhere in the district since their aim is for 95%	CDS will not provide the required assessment. Some business parks may lie within the final 5% outside of SEP. SSDC may be unable to ensure all businesses parks are covered.
<b>8.</b> District Executive expressed the view that broadband coverage must extend to the whole of South Somerset, including rural settlements	SSDC SEP contribution is match funded by BDUK, creating the largest amount available to support delivery (£1.28m) Delivery with CDS will not be 100%, however, they are clear on where the non-delivery areas are in district. Going with them will mean these areas can be more clearly supported to invest in alternatives	The CDS SEP target has only increased from 90% to 95% of premises in the district having access to superfast BB. Support for CDS SEP delivery means 100% will not be the aim	Reputational risk. SEP through CDS contract will not extend to all rural settlements. 5% will remain unconnected to SF broadband. Most geographically isolated will become most digitally isolated.

<b>Option 1: Full SSDC commitment to contribute £0.64m match funding to support the CDS 95% Superfast Broadband Extension Programme (SEP)</b>			
<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Risks</b>
<p>9. Support is subject to a satisfactory partnering agreement and governance arrangement to ensure this Council is fully engaged and involved in the delivery of superfast broadband</p>	<p>SSDC are assured of this by CDS. This should clarify governance and degree of input SSDC will have in decision making and delivery. CDS SEP option represents minimal SSDC officer resource (pending detail of partnership agreement)</p>	<p>Significant amount of officer time – ED and Area teams. We may feel compelled to agree to a non-satisfactory partnering agreement rather than risk losing the BDUK match funding which may not be granted to us outside of CDS</p>	<p>NDA issues remain with CDS in respect of the current rollout. It is unclear whether this will continue to be an issue in the contracts awarded to SEP delivery partners. If CDS partnering agreement is unsatisfactory, we will have risked non-delivery when steps could have been taken through a Public-Private partnership (PPP).</p>

<b>Option 2: SSDC invest in 100% High Speed broadband coverage with alternative provider(s) through a Co-Investment Model</b>			
<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Risks</b>
<p>1. Detailed investigation of existing loan agreements e.g. between West Oxfordshire District Council and Cotswold Broadband. Full examination of partnership agreement, best practice and potential suitability</p>	<p>A similar loan model may present a better opportunity for maximising broadband coverage. Potential for improved capital return on investment in longer term</p>	<p>Far more resource intensive in terms of ED, Procurement and Finance officer time in the short, medium and long term. Significant Area Team resource commitment to coordinate engagement and delivery to deeply rural settlements comprising the final 10%.</p>	<p>May fail to meet BDUK requirements (West Oxfordshire DC had prior option of BDUK match funding, SSDC do not). SSDC may fail to identify cost effective provider(s) to deliver to the final 5% Potential for abortive work</p>
<p>2. District Executive members insisted that loan rather than grant funding should be explored. The ability to generate a return on the investment must be prioritised</p>	<p>Entirely possible via this route to BB infrastructure provision. SSDC contribution is an interest earning investment and not a grant.  (C. %5 return on investment if successful). Repayment over 10-12 yrs.</p>	<p>Significant officer time and technical examination. Further research and due diligence required to satisfy State Aid and BDUK gateway reviews.  Requires market testing, sound planning and demand stimulation to create viability required to generate returns. Chard Connect project, supported by SSDC,</p>	<p>State Aid regulation may be breached. Loan cannot be fixed to significant assets (network is not worth anything until it is in place) Large risk of default on loan with smaller, independent suppliers. May not be possible for all co-investors to be guaranteed an appropriate return since premises are most rural with lower commercial return.</p>

<b>Option 2: SSDC invest in 100% High Speed broadband coverage with alternative provider(s) through a Co-Investment Model</b>			
<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Costs</b>	<b>Risks</b>
		aimed to provide 'line of sight' high speed broadband to businesses in Chard. It was not successful – low demand and poor reliability.	Demand among final 5% unknown. If demand (indicating eventual take up) is poor, the high cost of provision would require scrutiny.
<b>3.</b> A clear understanding of what the funding is going towards	In small areas, this can be achieved. Local providers (such as CFB Broadband) can map out areas within a given settlement that can have 'line of sight' access.  Partnership ensures open sharing of information with clear planning to meet shared social and economic objectives. SSDC will have more influence on the project and delivery.	Clarity from CDS/BT on identifying the final 10% may not be provided.  Officer time requirement. In this option, SSDC are part of the delivery partnership and there are risks associated with this.	Higher risk of non-delivery.  Very difficult to map with alternative suppliers. Incredibly complex task and required current CDS delivery data that SSDC do not have access to.  Strong potential for duplication of delivery with CDS unless initiated after Dec. 2016 when current CDS delivery ends.
<b>4.</b> Delivery to be prioritised to all SSDC's business parks. Must be demonstrably favourable and beneficial to businesses in South Somerset	This is possible if a 100% superfast delivery model is pursued.  Technically possible to tailor the delivery in partnership with our own infrastructure providers though costs may be unacceptable.  Maximises potential for inward investment, indigenous growth and job creation.  Not limited to the SEP 95% delivery target	This will require detailed investigation with alternative providers.  Importantly, coordination of delivery to the final 10% (to 100%) in parallel with CDS delivery to the 90% will prove problematic – esp. since delivery plans will not be shared (NDA) and if separate suppliers are engaged.	Prioritising business parks may mean delayed/decreased delivery elsewhere.  Potential for poor investment and low return.  Final delivery may not be as strong as SEP would have been through CDS.
<b>5.</b> Broadband coverage must extend to the whole of South Somerset, including rural settlements	This is possible but requires detailed market appraisal and possible specialist analysis of alternative SF broadband delivery models, technologies and providers.  Potential to deliver widest SF broadband improvement to district overall, 100% capability. Presents various delivery options.	Detailed research requirement.  Likely to take much longer than CDS SEP – not least as we may need to wait until the CDS programme ends to know where the final 10% is located.  May cost more than £640k	Less established broadband infrastructure providers may aim to deliver to 100% of premises, but ultimately fail to do so for a variety of reasons with less reputational risk (than BT for e.g.)  Smaller, less established suppliers more likely to fail mid-delivery and default on loan – esp. if take up is low.

**Option 2: SSDC invest in 100% High Speed broadband coverage with alternative provider(s) through a Co-Investment Model**

Requirements	Benefits	Costs	Risks
<p>6. Support is subject to a satisfactory partnering agreement and governance arrangement to ensure this Council is fully engaged and involved in the delivery of superfast broadband</p>	<p>Likely to feature stronger engagement since there will be no NDS restrictions placed on SSDC.</p> <p>This agreement will clarify governance and the degree of input SSDC will have in decision making and local delivery.</p> <p>External expertise ensured.</p>	<p>Requires significant work by SSDC and potential suppliers. Comprehensive tendering and procurement.</p> <p>Once a preferred supplier is identified, a separate bid to BDUK for match funding will be required.</p>	<p>SSDC may fail to identify cost effective provider(s) to deliver SF broadband to the final 5%</p> <p>If this satisfactory loan agreement cannot ultimately be achieved, we will have risked a period of non-delivery when steps could have been taken with CDS SEP delivery.</p> <p>The BDUK match funding to CDS may no longer be renegotiable to providers outside of CDS</p>
<p>7. Will require wireless infrastructure to maximise coverage to more remote rural settlements</p>	<p>Wireless BB now provides 10-20Mb download and 8-10Mb upload speeds at reasonable costs in areas least likely to be upgraded via current CDS</p>	<p>Potential for high costs and low uptake.</p> <p>Potential for local objection to masts/non satellite infrastructure through planning.</p>	<p>Potential for duplication of delivery and abortive working should CDS and SSDC suppliers overlap in delivery terms.</p> <p>Without further match funding, the cost of delivery to the final 5% <i>could</i> prove unaffordable.</p>



## Appendix 2: Brief case studies of poor broadband speeds impeding rural business development

Location	Businesses	Impact
Stathe	Self-catering cottages	BB very slow, really affects business. Working people who stay in winter want to be able to work in the evenings but find the download speed so slow they would rather stay in Taunton (much faster). Families with children want fast BB and are disappointed too.
Westover Trading Estate Langport	Assessment and certification body	Rely on BB for day to day operations. Customers, suppliers and directors spread across the UK. Email and web page are primary means of communication. Need to update the Gas Safe Register with all the certification results for gas engineers, link into the Gas Safe website and upload details directly to their system. Faster BB would be a huge benefit. Developing file sharing and electronic transfer of candidate file records/examination paperwork to assessment centres (e.g. Newcastle) attended by the installer (currently all hard copy by courier with twice weekly deliveries & back on completion). Electronic transfer would bring cost and environmental savings, huge reductions on fuel miles. Electronic file size would vary, but could be large.
Aller	Serviced offices	Has lost potential tenants due to poor broadband speeds in the past.
Langport area	Community web access initiative	Figs for a monitored line for the last few months from a small home. Business having big problems with the internet. Average download speed at TA12 6BU May-1.6mbps, June-1.49, July-1.54, Aug-1.52 (range 0.2-1.88mbps). Upload is consistently 0.39mbps
Langport	Bow St	Staff visiting shops about business rates have been told consistently that BB speeds are a problem that affect workspace lettings and slow down business efficiency.
Langport	Estate agents	lose business tenants in the area due to poor broadband speeds
Langport	Social enterprise/Work Hub	We are struggling to get people in as the existing lines into the building are slow and the upgrade costs to a bonded option are prohibitive.
Pitney	Domiciliary Care Agency	Rely on contact with care assistants 24/7 and the clients and their relatives. Floods highlighted many "pockets" of poor or no 3G signal. Larger companies manage their business from a central hub, no issues, small companies manage at ground level. Technology advancement does not appear to be a priority in Somerset. SCC Adult Social care acknowledge the highest percentage of older adults in the UK & predicted to rise so imperative that people at risk and their carers can be contactable.
Wincanton	IT Hardware Support (60 employees)	Servicing global IT clients and international subsidiaries, can hardly hold a conversation on Skype never mind video conference! Seriously considering moving out of the area because the service is so poor quoted £30-40k to link to fibre optic by BT (2013).
Brewham	Equestrian Consultants (3 employees). Works with over 225 international solicitors and insurance firms	Rely on BB for all communication and instructions including sending and receiving large files of DVD and photographic evidence. Use internet for research and administration. Very weak/intermittent mobile data signal so also rely on BB for all use of mobile phones, poor speeds mean all other internet activity must be stopped to allow one conversation on a mobile to take place. IT support is provided remotely whenever possible but poor BB speeds result in twice as many visits.

Location	Businesses	Impact
		<p>Increasingly meetings with solicitors, barristers and insurers are carried out by video conferencing the lack of a suitable BB link requires me to travel to an urban area to take part in these conferences.</p> <p>SFBB links in rural areas will allow more home working and reduced journey times and numbers. It will allow our rural communities to thrive, make better use of the local resources and environment and reducing the local population average age making it more representative of the country as a whole.</p>
Wincanton	SSDC Churchfield	Prospective Business tenant did not follow up due to poor BB speeds in town.
Castle Cary	Veterinary medicine distribution Co.	Communications a clear issue for this firm which needs SFBB to develop its business effectively (distribution of veterinary supplies) also a priority for other businesses in Castle Cary. One major manufacturer has installed its own satellite system to overcome the problem.
Yeovil	Industrial Estates	Very high costs of connecting up to SFBB, e.g. Houndstone business quoted £10k.
Chard , Crewkerne and Ilminster		<p>It is a mixed picture. The issue is cost. Businesses with deep enough pockets can and do procure the 100+ Mbps SFBB they need right now, but the “entry” costs are high. Lowering those costs via infrastructure improvements would promote growth and relocation and lower the entry cost barriers to start-up companies.</p> <p>We did some research that demonstrated that effective demand for office space within Ilminster would increase if it came with access to SFBB, contrary to the assertions of a local developer, which helped to partially resist a change of use from Economic to residential.</p> <p>If business relies on a connection to the existing infrastructure, Ilminster now has a clear advantage, but the max speed available to (e.g.) the local Ashwell Trading Estate is still only 7.6Mbps. Crewkerne has slightly higher max speeds at around 13 Mbps and Chard at around 10Mbps access to standard broadband.</p>

# Agenda Item 10

## **Adoption of Housing Strategy Implementation Plan**

<i>Executive Portfolio Holder:</i>	<i>Councillor Ric Pallister, Strategy and Policy</i>
<i>Strategic Director:</i>	<i>Rina Singh, Place and Performance</i>
<i>Assistant Director:</i>	<i>Martin Woods, Economy</i>
<i>Service Manager:</i>	<i>Colin McDonald, Corporate Strategic Housing Manager</i>
<i>Lead Officer:</i>	<i>Colin McDonald, Corporate Strategic Housing Manager</i>
<i>Contact Details:</i>	<i>colin.mcdonald@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462331</i>

### **Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of this report is to seek adoption of the Housing Strategy Implementation Plan.

### **Public Interest**

This report covers the Council's overall strategic approach to housing provision across the district, in partnership with other organisations such as the County Council (with respect to its health and wellbeing responsibilities) and a range of Housing Associations and other landlords operating within the district. The proposed document is the district specific plan which follows on from the county wide framework document adopted by the Council in March 2014.

It will be of interest to members of the public concerned about the provision of:-

- social housing for those in need in their local area
- low cost and other forms of affordable housing below prevailing market rates
- advice and support services to those who find themselves homeless
- housing related support for those who might otherwise find it difficult to maintain their current tenure
- practical assistance for those owning or occupying poor standard housing in the private sector
- temporary stopping points for the gypsy and traveller communities

and to members of the public interested in the wider economic benefits of improving housing provision.

It will be of particular interest to any member of the public who is seeking assistance with any of the above or has a friend or relative in need of assistance from the District Council or one of the other related partner agencies.

### **Recommendation**

The District Executive is asked to formally adopt the Housing Strategy Implementation Plan.

### **Background**

Following the introduction of a new statutory requirement, the district council first published a Housing Strategy in October 1992 covering the three year period 1992-1995. The last full Housing & Accommodation Strategy was published in May 2004, covering the period 2004 – 2007. An update document was published in 2008, but since then no further updates have been issued, in anticipation of the development of a county-wide document.

The five housing authorities in Somerset have a long history of working collaboratively resulting in resources being used more effectively and various initiatives being developed consistently. This partnership working pre-dates the current government's emphasis on strategic, cross-border, multi-discipline partnerships and has been delivered through the Somerset Strategic Housing Partnership (SSHP) and the Somerset Strategic Housing Group (SSHG). The former includes the latter and all the relevant elected member portfolio holders from the five districts and the County.

Work began in earnest on a county wide housing strategy in 2011 with the creation of a vision statement, developed through wide consultation with affected agencies and groups. A project group began work in February 2012 to develop the vision into a full blown strategy framework. After originally holding back in order to allow for a county wide process, this councils scrutiny task and finish group considered the proposed framework document in January 2014. The District Executive formally adopted the Housing Strategy Framework Document in March 2014.

When adopting the county-wide framework document, the District Executive also endorsed the proposals for developing a district specific strategy document.

### **Development of the Housing Strategy Implementation Plan: Process**

Following the proposals endorsed by the District Executive in March 2014, an internal project team was created, led by the Corporate Strategic Housing Manager and included:

- Members of the Strategic Housing Unit
- The Environmental Health Manager
- The Empty Homes Officer
- A member of the Spatial Policy team
- A team leader from the Benefits team and
- The Council's Equalities Officer

The Housing Options team were also invited to send officers to the project team and were kept informed of progress at all stages.

The project team reviewed relevant strategies, action plans and other evidence to look at:

- How current each document is
- How consistent documents are with the county-wide housing strategy framework
- Whether the evidence base required a refresh
- Identifying and reviewing any outstanding actions
- Identifying whether anything needs to change in the light of the framework document and/or emerging issues
- Checking for options appraisals
- Inclusion of Equalities Analysis
- Opportunities for further partnership or cross boundary working.

A consultation draft was produced in July 2014 and widely circulated to a range of relevant stakeholders such as Parish Councils, Housing Associations and other partner organisations. The consultation draft was also made available on our web site. The formal consultation period ran for ten weeks, closing on 17<sup>th</sup> September. Embedded within the consultation draft were eight specific consultation questions at appropriate places within the text and a final catch-all question seeking comments on any other aspect. A web-based 'surveymonkey' questionnaire was also created using the same standard questions.

There was also a report back to Scrutiny and the Task and Finish Group (which commented on the pre-consultation draft). One of the regular Portfolio Holder discussion group mornings, open to all elected members, in early September, was set aside to go

through the nine consultation questions. Finally the document was discussed at the Equalities Steering Group meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2014.

## **Development of the Housing Strategy Implementation Plan: Content**

The proposed Housing Strategy Implementation Plan for adoption is attached as Appendix 1.

The Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish group made suggestions with regard to the layout and content of the Housing Strategy Implementation Plan. The District Executive, meeting in March 2014, endorsed that the plan be created with the following objectives:

- Ensuring SSDC addresses priorities based on its locality and demographic
- The strategy is supported by the most up-to-date information and evidence
- The strategy details the objectives and priority areas that should be addressed while providing flexibility in how this is achieved
- The document is accessible and uses 'Plain English' throughout

The document has been developed to be consistent with the county wide housing strategy framework and look at how some of the issues identified should be addressed at a local level. However, as suggested by the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish group it identifies four, rather than three, objectives:

- Objective 1 Health & wellbeing for all
- Objective 2 To increase the supply of affordable housing to support economic growth and development.
- Objective 3 Making effective use of South Somerset's housing stock.
- Objective 4 To meet the housing and accommodation related support needs of Somerset's most vulnerable and least resilient residents by working in partnership.

The main part of the document provides commentary on these objectives in turn, recognising that some areas of activity straddle two or more of these objectives. On the whole the evidence behind the commentary is gathered together in a separate section towards the back of the document, or separately referenced, rather than set within the commentary text. Where new actions are proposed these are described in the main commentary but also summarised in an action plan table at the end of the main commentary sequence.

## **Implications for the District Executive Forward Plan**

Adoption of the Housing Strategy Implementation Plan implies that further reports will be required for the District Executive where actions within the action plan cannot be dealt with under existing delegated authority (for example through a formal report to the Portfolio Holder). In particular it is suggested that the following reports be placed in the Forward Plan at an appropriate juncture:

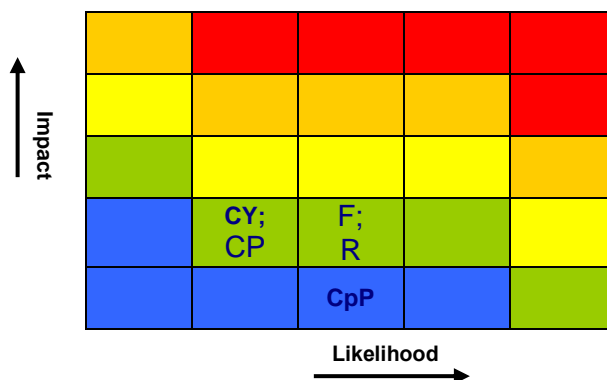
- Adoption of a revised private sector housing strategy
- Adoption of a balanced rural lettings policy
- Adoption of the revised county wide tenancy strategy

The District Executive may also wish to ask for update reports on any of the other actions contained within the Implementation Plan.

## **Financial Implications**

There are financial implications arising from the some parts of the document, as described in the action plan section. Specific actions within that plan are either already resourced through existing budgets and staffing levels or will be subject to separate formal reports.

### Risk Matrix



### 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

### Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

All affordable housing in receipt of public subsidy, whether through the HCA or from the Council, has to achieve the minimum code three rating within the Code for Sustainable Homes.

Other interventions made by the Council or its partners in the private sector produce refurbishment or renovated properties achieving a higher standard than was previously the case, even if not reaching code three; particular emphasis is placed on tackling fuel poverty.

The proposed framework document supports these activities and therefore contributes towards reducing overall emissions.

### Equality and Diversity Implications

An equalities analysis has been carried out and will be published alongside the document attached as Appendix 2.

### Implications for Corporate Priorities

The proposed framework document clearly provides a major plank in addressing “Focus Three – Homes” and in particular meets the stated aims:

“This is what we will do

- Minimise impact to our residents of the major changes to housing and council tax benefits proposed by the Government.

- Make optimum use of resources for home adaptations each year to enable people to live independently.
- Minimise homelessness by providing advice, support and housing options.
- With partners, enable additional new homes to meet the needs of the district, including mixed housing schemes to buy or rent that are affordable.
- Identify a temporary stopping point for gypsies and travellers by 2014.
- Continue to work with partners to bring private sector housing up to Decent Homes Standard
- Continue to work to bring empty houses back into use.
- Work with partners to combat fuel poverty”

and the major statement in the Plan:

*“We want decent housing for our residents that matches their income”*

The proposed framework document also contributes towards “Focus One – Jobs”, in particular through the positive economic impact of construction activity brought about by investment in new housing.

### **Privacy Impact Assessment**

This report does not directly impact on any data held of a personal nature.

### **Background Papers**

County wide documents:

- Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Somerset Homeless Strategy (2013 – 2016)
- Somerset Youth Housing Strategy & Action Plan (2012 -2015)
- Housing, Health, Care and Support Strategy for older People in Somerset
- Avon and Somerset Rough Sleepers Steering Group Action Plan (2012)
- Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2011 and update 2013
- Somerset Financial inclusion Strategy (2011-2013)
- Somerset Tenancy Strategy (2012)
- Somerset Sustainable Community Strategy (2008-2026)
- Somerset Dementia Strategy (2010)
- Somerset Extra Care Housing Strategic Review (2008)

District documents:

- Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Strategy (2006 – 2009)
- Private Sector Housing Strategy (2007 – 2012)
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2009)
- Empty Property Strategy (Jointly with Mendip) (2010)
- Temporary Accommodation Strategy (2011)
- Council Plan (2012-2015)
- Rural Housing Action Plan (2013)
- Asset Management Strategy (2014)

Adoption of County-wide Housing Strategy Framework - District Executive, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2014

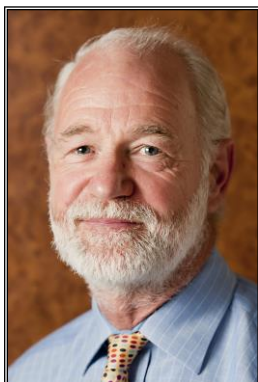


# Housing Strategy Implementation Plan





# Forward



By Councillor Ric Pallister OBE,  
Leader South Somerset District Council

Secure and affordable housing that is dry and warm is a pre-requisite to a healthy life whatever one's age and this has never been more important than now as we watch the housing needs gap widen year on year.

However, housing is more than just a roof over a family or individual's head and it is more than just bricks and mortar. These are just the physical structures that help to create the space and environment we live in which in turn should translate into a home. Place, community and neighbours all play their part and was a strong feature in years gone by but that is now at risk as we are told that a tenure for those renting, be that through a Housing Association or privately is far from secure. For many this is a strong disincentive to invest time, money and effort in a house, garden or neighbourhood to create a home.

Affordability is now a major factor for many, with rising utility bills outstripping wages, far too many residents of South Somerset are facing the effects of poverty and it seems to be getting worse.

Our task is not only to create the houses we desperately need, but also to work with the tenants to maintain their tenancies and invest in their homes.

In this plan we have tried to address all the elements of creating a home and supporting the households. We will never be able to do enough, but I believe that by working together across the public and private sector we can make a difference in the delivery of more houses that can become homes for those unable to make provision for themselves.

## Credit

Throughout this document we have used various photographs to illustrate the text. Some of these are sourced internally but most have been kindly supplied by one or other of our Housing Association partners depicting recently completed and pipeline schemes.

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# Introduction

This document covers the strategic approach of the District Council towards the provision of affordable housing in South Somerset. It outlines overall policy and suggests a series of discrete actions to help bring about the objectives listed.

Following the introduction of a new statutory requirement, the district council first published a Housing Strategy in October 1992 covering the three year period 1992-1995. The last full Housing & Accommodation Strategy was published in May 2004, covering the period 2004 – 2007, although an update document was also published in 2008.

Since the publication of the last full Housing Strategy the following related strategies and plans have been adopted:

- Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Strategy (2006 -2009)
- Private Sector Housing Strategy (2007 – 2012)
- Empty Property Strategy (Jointly with Mendip) (2010)
- Temporary Accommodation Strategy (2011)
- Council Plan (2012-2015)
- Somerset Tenancy Strategy (2012)
- Health & Wellbeing Strategy (2012-2015)
- Youth Housing Strategy (2012-2015)
- Rural Housing Action Plan (2013)
- Somerset Homelessness Strategy (2013 – 2016)
- Asset Management Strategy (2014)



Last year we adopted the county-wide Housing Strategy framework, which sets out the direction for all five local housing authorities (the district and borough councils) in Somerset. This implementation plan has been drawn up taking into account the following principle (as set out in the county-wide framework):

“Wherever possible working together on shared issues, developing joint strategies and policies and finding common solutions where appropriate; where separate approaches are required endeavouring to make these as consistent as possible whilst respecting local circumstances.”

This Implementation Plan is intended to be an overarching document. In developing it we have included those aspects of the county-wide housing strategy framework which require a district response or a degree of local refinement. The Council’s scrutiny task & finish group (made up of elected members), which originally looked at the county-wide framework document, asked that this document:

- ensures SSDC addresses priorities based on its locality and demographic
- is supported by the most up-to-date information and evidence
- details the objectives and priority areas that should be addressed while providing flexibility in how this is achieved
- is accessible and uses plain English throughout

We have reviewed all existing relevant SSDC strategies & action plans (as listed in Appendix A) to check for consistency with the adopted framework. Where the actions stated within these documents have been largely achieved, we have looked at what is outstanding and included those relevant actions in this document. We have also updated the local evidence base to check what things have changed since each of these strategies or plans were originally adopted and whether we now need to do something differently as a result. We have also included some new approaches in response to other factors which were not previously on the radar. Where something listed above has either been overtaken by events or run its due course, we have included the need to review it as part of the action plan arising from this document.

We have undertaken consultation (details are set out in Appendix C) and amended proposals in the light of the responses to this consultation.

The main part of this plan describes the issues, considers our options and proposes actions. It is set out in accordance with the four objectives (listed below), and as far as possible discussing issues in one place and avoiding repetition even though some issues will straddle these objectives.

Wherever possible the options and proposed actions include where we could or should be working with neighbouring councils or other agencies in a collaborative way to save resources, become more effective or both.

# Objectives

The county-wide housing strategy framework sets out three objectives but this plan sets out four, because we feel the first is fundamental. These are:



## Objective 1 - Health and Wellbeing for all

- Bringing homes up to the Decent Homes standard<sup>1</sup> wherever possible
- Maximising works to improve energy efficiency and thermal comfort
- Ensuring the diversification of the tenure mix within existing and new developments
- Ensuring all new developments conform with the minimum standards prescribed by the Homes and Community Agency<sup>2</sup>
- Supporting the delivery of the priorities within the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy – developing effective information and advice
- Ensuring that composition of new developments make allowance for storage and waste
- Sustainable development – energy efficiency and diversity, local facilities and places of work

## Objective 2 - To increase the supply of affordable housing to support economic growth and development

- Effective use of planning
- Increasing supply of land for affordable housing
- Identifying need effectively
- Identifying more creative ways of delivering affordable homes
- Sustainable developments<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The 'Decent Homes standard' is set nationally by the government and sets out minimum expectations such as the energy efficiency of a dwelling and the age of certain component elements.

<sup>2</sup> At the time of setting out this consultation draft it is unclear exactly what these minimum standards now are as they have been subject to some consultation, but previously this covered aspects such as minimum internal floor area.

- Continuing to maximise the New Homes Bonus<sup>4</sup>
- Co-ordination of partnership working with partner landlords such as housing associations

**Objective 3 – To make effective use of South Somerset’s housing stock**

- Ensuring that Homefinder Somerset continues to deliver mobility and choice of housing options to those wishing to access affordable housing in Somerset
- Ensuring that those already in social housing have mobility when they need it through the promotion and facilitation of mutual exchange wherever possible
- Bringing empty homes back into use and utilising them for those in housing need
- Implementing co-ordinated approaches to small scale adaptations and repairs to enable people to remain in their homes

**Objective 4 - To meet the housing and accommodation-related support needs of Somerset’s most vulnerable and least resilient residents by working in partnership**

- Participating in the refresh and implementation of the financial inclusion strategy, ensuring any changes to benefits are taken into account
- Constructive input into the review of extra care housing and support housing to support how the personalisation agenda in social care will affect housing service delivery
- Supporting the delivery of the priorities of the Somerset Homelessness Strategy, including the delivery of the Pathway for Adults (P4A)<sup>5</sup>
- Supporting the delivery of the key outcomes from the Somerset Youth Housing Strategy, including the implementation of the Pathway to Independence (P2i pathway)<sup>6</sup>
- Revising the Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA ) and delivering the pitch requirements as set out in the GTAA 2013

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<sup>3</sup> This includes links to economic opportunities.

<sup>4</sup> The ‘New Homes Bonus’ is a form of subsidy paid by central government to local government calculated according to the increase in the number of homes within the district, partly as a direct financial incentive to ensure that Local Authorities are not wilfully blocking new developments.

<sup>5</sup> The ‘Pathway For Adults’ (P4A) is a combination of support packages commissioned by the County Council to assist individuals and families in maintaining an appropriate tenure. It covers a broad range of client groups including, for example, those escaping from domestic violence.

<sup>6</sup> The ‘Pathway to Independence’ (P2i) is a programme of support packages commissioned by the County Council to assist young people, including those leaving care, to establish their own home or maintain an appropriate tenure.



# Objective 1 – Health & Wellbeing For All

## The quality of the housing stock

Just over a decade ago the Government introduced the Decent Homes standard as a 21<sup>st</sup> century benchmark representing the minimum aspects of quality that any dwelling should achieve. At the same time a target was set for all social landlords (councils, housing associations, etc.) to bring all their stock up to Decent Homes standard by now.



Thanks largely to a programme of replenishment and refurbishment agreed by Yarlington Housing Group (then known as South Somerset Homes) as part of the stock transfer arrangement when they took ownership of all the remaining former council housing, the Decent Homes standard was completely met for social housing last year at the point when the last remaining pre-stressed reinforced concrete homes were demolished, prior to replacement.

It is still possible for an individual property to fall outside the Decent Homes Standard when, for example, the heating system reaches a certain age and lower level of efficiency. So, in order to ensure that social housing remains within the Decent Homes standard, Yarlington and other housing associations need to maintain a cyclical programme of repairs and replenishment. This is slightly more problematic with some of the older stock (mainly former council dwellings transferred to Yarlington), where some retro-fitting may be necessary to achieve expected energy efficiency levels.

The problem of properties failing to meet the Decent Homes Standard in South Somerset exists largely in the private sector, the two areas of concern being:

- marginal owner-occupiers
- (parts of) the private rented sector

In 2007 we adopted a private sector housing strategy to address this (and other issues), largely through a series of grants to assist landlords and marginal owners, especially with respect to energy efficiency, an important part of the Decent Homes Standard. A lot has changed since then with the Government reforming the grants system, the introduction of soft loans<sup>7</sup> in conjunction with Wessex Reinvestment Trust and the creation of the Green Deal. We do not propose to discuss these aspects further in this document; rather we feel this is best dealt with through a revised private sector housing strategy. Before setting out a new strategy we will first consider undertaking a new private sector stock condition survey to provide reliable up-to-date data on which to revise the relevant approach.

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<sup>7</sup> A 'soft loan' being one made available at an advantageous rate of interest, lower than might be available from a commercial lender

**Action:** Explore options to undertake a private sector stock condition survey, subject to available funding.

**Action:** We shall review and update the private sector housing strategy, with the intention of publishing a new document.

## Tenure mix

We seek to achieve a diversification of tenure within existing and new estates. Former council housing estates have been broken up through the process of the Right to Buy and this continues, albeit at a slower pace, through the preserved Right to Buy still enjoyed by those former council tenants who have remained tenants of Yarlington since the day of the stock transfer.

On new estates we seek a proportion of new homes to be provided by a housing association, or other recognised provider, as affordable<sup>8</sup> under planning obligations (i.e. sold at a price which allows the housing association to service the debt incurred on the rental stream available, whilst keeping the rent affordable). The proportion we initially seek under current planning policy is 35% of all the dwellings proposed on the site, although this figure may decrease if the developer is able to demonstrate that the overall package of planning obligations calls into question the economic viability of the site.



The tenure mix within the 35% is further broken down with at least two thirds being housing made available for social rent<sup>9</sup> and the remaining (up to) one third being other forms of intermediate<sup>10</sup> housing; traditionally this has largely been shared ownership. Further, we seek to pepper-pot (scatter) the affordable housing provision throughout the site, rather than have it as a mini-mono-

tenure estate in one corner of the larger estate. Our approach has been to, as far as possible, ensure that on casual inspection the ordinary bystander would not be able to immediately identify the particular tenure of any property on the overall development.

In the past this approach has been compromised for a number of reasons, for example where the economics of a site have led to the developer wishing to produce a significant proportion of the affordable housing at an early stage in order to

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<sup>8</sup> Put simply, 'affordable' here means available at a cost which is affordable for those who cannot afford market housing (either for rent or to buy) under current prevailing circumstances, i.e. it is sub-market.

<sup>9</sup> 'Social rent' is the traditional rent regime operated by housing associations and, generally, is the cheapest available type of affordable housing.

<sup>10</sup> 'Intermediate' is basically any form of housing which is more expensive than social rent but remains sub-market; this includes most forms of shared ownership and discounted market housing.



generate a (guaranteed) cash flow to help overcome necessary up-front infrastructure costs. Allowing an earlier provision of affordable housing has the advantage of helping to bring the entire site forward (when it otherwise might have remained stalled) and being able to rehouse a larger number of households from the register sooner rather than later. However, the disadvantage is a greater degree of clustering which has a longer term impact on the social mix within the overall estate. There have also been cases where the housing association has expressed a preference for some degree of clustering in order to ease future maintenance programmes. In one appeal decision<sup>11</sup>, the inspector allowed the development to go ahead on the basis that, for this particular site, affordable housing was provided in a single strip along one edge of the site which, he felt, was well situated for access to town centre services.

We have almost always sought on-site provision of affordable housing, rather than the obligation being met through provision on an alternative site or through the developer paying a commuted sum<sup>12</sup> which we can then deploy to subsidise affordable housing elsewhere. Again, this is motivated by the desire to see a balance of social mix throughout rather than creating mono-tenure estates of any particular tenure. The one example where we might seek a commuted sum rather than on-site provision of affordable housing through planning obligations is where the site in question is an infill site otherwise completely surrounded by a former council housing estate which has not been subject to a high level of take up of Right to Buy or the preserved Right to Buy. In this example, the infill site is entirely private sector and adds to the overall balance of the wider neighbourhood.

## Space standards, Lifetime Homes & other design issues

Where affordable housing is produced under planning obligation, our approach is to ensure that such housing meets the same standards as would be the case had the same Housing Association received public subsidy (by way of grant) either from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) or the district council. We are mindful that one of the unintended consequences of the so-called bedroom tax is the expectation that, for Housing Benefit purposes, any bedroom will be



treated as large enough for two children of an appropriate age and gender mix, regardless of the actual size of that bedroom. This leaves us to consider space standards with reference to only ever having an even number of bedspaces,

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<sup>11</sup> The appeal was on a site known as Mitchell Gardens in Chard.

<sup>12</sup> A 'commuted sum' is a cash payment to the council equivalent to the cost of providing subsidy to create the housing on the same site but then available to spend on alternative provision on a different site.

although traditionally housing associations often refer to an odd number of bedspaces.

The minimum sizes we have been using until now refer to internal floor areas and are originally derived from the Housing Quality Indicator regime initiated by the now defunct Housing Corporation (although still referred to by the Homes and Communities Agency which took over its investment functions). They are:

<b>1 bedroom flat</b>	47 sq. m
<b>2 bedroom flat</b>	66 sq. m
<b>2 bedroom house</b>	76 sq. m (86 sq. m if 3 storey)
<b>3 bedroom house</b>	86 sq. m (94 sq. m if 3 storey)
<b>4 bedroom house</b>	106 sq. m (114 sq. m if 3 storey)
<b>5 bedroom house</b>	126 sq. m (134 sq. m if 3 storey)

The government consulted on housing standards during 2013, including the degree to which the Lifetime Homes standard is met. The government rightly pointed out that over the years a series of different standards have been developed by various agencies, which can lead to some confusion amongst the development industry and unnecessary additional costs in making adjustments to standard house types to meet local circumstances. As the results of this consultation were unknown, the Homes and Communities Agency then issued ambiguous messages on the standards to be met for properties within its most recent bid round (for 2015-18).



On 12<sup>th</sup> September 2014 the government issued a new consultation in which it set out proposed amendments to building regulations which it intends to legislate for in 2015 and a proposed national space standard for new housing. The government's stated intention is that the space standard will not be statutorily imposed but can be referenced in local planning policy where justified and subject to viability. However a single national space standard can effectively replace the 'many different space standards used by local authorities'. The consultation did not

seek views on this approach, but did seek views on the details of the proposed space standard.

Unfortunately this document is due to be finalised before the results of this latest consultation are known. However, we know that the proposed national space standard is, generally, higher than the internal space standards we have been using until now (although the government's proposal does not take into account the current Housing Benefit regulations, which assume that all bedrooms can be occupied by at least two children). We are therefore minded to adopt the proposed national space standard, although we currently (at the time of publishing this document) do not know the final form of that proposed space standard. We also accept that there are

some circumstances (such as the refurbishment of an existing building) where they may be harder to meet for very practical reasons.

The proposed standard, as published on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2014 in draft form, can be summarised as follows:

Number of bedrooms	Number of bedspaces	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
Studio	1 person	39 (37)*			1.0
One bedroom	2 persons	50	58		1.5
Two Bedrooms	3 persons	61	70		2.0
	4 persons	70	79		
Three Bedrooms	4 persons	74	84	90	2.5
	5 persons	86	93	99	
	6 persons	95	102	108	
Four Bedrooms	5 persons	90	97	103	3.0
	6 persons	99	108	112	
	7 persons	108	115	121	
	8 persons	117	124	130	
Five Bedrooms	6 persons	103	110	116	3.5
	7 persons	112	119	125	
	8 persons	121	128	134	
Six Bedrooms	7 persons	116	123	129	4.0
	8 persons	125	132	138	

\*Smaller if shower room and no bath

Whilst the government has stated that these standards can be referenced in local planning policy, our intent would be to use them in other circumstances, such as being part of the conditions on which we provide grant subsidy to housing associations and others to build or acquire new housing.

The Lifetime Homes standard was originally proposed by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation many years ago following research into apportioning costs between amending initial design features and making future adaptations. Over the years gradual changes in building regulations have reduced the marginal cost of including the Lifetime Homes standard, for example by all new dwellings having electric sockets placed at an appropriate height above the floor. Criticisms have remained that other features are disproportionate in upfront costs for developers when considering the number of instances where a future adaptation might be avoided.

We therefore propose that all newly built affordable houses (whether achieved through planning obligations or through grant funding) are to have a wide enough staircase, wherever possible in a single straight run, to allow for easy fitting of a stair-lift chair when required. This being the only feature of the original Lifetime Homes standard we would seek to retain over and above those that have effectively been incorporated into building regulations.

In recent developments there has been more comment on the provision of space for waste storage, the use of water butts and, where HCA funding has been used, the provision of garden sheds, sometimes taking a disproportionate amount of the garden space. These features could be considered in a wider review.

**Action:** We shall develop an affordable housing design code, in collaboration with other local housing authorities if possible, using national space standards as a minimum.

In the past we have tried to incorporate Secured by Design<sup>13</sup> wherever possible, although on a site by site basis there are sometimes conflicts between the objectives of Secured by Design and other desired aspects, for example the preservation of existing rights of way across the site. Including as many Secured by Design features as possible on an estate should reduce the incidence of opportunist crime and other antisocial behaviour, reinforced by a robust approach to housing management from housing association partners and private sector landlords. More recently the government has signalled the intention to reduce the overall burden of regulation on the private sector, including developers, and this has called into question the future of Secured by Design.

As we develop a design code for affordable housing we could include some aspects of Secured by Design. However this may become impractical when Secured by Design features by their very nature should cover the estate as a whole and our expectation is that affordable housing will be scattered, either through pepper-potting or through small clusters, throughout a larger site.

## Housing for Independence

The Somerset Health & Wellbeing Strategy contains an action to achieve 'housing for independence':

"There needs to be an increased focus on the changing housing needs of the Somerset population, with particular emphasis given to widening the housing options for achieving and maintaining independent living."

This can be achieved through greater analysis of the tenure and property types commissioned on new sites and a review of the support systems in place to enable people to remain in their own home wherever possible or to retain or regain their independence for as long as possible.

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<sup>13</sup> 'Secured by Design' covers aspects of proposed designs and estate layouts with the intention to increase the security features of the built environment and reduce poor design features which might assist criminal behaviour.



## Objective 2 – To Increase the Supply of Affordable Housing

The district council has a long and very successful history of providing affordable housing, particularly for rent at sub-market levels, but also for other tenures such as shared ownership. There are two main mechanisms for achieving this:

- through housing associations (and others) building on their own sites, or renovating buildings that they have acquired, using public subsidy i.e.
  - Grant funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)
  - Grant funding from the district council
  - Publicly owned land or buildings transferred at nil or reduced cost
  - Some combination of the above
- through private developers being obliged to sell a proportion of the dwellings on their site to a housing association (or other affordable housing provider) at a reduced rate as part of their package of planning obligations under a s106 Agreement<sup>14</sup>

Over the past six years we have delivered 1,460 new homes (representing a net gain of 1,116 new homes when taking into account replacements for demolished system built concrete dwellings) having deployed just over £2½m of our own capital resources and, in turn, levered in almost £53m of central public funding via the Homes and Communities Agency. More detail can be seen in graphs 1-4 and charts 1-4 in the evidence section (pages 41-45)

**Action:** We shall deliver a further 270 new homes during 2014/15 and aim to deliver at least a further 270 during the 2015/18 programme period.

Our current planning policy is that all qualifying sites (i.e. over a certain threshold) should provide 35% of the dwellings as affordable. Our current threshold is 15 dwellings or ½ hectare, but our intention is to reduce this to six. We are unable to reduce the threshold to six until we have an adopted Local Plan which, at the time of producing this draft, is subject to examination. The government has consulted on issuing a national minimum of ten which, if implemented, would undermine our locally based policy.

**Action:** We shall reduce our threshold through planning policy as soon as we are able to do so, either to six dwellings (as originally planned) or to ten (if this is imposed by central government policy).

Viability issues are important with several sites having recently had their overall affordable housing contribution reduced due to the economics faced by the developer; however, in all cases the affordable housing has been part of a package of reductions, with other obligations also being reined back, and we have considered

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<sup>14</sup> 's106' is section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). A s106 Agreement is a legally binding document which binds all parties to certain provisions, such as contributing towards community facilities, within the meaning of the Act.

overage clauses which (at least in part) restore the lost obligations should the economics of the site improve over time, prior to completion.

So, given that some sites fall below the threshold and others have reduced contributions due to viability, the overall level of affordable housing achieved through the planning obligation route falls short of the 35% expressed in the policy.

Whatever is agreed in the s106 Agreement does not necessarily get reflected in actions on the ground. In some cases, we have apparently secured a level of affordable housing through the s106 Agreement but many years have passed before the developer in control of the site has even really begun. In other cases we have agreed that the affordable housing provision does not need to commence on day one but at some later trigger point, taking into account some of the upfront costs that a developer might face (and thus needing a greater proportion of open market sales in the early stages).

On the other hand, we have agreed a greater degree of clustering and greater provision of the affordable housing in the early stages where this has given the developer a guaranteed income (albeit not at full profit compared with open market housing) to help overcome major infrastructure costs (such as essential road works). In a couple of cases, this has led to a major site being well over 35% affordable whilst still partially completed, even though it might, for overall viability reasons, fall below 35% overall when finally completed.

The 35% target is derived from the projected need for affordable housing compared to the projected overall need for housing (of all tenures) for the period of the Local Plan.

## **Sustainability and the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)**

In this context, we are using sustainability in the economic sense rather than discussing the green features of housing. In some places our views on how much housing is required are based on expressed demand and an assumption of the future demographics. In other places our views are influenced by what future demand for housing might be predicted as a result of new job opportunities arising, i.e. sometimes the projected size of a settlement in the Local Plan is influenced by the projection of economic development rather than population or household growth per se. The new government guidance on Strategic Housing Market Assessments<sup>15</sup> expects us to take these factors into account.



<sup>15</sup> A Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is a technical assessment of the current trends and shortfalls within a functioning housing market area intended to inform future housing and planning

The last SHMA was published in February 2009 based on data gathered in 2008. The evidence within the SHMA is now out of date and needs an urgent refresh. The county-wide framework relies more heavily on current housing register data and we can continue to do so for lettings purposes and to help inform desired property mixes in proposed sites as they come forward, but for longer term planning purposes we need a refreshed SHMA. We require a full refresh in accordance with latest guidance published in the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)<sup>16</sup>.

The housing register (see tables 9-12 on pages 52-55) provides a live picture of expressed housing need, but it has a number of limitations and is not necessarily a complete picture. For example we often find that in small villages there is a range of hidden need because many households who cannot afford to live in the village do not apply on the register. Their reasons may include:

- feeling that there is little or no point as they never see any vacancies occurring in their village
- thinking that the register is only for those who wish to rent (and not for those who aspire to home ownership, such as through shared ownership)

Because of this low take-up on the register, villages often undertake a local housing needs survey to establish the current level of local need and such surveys are often used as evidence when seeking planning permission outside of the ordinary development boundary for a rural exceptions scheme<sup>17</sup>.

The SHMA has different limitations: whilst it took into account the (then current) backlog of need as expressed through the housing register, it extrapolated need over the plan period by looking at income levels and household formation projections. It told us that two thirds of all those requiring affordable housing could only afford the prevailing rent regime (which we now refer to as social rent). The new SHMA needs to tell us more about local incomes and the affordability of different types of affordable housing (including the government's new affordable rent model and testing out the potential for discounted market housing). The previous SHMA gave us some idea of what proportions were needed of different size dwellings (e.g. one, two or three bedrooms) but did so before the slight amendments to entitlements brought about by the changes to the Housing Benefit system. We should also gauge, through the SHMA process, what proportions of new dwellings should be bungalows.

The SHMA should be refreshed as soon as possible. There are limitations on partnership working brought about by the point in the local plan cycle that each authority has reached. We should try to work collaboratively again, if we can, but cannot afford to let this desire hold us up from getting on with it.

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policy. The government's recent change in guidance to the Housing And Economic Development Needs Assessment is intended to take into account the local economic factors.

<sup>16</sup> The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is published by the government and provides technical guidance on a range of planning policy topics.

<sup>17</sup> A 'rural exceptions scheme' is where affordable housing is permitted, as an exception, outside of the usual development boundary for the settlement on the basis that the local needs of the settlement for affordable housing cannot otherwise be met within the same settlement.

**Action:** We shall refresh the SHMA, in collaboration with neighbouring planning authorities if possible, with the intention of having full analysis available by December 2015.

## Other Opportunities for Affordable Housing

Our ability to acquire new housing directly is limited by financial rules over the operation of a 'Housing Revenue Account' (which was effectively closed when the Council undertook a transfer of all its tenanted homes to a newly created Housing Association which has since become Yarlington). We intend to identify more creative ways of delivering affordable homes, possibly using some of our own available capital funding to lever in further investment. One way in which we could achieve this might be through the creation of a joint venture vehicle with a partner organisation, such as a housing association. In turn, an active joint venture organisation, or some similar model, could give greater certainty of bulk sales to some developers and thus bring forward stalled sites.

**Action:** We shall assemble a portfolio of around twenty properties and investigate creating a joint venture vehicle, or other options, to provide for local housing needs



In recent years, some housing associations, such as Yarlington, have employed alternative construction methods such as some timber framing systems which require less intensive labour on site. This has tended to be on sites where they are in control of the entire site rather than on larger sites where the affordable housing is only one element. We could also investigate

further alternative forms of construction, such as other forms of modular units, to reduce overall construction costs and promote these to the wider development industry.

**Action:** We shall investigate alternative forms of construction

Often developers sell houses on their new estates on a part-exchange basis as a way to assist the purchaser. These acquired properties may be of variable quality and sizes and scattered over a much larger area than the immediate area of the site which the developer has brought forward.

Every year we undertake the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)<sup>18</sup>. It might be that smaller parcels of land put forward for inclusion in the SHLAA could be developed by a housing association, one example being where we need to identify land on the edge of a village for a rural exceptions scheme.

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<sup>18</sup> The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is a process undertaken by spatial policy planners to identify the local capacity to provide for the required increase in dwellings.



Housing associations continue to use smaller infill sites to produce affordable housing and, occasionally, redundant buildings such as former clothing factories. Here housing associations are in competition with private developers and may not always be able to compete on land prices. Where they are able to bring forward such sites, public subsidy is usually required, although some form of cross subsidy through a limited amount of market sale might be possible.

There may be some scope in finding some additional public sector land (but note, as previously stated, the desire to achieve diversification and avoid single tenure estates). We no longer own land in any great amount, although a couple of schemes are currently on site on land which we are leasing long term to a housing association partner. We have tried to consider public sector land in the past and this has also led to a couple of other schemes being brought forward based on a housing association purchasing land from the county council. However other public sector agencies, most notably the Ministry of Defence and the British Rail Residual Board were not so forthcoming. We look forward to working with the HCA, which is acting as the government's clearing house, and challenging why some of these land holdings have not been brought forward.

## **Maximising the New Homes Bonus**

Since the introduction of the New Homes Bonus<sup>19</sup>, we have been a net gainer (compared with the loss of other central government funding), due to the number of new homes that have been brought forward during the qualifying period. For example the amount for 2013/14 exceeded £ 2.3m, about half of which was derived from the creation of new affordable housing, which also attracts an additional premium on the New Home Bonus. Funding an Empty Property Officer post has proven to be a spend-to-save measure as the net decrease in empty properties has also contributed significantly to the level of New Homes Bonus we qualify for.

## **Co-ordination of Housing Partners**

We co-ordinate with partners such as housing associations and private sector landlords in order to provide a consistent response to issues in the affordable and private rented sectors.

We have had a partnership arrangement with a small number of housing associations for many years, choosing our main partners on a range of criteria; that is, not just concentrating on the efficiency and effectiveness of their development function, but also taking into account their record of housing management, such as their ability to robustly respond to substantiated incidents of antisocial behaviour.

Our current main partners are **Aster, Jephson, Knightstone, Raglan** and **Yarlington**, but we will also work with **Hastoe** on some more rural sites.

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<sup>19</sup> The 'New Homes Bonus' is a form of subsidy paid by Central Government to Local Government calculated according to the increase in the number of homes within the district, partly as a direct financial incentive to ensure that Local Authorities are not wilfully blocking new developments.

The last time we ran the selection process, we did so with Sedgemoor and Mendip District Councils. This had the added advantage of sharing resources to run the process and housing associations having to produce one submission rather than three. The result was that we chose exactly the same five main partners as Mendip and we both share four of these with Sedgemoor. There is currently a proposed merger between Jephson and Raglan, with a joint transition board already appointed. Assuming this does go ahead, we will be reduced to four main partners, as will Mendip. There is a risk to us (in terms of sector capacity) of having too many eggs in too few baskets, which could seriously impact on our delivery should anything happen to any one of the remaining partner housing associations (for example a moratorium on new building brought about by a significant failure on a site elsewhere in the country). We also want to continue to give private sector developers a wide enough choice when suggesting potential named housing associations to receive the affordable housing in s106 Agreements. The previous selection exercise was run too long ago to justify a simple promotion of the Housing Association that came sixth.

**Action:** We shall undertake the housing association partnership selection process, in collaboration with Sedgemoor and Mendip District Councils, with the intention of having a revised partnership in place by April 2015.

## **Self-Build & Custom-Build Housing**

There is potential for some housing in the district to be provided via a self-build or custom-build route. The government is keen to promote these forms of provision and will be consulting on whether councils should set aside some of their own land to be made available for custom-build options (the so-called 'Right to Build').

Self-build tends to be where the future occupants either collectively or individually work on the site themselves, potentially buying in specialist trades at different stages of the construction. The 'sweat equity' accumulated through working on the build themselves either converts to a reduced rent (where the scheme is managed by a landlord such as a housing association) or to a reduced construction cost (where the scheme is to be owned by the participants).

Custom-build refers to where a house is not purchased from a volume builder but is commissioned as an individual unit. Custom-build could include self-build but could be entirely contracted out to a private builder (presumably a small scale company), provided that the future occupants remain in control of the process. In theory, this form of custom-build could prove to be cheaper than purchasing a standard house type from a volume builder, but the individual choices involved probably do not command the same economies of scale.

## **Community Land Trusts**

Community Land Trusts are good examples of communities taking control and transforming the future of their local community. They are non-profit, community-

based organisations run by volunteers that develop housing, workspaces, community facilities or other assets that meet the needs of the community, are owned and controlled by the community and are made available at permanently affordable levels.



South Somerset currently has two active CLTs (at Norton-sub-Hamdon and at Queen Camel), both of whom are working in collaboration with a housing association (Yarlington and Hastoe respectively). In each case the CLT has taken ownership of land previously used for agriculture on the edge of their village and are entering

into a long term lease with the housing association. The ground rent raised under the lease forms the basis of a community fund for other projects. The CLT and the housing association are both legally bound by the s106 Agreement which ensures that the houses will be available for very local people in perpetuity.

In both cases the housing association has secured funding from the HCA under a special community-led pot of funding, thanks to the partnership with the CLT. In both cases the houses are a mixture of rent and shared ownership.

## **Objective 3 – Making Effective Use of South Somerset’s Housing Stock**

Since December 2008, we have worked with the four other local housing authorities and all the major housing association landlords in the county on a single housing register and choice based lettings system, known as Homefinder Somerset. All applicants are placed in one of three broad bands ('gold', 'silver' or 'bronze'), which relate to their relative level of housing need and have an effective date (usually the date that they first applied). Rarely, the most urgent cases are placed in a fourth 'emergency' band.

Almost all available homes are advertised on a weekly basis, with applicants placing bids on those properties they are eligible for (e.g. with the right number of bedrooms or with the right type of adaptation for their family). Subject to verification the landlord will ordinarily offer the property to the bidder in the highest band, and where there is more than one eligible applicant in the same band, the bidder with the longest effective date.

In the early part of 2014, further changes were implemented to the system following new government guidance and changes to the welfare benefits system. The two most significant changes were:

- closing the register to those who cannot demonstrate a local connection to Somerset (with some exceptions such as certain services personnel)
- changing the bedroom eligibility to match current housing benefit rules on the age and gender split of children who can share a bedroom

A monitoring board, which represents all the councils and landlords involved in the Homefinder system, exists to check that actual outcomes (and other procedural practices) sufficiently reflect the intentions of such changes.

The partnership is now working together to introduce a county-wide mutual exchange site which should be introduced in November 2014 (see table 14 on page 57 for mutual exchange statistics).

### **Local Lettings Plans and Policies**

In some cases, housing associations operate a local lettings plan (for initial lets of a new scheme) or a local lettings policy (longer term covering casual vacancies as they arise over time) in order to produce a sustainable community. In this context the word 'local' should not (necessarily) be taken to imply that lettings are only for local people – but that the plan or policy covers a local area rather than all stock in a single district.

One example might be on initial lets to set aside a significant proportion for existing tenants (of all housing associations) in need of a transfer. This creates a scattering of subsequent vacancies, not necessarily all of the same size as the original stock

and not even necessarily in the same settlement, which can then be let through the Homefinder system as normal, thus probably rehousing a high proportion of those in high level need such as gold and emergency band households. In this way a batch of new properties can contribute towards reducing a high level of need, but not necessarily directly and not all at the same time in the same location.

Local lettings policies have been used as a longer term measure where there are special circumstances, such as the need to turn an estate around, and often in conjunction with a range of other measures such as organising residents' associations and undertaking environmental works or refurbishing communal areas. The relevant legislation requires consent from the local housing authority and we, in turn, have delegated power to our portfolio holder to agree such local lettings policies, provided they are still justified and provided the total housing association stock covered by any such policy does not exceed 3% at any one time. Our concern here is that too many such restrictions would reduce our ability to meet our statutory obligation towards those in the reasonable preference<sup>20</sup> groups and may have other equalities impacts. Approval of such local lettings policies is time limited, so there are five such policies due for review.

**Action:** Review each of the following local lettings policies with a view to renewing, revising or revoking:

- Roping Road, Yeovil (Yarlington)
- Wellington Flats, Yeovil (Yarlington)
- Henson Park, Chard (Yarlington)
- Fosse Park, Yeovil (Jephson)
- Old Lloyd's Bank & Hanover House, Langport (Yarlington)

## A Rural Lettings Policy



There is a potential for a rural housing lettings policy. This would be similar to the local lettings policies described above but could cover all housing association vacancies arising in our most rural settlements where the amount of available affordable housing has reduced over time. Similarly to the cumulative effect of the local lettings policies referred to above, we need to ensure that the

proportion of vacancies affected remains low in order to ensure that we fulfil our

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<sup>20</sup> The 'reasonable preference' groups are those types of applicant households set out in the relevant legislation as having the greatest need, such as those who are overcrowded or living in insanitary conditions. The local housing authority must demonstrate that its policies and processes provide sufficient weight towards these groups, i.e. they should stand a greater chance of being rehoused than applicants who are not in a reasonable preference group.



statutory obligation towards the reasonable preference groups and consider other equalities issues.

The take up of the Right to Buy (and, since the transfer of former council stock to Yarlington, the preserved Right to Buy) has been disproportionate in rural settlements; at the same time, the opportunities for further provision have tended to be more limited. In many cases, we have spent years taking a rural exceptions scheme from concept to reality in order to meet very local needs that otherwise are not getting served through letting the existing stock if and when it becomes available.

Rural exceptions schemes typically give preference initially to: those with a proven local connection to the target village; then to those with a proven connection to the 'doughnut ring' (of immediately adjacent parishes); and finally to anybody with a connection to the district. Where there is more than one household with a need for the size and type of property on offer and a local connection on the same tier,



the normal Homefinder rules apply and this vacancy will be let to the household with the highest banding and, if in the same banding, the longest effective date. Usually the logic of the 'doughnut ring' of immediately adjacent parishes is to include all adjacent parishes (with a population of less than 3,000) even if they happen to be in a different district because the target village lies on the district border.

A Rural Housing Lettings Policy, similar to the one adopted by Mendip District Council<sup>21</sup>, would treat all vacancies in the target village as if they were subject to the same rules as rural exceptions schemes, but without going through all the expense and effort of creating a small number of new dwellings. Whilst being somebody with a very local connection and being in one of the reasonable preference groups are not mutually exclusive, we need to judge the number of affected dwellings carefully in order to ensure the balance between trying to meet very local needs and meeting our wider statutory obligations.

An analysis of total housing association general needs dwellings in villages with less than 3,000 population suggests that a cut-off point of 20 dwellings (or less) would encompass 50 parishes and represent 3.27% of all Housing Association stock (although probably a lower percentage of vacancies as these tend to arise less frequently in rural locations, initial analysis suggests around 2.5%).

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.mendip.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=3587&p=0>

Another option might be to include all vacancies arising where there are 10 general needs dwellings or fewer (which would cover 38 parishes) and every other vacancy where there are 11 or more but fewer than 25 dwellings (which would cover a further 20 parishes). This would be equivalent to 3.22% of all stock (again, initial analysis suggests around 2.5% of vacancies).

**Action:** We shall develop and implement a balanced rural lettings policy with the intention that it takes effect from August 2015.

We are committed to bringing forward more affordable homes in very rural locations through the use of the rural exceptions policy and the emerging Local Plan policy SS2<sup>22</sup>. The Rural Housing Action Plan will need to be revised in due course and include specific actions in certain locations. In the evidence section we have updated one of the main summary tables from the previous Rural Housing Action Plan, showing where local surveys have been undertaken and where local schemes have been developed since. (Table 13 on pages 56 & 57).

**Action:** We shall review the rural housing action plan with the intention of publishing a new plan by May 2015.

## Tenancy Strategy

The Localism Act 2011 placed a new statutory responsibility on local housing authorities to develop a Tenancy Strategy to guide social landlords (mostly housing associations) in developing tenancy policies for their own stock. It also required those landlords to have regard to the strategy. This was in response to the new freedoms for such landlords in granting new tenancies on fixed terms and on a different rent regime (to be up to 80% of the local market rents).



Starting in July 2011 we led a county-wide project team, including some of the larger housing association landlords, to create a single county-wide tenancy strategy to provide consistency across the county for all concerned. After significant consultation we adopted this strategy in July 2012. The other four local housing authorities in the county agree that it is now time to review the strategy in the light of actual outcomes resulting from lettings under the range of tenancy types and rent regimes currently available in the social sector.

**Action:** We shall participate in the review with the intention of adopting a new county-wide tenancy strategy by June 2015.

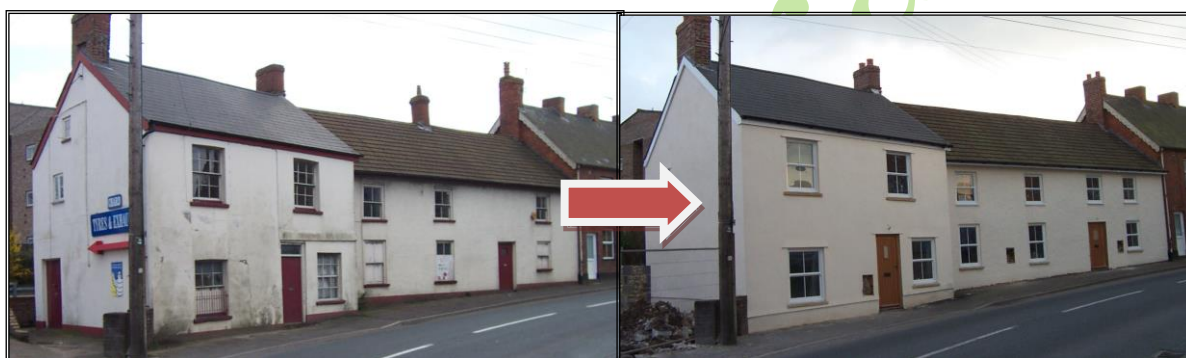
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<sup>22</sup> Policy SS2 in the emerging Local Plan effectively replaces the previous rural exceptions policy and will allow development outside of the defined boundary in rural settlements where it can be demonstrated that such development is sustainable, such as new affordable housing that otherwise could not be built.

## Making use of Empty Properties

Since the adoption of our Empty Property Strategy, we have had a very good track record in recent years of reducing the number of empty properties in the district. As at October 2013 we were 8<sup>th</sup> most successful council in the country at bringing empty properties back into use (546 properties). See graphs 9 and 10 on page 58 for a visual comparison with other authorities in Somerset.

In part this has been achieved by employing a specialist officer who can take a tenacious but tailored approach to each individual property. In some cases owners have brought the property back into use without any input from the council. In other cases we have made available an empty property grant, with conditions attached obliging the owner to let the refurbished property for a minimum period to somebody nominated by our Housing Options Team at a market rent within current housing benefit limits. We have also been able to refer some properties to Somerset Care & Repair who have also been able to bring the property back into a habitable condition whilst taking control of it under a lease and, in turn, being able to let.



## Aids & Adaptation works

We provide a number of other grants to assist private landlords and owner occupiers with the condition and suitability of their property. This includes the provision of Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) to those in need of a specialist adaptation to meet their physical requirements, for example the provision of a wet floor shower room for those no longer able to get in or out of a bath. Across the rest of the county these works are organised through a Home Improvement Agency (HIA)<sup>23</sup>, in place under a contract organised by the county council. This HIA contract is currently due for renewal.

The government have organised some social care and health funding into a new 'Better Care Fund' which is to be jointly managed by the County Council and the

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<sup>23</sup> The Home Improvement Agency (HIA) provides services to owners of homes who need assistance to keep their home safe, warm or weather proof, particularly where the issue may cause or worsen a health problem. The HIA also assists tenants and helps with specific adaptations for the home to meet an individual's specific physical needs, such as organising the work covered by a Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG)



Clinical Commissioning Group<sup>24</sup>. There will be opportunities for the Better Care Fund to be deployed in more innovative ways to improve housing conditions and, thus, reduce the call on primary care services.

For just over a year the County Council has employed a housing specialist Occupational Therapist who has been able to intervene in certain cases to find better housing solutions, sometimes avoiding the need to use DFG funding altogether. We will support the continued funding of this service, possibly as a priority for the Better Care Fund.

A sub-regional group of local housing authorities across Avon and Somerset has funding to enhance services that will reduce non-priority single homelessness and rough sleeping. The group's gap analysis has identified a particular problem with mental health users who have been discharged from services in Somerset including in-patient wards. The group would like to invest in a service that will improve the experience for clients who are discharged from hospital but with nowhere to go.

### **Dorcas House Trust**

The Council is the corporate trustee of a charitable trust set up to provide accommodation in Yeovil for single women. For almost 100 years this provision was made through a building known as Dorcas House but, following consent from the Charity Commission, this was disposed of in the light of it no longer being economically viable. We now hold the funds in trust and are obliged to procure alternative provision.

**Action:** We shall procure replacement properties for the Dorcas House Trust.

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<sup>24</sup> The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is the body created to commission some specialist services, working in collaboration with the public health services of the County Council, following abolition of the Primary Care Trust. The CCG is effectively practitioner led.

# Objective 4 – Meeting the Housing Related Support Needs of the Most Vulnerable and Least Resilient Residents



Over the past year a county-wide project team has been reviewing financial inclusion work across the County with a view to producing a new Financial Inclusion Strategy. There has been a raft of reforms to the overall benefits system over the past couple of years, with more changes to come (such as the rolling out of Universal Credit). In particular changes to Housing Benefit such as the freezing of the Local Housing Allowance and the introduction of

the so-called bedroom tax, the introduction of an overall benefits cap and the changes to Council Tax Reductions have created a difficult new environment for those on marginal incomes to navigate through.

**Action:** We shall provide a high quality comprehensive Welfare Benefits advice service to ensure that people are able to access the advice they need and refer/signpost to other organisations where appropriate.

## Sheltered and Extra Care Needs

Historically, South Somerset has had a good range of sheltered and extra care housing options, now mostly provided by Yarlington Housing Group. The additional support provided in such schemes (often referred to as 'housing-related support') is not funded through rents but through a separate contract with the County Council which gained responsibility for the Supporting People<sup>25</sup> regime.



The service is being challenged from two directions. Firstly, the demographics: with an ageing population we expect the demand for sheltered and extra care schemes to rise in coming years. Secondly, the pressure on public funding, with the county

<sup>25</sup> The 'Supporting People' regime was created just over ten years ago to bring together under one umbrella a series of separate forms of support services (for example support previously paid for by the Housing Corporation, the Probation service, the Local Housing Authority or Social Services). What all of these services had in common was the need to provide support to individuals or families in order to enable them to maintain their current tenure.

council making significant savings on contracts issued under the auspices of Supporting People. A third, related, factor is the movement towards personalised budgets<sup>26</sup>, which calls into question the economies of scale that can be achieved under traditional budgets.

The County Council is also considering the relationship between places that it funds in residential care and the type of support that it can purchase for individuals in extra care schemes. It may be that some minor adjustment of the types of services provided means that an individual can be helped through a placement in an extra care scheme rather than placed in residential care (which often results in a greater loss of independence at a higher cost to the public purse).

Together with Yarlinton and other housing providers, the district council is participating in a stakeholder partnership board created by the county to consider how to remodel the contracted services provided in extra care housing schemes. We remain concerned that prevention is key and that an appropriate level of support services provided at extra care schemes will reduce the call on other public services, i.e. there is an economic as well as a moral case for maintaining the type of support that has been provided historically.



Similarly, we would wish to assist people to remain independently in their own home for as long as possible and for some people this can be achieved through the assurance of having a dispersed community alarm unit<sup>27</sup>.

**Action:** We shall provide and promote a high quality community alarm service through South Somerset Careline to support vulnerable residents staying in their homes.

## Homelessness

The Homelessness Act 2002 placed a statutory duty on all local housing authorities to produce a Homelessness Strategy, the first of which had to be in place by July 2003. Last year we agreed the second county-wide Homelessness Strategy with the other four districts (we formally adopted it on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2013). As this document is so relatively recent we have not discussed most of it again here. More recent evidence suggests that we are seeing a continuing reduction in the number of homeless households making an approach (where homelessness is not prevented),

<sup>26</sup> Under 'personalised budgets' it is expected that individuals in need of help and support will be given control of the public funds available to meet their needs and exercise their own judgement as to how best to purchase that help or support and who from. This has significant implications for providers of such services who are used to the financial security (and economies of scale) of a block contract from the county council.

<sup>27</sup> A dispersed community alarm is usually fitted to the property but could be activated by a pendant worn by the resident and, in an emergency, it will contact a dedicated call centre who can assess the situation and call in relevant help. It is 'dispersed' because it can be fitted in any dwelling, rather than only those built in a group connected to a sheltered housing scheme, for example.

being found to be owed a duty by us under the act<sup>28</sup> and subsequently being placed in some form of temporary accommodation<sup>29</sup>.

**Action:** We shall continue to deliver the actions set out in the Homelessness Strategy.

## Temporary Accommodation

We have continued to reduce our reliance on temporary accommodation<sup>30</sup> and have kept the use of bed & breakfast to an absolute minimum, whilst nationally the reliance on B&B has grown and the number of families left, unlawfully, for over six weeks has increased dramatically over the past couple of years. In 2011 we published the Temporary Accommodation Strategy with the intention of maintaining a flexible portfolio of properties available for use as temporary accommodation and being prepared for the possibility of a spike in homelessness due to local economic circumstances.

**Action:** We shall review the actions set out in the Temporary Accommodation Strategy and publish a revised plan in the light of current circumstances by March 2015.

## Rough Sleeping

The government has targeted rough sleeping, and the prevention of rough sleeping, as a priority within homelessness services provided by local authorities and other agencies. It has set aside a specific grant fund and divided this nationally among several groups of local authorities. In May 2011, £60,000 was allocated to a group of eight housing authorities (the five in Somerset, plus North Somerset, Bristol and Bath & North East Somerset) and placed in the stewardship of Mendip District Council. A cross authority steering group (including voluntary sector representation) was created to consider best use of these funds and it first met in June 2011. In 2012 the Government awarded a further £499,000 to the Avon & Somerset cluster. The steering group appointed a co-ordinator (managed by Mendip) and one of her first tasks was a thorough gap analysis, comparing facilities and services across the eight authorities against a good practice checklist.

Various vulnerable client groups (who may be at risk of rough sleeping if they fail to manage their current circumstances) are provided with assistance under contract (issued by the county council), based around certain properties. Much of this housing-related support<sup>31</sup> is designated and time limited. One common missing factor in trying to help many (but not all) vulnerable people regain confidence and appropriate skills to engage in society, at least to the extent where potential repeat

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<sup>28</sup> See Graphs 12 & 13 on pages 63 & 64 and Map 4 on page 66.

<sup>29</sup> See Graph 14 on page 65 and Map 5 on page 67.

<sup>30</sup> See Graph 14 on page 65

<sup>31</sup> 'Housing-related' support services are defined as services that aim to develop or sustain an individual's capacity to live independently in accommodation. Housing-related support services are not general health, social care or statutory personal care services, but rather services whose aim is to support more independent living arrangements.



homelessness can be avoided, is the operation of a day centre facility providing a structured approach. The lack of a day centre facility in South Somerset was identified as the highest priority emerging from the gap analysis undertaken by the rough sleeping co-ordinator.

The council owns a grade 2 listed building at 80 South Street, Yeovil. In recent years it has had various uses including as an art gallery with associated café and as office accommodation, at one time housing the Town Centre Manager, and as a meeting room facility. We have agreed to lease this property to Bournemouth Churches Housing Association (BCHA) and allocated grant towards the refurbishment of the upper floors to create some self-contained flats. Funds are also being made available from the rough sleepers steering group to help turn the ground floor into the much-needed day centre facility to be run by Barnabas, part of the BCHA Group.

**Action:** We shall deliver the new Day Centre provision for supported housing clients in South Somerset in partnership with BCHA

## Housing-Related Support

Over a number of years a range of housing-related support projects for various vulnerable groups has developed, often with input of capital grant from the district council. More recently, the county council consolidated the majority of these various support services into two major 'pathway' contracts, known as 'P2i' (Pathway to Independence) and 'P4A' (Pathway for Adults), both of which commenced in May 2013. The P2i contract is geared towards young people, including those leaving care, and the P4A contract is geared towards older adults with one or more of a wide range of vulnerabilities. Both contracts include services towards homeless people, both statutory homeless (within the meaning of the Act) and those who are homeless within the plain English meaning of the word.

There are four other key areas of housing-related support which formerly came within the Supporting People regime. In terms of numbers of people affected, the largest is the older people's contracts, centred around sheltered and extra care facilities and described earlier. The second largest area is providing support for those with learning disabilities, which the county is currently reviewing.

The two other main contracts are SDAS<sup>32</sup>, which covers drug and alcohol misuse, and the domestic violence contract which includes the provision of refuge and safe houses.

The P2i contract (younger people) has just entered the second year at which time there was a decrease in terms of the accommodation-based support, which effectively meant a reduction of



<sup>32</sup> Somerset Drug and Alcohol Service (SDAS) offers free, confidential advice and support to anyone whose life is being adversely affected by drug and/or alcohol use.

approximately 29% in such placements (from 84 to 60), albeit accompanied by an increase in the level of floating support (but still representing an overall step-down). Whilst this represents a risk in terms of the potential bottleneck of newly arising cases, so far this has not impacted on our sustained reduction of temporary accommodation.

The changes in the contracts, and the P2i contract in particular, have led to a complex picture of buildings being procured, designed and subsidised for one purpose (within the ownership of one particular provider) now being used for a slightly different purpose (with the support contract being awarded to a completely different provider). We have been pro-active in trying to make sure that the best use is made of all the existing stock, especially that which we have put our capital subsidy into at some point in the past.

**Action:** We shall investigate options for future use of historically subsidised properties no longer required for the P2i contract to meet local housing needs

One of the emerging issues within many of the projects mentioned above is the apparent silting up of the accommodation-based support units with the lack of appropriate move-on, including for those who still require a level of support (called floating support - because it follows the individual rather than being provided at a specific property). Some of the difficulty may arise from Housing Associations being unwilling to rehouse former project residents into general needs housing because they do not believe that either

- the individual is truly ready to move on; or
- the level of floating support offered to them is inadequate; or
- the individual may refuse the floating support once the new accommodation is secured; or
- a combination of the above

In addition, the number of available properties may be in decline, partly because of the competition we now have with those needing to downsize because of the effect of the so-called bedroom tax.

**Action:** We shall develop a move-on plan for supported housing projects by December 2015.

One of the properties that have become vacant as a result of the various changes is owned by Chapter One and known as Christopher House. Following the award of grant from the HCA's 2015/18 funding programme, the building shall be remodelled to create some self-contained flats. We shall support Chapter One in their plans to create a new use for this building.

## **Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs**

We already provide some residential pitches for Gypsies and Travellers in South Somerset, having taken control of the county-owned sites some fourteen years ago. At the time of publishing this document, two of the council's Gypsy sites are fully occupied, with two pitches remaining vacant at Twisted Willows near Ilton. There are currently four outstanding applications on the waiting list for our sites.

Since the 2006 Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Strategy document was adopted:

- we have terminated our contract with a private sector provider to manage the sites under our control
- we have fully refurbished the sites under our control, now providing park homes
- we have extended the site at Ilton and taken back into public control a further piece of associated land there
- the county council-owned transit site (in Sedgemoor) has fallen into disuse
- the Supporting People grant towards our site management and community liaison work has been withdrawn
- a Travellers' CLT<sup>33</sup> has been created with a county-wide remit, although currently based in Mendip
- relevant regional structures have been disbanded
- the government has revised and re-issued planning guidance
- we have failed to locate a transit site in South Somerset
- we continue to hold unspent monies from central government grant in an acquisition fund
- the county-wide Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment has been undertaken and updated
- we have provided (including through the appeal process) sufficient residential pitches through the planning process



The most recent analysis of evidence, the GTAA<sup>34</sup>, was conducted on a county-wide basis last year. Data was collected in May 2013 with the final document being published in September 2013. One area that remains a little unclear from the evidence presented in the GTAA is the needs of Showmen, i.e. travelling entertainers who may need yards for storage of equipment or animals. We want to be clearer about exactly what these needs might be.

In terms of residential pitches we are already ahead of schedule thanks to providing planning permission (including losing appeals) to enough privately owned residential sites so that we are likely to need no specific action over next few years (see Table 17 on Page 68). In that respect we are unique, with the other districts in the county (and probably much further afield) having predicted shortfalls making it harder for them to prevent unsuitable sites gaining permission at appeal. In planning terms, once the Local Plan has been adopted, we need to produce some policy guidance

<sup>33</sup> A Community Land Trust (CLT) is a community-led organisation that provides land and buildings to meet the long term needs of its community.

<sup>34</sup> The Somerset Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) provides independent evidence of the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in Somerset.

(known as DPD<sup>35</sup>) to allocate sites to meet the identified need. In the spirit of the countywide framework we would like this to be a joint DPD if possible, providing consistency for individuals and communities across the county. The proposed timing for this is set out in our Local Development Scheme (LDS)<sup>36</sup>.

However we still need to identify a suitable stopping point for Travellers who are travelling through the district and/or a transit site. We intend to work in collaboration with the other Councils in Somerset to investigate solutions across the County.

**Action:** We shall identify and secure emergency stopping point/transit site for travellers within Somerset in collaboration with other councils in Somerset.

Final Draft

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<sup>35</sup> DPD stands for Development Plan Document.

<sup>36</sup> The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is part of the local planning framework where the planning authority sets out its proposals for developing detailed policies and guidance, such as DPD, including a timescale showing the order in which these should be dealt with.



# Action Plan

Page Ref	Action	EqA required?	Lead Officer	Resources	Target Date
9	Explore options to undertake a private sector stock condition survey,	No	Environmental Health Manager	Time to explore the options available within existing staff capacity but full survey subject to funding being made available	October 2015
9	Review and update the private sector housing strategy	Yes	Environmental Health Manager	Time available within existing staff capacity	July 2015
13	Develop an affordable housing design code, in collaboration with other local housing authorities if possible, using national standards as a minimum (if these are adopted by Government)	Yes	Corporate Housing Strategy Manager	Time available within existing staff capacity	March 2015
14	Deliver a further 270 new homes during 2014/15 and aim to deliver at least a further 270 during the 2015/18 programme period.	No	Corporate Housing Strategy Manager	Time available within existing staff capacity. Capital funding in place for the programme up to and including 2014/15; subject to further bids to HCA and Councils own funding beyond that date.	March 2015 & March 2018
14	Reduce our qualifying site threshold through planning policy either to six dwellings (as originally planned) or to ten (if this is imposed by central Government policy)	No	Principal Spatial Planner	Time available within existing staff capacity	as soon as we are able to do so
17	Refresh the SHMA, in collaboration with neighbouring planning authorities if possible	Yes	Principal Spatial Planner	Time available within existing staff capacity but full refresh subject to funding being made available	December 2015

Page Ref	Action	EqA required?	Lead Officer	Resources	Target Date
17	Assemble a portfolio of around twenty properties and investigate creating a joint venture vehicle, or other options, to provide for local housing needs	Yes	Strategic Director (Place and Performance)	Time available within existing staff capacity. Capital acquisitions costs subject to approval of release of sufficient funding.	March 2016
17	Investigate gains to be made by promoting alternative forms of construction	No	Housing Development Officer	Time available within existing staff capacity	November 2015
19	Undertake the Housing Association partnership selection process, in collaboration with Sedgemoor and Mendip District Councils	No	Corporate Housing Strategy Manager	Time commitment reduced through collaborative work and available within existing staff capacity	April 2015.
22	Review each of the following local lettings policies Roping Road, Yeovil (Yarlington) Wellington Flats, Yeovil (Yarlington) Henson Park, Chard (Yarlington) Fosse Park, Yeovil (Jephson) Old Lloyd's Bank & Hanover House, Langport (Yarlington)	No	Housing Policy Officer (all five reviews)	Time available within existing staff capacity	Dec 2014 Dec 2014 Dec 2014 May 2015 Dec 2014
24	Develop and implement a balanced rural lettings policy, improving access to affordable housing for those with very local housing needs	Yes	Corporate Housing Strategy Manager	Time available within existing staff capacity	August 2015

Page Ref	Action	EqA required?	Lead Officer	Resources	Target Date
24	Review the rural housing action plan in order to focus action to deliver a steady supply of new rural housing	No	Housing Policy Officer	Time available within existing staff capacity. Capital funding for specific new proposed schemes subject to bids to HCA or Councils own funding.	May 2015
24	Participate in the review of the county wide tenancy strategy	Yes, county wide	Supported Housing & Strategy Officer	Time available within existing staff capacity	June 2015
26	Procure replacement properties for the Dorcas House Trust	No	Corporate Housing Strategy Manager	Time available within existing staff capacity. Acquisition costs to be met primarily from Dorcas reserves.	To be agreed with Charity Commission
27	Provide a high quality comprehensive Welfare Benefits Advice service to ensure that people are able to access the advice they need and refer/signpost to other organisations where appropriate	No	Welfare & Careline Manager	Time available within existing staff capacity	
28	Provide and promote a high quality community alarm service through South Somerset Careline to support vulnerable residents staying in their homes	No	Welfare & Careline Manager	Time available within existing staff capacity. Equipment available through existing trading budget	
29	Deliver the remaining actions set out in the Homelessness Strategy	No	Housing & Welfare Manager	Time available within existing staff capacity. Cost largely available through existing budgets, some release of funds through 'spend to save' initiatives	March 2016

Page Ref	Action	EqA required?	Lead Officer	Resources	Target Date
29	Review the actions set out in the Temporary Accommodation Strategy and publish a revised plan	Yes	Corporate Housing Strategy Manager	Time available within existing staff capacity. Revenue subsidy available through existing budgets	March 2015
30	Deliver the new Day Centre provision for supported housing clients in South Somerset in partnership with BCHA	Yes	Supported Housing & Strategy Officer	Time available within existing staff capacity. Capital funding largely secured through three different funding routes including Councils own affordable housing development budget	July 2015
31	Investigate options for future use of historically subsidised properties no longer required for the P2i contract to meet local housing needs	No	Supported Housing & Strategy Officer	Time available within existing staff capacity. Possibility that some capital subsidy may be needed to help with reconfiguration, in which case it will be subject to bids to the HCA or the Council's own funding.	Ongoing
31	Develop a 'move-on' plan for supported housing projects to ensure sufficient accommodation is available to avoid such projects 'silting up'	No	Supported Housing & Strategy Officer	Time available within existing staff capacity. Properties may become available through the above initiative or taken out of general needs management by Housing Association partners.	December 2015
33	Identify and secure emergency stopping point/transit site for travellers within Somerset in collaboration with other councils in Somerset.	No	Corporate Housing Strategy Manager	Time available within existing staff capacity. The Council has already secured an acquisition fund.	December 2015

# Evidence

A wealth of evidence on housing issues across the County can be found within the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) at the following website:  
[www.somersetintelligence.org.uk](http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk)

The JSNA is continuously updated, in the sense that different data sets are changed as and when the new data becomes available rather than, say, the entire website being changed annually. Information on the website is, then, likely to be more up to date than any data we reproduce here (which will, inevitably, date). On the other hand some of the data held as part of the JSNA provides a country wide picture but not much more detail on a district by district basis. In the following section we have selected some details which have informed this Strategy Implementation document.

## Evidence relating to Objective 1

### Housing tenure data

Household spaces are broken down by tenure by district in the two tables below. Although the number of households can vary by district, the proportions remain very similar, differing only by a few percentage points. Most noteworthy is that South Somerset is the only district where the social rented sector is still more dominant than the private rented sector.

**Table 1 - by number**

Number	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	TOTAL
Owned Outright	17,387	18,320	26,718	16,329	7,024	<b>85,778</b>
Owned - Mortgage	15,051	16,482	22,137	15,064	3,397	<b>72,131</b>
Shared Ownership	349	273	542	251	72	<b>1,487</b>
Social Rented	5,473	5,951	9,697	7,321	2,288	<b>30,730</b>
Private Rented	7,136	7,113	9,272	7,227	2,510	<b>33,258</b>
Live rent-free	761	662	1,135	715	332	<b>3,605</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46,157</b>	<b>48,801</b>	<b>69,501</b>	<b>46,907</b>	<b>15,623</b>	<b>226,989</b>

Source: 2011 Census (Table KS402EW) via Somerset Intelligence

**Table 2 – tenure as percentage of homes in each district**

%	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	TOTAL
Owned Outright	37.7	37.5	38.4	34.8	45.0	37.8
Owned - Mortgage	32.6	33.8	31.9	32.1	21.7	31.8
Shared Ownership	0.8	0.6	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.7
Social Rented	11.9	12.2	14.0	15.6	14.6	13.5
Private Rented	15.5	14.6	13.3	15.4	16.1	14.7
Live rent-free	1.6	1.4	1.6	1.5	2.1	1.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: 2011 Census (Table KS402EW) via Somerset Intelligence

## Energy efficiency

The following two tables illustrate that, whilst improving energy efficiency is a national as well as a regional issue, the need is greatest among owner-occupiers.

**Table 3 – energy efficiency ratings of South Somerset’s housing stock**

SAP <sup>37</sup> Band	Households	% of local housing stock	South West	England
A	0	0%	0%	0%
B	1	0%	0%	1%
C	7,798	11%	13%	13%
D	31,057	43%	35%	38%
E	17,049	24%	33%	34%
F	14,460	20%	14%	11%
G	1,414	2%	5%	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>71,779</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Centre for Sustainable Energy, 2013

<sup>37</sup> The Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is the methodology used by the government to assess and compare the energy and environmental performance of dwellings, where A is the most efficient and G the least. Its purpose is to provide accurate and reliable assessments of dwelling energy performances that are needed to underpin energy and environmental policy initiatives.

For more information see <https://www.gov.uk/standard-assessment-procedure>

**Table 4 - modelling SAP ratings of the local housing stock by tenure**

SAP Band	Private rented	Owner-Occupied	LA/ HA
A	0%	0%	0%
B	0%	0%	0%
C	19%	6%	28%
D	37%	44%	44%
E	19%	24%	24%
F	23%	23%	3%
G	2%	2%	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Centre for Sustainable Energy, 2013

There also remain a small percentage of homes without central heating, although the higher proportion in West Somerset seems to indicate that this may be more marked in rural than urban areas, possibly linked to the existing mains gas infrastructure, as shown below.

**Table 5 - homes without central heating by district**

	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	TOTAL
Number of homes	1,291	1,906	2,513	1,448	828	7,986
Homes as % of total	2.8	3.9	3.6	3.1	5.3	3.5

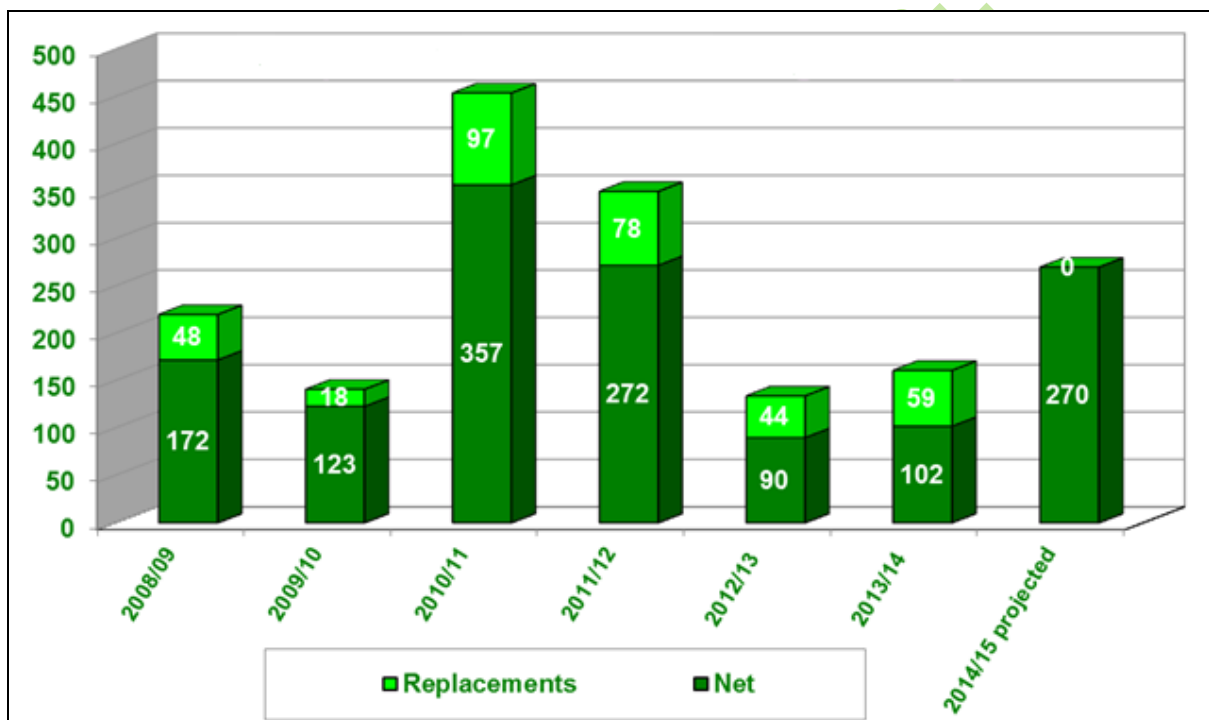
Source: Census 2011 via Somerset Intelligence

# Evidence relating to Objective 2

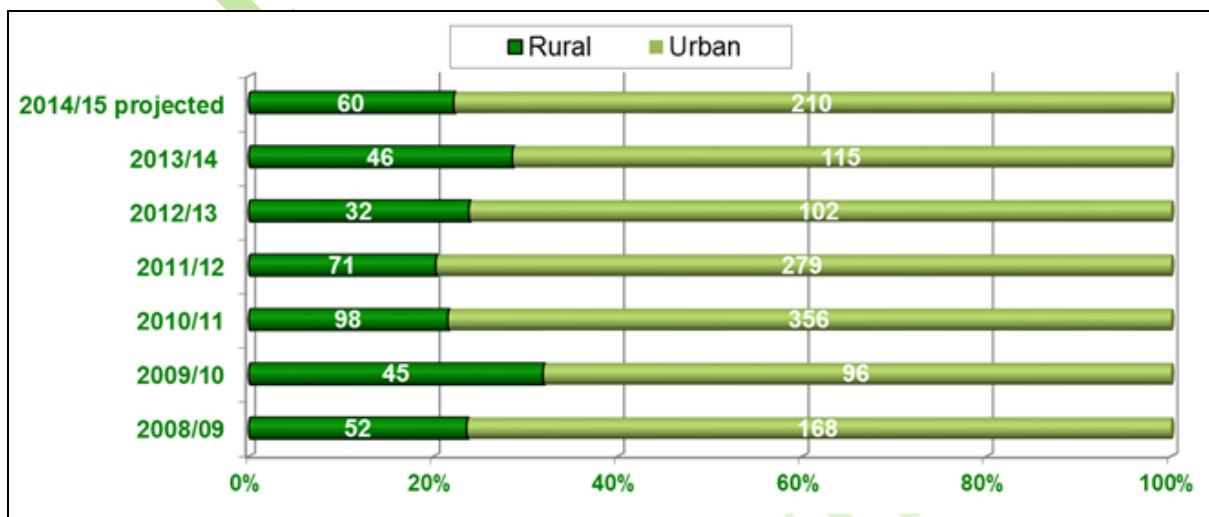
## Affordable Housing delivery

The following graphs depict the affordable housing development programme over the previous six years and projected for the current financial year (2014/15). Graph 1 shows both the overall number of new affordable homes delivered and how this breaks down into replacement properties (following demolition of concrete houses for example) and the real net gain.

**Graph 1 – affordable housing delivery**



**Graph 2 – rural housing as a proportion**

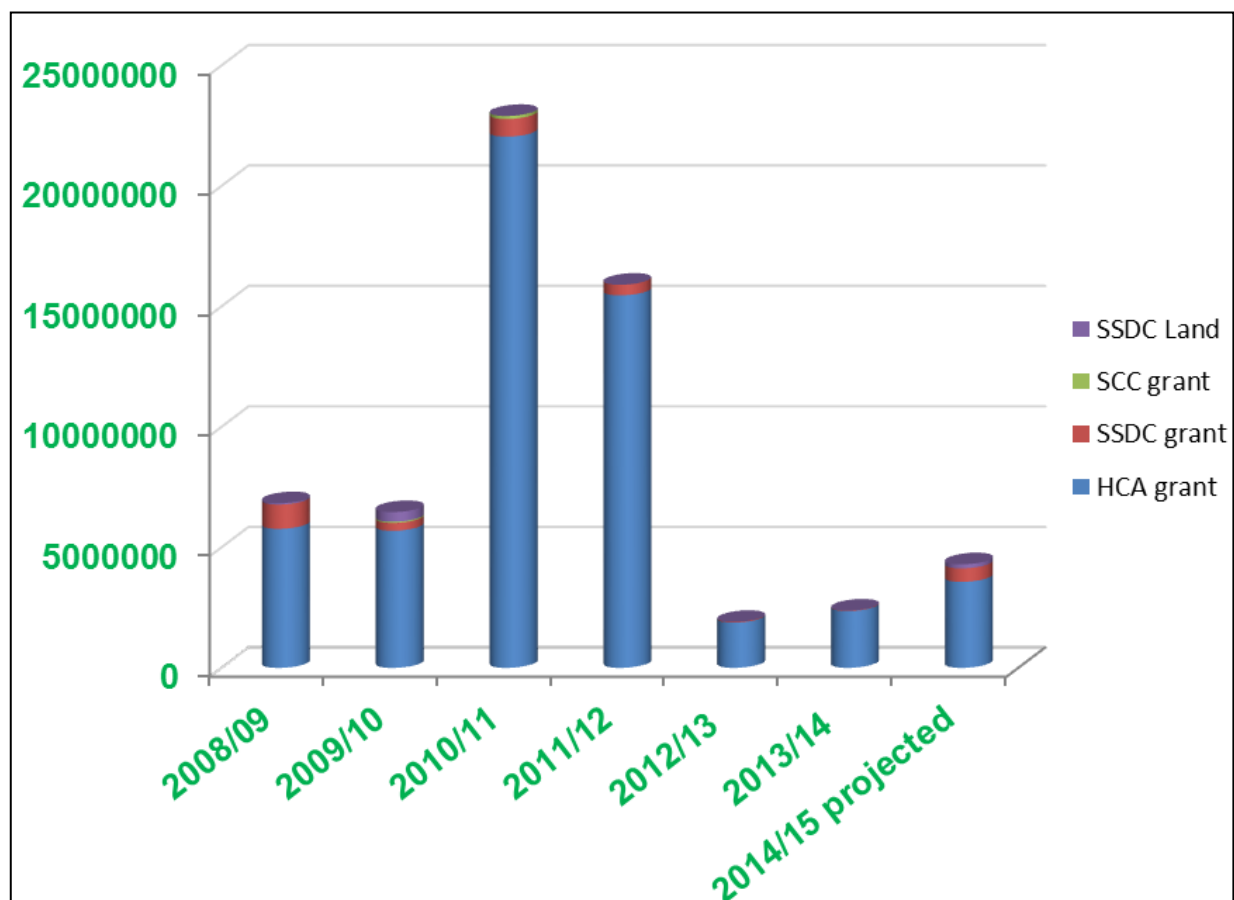




In Graph 2 'rural' means within settlements of 3,000 or less population. It shows that we have consistently delivered at least one fifth of the programme each year in our most rural settlements (see also Chart 4 further below).

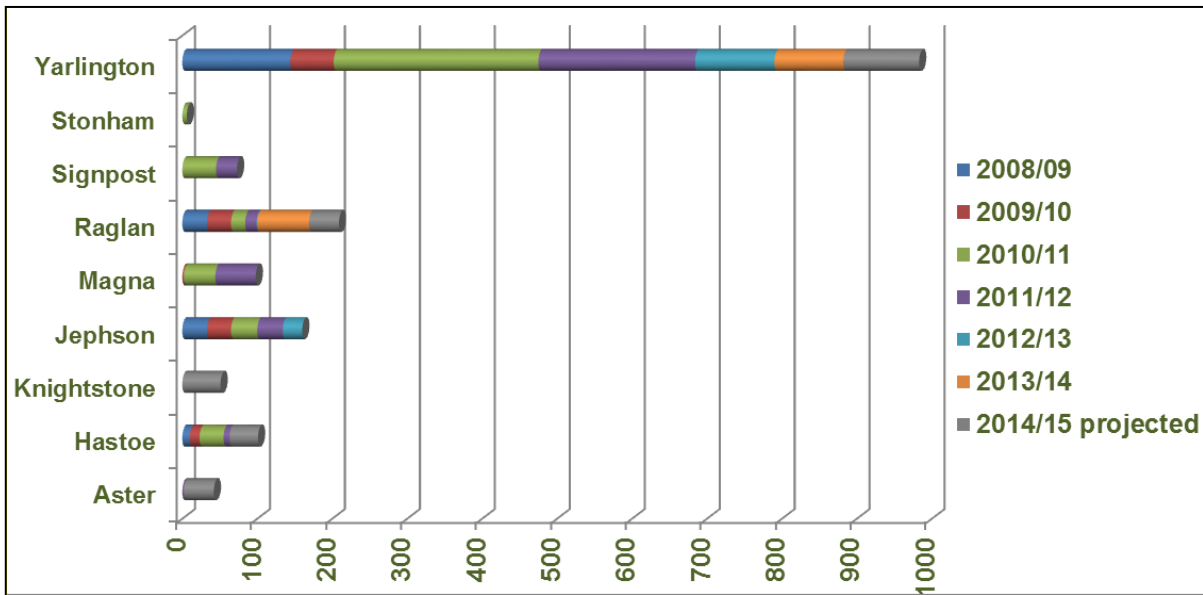
Graph 3 shows the breakdown of sources for public subsidy. Over the past six (complete) financial years this amounts to just over £ 56million, of which 94% (almost exactly £53million) has come through the Homes and Communities Agency and 5% (just over £ 2½million) has come as cash grant from the District Council. This demonstrates that we have, generally, deployed our own funds in a manner that maximises capture of central sources.

**Graph 3 – level of public subsidy associated with completed schemes**

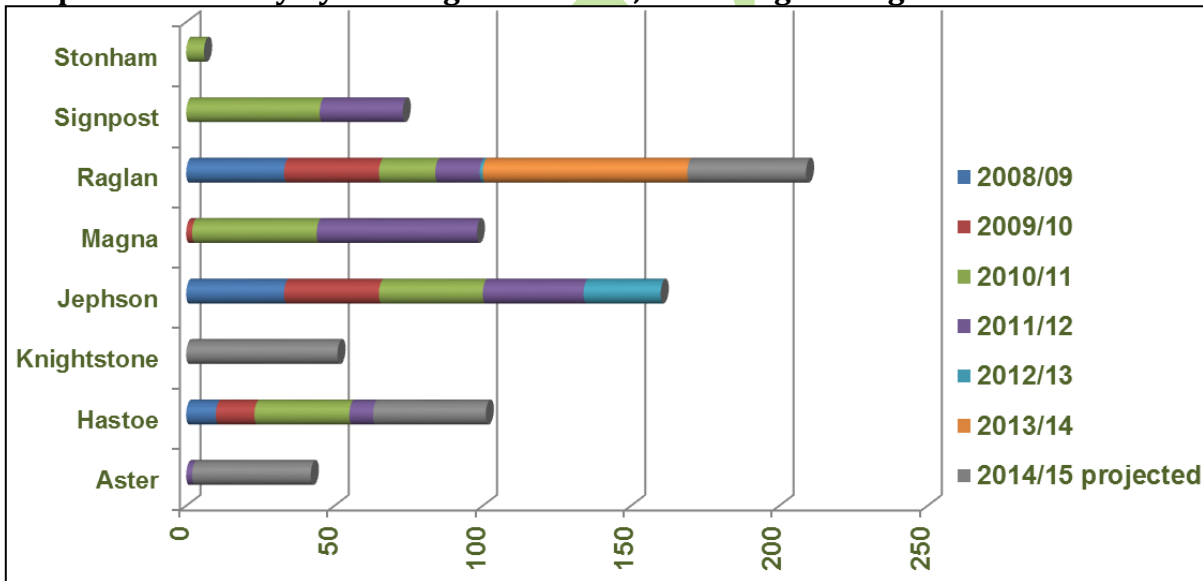


Although Yarlington are by far the largest social landlord in South Somerset in terms of both stock levels and delivery, a significant quantity of affordable housing has been (and is projected to be) delivered by some of our other partners, as illustrated by graphs 4a and 4b. Over the seven year period Yarlington will have delivered the best part of a thousand new homes in South Somerset (including replacements for concrete dwellings). Graph 4 b excludes Yarlington and thus better depicts the relative delivery between the other Housing Associations.

**Graph 4a – delivery by housing association**

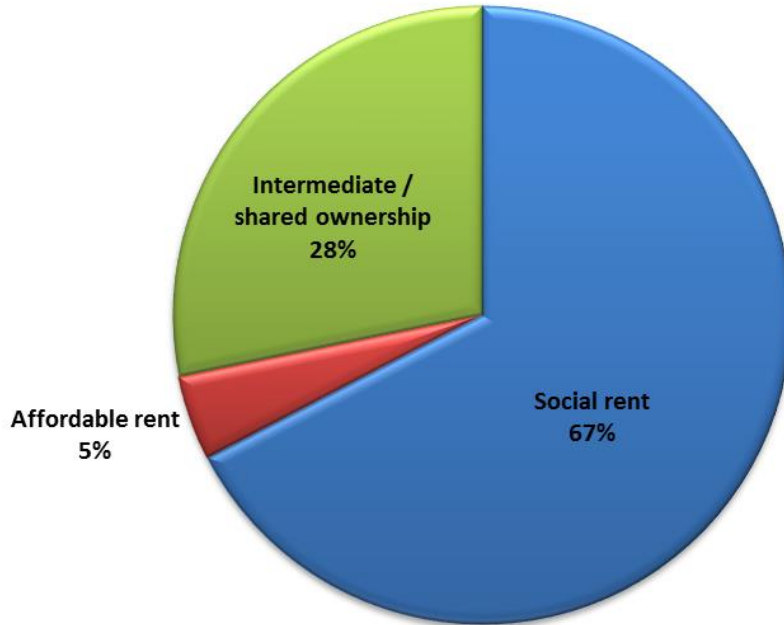


**Graph 4b – delivery by housing association, excluding Yarlington**

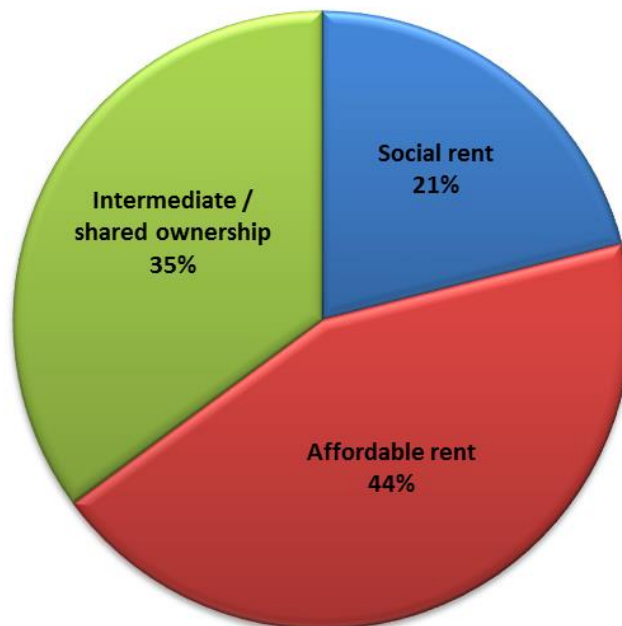


Charts 1-3 show the proportions of different tenure types within the affordable housing programme and clearly demonstrates the extent to which social rent is being replaced by affordable rent. Chart 4 gives a breakdown of the six-year development programme by location. Almost a quarter of delivery occurs in rural locations, with most other developments taking place, as expected, in major settlements such as Yeovil and Chard.

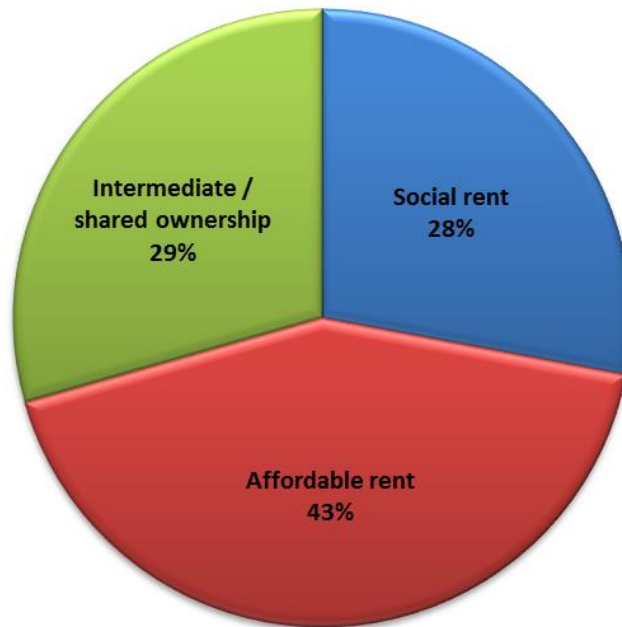
**Chart 1 - breakdown of affordable housing delivered  
2008/09 to 2013/14**



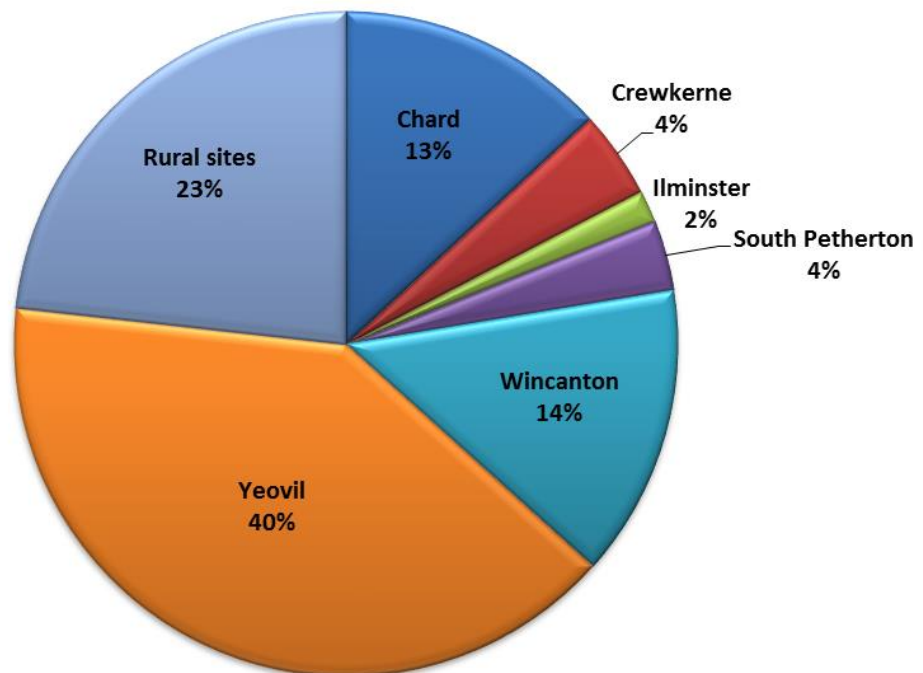
**Chart 2 - breakdown of affordable housing delivered  
2013/14 only**



**Chart 3 - breakdown of affordable housing programme for 2014/15**



**Chart 4 - six-year development by location**



## House prices and affordability

A comparison of property prices between the component districts and boroughs of Somerset shows some significant differences within the county. Sedgemoor in particular has much lower property prices than other parts of Somerset, whereas areas such as Mendip and West Somerset are often the most expensive on average.

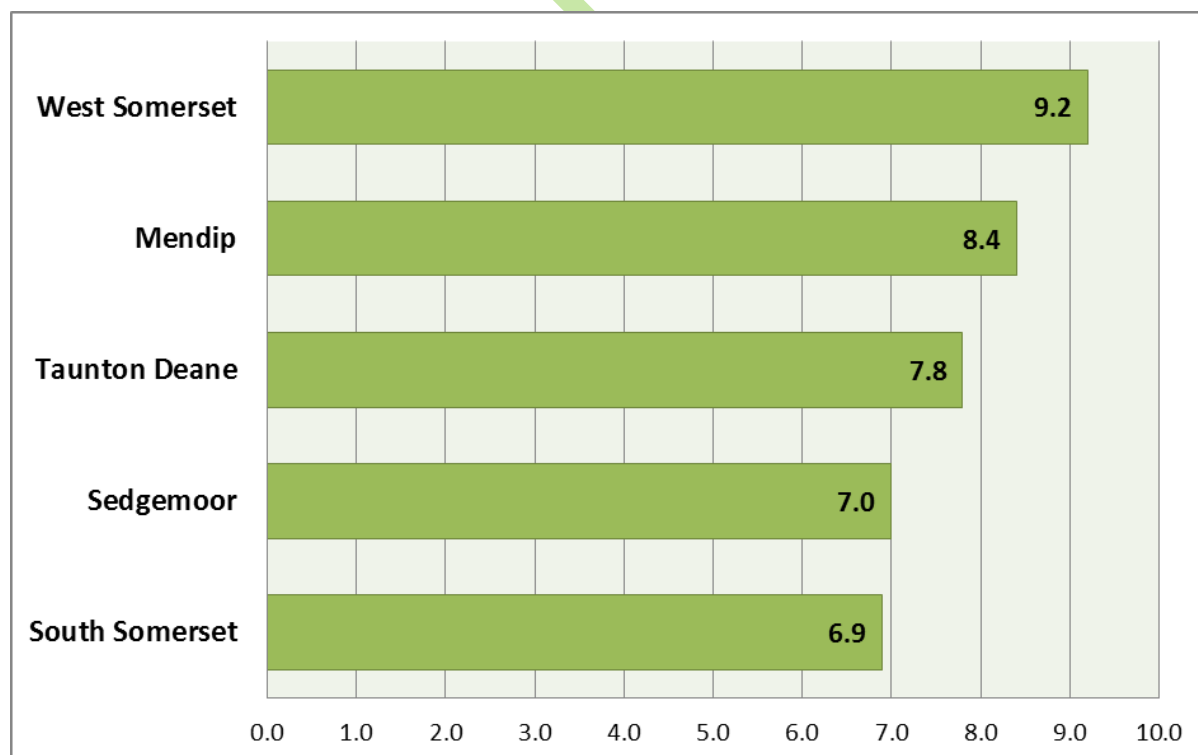
**Table 6 – average residential property price, by type of property, 2012/13**

District	Flat	Terraced	Semi-detached	Detached
Mendip	£119,659	£173,015	£193,232	£326,128
Sedgemoor	£102,770	£138,832	£175,764	£273,166
South Somerset	£102,504	£156,936	£178,201	£295,326
Taunton Deane	£112,888	£167,825	£190,998	£307,095
West Somerset	£122,232	£150,041	£202,040	£308,172

Source: Somerset Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

The data on the following pages compare house price affordability in South Somerset with elsewhere in the county, but also with national averages. On the one hand, the ratio of lower quartile house prices to earnings appears better than in other parts of Somerset; however, lower average wages mean that it remains more difficult for first-time buyers in South Somerset than in many other parts of England, despite lower property prices.

**Graph 5 – ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings, Somerset districts, 2013**

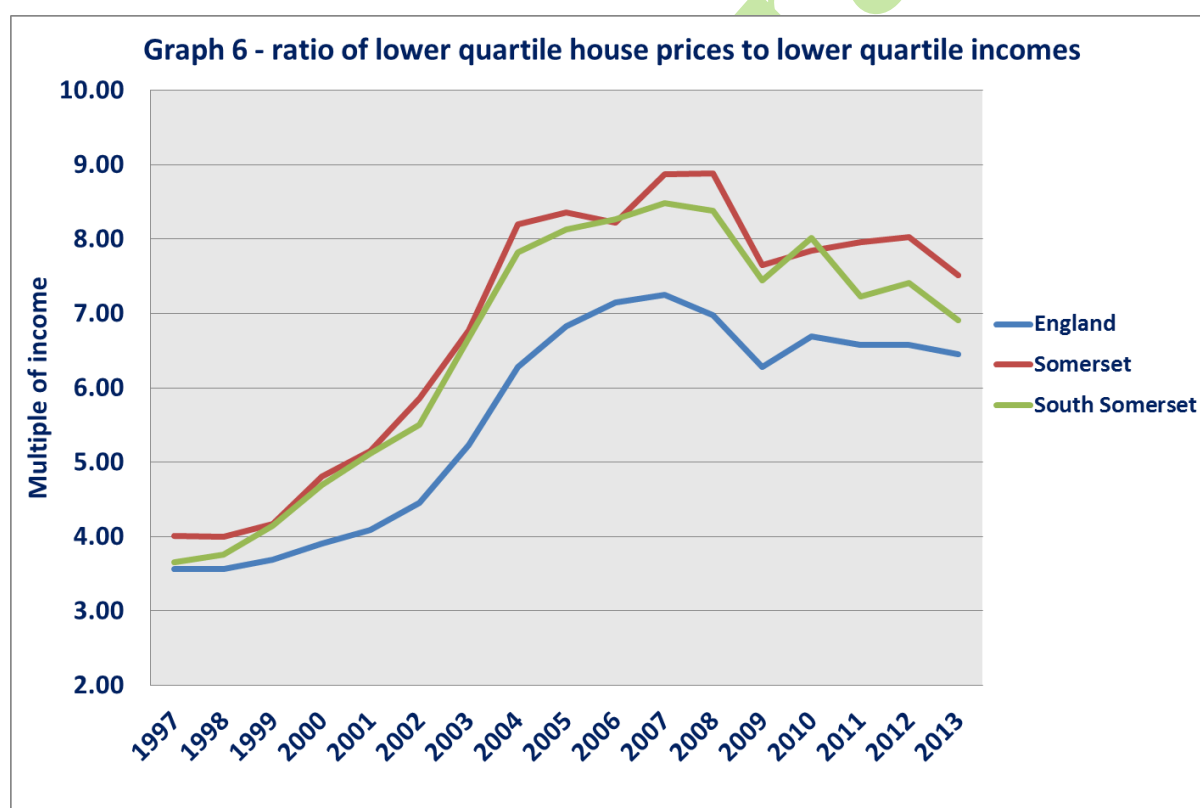


Source: Somerset Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

**Table 7 – house price and affordability – comparison with national figures**

	South Somerset	England
Average (mean) house price <sup>38</sup>	£210,447	£256,643
Gross annual income needed for a mortgage on above <sup>39</sup>	£48,102	£58,661
Average (median) gross salary <sup>40</sup>	£19,774	£22,199
Ratio of house price to salary <sup>41</sup>	10.6	11.6
Ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile earnings <sup>42</sup>	6.91	6.45

Graph 6, below, shows how the figures on the final row of Table 7 have changed over time, including a county comparison figure.



Map 1, overleaf, makes a snapshot comparison of the same with local authorities across England in 2013.

<sup>38</sup> Price Paid data for the period 01/01/2014 to 30/06/2014. Data produced by Land Registry © Crown copyright 2014.

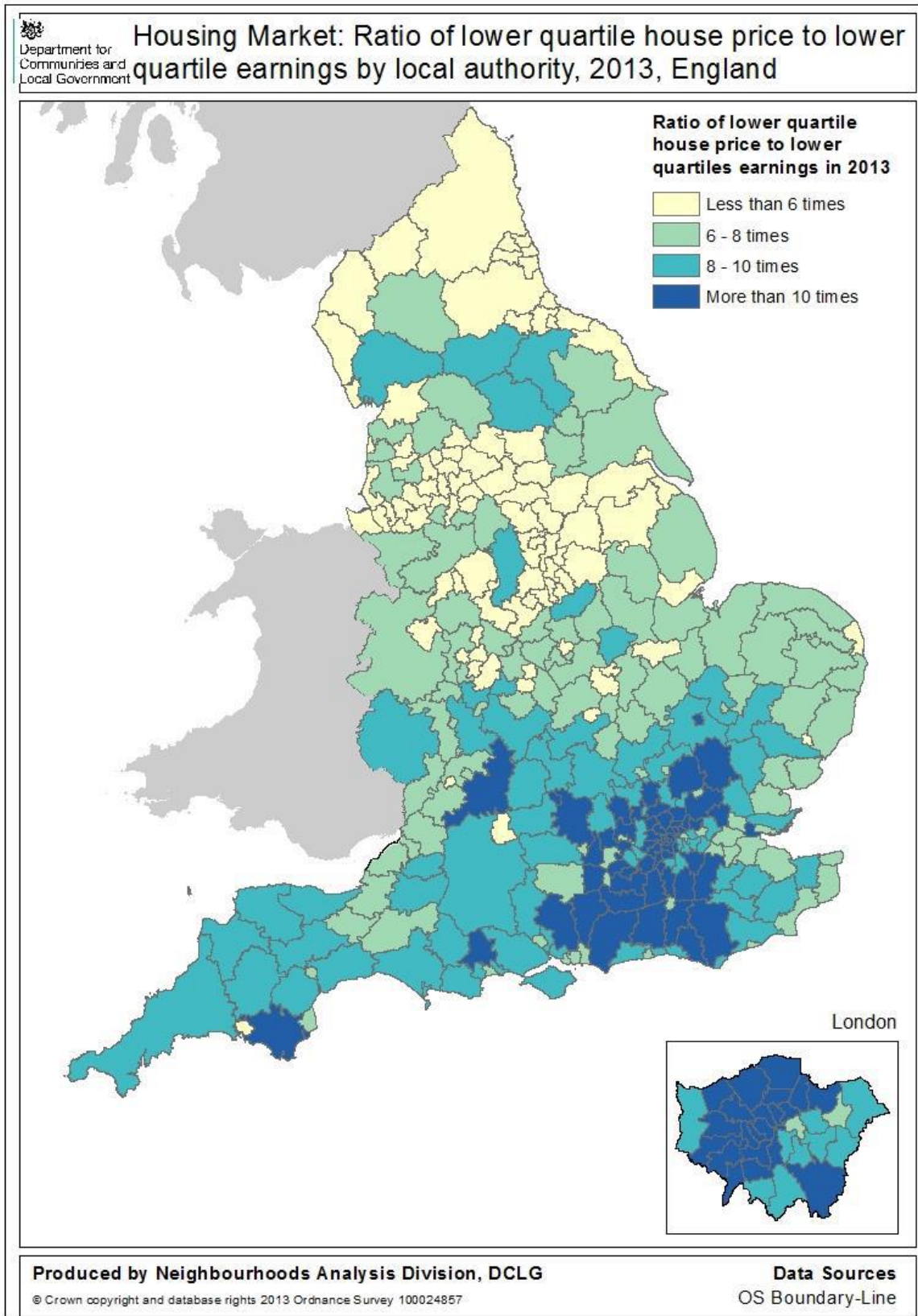
<sup>39</sup> 80% of average house price divided by 3.5.

<sup>40</sup> Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), Office for National Statistics, 2013.

<sup>41</sup> House price divided by salary, using the above figures.

<sup>42</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government, 2013.

**Map 1 - ratio of lower quartile house prices to lower quartile incomes**





## Lettings and Rent Levels

In chart 5, below, 'other settlements' comprises 17 other parishes in South Somerset with three or fewer lets. These lets include those from new schemes as well as casual vacancies arising from existing stock. Yeovil and Chard account for almost half of all advertised vacancies, with significant numbers also in Crewkerne, Ilminster, Martock and Wincanton.

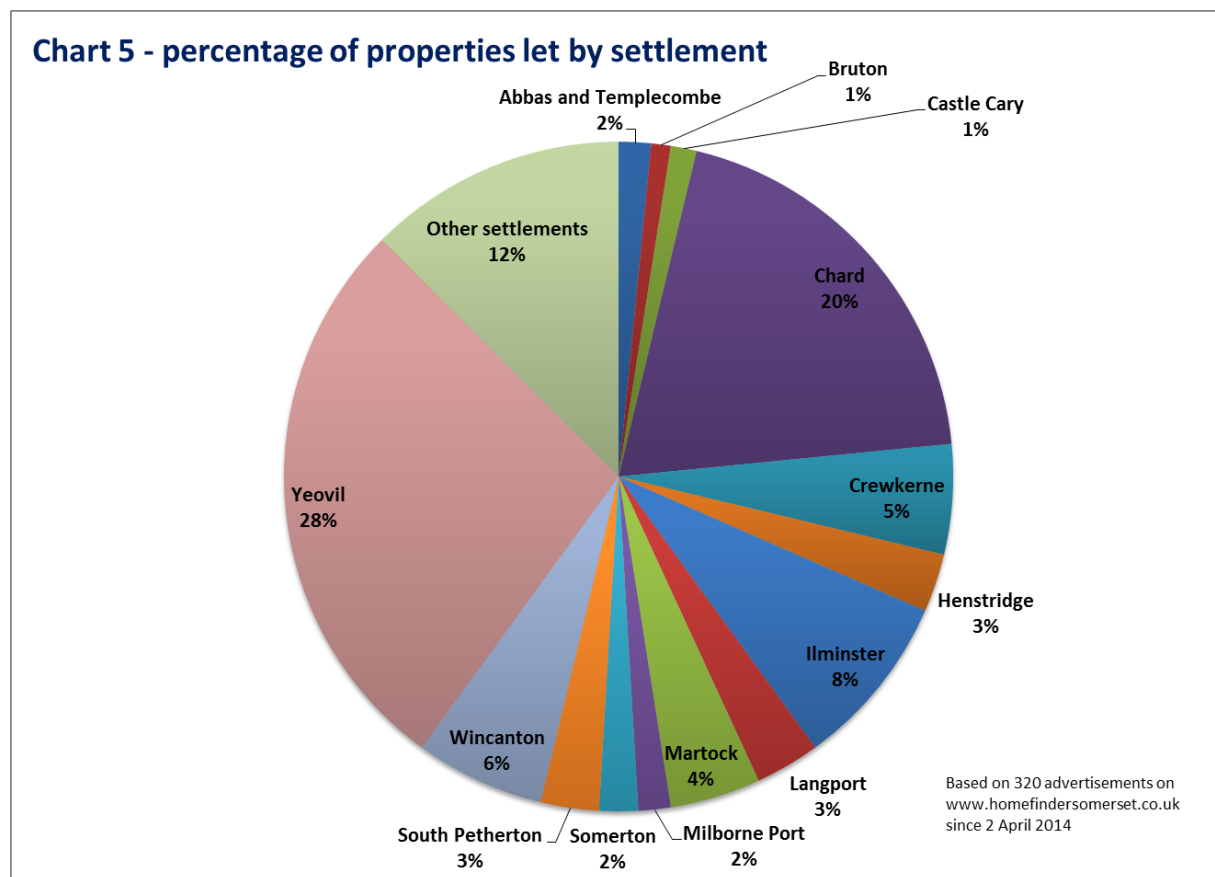


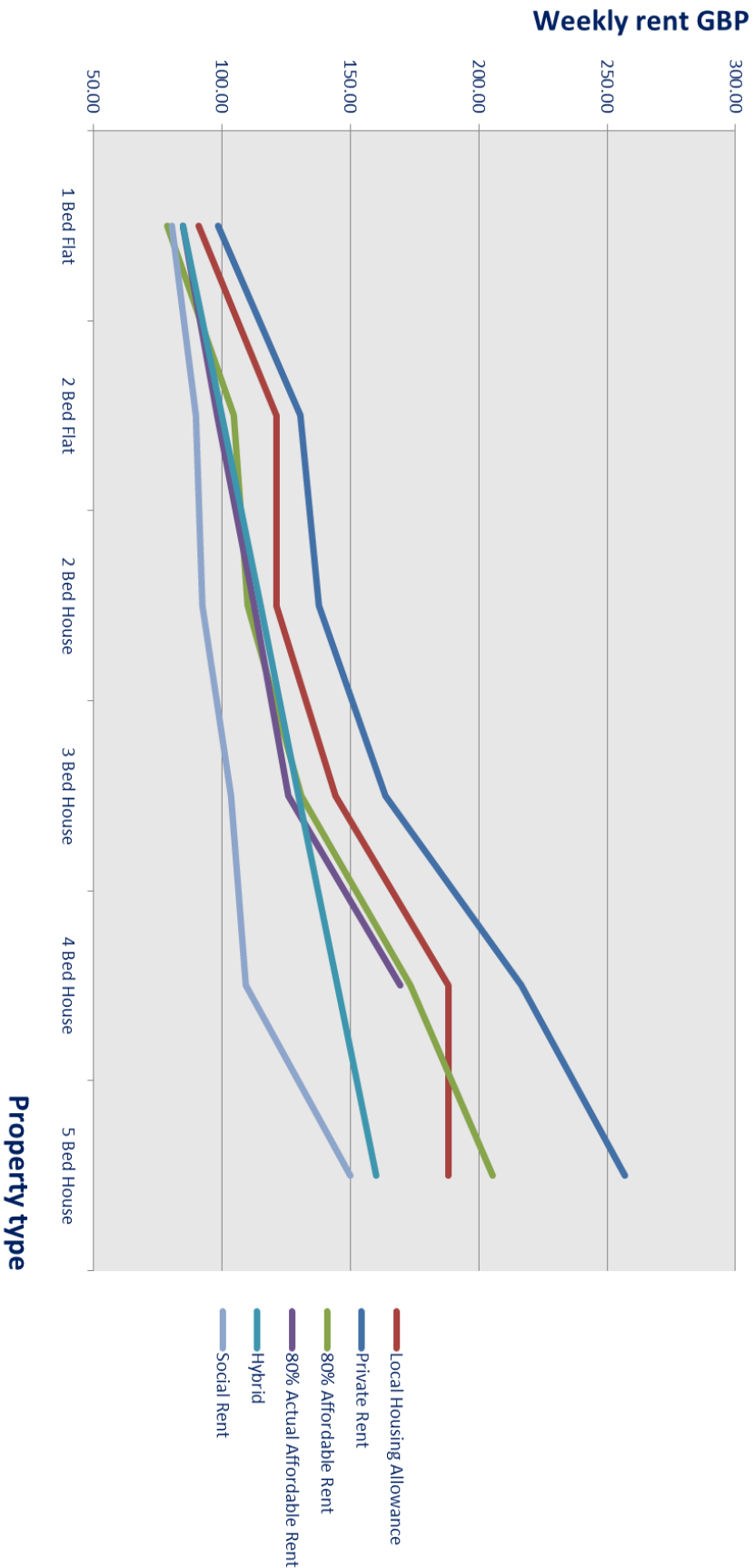
Table 8 is a detailed comparison of rent levels in South Somerset, using advertised vacancies since the beginning of this financial year. It shows a marked divergence in rent levels as property size increases; the private sector quickly becomes much more expensive compared to social and affordable rent. This is expanded in Graphs 7 & 8 on the following pages.

**Table 8 - weekly rent levels and comparisons**

	1 Bed Flat	2 Bed Flat	2 Bed House	3 Bed House	4 Bed House	5 Bed House
Private Rent	99.45	130.01	135.99	163.03	218.81	257.08
Local Housing Allowance	91.15	121.15	121.15	144.23	188.08	188.08
80% Affordable Rent	79.56	104.01	108.79	130.42	175.05	205.67
80% Actual Affordable	81.29	97.09	112.64	125.16	151.89	No data
Hybrid	85.00	100.00	115.00	130.00	145.00	160.00
Social Rent	80.32	89.92	92.09	103.93	109.39	133.49



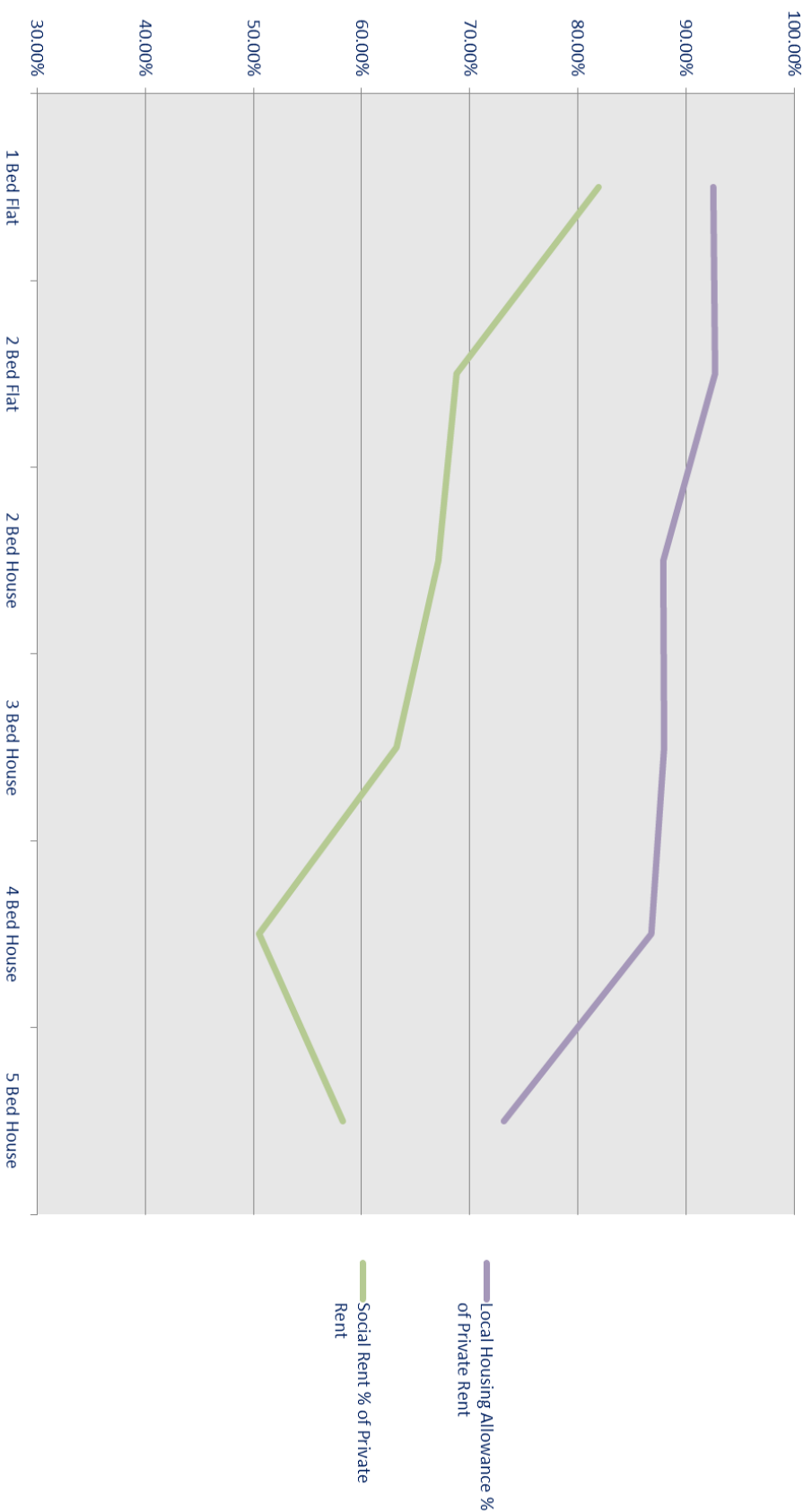
## Graph 7 - weekly rent levels



**Key:**  
**Private Rent:** 609 properties sampled from www.rightmove.co.uk from 02/06/2014 to 10/10/2014  
**80% Affordable Rent:** 80% of the private rent average  
**80% Actual Affordable Rent:** advertised on www.homefindersomerset.co.uk as Affordable Rent properties  
**Hybrid:** calculated on 01/12/2013  
**Social Rent:** average rents of all registered social landlords, taken weekly from www.homefindersomerset.co.uk, starting on 02/04/2014

Affordable Rent properties are smaller in number and due to sample sizes, rent levels are not available for every property type.

### Graph 8 - comparison with private rent by property type



**Private Rent:** 609 properties sampled from [www.rightmove.co.uk](http://www.rightmove.co.uk) from 02/06/2014 to 10/10/2014  
**Social Rent:** average rents of all registered social landlords, taken weekly from [www.homefindersomerset.co.uk](http://www.homefindersomerset.co.uk), starting on 02/04/2014

## Tables 9-12 - Housing Register data on 16 October 2014

The following tables give a snapshot of the register broken down by Area, Ward and parish.

AREA EAST	Housing Register Data					Housing Register Data			
				Total					Total
<b>BLACKMOOR VALE</b>					<b>IVELCHESTER</b>				
Abbas & Templecombe	1	7	17	25	Chilton Cantelo				0
Charlton Horethorne			1	1	Ilchester	2	8	9	19
Compton Pauncefoot				0	Limington				0
Corton Denham				0	Mudford	1	1		2
Henstridge	1	4	12	17	Yeovilton	1		3	4
Holton				0	<b>Total</b>				<b>25</b>
Horsington		1	2	3					
Maperton				0	<b>MILBORNE PORT</b>				
North Cheriton				0	Milborne Port	5	12	20	37
<b>Total</b>				<b>46</b>	<b>Total</b>				<b>37</b>
<b>BRUTON</b>					<b>NORTHSTONE</b>				
Bruton	2	8	17	27	Barton St David			2	2
<b>Total</b>				<b>27</b>	Charlton Mackerell			2	2
					Keinton Mandeville			3	3
<b>CAMELOT</b>					Kingsdon			1	1
Marston Magna	1	2		3	Kingweston				0
Queen Camel	1	1	16	18	<b>Total</b>				<b>8</b>
Rimpton				0					
Sparkford		3	3	6	<b>TOWER</b>				
West Camel		2	2	4	Bratton Seymour				0
<b>Total</b>				<b>31</b>	Brewham			1	1
					Charlton Musgrove				0
<b>CARY</b>					Cucklington				0
Alford				0	Pen Selwood				0
Ansford				0	Pitcombe				0
Babcary				0	Shepton Montague	1			1
Castle Cary	4	14	26	44	Stoke Trister				0
Lovington				0	<b>Total</b>				<b>2</b>
North Barrow				0					
North Cadbury			1	1	<b>WINCANTON</b>				
South Barrow				0	Wincanton	13	41	49	103
South Cadbury			1	1	<b>Total</b>				<b>103</b>
Yarlington	2	6	4	12					
<b>Total</b>				<b>58</b>	<b>TOTALS BY BAND</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>192</b>	
					<b>AREA EAST TOTAL</b>	<b>337</b>			

There are an additional **32** applicants from other parts of Somerset whose first choice parish lies within Area East.

AREA NORTH	Housing Register Data					Housing Register Data			
				Total					Total
<b>BURROW HILL</b>					<b>MARTOCK</b>				
Barrington	2			2	Ash	1	2		3
Kingsbury Episcopi		3	2	5	Long Load				0
Muchelney			1	1	Martock	4	14	32	50
Puckington			1	1	<b>Total</b>				<b>53</b>
Stocklinch				0					
<b>Total</b>				<b>9</b>	<b>ST MICHAEL'S</b>				
					Chilthorne Domer	1		3	4
<b>CURRY RIVEL</b>					Montacute	1		5	6
Drayton				0	Tintinhull	3	1	3	7
Curry Rivel	3	5	7	15	<b>Total</b>				<b>17</b>
<b>Total</b>				<b>15</b>					
					<b>SOUTH PETHERTON</b>				
<b>HAMDON</b>					Lopen				0
Norton Sub Hamdon		3	8	11	Seavington St Mary				0
Stoke Sub Hamdon	5	4	24	33	Seavington St Michael				0
<b>Total</b>				<b>44</b>	Shepton Beauchamp	1	2	2	5
					South Petherton	3	13	21	37
<b>ISLEMOOR</b>					<b>Total</b>				<b>42</b>
Beercrocombe				0					
Curry Mallett	1		1	2	<b>TURN HILL</b>				
Fivehead			1	1	Aller				0
Hambridge & Westport				0	High Ham	1			1
Ilton			1	1	Long Sutton			2	2
Isle Abbots				0	Pitney				0
Isle Brewers				0	<b>Total</b>				<b>3</b>
<b>Total</b>				<b>4</b>					
					<b>WESSEX</b>				
<b>LANGPORT &amp; HUISSH</b>					Compton Dundon			3	3
Huish Episcopi			3	3	Somerton	5	18	37	60
Langport	5	14	31	50	<b>Total</b>				<b>63</b>
<b>Total</b>				<b>53</b>					
					<b>TOTALS BY BAND</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>188</b>	
					<b>AREA NORTH TOTAL</b>	<b>303</b>			

There are an additional **30** applicants from other parts of Somerset whose first choice parish lies within Area North.

AREA WEST	Housing Register Data				Housing Register Data			
				Total				Total
<b>BLACKDOWN</b>					<b>NEROCHE</b>			
Buckland St Mary		1	2	3	Ashill		2	2
Combe St Nicholas		3	4	7	Broadway		1	3
Wambrook			1	1	Donyatt		1	1
Whitestaunton				0	Horton		1	5
<b>Total</b>				<b>11</b>	<b>Total</b>			<b>14</b>
<b>CHARD AVISHAYES</b>					<b>PARRETT</b>			
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>48</b>	Chiselborough		1	1
<b>CHARD COMBE</b>					East Chinnock			0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>21</b>	Haselbury Plucknett			1
<b>CHARD CRIMCHARD</b>					North Perrott			1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>35</b>	West Chinnock	1		1
<b>CHARD HOLYROOD</b>					<b>Total</b>			<b>5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>TATWORTH &amp; FORTON</b>			
<b>CHARD JOCELYN</b>					Tatworth & Forton		3	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>Total</b>			<b>12</b>
<b>CREWKERNE</b>					<b>WINDWHISTLE</b>			
Crewkerne	9	44	60	113	Chaffcombe			0
Misterton	2		3	5	Chillington			0
<b>Total</b>				<b>118</b>	Cudworth			0
<b>EGGWOOD</b>					Cricket St Thomas			0
Dinnington				0	Dowlish Wake			0
Hinton St George				0	Kingstone			0
Merriott	2	4	12	18	Knowle St Giles			0
<b>Total</b>				<b>18</b>	Wayford			0
<b>ILMINSTER</b>					West Crewkerne			0
Ilminster	9	29	49	87	Winsham	2	2	4
Whitelackington				0	<b>Total</b>			<b>8</b>
<b>Total</b>				<b>87</b>	<b>TOTALS BY BAND</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>310</b>
					<b>AREA WEST TOTAL</b>	<b>542</b>		

There are an additional **24** applicants from other parts of Somerset whose first choice parish lies within Area West.

AREA SOUTH	Housing Register Data					Housing Register Data			
				Total					Total
<b>BRYMPTON</b>					<b>YEOVIL EAST</b>				
Brympton			2	2	<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>164</b>
Yeovil Preston	23	36	54	113					
<b>Total</b>				<b>115</b>	<b>YEOVIL SOUTH</b>				
					<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>136</b>
<b>COKER</b>					<b>YEOVIL WEST</b>				
Barwick	6	2	5	13	<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>142</b>
Closworth				0					
East Coker	3	3	4	10					
Hardington Mandeville			1	1	<b>YEOVIL WITHOUT</b>				
Odcombe	2		2	4	<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>145</b>
West Coker		5	9	14					
<b>Total</b>				<b>42</b>					
<b>YEOVIL CENTRAL</b>									
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>TOTALS BY BAND</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>511</b>	
					<b>AREA SOUTH TOTAL</b>	<b>1026</b>			
There are an additional <b>42</b> applicants from other parts of Somerset whose first choice parish lies within Area South.									

In total, there are **128** applicants from other parts of Somerset whose first choice parish lies within South Somerset.

Additionally, there are **166** applicants from within South Somerset whose first choice parish lies elsewhere in Somerset.

The information in the above tables is only accurate as at the point in time it was taken – with new households joining the register on a day to day basis and existing households being rehoused following the weekly advert cycle.

## Evidence relating to Objective 3

**Table 13 – Local Parish Housing Needs Surveys completed since January 2004**

Parish/es	Date	Population 2011 Census	Households 2011 Census	Need	Developed	Year
Abbas & Templecombe	Oct-08	1560	689	25	9	Nov-10
Aller	Mar-04	410	166	0	5 (net gain)	2006
Ash	Sept-09	626	261	3		
Barton St David	Aug-08	561	233	2	13	May-13
Brewham	Sept-11	441	186	1		
<i>Broadway</i>	<i>Mar-05</i>	<i>740</i>	<i>318</i>	<i>4</i>		
Bruton	Oct-08	2907	1082	27	13 4 15	Feb-10 Dec-10 Mar-12
Buckland St. Mary*	Apr-05	521	214	3		
Charlton Horethorne	Feb-07	591	265	1		
<i>Charlton Musgrove</i>	<i>Sept-11</i>	<i>398</i>	<i>166</i>	<i>0</i>		
Compton Dundon	Dec-10	705	300	3		
Curry Mallet	2004	306	132	2	6	Jan-09
Curry Rivel	Aug-06	2148	938	15	17 2 5 7	Aug-06 Jun-08 Aug-11 Apr-12
<i>Donyatt</i>	<i>Sep-05</i>	<i>347</i>	<i>146</i>	<i>2</i>		
Hardington Mandeville*	May-04	585	236	1		
High Ham	Apr-04	909	371	1		
Hinton St George	March-13	442		0		
Horton	Sept -10	812	361	6		
Huish Episcopi	Apr-04	2095	876	3	18	Sept-10
<i>Kingsdon</i>	<i>Oct-08</i>	<i>303</i>	<i>146</i>	<i>1</i>		
Long Load	May-12	332	145	0		
Long Sutton	Feb-13	833	367	2		
<i>Marston Magna</i>	<i>Mar-09</i>	<i>523</i>	<i>207</i>	<i>3</i>		

\* Indicates the survey was not undertaken by the county-wide Rural Housing Enablers and methodology may vary.

**Table 13 continued**

Parish/es	Date	Population 2011 Census	Households 2011 Census	Need	Developed	Year
Misterton*	June-04	826	352	5	(see note)	
Norton Sub Hamdon	Oct-05	743	308	11	10	Mar-15
Pen Selwood	Sept-11	273	128	0		
Queen Camel	Sept-11	908	355	18	20	Mar-15
Shepton Beauchamp	Sep-04	728	320	5		
South Cadbury	Oct-04	284	132	1	3	Nov-08
<i>South Petherton<sup>43</sup></i>	<i>Jan-08</i>	<i>3367</i>	<i>1562</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>11 23 1 10</i>	<i>Mar-09 Nov-09 Feb-13 Apr-13</i>
Sparkford	Aug-05	617	258	6	8	Feb-13
Stoke Sub Hamdon	Mar-08	1968	861	33		
Tatworth & Forton	Aug-05	2660	1108	12	4 8	Jul-07 Mar-11
<i>West Camel</i>	<i>Oct-08</i>	<i>459</i>	<i>205</i>	<i>4</i>		
West Crewkerne	Sept-11	631	258	0		

*It was originally thought that the need established at Misterton would be met through the affordable housing provision within the former yard site adjacent Crewkerne Station. However just before going to print it was accepted that the developer was unable to afford this planning obligation according to an independent viability report.*

## Mutual exchange

On 31st December 2013 there were 850 live mutual exchange applications across the county, the vast majority of which were split between Mendip, Taunton Deane and South Somerset.

**Table 14 - mutual exchange applications by district**

	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	TOTAL
<b>Number of applications</b>	212	73	258	293	14	850

Source: Somerset Intelligence

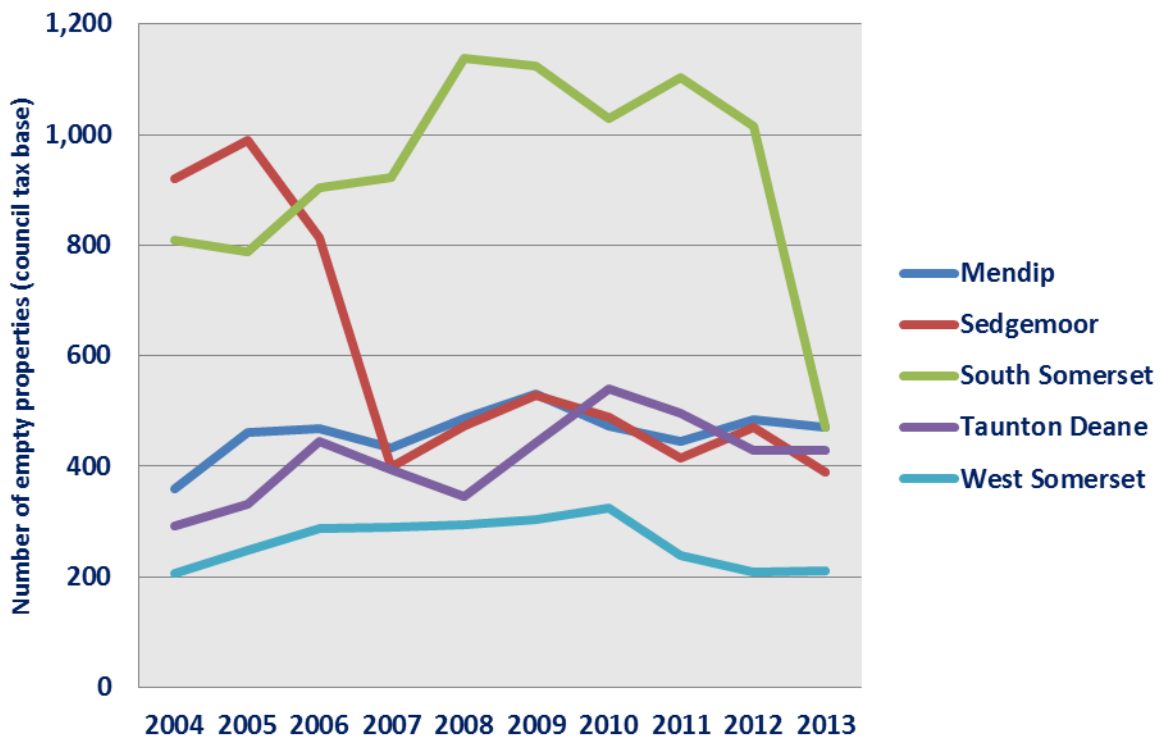
## Empty properties

The graphs on the following page clearly show the results achieved following the appointment of the Empty Property Officer in 2012, among all such properties but especially among long-term vacant dwellings.

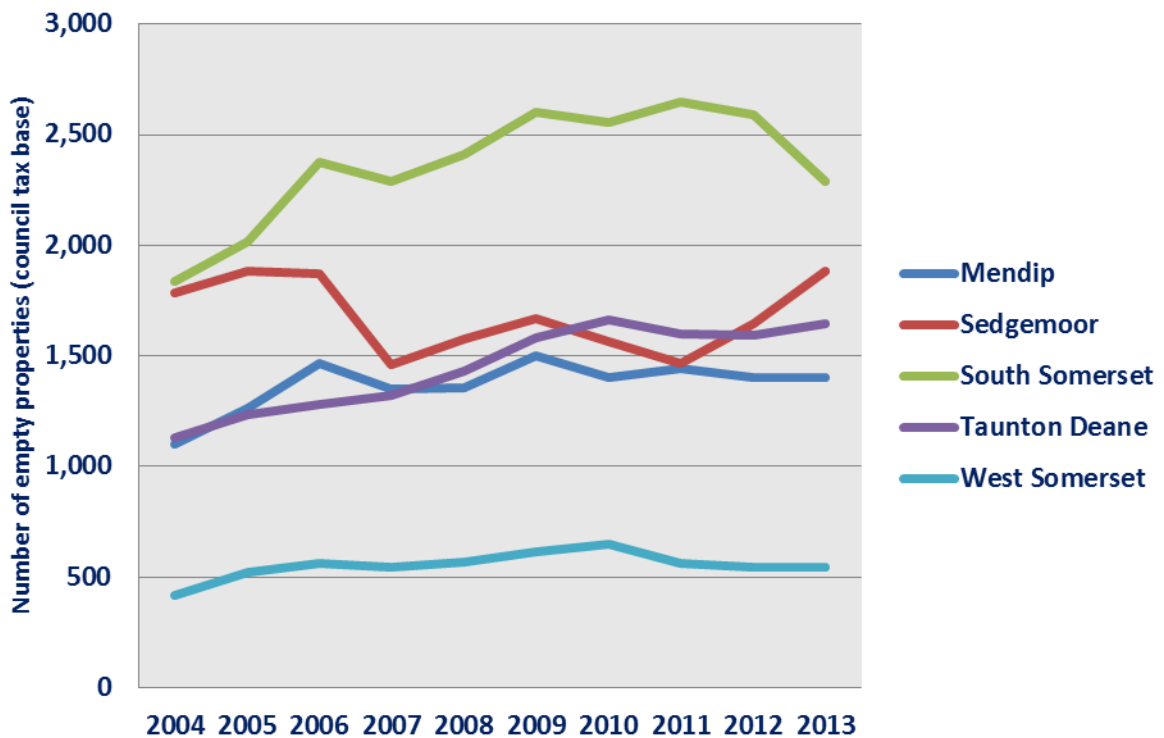
<sup>43</sup> South Petherton included for completeness sake given 2008 survey and fairly recently completed affordable housing provision; however most recent census data shows that the village has now exceeded 3,000 population



**Graph 9 - long-term vacant dwellings by local authority, 2004 to 2013**

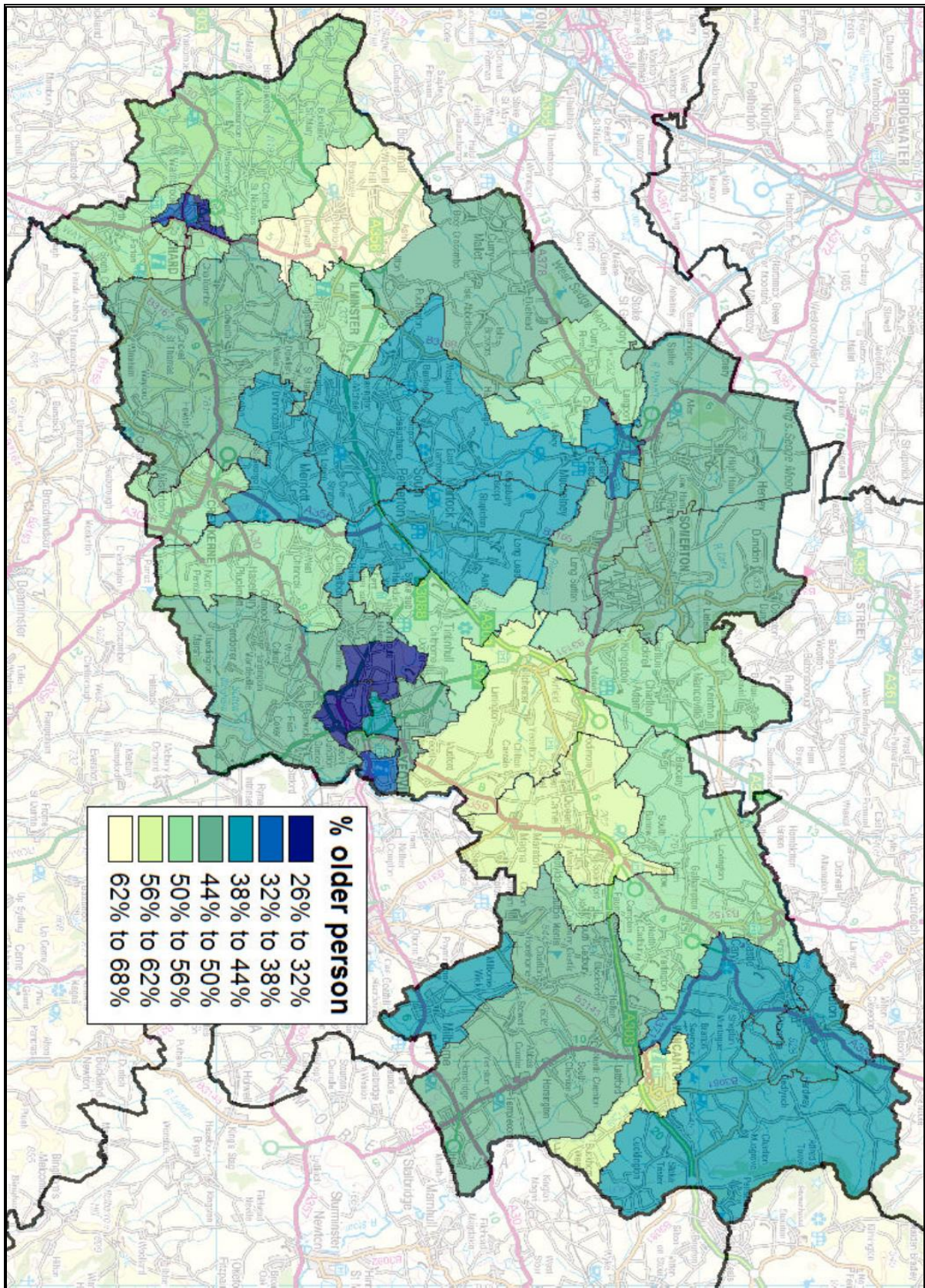


**Graph 10 - all vacant dwellings by local authority, 2004 to 2013**



# Evidence relating to Objective 4

Map 2 – age demographics in South Somerset as percentage



Source: Somerset SHMA household survey, Fordham Research 2008





## Age & Care Distribution

On the preceding two pages, map 2 shows the higher percentage of older people in rural areas of South Somerset and map 3 shows that the higher percentages of residents living in medical/care establishments are concentrated in and around the major settlements of the district.

## Under-occupation and overcrowding

**Table 15 - under/over-occupancy - 2011 Census**

The number of households within each occupancy rating category on **bedrooms** is broken down by district below:

Occupancy rating <sup>44</sup>	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset	TOTAL
+2 or more	17,713	18,612	26,549	17,024	5,800	85,698
+1	10,783	12,057	16,616	10,674	3,504	53,634
0	3,899	3,990	5,704	3,586	1,082	18,261
-1 or less	392	416	528	360	107	1,803

Source: Somerset Intelligence

Based on this measure, 53.7% of all households in South Somerset were highly under-occupied (a rating of +2 or more) while 1.1% are overcrowded (-1 or less).

Somerset households were more likely to be highly under-occupied than is the case regionally (South West: 38.7%) or nationally (England: 34.3%). There was very little variation across the five districts.

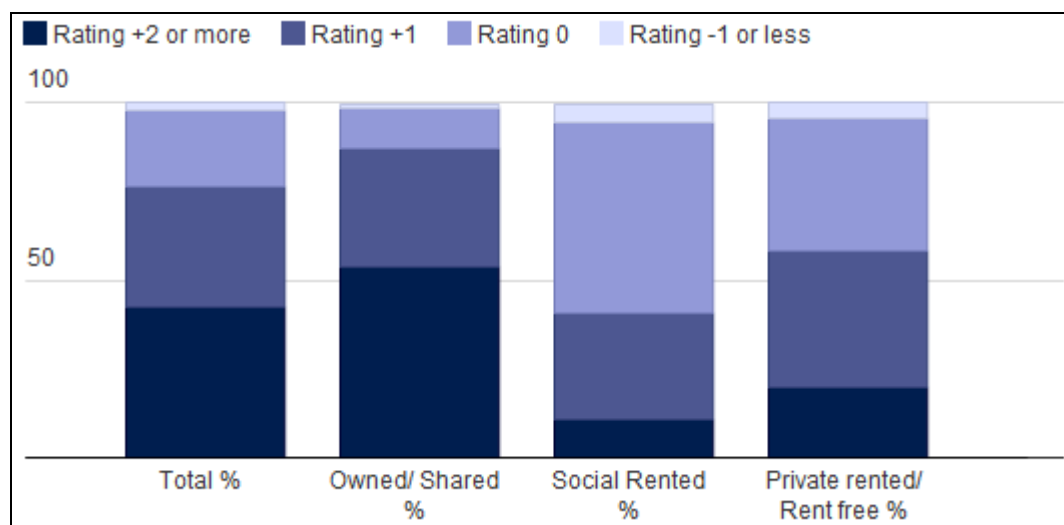
Graph 11 shows that this trend is most pronounced in the owner occupied sector (although the data source includes shared ownership properties) and clearly shows that the social rented sector has the greatest proportion of 'fit' between household and property size.

<sup>44</sup> From Somerset Intelligence:

“**Occupancy rating** provides a measure of whether a household's accommodation is overcrowded or under occupied. There are two measures of occupancy rating, one based on the number of rooms in a household's accommodation, and one based on the number of bedrooms. The ages of the household members and their relationships to each other are used to derive the number of rooms/bedrooms they require, based on a standard formula.

“The number of rooms/bedrooms required is subtracted from the number of rooms/bedrooms in the household's accommodation to obtain the occupancy rating. An occupancy rating of -1 implies that a household has one **fewer** room/bedroom than required, whereas +1 implies that they have one **more** room/bedroom than the standard requirement.”

**Graph 11 – occupancy rating profile by tenure**



Source: Office for National Statistics table DC4105EW1A via Somerset Intelligence

## Homelessness

**Table 16 – trends in homelessness acceptances per thousand households by area**

Area	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Mendip	2.09	2.41	2.74	2.27
Sedgemoor	1.15	0.96	1.52	1.06
South Somerset	3.57	4.06	3.59	3.90
Taunton Deane	2.89	3.28	3.70	2.73
West Somerset	2.13	1.94	1.94	1.65
SOMERSET	2.51	2.75	2.88	2.56
South West	1.35	1.46	1.67	1.52
England	1.86	2.03	2.31	2.37

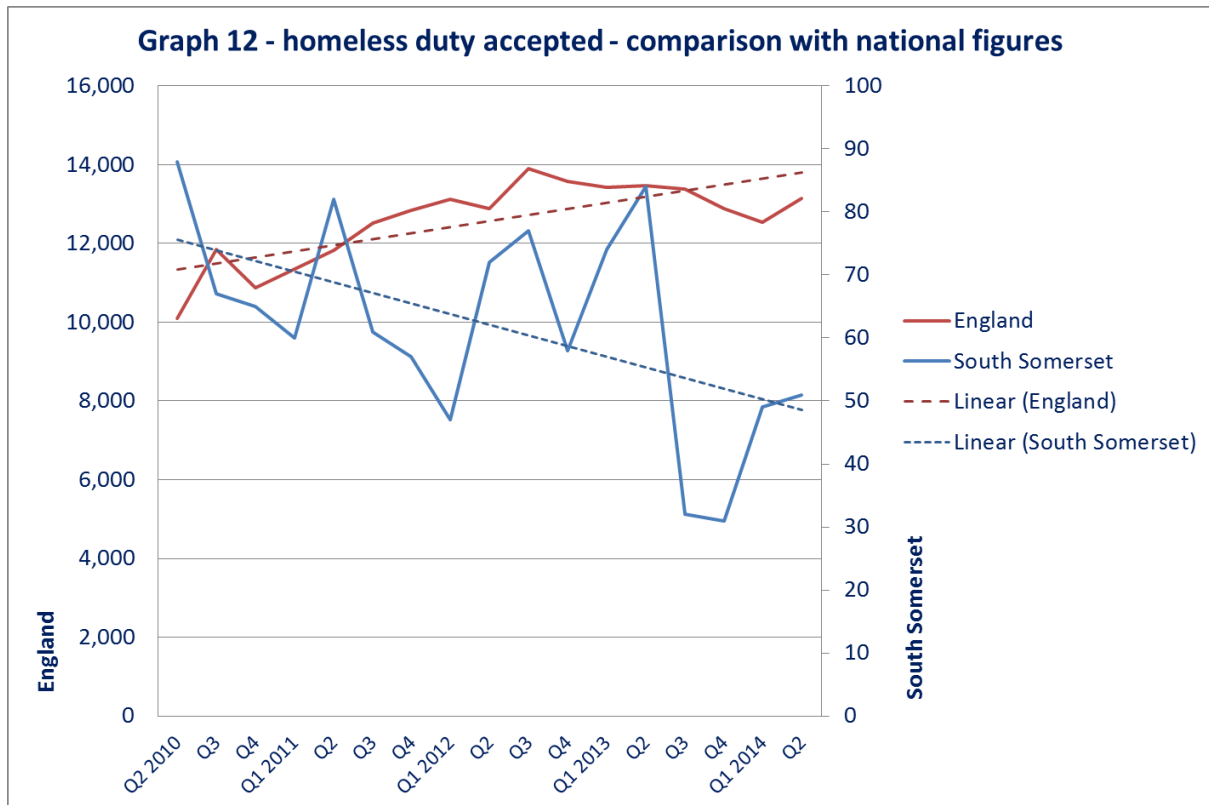
Source: Somerset Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

Graph 12, on the following page, demonstrates that our long term trend in acceptance of a duty under homelessness legislation is downwards, against the national trend.

Graph 13 shows this trend in the context of the overall number of approaches and formal decisions being made. All of these are downward, possibly reflecting a greater level of prevention prior to the point of homeless crisis being reached.

Graph 14 then shows the number of households in temporary accommodation which has also continued on a downward trend over the past four years. As with the previous graphs, more so as this graph depicts monthly snapshots, the line does jump up and down a lot from one reporting point to the next, but the long term trend is very clear (as shown by the dotted line). This trend is also against the national

trend where most housing authorities are finding themselves increasingly more reliant on temporary accommodation.



Source for national figures: Department for Communities and Local Government

Map 4 shows the number of households towards whom a duty was accepted as expressed per thousand population (in order to give a pro rata comparison).

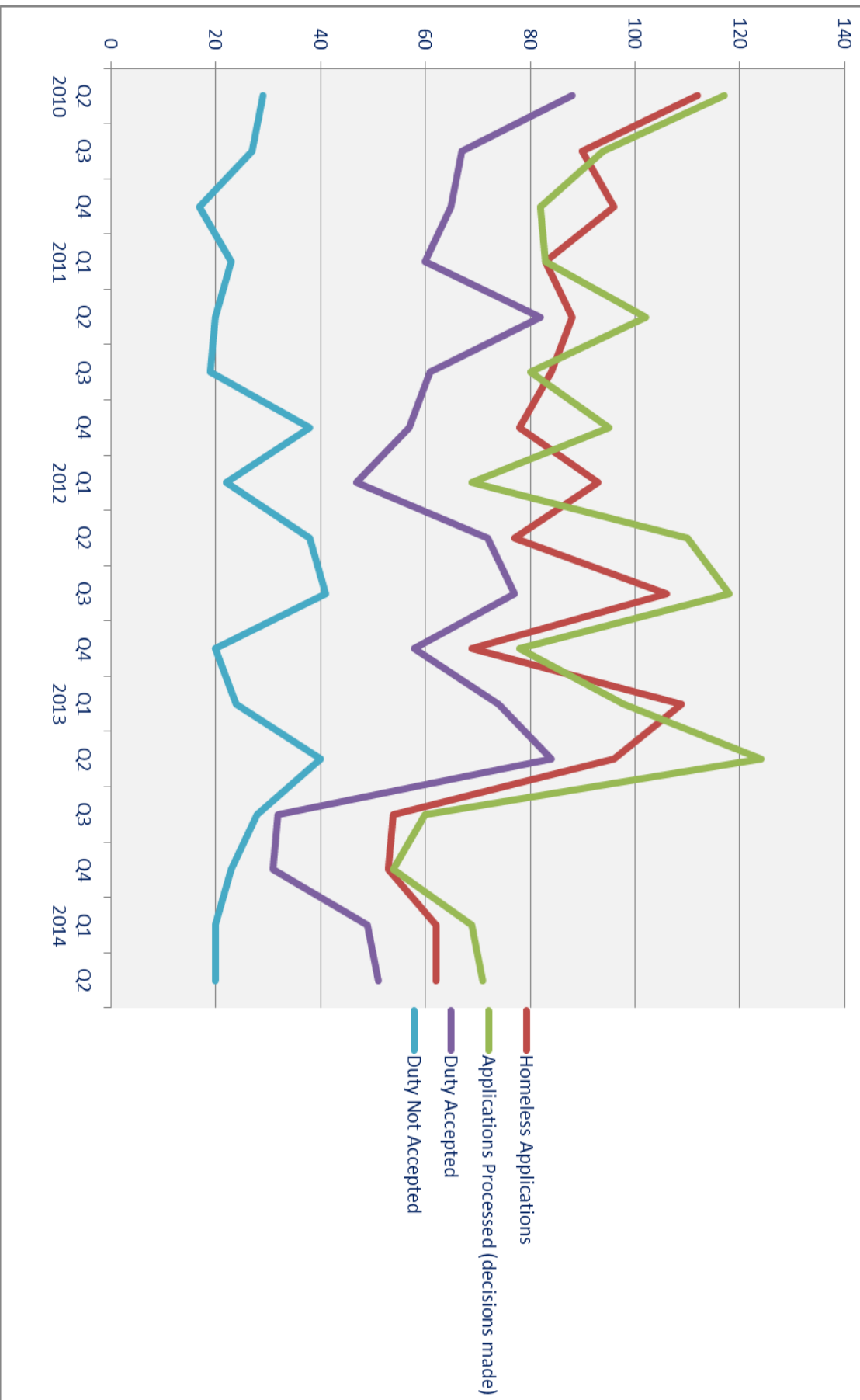
Map 5 depicts the number of households in temporary accommodation on the same pro rata basis (per thousand population)

These two maps show that South Somerset is now in one of the lowest concentrations on both counts, whereas four years previously we were in one of the highest. We have improved in both absolute and relative terms.

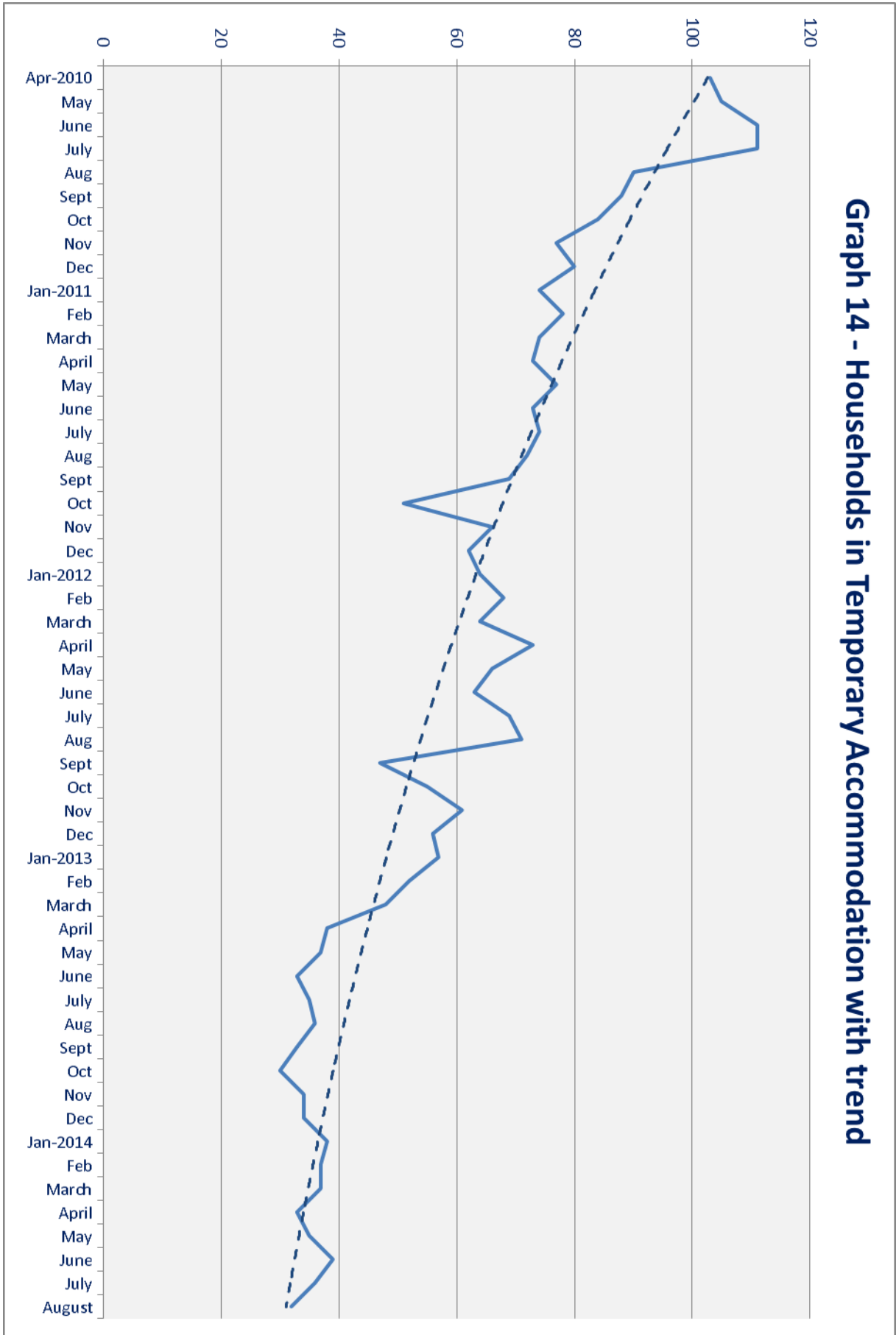
## Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs

Tables 17 and 18 summarise the findings of the Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) . Table 17 shows that in South Somerset we have already made adequate provision for residential pitches up until the end of the 2010-2015 period (whilst shortfalls remain in the rest of the County). Table 18 predicts the further shortfalls that will occur during the period 2016-2020.

**Graph 13 - Quarterly Homelessness Data**

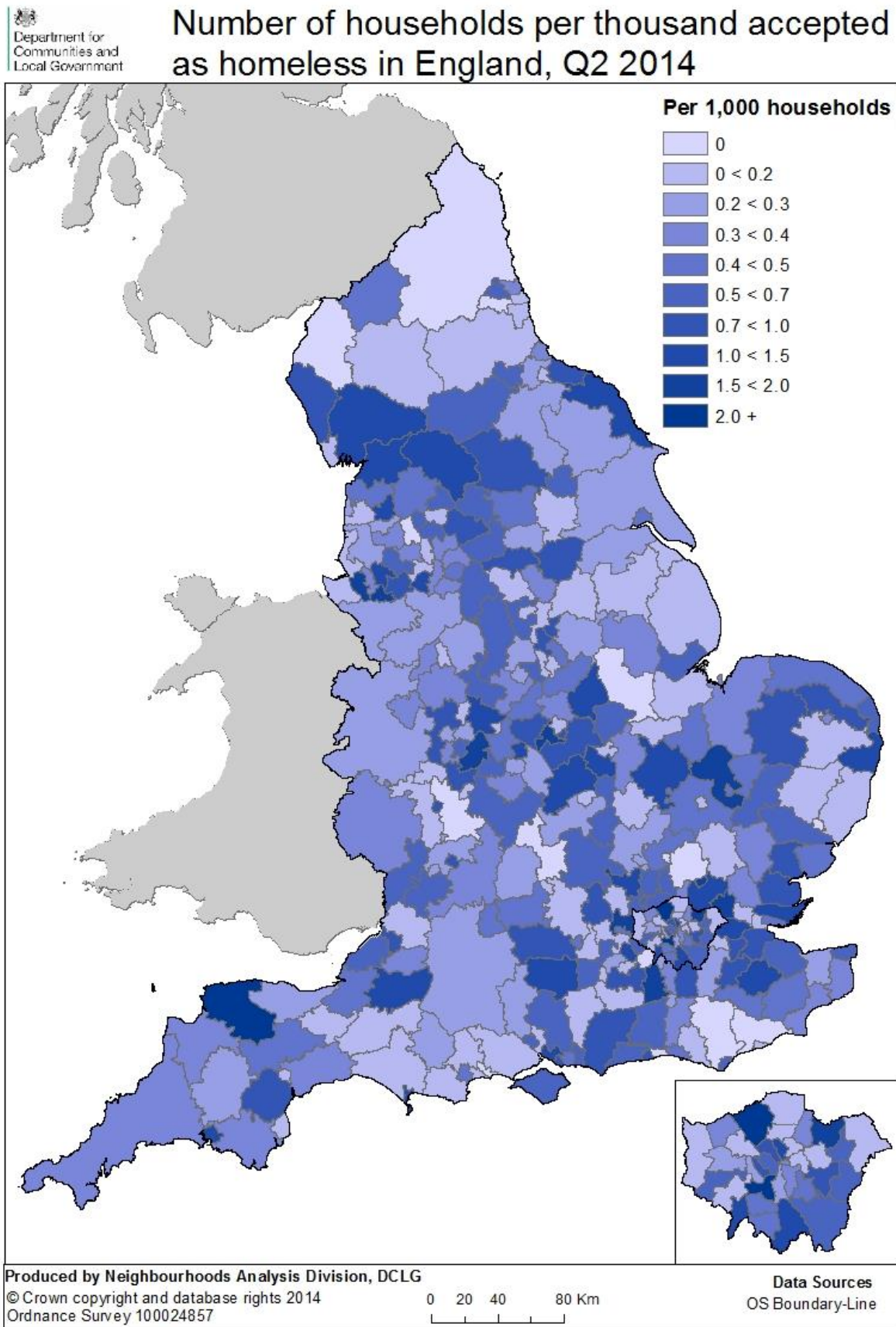


**Graph 14 - Households in Temporary Accommodation with trend**

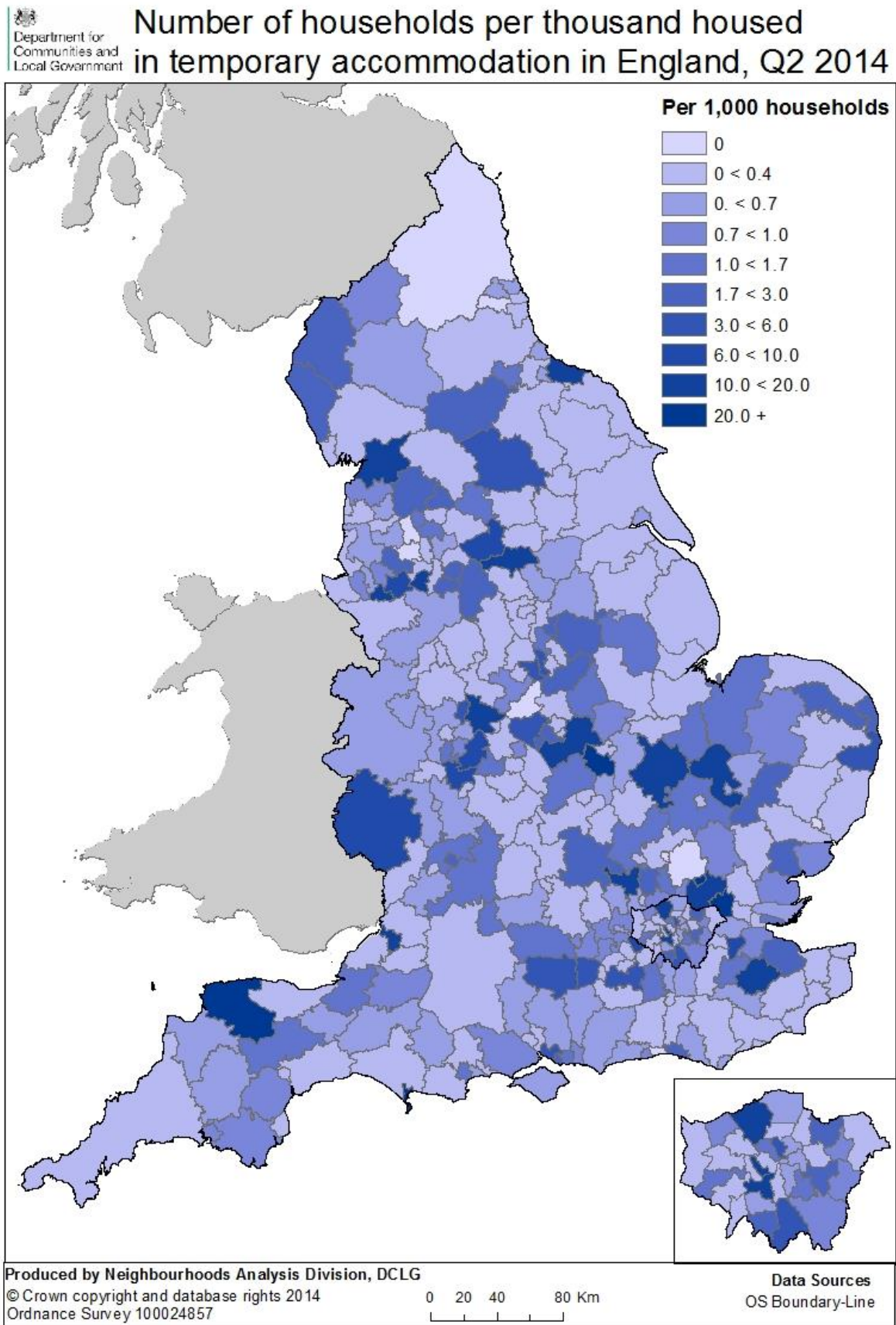




**Map 4 - households per thousand accepted as homeless**



**Map 5 – households per thousand in temporary accommodation**



**Table 17 – comparison of Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) requirement 2010-2015 and delivery to 29/07/2013**

Local authority	GTAA requirement	Provision to date	Difference
Mendip	69	2	-67
Sedgemoor	24	10	-14
South Somerset	10	12	+2
Taunton Deane	25	11	-14
West Somerset	2	0	-2
All	130	35	-95

Source: De Montfort University

**Table 18 – additional residential pitch requirements 2016-2020**

Baseline	Study area	Mendip	Sedgemoor	South Somerset	Taunton Deane	West Somerset
Housed 2010 estimate	189	67	42	41	23	16
Pitches 2013 estimate	279	93	49	37	85	15
Recommended 2010-2015	130	69	24	10	25	2
Further additional pitches	0	0	0	2	0	0
Assumed total pitches 2015	409	162	73	49	110	17
<b>Plus additional households formed</b>						
From housed families	25	9	5	5	3	2
From families on sites	50	21	8	6	14	1
<b>Giving additional pitch requirement</b>						
From housed families (50%)	11	4	3	2	1	1
From families on sites	50	21	8	6	14	1
<b>Requirement 2016-2020</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>

Source: De Montfort University

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Relevant Action Plans & Strategies

### **Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Strategy (2006 -2009)**

This Strategy Implementation Plan follows up all the outstanding actions from our original Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Strategy and we therefore no longer need a separate strategy.

### **Private Sector Housing Strategy (2007 – 2012)**

The Private Sector Housing Strategy has become out of date. We have not attempted to replenish it through this document but will be creating a new Private Sector Housing Strategy shortly.

### **Empty Property Strategy (Jointly with Mendip) (2010)**

This Strategy is also becoming out of date. We shall not attempt to replenish it through the new Private Sector Housing Strategy, keeping it as a distinct separate document, but we shall set out our plans to revise it.

### **Temporary Accommodation Strategy (2011)**

This Strategy Implementation Plan follows up some of the outstanding actions from our original Temporary Accommodation Strategy and we will be creating a new Temporary Accommodation Plan shortly.

### **Council Plan (2012-2015)**

The Council Plan is fundamental to everything we undertake as a district council. This document effectively expands on the housing issues cited in the Council Plan and reflects on more detail.

### **Somerset Tenancy Strategy (2012)**

The Tenancy Strategy is a statutory requirement and we developed the first version in collaboration with the other housing authorities and many social landlords in the county. The Tenancy Strategy needs to be updated and a county wide project group has already begun work on this.

### **Health & Wellbeing Strategy (2012-2015)**

The Health & Wellbeing Strategy is a document adopted by the County Council arising from its role in public health and related services.

### **Youth Housing Strategy (2012-2015)**

The Youth Housing Strategy was a collaborative document drawn up by housing authorities and the county council. A county-wide project group has been set up to begin work on revising the Youth Housing Strategy.

**Rural Housing Action Plan (2013)**

This document has updated the information produced in last year's Rural Housing Action Plan and brought forward the major policy change to rural lettings overall. We will produce a revised Rural Housing Action Plan next year.

**Somerset Homelessness Strategy (2013 – 2016)**

The Homelessness Strategy is a statutory requirement and the document produced last year was the second county-wide collaboration agreed by all the housing authorities in Somerset.

**Asset Management Strategy (2014)**

The Asset Management Strategy has recently been adopted and has a bearing on those properties which we retain ownership of but are used for housing purposes.

Final Draft



## Appendix B: Sources of Evidence

### **Affordable Housing Supply April 2012 to March 2013, England:**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/259999/Affordable\\_Housing\\_Supply\\_2012-13.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/259999/Affordable_Housing_Supply_2012-13.pdf)

### **The Decent Homes standard:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-decent-home-definition-and-guidance>

### **Greater London Authority Draft Housing Strategy April 2014 and Housing in London 2014 (evidence base):**

<http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/housing-land/consultations/draft-london-housing-strategy>

### **HECA Further Report for South Somerset:**

[http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/471147/heca\\_further\\_report\\_south\\_somersetpdf.pdf](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/471147/heca_further_report_south_somersetpdf.pdf)

### **Heating and housing 2011 census data**

<http://www.cse.org.uk/resources/open-data/output-area-level-census-data>

### **Homefinder Somerset:**

<http://www.homefindersomerset.co.uk/Data/ASPPages/1/33.aspx>

### **JSNA Housing Summary:**

<http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/housing-issues-for-2013-14-jsna-summary.pdf>

### **Lifetime Homes standard:**

<http://www.lifetimehomes.org.uk/pages/revised-design-criteria.html>

### **Localism Act 2011 Tenancy Strategy:**

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/part/7/chapter/2/enacted>

### **National Planning Practice Guidance:**

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

### **New Homes Bonus:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/increasing-the-number-of-available-homes/supporting-pages/new-homes-bonus>

### **P2i – Pathway to Independence:**

<http://www.p2i.org.uk/>

### **Secured by Design:**

<http://www.securedbydesign.com/professionals/guides.aspx>

### **Self-build and custom-build:**

<http://www.selfbuildportal.org.uk/>

**Somerset Intelligence housing information:**

<http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/housing.html>

**State of the Somerset Economy:**

<http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/state-of-the-somerset-economy-2013-full-report.pdf>

**Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment:**

[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/633128/shlaa\\_2012\\_report\\_updated\\_23-10-13.pdf](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/633128/shlaa_2012_report_updated_23-10-13.pdf)

**Strategic Housing Market Assessment South Somerset:**

[https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/321411/south\\_somerset\\_hns\\_report.pdf](https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/media/321411/south_somerset_hns_report.pdf)

**Supporting People (Housing Executive):**

[http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/advice/supporting\\_people.htm](http://www.nihe.gov.uk/index/advice/supporting_people.htm)

Final Draft

## Appendix C: Consultation Process

Consultation began on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2014 and ran for ten weeks, closing on 17<sup>th</sup> September. Copies of the consultation draft were distributed to all county, district and parish councillors in South Somerset and to all major local stakeholders, including housing associations, community land trusts, relevant charities and organisations, architects and developers. An online survey was created and opened to the public and a press release was also published on South Somerset District Council's website<sup>45</sup>.

The following nine consultation questions were set out in the draft:

1. What future approach do you think we should take to the degree of pepper-potting or clustering?
2. Should we continue to apply the stated minimum space standards, both in respect of affordable housing achieved through planning obligations and that achieved through grant of our own capital funding? Under what circumstances should we agree to a compromise?
3. Do you agree that these should be the only features of Lifetime Homes that we continue to seek for all newly built affordable housing?
4. Should we consider a design code for affordable housing covering internal storage space, waste storage facilities, water butts, circulation space, garden sheds and other aspects? If so, are there any specific measures you would wish to see incorporated (please tell us why)?
5. How should we approach Secure By Design in future?
6. What other ways could we use to create more affordable homes? Should we create a joint venture vehicle through which we can channel new investment? Should we investigate other forms of construction?
7. Do you agree that we should implement a rural lettings policy? If so, would you support a single cut-off point (e.g. 20 dwellings) or a tiered approach (e.g. all vacancies below 11 dwellings and half of those up to 25 dwellings)?
8. Should we change our Empty Property Grant regime so that there is an additional option of paying a higher level of grant in return for the outcome rent being kept at an affordable level (i.e. below market rent)?
9. Is there anything else that you wish to specifically comment on in the draft? Is there anything else that we haven't mentioned but you feel we ought to?

Whilst inviting feedback on these questions, the consultation draft also encouraged respondents to give any relevant views they might have, not only those covered by the above questions.

On 5<sup>th</sup> September 2014 there was also a Portfolio Holder briefing, in which councillors discussed each question and provided their own feedback. Finally, the draft was considered by the Equalities Steering Group on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2014.

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<sup>45</sup> <http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/latest-news/july-2014/have-your-say-on-the-future-of-social-housing-and-housing-needs-in-south-somerset/>





**More information is available from:**

Strategic Housing

✉ Brympton Way, Yeovil, BA20 2HT

🌐 [www.southsomerset.gov.uk](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk)

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## Equality Analysis - Housing Strategy Implementation Plan

<b>Impact</b>	Medium Impact	<b>Lead Officer</b>	Paul Herbert
<b>Date of EqA</b>	27/10/14	<b>EqA Review Date</b>	31 December 2015
<b>What are the main purposes of the policy, strategy or service area?</b>			
<p>The strategy covers the strategic approach of the District Council towards the provision of affordable housing in South Somerset. It outlines overall policy and suggests a series of discrete actions to help bring about the objectives listed. The plan describes the issues, considers our options and proposes actions. It is set out in accordance with the following four objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Objective 1 - Health and Wellbeing for all</li> <li>- Objective 2 - To increase the supply of affordable housing to support economic growth and development</li> <li>- Objective 3 - To make effective use of South Somerset's housing stock</li> <li>- Objective 4 - To meet the housing and accommodation-related support needs of Somerset's most vulnerable and least resilient residents by working in partnership</li> </ul> <p>Wherever possible the options and proposed actions include where we could or should be working with neighbouring councils or other agencies in a collaborative way to save resources, become more effective or both.</p>			
<b>Evidence</b>			
<p>An internal project team was created, led by the Corporate Strategic Housing Manager and included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members of the Strategic Housing Unit</li> <li>• The Environmental Health Manager</li> <li>• The Empty Homes Officer</li> <li>• A member of the Spatial Policy team</li> <li>• A team leader from the Benefits team and</li> <li>• The Council's Equalities Officer</li> </ul> <p>The Housing Options team were also invited to send officers to the project team and were kept informed of progress at all stages.</p>			

The following pieces of evidence were reviewed to consider their relevance to and consistency with the county-wide housing strategy framework:

- Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Strategy (2006 -2009)
- Private Sector Housing Strategy (2007 – 2012)
- Empty Property Strategy (Jointly with Mendip) (2010)
- Temporary Accommodation Strategy (2011)
- Council Plan (2012-2015)
- Somerset Tenancy Strategy (2012)
- Health & Wellbeing Strategy (2012-2015)
- Youth Housing Strategy (2012-2015)
- Rural Housing Action Plan (2013)
- Somerset Homelessness Strategy (2013 – 2016)
- Asset Management Strategy (2014)
- Strategic Housing Market Analysis
- Data from the live Housing Register
- Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment
- Home Truths document, National Housing Federation
- Home Energy Conservation Act report (2013)
- Relevant housing legislation

Consultation began on 9th July 2014 and ran for ten weeks, closing on 17th September. Copies of the consultation draft were distributed to all county, district and parish councillors in South Somerset and to all major local stakeholders, including housing associations, community land trusts, relevant charities and organisations, architects and developers. An online survey was created and opened to the public and a press release was also published on South Somerset District Council's website.

On 5th September 2014 there was also a Portfolio Holder briefing, in which councillors discussed each question and provided their own feedback. Finally, the draft was considered by the Equalities Steering Group on 21st October 2014.

See also Appendix B for other sources of evidence used to create the document.

### **Supporting Documentation/Links**

Printed%20minutes%2002nd-Sep-2014%2010.00%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=1, Minutes%2006-03-2014%20(de10m\_-public.pdf).pdf

**Please comment/explain how you will meet the General Equality Duty (GED)?**

The operational delivery of the Housing Strategy Implementation Plan will fulfil the Council's General and Specific equality duties under the Equality Act 2010 (advance equality of opportunity, eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and foster good relations). It is envisioned that the strategy will support a number of positive outcomes for groups within the protected characteristics.

Each individual action within the strategy will form part of service plans, all of which will be individually assessed where necessary for equalities and monitored on TEN (internal Performance Monitoring System).

<b>Lead Officer Sign Off</b>	Paul Herbert, Housing Policy Officer	<b>Date</b>	27/10/14
<b>Equalities Steering Group Comments</b>	The Housing Strategy Implementation Plan was presented to and approved by the Equalities Steering Group on 21 October 2014.	<b>Date</b>	27/10/14
<b>Equalities Officer Approval Comments</b>	Jo Morgan	<b>Status</b>	Approved

# Agenda Item 11

## Upgrade of E5 Financial System

*Executive Portfolio Holder:* Tim Carroll, Finance and Spatial Planning  
*Chief Executive:* Mark Williams, Chief Executive  
*Assistant Director:* Donna Parham, Finance and Corporate Services  
*Service Manager:* Amanda Card, Finance Manager  
*Lead Officer:* Amanda Card, Finance Manager  
*Contact Details:* Amanda.Card@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462542

### Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the upgrade of the current financial system.

### Forward Plan

This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of November 2014.

### Recommendations

Members are recommended to agree:

- a) that the E5 Financial System is implemented at a capital cost of £106,000, of which £96,000 to come from the ICT Replacement Fund and £10,000 from the already approved ICT Hardware Replacement Programme.
- b) that the revenue implication, of £5,000 is added to the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2015/16.

### Background

SSDC brought the current corporate Financial Management System (E5) in house in 2008. Previously, the system was supported and hosted by Somerset County Council. As with most IT systems, it is necessary to carry out upgrades in order to keep up with user's needs, legislation, technological advances and to have the system provider's support for issues that may occur. The current version of E5 – version 5.2 in theory, is unsupported.

### Upgraded Version

The new version comes with many benefits to the 210 users of the current version. Users will have a better experience as well as benefits of additional enhancements will which allow more efficient processes.

In addition to this, there are many technical advantages such as being able to run on a Windows Platform and corporate advantages such as the ability to output documents electronically. This will enable to the council to meet the expectations of the customers and suppliers. There are improvements that can be implemented to improve the Council's rate of recovery of debt.

It is recognised that the Financial Systems Team do not have the resources in terms of capacity in-house due to the downsizing over the past few years. Therefore it is intended to purchase Project Management in addition to the software. This will ensure that the implementation is successful and timely since ABS has the experience of upgrading from version 5.2 to 5.4. The ICT Hardware Replacement Programme will contribute towards the storage as part of their programme to replace hardware.

## Financial Implications

A breakdown of the capital costs of this project are:

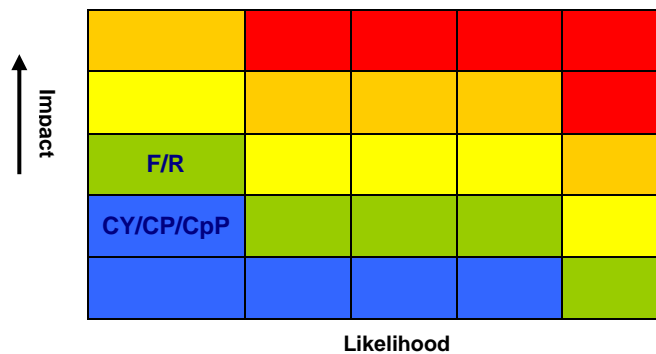
	<b>£'000</b>
Service Costs	66
Software Costs	30
Hardware Costs	10
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>106</b>

The ICT Hardware Replacement Programme, approved by District Executive in February 2014, as part of the capital bids for 2014/15, will contribute £10,000 towards the storage as part of their programme to replace hardware.

The remaining £96,000 is being requested from the ICT Replacement Fund. The ICT Reserve currently stands at £337,000, should this allocation be approved, the remaining balance for other projects will be £241,000.

This project will have revenue implications of £5,130 due to the loss of interest (£2,880) and an additional £2,250 for annual maintenance. This will need to be added to the medium financial plan for 2015/16 onwards.

## Risk Matrix



<b>Categories</b>	<b>Colours</b> <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

## Corporate Priority Implications

The budget is closely linked to the Corporate Plan and growth bids are scored accordingly.

## Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

None

## Equality and Diversity Implications

When the budget was set any growth or savings made included an assessment of the impact on equalities as part of that exercise.

## **Background Papers**

Indicative Costs and services estimates – ABS October 2014



# South Somerset District Council

## Project Brief

Approved Budget within Service Plan? **No**

**Project Number:** 2014-16

**Project Name:** Upgrade of E5 Financial Systems

**Date Created** 23/09/2014

**Document Version:** 3.0

**Author:** Amanda Card, Finance Manager



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## 0 Document Control

### 0.1 Document Approval

Name	Organisation	Role	Approval	Date

### 0.2 Revision History

Version	Author	Review	Reason For Issue	Date
1.0	Amanda Card		Initial Project Brief	10/10/14
2.0	Ben Warman	Amanda Card	Update from IT	14/10/14
3.0	Amanda Card	Nicola Hix	Update for costings	17/10/14

### 0.3 Document Distribution

Name	Organisation	Role
Amanda Card	SSDC	Project Manager
Richard Clarke	SSDC	Project Support
Donna Parham	SSDC	Project Sponsor
Ben Warman	SSDC	IT Support

### 0.4 Document References

Section Reference	Document Referred	Document Title

# 1 Purpose

To upgrade the corporate Financial Management System (E5) due to support terminating for SSDC's current version and additional functionality available in the latest version.

## 2 Project Outline

This project will involve upgrading the current E5 release at SSDC as the support for the current version used will be terminated. It will also improve the effectiveness of the E5 system by introducing new capabilities and functionality.

### 2.1 Authority Responsible

Donna Parham, Assistant Director – Finance and Corporate Services.

### 2.2 Background

SSDC brought the current corporate Financial Management System (E5) in house in 2008. Previously, the system was supported and hosted by Somerset County Council. As with most IT systems, it is necessary to carry out upgrades in order to keep up with user's needs, legislation, technological advances and to have the system provider's support for issues that may occur. The current version of E5 – version 5.2 in theory is unsupported.

An upgrade to the current system has the benefit of minimal disruption to our 210 users, less expensive and less risk than purchasing a new system.

### 2.3 Project Objectives

- To seamlessly upgrade E5
- To utilise efficiently the new functionality that version 5.4 offers
- To ensure that existing financial data is accessible
- To ensure that the system provides quality management information when and as required
- To ensure that all income and expenditure is correctly accounted for

This project will contribute to our corporate aim:

“to deliver well managed, cost effective service, valued by our customer.”

This project will also enhance the current asset that is owned by SSDC. Ownership will continue for as long as we continue to pay on-going maintenance.

### 2.4 Project Scope

#### Inclusions

- Purchase of software
- Purchase of hardware
- Cost of support from ABS as necessary to assist in the implementation
- Training costs
- Upgrade to latest version (5.4) which was released in February 2014.

#### Exclusions

- Additional modules
- E-procurement modules
- Cash receipting module (This has recently been purchased from Capita)

## Constraints and Decisions

- **Officer Time:** It is vital to have adequate staff resources. The project team is small and therefore additional consultancy will need to be purchased from ABS. The project will involve close working with IT and as such time will have to be managed between both Finance and IT. Testing of the implementation will be carried out by officers within Finance, which means that there will often be issues of prioritisation. However, support will be given to make these determinations.
- **Changes to Procedure:** There may be times when influencing users into new ways of working will be of benefit. Users will be consulted as required.
- **Price:** The cost of the upgrade has been quoted. These are subject to fluctuation.

## Interfaces

- E5 have a range of systems that interface with it, both input and output.
- General Ledger Interfaces:  
Cash Receipting System  
Fleetmaster System  
Procurement cards  
Bank reconciliation  
Payroll (Staff and Councillors)
- Purchase Ledger Interfaces:  
Housing Benefits  
Council Tax  
Business Rates

## 2.5 Quality Expectations

- System must be in balance at all times (i.e. debits must equal credits)
- System must provide budget monitoring information
- System must provide information to produce Statement of Accounts
- System must be able to process payments to our suppliers
- System must be able to raise invoices for our customers

## 2.6 Carbon Management

There is no impact on SSDC's carbon management programme.

## 3 Initial Business Case

### 3.1 Reasons

The reason for undertaking this project is that our current financial management system E5 Version 5.2 is now in effect unsupported. The upgrade will also enhance functionality.

## 3.2 Anticipated Benefits

In addition to the protection that system support will give, there are around 80 enhancements available in an upgraded e5 system that would be of immediate benefit, a further 20 that afford future benefit if some working practices are changed. The main changes are categorised:

- **General ease of use**  
There will be substantial User interface improvements. The user interface (UI) is the means by which users view and interact with the system. The current UI is out of date and has now been radically overhauled by ABS with larger displays and more efficient use of screen space, making the financial system easier to use. There will be little if any need for SSDC to adapt or re-design these new screens to fit our needs. If we take the optional HTML5 interface, the technical deployment and maintenance is greatly simplified. Data entry and enquiry/reporting improvements - there are many enhancements to the data entry, enquiry and reporting facilities. These new features will positively impact on the main tasks undertaken daily by users.
- **Communication with external contacts** – Our current system lacks the ability to output documents (such as customer invoices and reminder letters or remittance advice slips) in any format other than plain text. New graphical capabilities and the ability to output in the universal PDF format are introduced in e5.4 which will enable SSDC to flexibly produce documents without reliance on pre-printed stationery and fully embrace electronic forms of communication. This will enable SSDC to cut costs on postage and also allow the process to become leaner. It will also bring the way that SSDC does business up to date with technology and meet the expectations of customers and suppliers.
- **Debt and customer account management** – Ease of monitoring debt and improved rate of recovering amounts owed to the council have been the focus of recent attention at SSDC. Many improvements are introduced in e5.4 to assist the flow of information internally relating to customer activity – with a move to a more process driven 'case management' approach to debt recovery.
- **System maintenance and security** – a significant area of responsibility for SSDC teams whose resources have been considerably reduced in recent years. New features available in e5.4 streamline many aspects of system security, particularly in the area of assigning user privileges and will help to ensure SSDC continues to maintain a flexible but robust financial system. Our current version of e5 is not capable of running on SSDC's preferred Windows platform – on upgrade to 5.4 we will have the option to migrate to this architecture.

## 3.3 Options

SSDC could join up with another authority but on further investigation there are issues with hosting and additional licences which means that there is not much monetary benefit to the host to offset the additional risks that they would take on.

SSDC could purchase a different Financial Management System, however, the costs are quite significant (a recent quote from Agresso was in the region of £400,000) and the time to implement a new system could take up to 18 months. There would also be the additional costs of retraining all users.

## 3.4 Key Project Information Summary

<b>3.4.1 Expected Duration Of Project</b>				
	Start date:	November 2014		
	Other Key Milestones with Dates:			
	Expected Completion Date:	March 2014		
<b>3.4.2 Estimate of Officer Time Required: -</b>				
	<b>Officer's Name</b>	<b>Estimate of Officer hrs</b>	<b>Officer available? Y/N</b>	<b>Agreement of Officer? Y/N</b>
	Financial Systems Officer	480	Yes	Yes
	Finance Manager	125	Yes	Yes
	Land and Property Assistant	125	Yes	Yes
	ICT	350	Yes	Yes
	Creditors/Debtors Input/Advice	74	Yes	Yes
	Accountancy Input/Advice	74	Yes	Yes
	<b>Comment by Property Services:</b>	N/A		
	<b>Comment by Information Systems (if new IT system):</b>	<p>This upgrade will align the E5 system to the ICT strategy. This will reduce hardware and software maintenance costs. E5 is the last system currently running on UNIX. On completion of the upgrade ICT will no longer be supporting a mixed environment.</p> <p>The use of the HTML5 interface is recommend as it will remove the patching burden and complexity of the existing client software.</p>		
	<b>Comment by Green Team:</b>			
	<b>Comment by Community Cohesion Officer:</b>			
	<b>Comment by Other Services requiring significant input:</b>			

3.4.3 Risk Assessment	
Risk	Steps taken to mitigate Risk
Rising Costs	Quote received is subject to fluctuation – will try and get a fixed quote
Key staff leaving	Finance Manager and Assistant Director – Finance and Corporate Services will monitor this
Unforeseen technical difficulties	Draw on support from ABS and IT for advice
Project not completed within required timescales	Finance Manager will monitor progress alongside plan and redirect resources if necessary. ABS will be project managing.

## 4 Financial Investment

### 4.1 Financial Investment – Capital Projects

4.2.1 Total Costs and Funding – Capital Project						
	Funding Body	£' 000				
SSDC Capital: -	District Executive	96				
Other Sources: - - ICT Hardware Replacement Programme	District Executive approved Feb 14	10				
<b>Total Capital Cost</b>		<b>106</b>				
4.2.2 Breakdown of main areas of cost						
	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000	
E5 5.4 Upgrade	52					
E5 HTML	4					
E5 Adhoc Reporting	10					
Software	30					
Storage/Discs	10					
<b>Totals</b>	<b>106</b>					
4.2.3 External funds to be received						
	Secured? Y/N	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000
N/A						
<b>Totals</b>						

4.2.4 Revenue Implications of Capital scheme							
		Cost Centre	2014/15 £'000	2015/16 £'000	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £'000
	Loss of interest @ 3% (PWL B 10yr rate 10.7.14)	FT922	2.9				
	(Savings in expenditure)						
	Revenue Costs by Individual Budget: (List)						
	Annual Maintenance	FS661	2.3				
	Revenue Income						
	<b>Total Revenue Expenditure / (Net saving)</b>		<b>5.20</b>				
	<b>Cumulative</b>						
4.2.5 Whole Life Costing							
	Estimated useful life of asset (years)						5
	Total Revenue Costs Year 1 to 5						Additional cost of £11,250
	Annual Revenue Cost after year 5						There is likely to be increased revenue costs after year 5 if another upgrade has not been made
	<b>Total cost over whole life of asset</b>						<b>£11,250</b>
4.2.6 VAT Implications							
	Based on the current information provided, VAT is recoverable on this project.						
4.2.7 Impact on Band D							
	Additional spend						£96,000
	Lost interest at 3.0%						£2,880
	Divided by tax base						£54,960
	<b>Cost per band D tax payer</b>						<b>£0.05</b>



## 5 Project Organisation

### 5.1 Provisional Project Management Team

Name	Role/ Title
Donna Parham	Project Sponsor
Amanda Card	Project Manager
TBA	User Representative
Carol Duncan	Supplier Representative

### 5.2 Interested Parties

Name	Reason	Action required
All services	Users of Financial Management Services	Keep up to date. Provide training if necessary.
All services who interface with E5	Possible changes to their interfaces and systems	2-way information so that both system staff know what changes are being made as this will have an impact on interfacing.

# Agenda Item 12

## **2014/15 Capital Budget Monitoring Report for the Quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

*Executive Portfolio Holder:* Cllr Tim Carroll, Finance and Spatial Planning  
*Strategic Director:* Mark Williams, Chief Executive  
*Assistant Director:* Donna Parham, Finance and Corporate Services  
*Service Manager:* Amanda Card, Finance Manager  
*Lead Officer:* Nicola Hix, Corporate / Management Accountant  
*Contact details:* nicola.hix@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462642

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to update Members on the current financial position of the capital programme of the Council and to report the reasons for variations from approved budgets for the period 1<sup>st</sup> July to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

### **Forward Plan**

2. This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of November 2014.

### **Public Interest**

3. This report updates progress on capital expenditure in 2014/15.

### **Recommendation(s)**

4. That the District Executive: -
  - a) note the spend of £487,000 so far on capital for 2014/15 and approve the revised capital programme for 2014/15 and beyond (paragraph 6 and 7);
  - b) note the progress of individual capital schemes as detailed in Appendix A;
  - c) note the slippage over £50,000 in the capital programme as detailed in paragraph 10;
  - d) approve the virement of £30,000 outline in paragraph 11;
  - e) approve the revenue contribution of £42,000 to capital outlined in paragraph 12;
  - f) approve the re-allocation of funding as detailed in paragraph 13;
  - g) note the schemes that were approved prior to 2010, as detailed in Appendix D, and confirm approval for those projects that they wish to remain in the programme
  - h) note the total land disposals to registered social landlords as detailed in Appendix B;
  - i) note the balance of S106 deposits by developers held in a reserve as detailed in Appendix C;

- j) note the current position with regard to funds held by the Wessex Home Improvement Loans as detailed in paragraph 17;

## Background

5. Full Council approved the Capital Programme in February 2014. Monitoring of the agreed programme has been delegated to District Executive.

## Qtr 2 Spend Position

6. The actual net position as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014 is net expenditure of £487,000. This is made up of actual expenditure being £1.164m less grants received in advance for various projects of £677,000.

## Revised Capital Programme

7. The capital programme for this financial year and beyond has been revised to take account of amendments requested since Quarter 1. A summary of those amendments are outlined below and Members are requested to approve the revised Capital Programme shown in Appendix A. The estimated spend for 2014/15 has been revised from **£5.294 million** to **£4.291 million** for the following reasons: -

	14/15 £'000	15/16 £'000	16/17 £'000	17/18 £'000
<b>Capital Programme for 2014/15 onwards approved at DX August 2014</b>	<b>5,294</b>	<b>951</b>	<b>202</b>	
Plus projects added to Capital Programme:				
Affordable Housing reserve to Mortgage Rescue Contingency Fund 3	277			
Sharing Brympton Way with SCC 1	254			
Affordable Housing reserve to Rural exception, Broadway Farm, Merriott 3	240			
Affordable Housing reserve to Yarlinton, Buy back of share property 3	65			
Adaptions for lease of floor, Churchfields 3	50			
CCTV Cameras in Yeovil 2	29			
Affordable Housing reserve to Knightstone Housing, Somerton Hybrid Rent 3	14			
Thorney Ringbank Flood Defence Grant	10			
Area North reserve to Chilthorne Domer Rec Trust for Pavilion 4	6			
Area North reserve to Seavinton Playing Field for accessible paths 4	6			
Area North reserve to Norton Sub Hamdon Comm Land Trust for shop 5	5			
Revenue contributions to capital (RCCO) quarter	42			

	<b>14/15</b>	<b>15/16</b>	<b>16/17</b>	<b>17/18</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
2: See paragraph 12				
Less surplus funding moved to the reserve:				
Affordable Housing schemes 3	(1,310)			
Area North part funding of extension to Chilthorne Domer Village Hall	(3)			
Less slippage from 2014/15 forecast to slip into 2015/16 and beyond (re-profiling)	(688)	565	123	
Revised Capital Programme for 2014/15 at 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2014.	<b>4,291</b>	<b>1,516</b>	<b>325</b>	

(Figures shown in brackets reduce the capital spend in any particular year)

- 1 Approved at District Executive 7<sup>th</sup> November 2013
- 2 Approved at District Executive 7<sup>th</sup> August 2014
- 3 Approved at District Executive 4<sup>th</sup> September 2014
- 4 Approved at Area North Committee 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2014
- 5 Approved at Area North Committee 27<sup>th</sup> August 2014

### Capital Programme & Reserves

8. The current Capital Programme allocates £10.240 million to various schemes over the next five years. Further details are shown in Appendix A.

	<b>£'000</b>
Capital Programme (as detailed in paragraph 6)	6,132
Contingent Liabilities and Reserve Scheme	4,108
<b>Total programme to be financed</b>	<b>10,240</b>

### Available Capital Resources

9. The amount of capital resources the Council has remaining unallocated is shown in the table below.

	<b>£'000</b>
Useable Capital Receipts & Capital Fund as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2014	<b>38,313</b>
Add new capital receipts as at 30 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	75
Less capital programme & reserve schemes	(10,240)
Less other schemes in pipeline	(11,922)
<b>Total remaining unallocated resources</b>	<b>16,226</b>

### Progress on various schemes

10. Progress on individual schemes is attached at Appendix A. Appendix A also incorporates responsible officer comments on slippage and performance against targets. Schemes which are expected to be delayed this year, are more than £50,000 and have slipped to 2015/16 include:

<b>Project</b>	<b>Date Funding Originally Approved</b>	<b>Slippage to 2015/16 £'000</b>	<b>Reason for Delay</b>
Capital Works to the Councils Portfolio	Feb 2014	164	Delays due to staff shortages & office accommodation moves.
Home Repairs Assistance	Feb 2014	150	Estimate of grants to be paid this year less than original estimate.
Reckleford Gyratory (Eastern Gateway)	Feb 2007	88	Remaining budget to be spent on removal of traffic lights.

*(the figures shown above are included in the slippage figure at the bottom of the table in paragraph 7),*

### **Virements between Capital Projects**

11. The table below shows the requested budget virement between projects within the capital programme.

<b>Amount £'000</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Reason</b>
30	Hardware Replacement Programme 2014/15 to 2016/17	Replacement 'Back up' system software	The Hardware Replacement Programme includes an allocation for replacing the hardware back up system with the latest version from the same vendor. However, due to recent problems with the software and industry opinions on the best way to back up our operating environment now, we need to move to a new vendor and purchase new software as well as hardware.
<b>30</b>	<b>Total Virement</b>		

### **Revenue Contributions to Capital Projects**

12. Funding for projects can be transferred from revenue to capital. This can be because the project has been funded from revenue but results in an asset for the authority.

<b>Amount £'000</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>Reason</b>
26	Octagon Theatre	Octagon Theatre - Upgrade to Facilities	To enable refurbishment works to be carried out to ladies lavatories.
16	Streetscene	Enforcement Van	To enable purchase of new van.
<b>42</b>	<b>Total Revenue Contributions to Capital</b>		

### **Reallocation of Funding**

13. Members will recall that the report on the affordable housing development programme made in September recommended that, together with several other schemes, funding

for the Raglan scheme at Font Villas, West Coker be de-allocated on the basis that grant subsidy had become available from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

Whilst it was correct that HCA funding had been awarded, the complete withdrawal of Council funding from the scheme was in error as the HCA funding had been gained on the basis of joint funding for the scheme.

In total the decisions made at the September District Executive meeting released approximately £1.5million back into the 'unallocated' reserve within the approved affordable housing programme however the £143,000 for the scheme at Font Villas should not have been included.

It is therefore recommended that the allocation be re-instated. Members may wish to note that even with the Font Villas allocation re-instated the total de-allocated from Raglan Housing Association resulting from their successful bidding to the HCA remains at £850,000.

### **Projects agreed before 2010**

14. There are number of schemes still in the capital programme where funding was agreed before 2010. Appendix D provides a reason for the delay in their progression. Members need to confirm their approval for the project to stay in the capital programme.

### **Disposals to Housing Associations**

15. Since the last quarter there have been no further disposals of surplus/non strategic land at less than best consideration to Housing Associations as agreed under the delegated authority awarded to the appropriate portfolio holder in conjunction with the Assistant Director – Finance and Corporate Services. The total disposals/leases of this nature agreed, since the policy began, now stands at £1.573 million. Details of the land involved and the date of transfer, where completed, are shown in appendix B to this report.

### **Section 106 (S106) Deposits by Developers**

16. S106 agreements are legal agreements between Local Authorities and developers that are linked to a planning permission. Details of income relating to S106 agreements are shown in appendix C categories by project type. The total balance held is £2,481,677. This is purely a South Somerset District Council financial summary, more detail on S106's is given to Area Committees on a quarterly basis.

### **Wessex Home Improvement Loans (WHIL)**

17. WHIL works in partnership with the Council to provide finance to homeowners for essential maintenance and improvement works to their property. Loans are increasingly replacing grants allowing the Council to re-circulate funds.

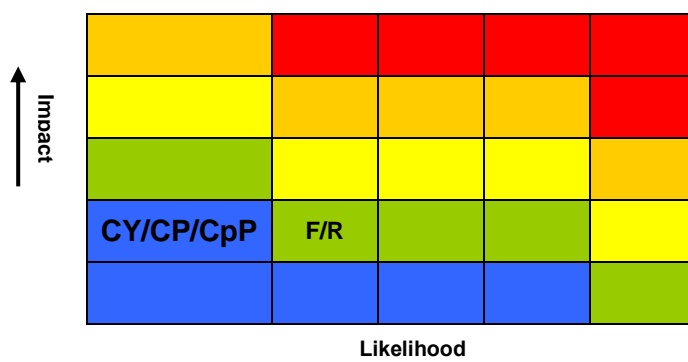
The Council has £672,948 of capital invested with WHIL. As at the end of September 2014 there was £282,315 on the loan book and £390,633 as available capital.

### **Financial Implications**

18. These are contained in the body of the report.

### Risk Matrix

19. This matrix only identifies the risk associated with taking the decision as set out in the report as the recommendations. Should there be any proposal to amend the recommendations by either members or officers at the meeting then the impact on the matrix and the risks it identifies must be considered prior to the vote on the recommendations taking place.



#### 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

### Corporate Priority Implications

20. There are no specific implications in these proposals.

### Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

21. There are no specific implications in these proposals.

### Equality and Diversity Implications

22. There are no specific implications in these proposals.

### Background Papers

Revenue Quarterly Monitoring Reports to District Executive  
 Capital Monitoring Report to District Executive

	Original Date of Project Approval	Previous Years Spend £'000	In Year Monitoring				Original Budget Allocation £'000	Project Officer	Responsible Officers comments on action on slippage and performance against targets
			2014/15 Est Spend £'000	Actual Spend to 30/09/2014 £'000	2014/15 Remaining Budget £'000	Revised Future Est Spend £'000			
<b>Chief Executive/ Strategic Director (Corporate Services) - Mark Williams</b>									
<b>FINANCE &amp; CORPORATE SERVICES</b>									
Assistant Director - Donna Parham									
<b>ICT SERVICES</b>									
Service Manager - Roger Brown									
Portfolio Holder - Cllr Henry Hobhouse									
Hardware Replacement Programme 2010/11 to 2013/14	Feb 2009	368	61	0	61	0	429	R Brown	Substantially complete, anticipating £30K underspend to be transferred to Replacement Backup System as per request in report.
Hardware Replacement Programme 2014/15 to 2016/17	Feb 2014	0	58	0	58	20	78	R Brown	Projects within programme are underway & on budget financially.
Windows 7	Dec 2011	347	89	0	89	0	436	R Brown	Substantially complete, maybe some spend on software but will be underspent.
Disaster Recovery & Business Continuity	Nov 2013	58	2	2	0	0	60	R Brown	Project completed.
Microsoft Lync	Jan 2014	14	123	79	44	0	137	R Brown	Project underway with a small underspend anticipated.
<b>REVENUE &amp; BENEFITS SERVICES</b>									
Service Manager - Ian Potter									
Portfolio Holder - Cllr Tim Carroll									
Northgate Business Rates Software	October 2013	25	15	0	15	0	40	I Potter	The migration project is still expected to be completed in 2014/15.



	Original Date of Project Approval	Previous Years Spend £'000	In Year Monitoring				Original Budget Allocation £'000	Project Officer	Responsible Officers comments on action on slippage and performance against targets
			2014/15 Est Spend £'000	Actual Spend to 30/09/2014 £'000	2014/15 Remaining Budget £'000	Revised Future Est Spend £'000			
<b>FINANCIAL SERVICES</b>									
<b>Service Manager - Amanda Card</b>									
<b>Portfolio Holder - Cllr Tim Carroll</b>									
Capital Salaries	Feb 2013	2,489	111	0	111	0	2,600	A Card	Profiled for allocation in Qtr 4.
Purchase land at Churchfields Drive, Castle Cary on behalf of TC	April 2014	0	70	70	0	0	70	D Parham / I Clarke	Land was aquired then sold onto Castle Cary Town Council almost immediately.
Crewkerne Aqua Centre Loan - Repayment	June 2005	(450)	(60)	(60)	0	(90)	(600)	A Card	Loan repayment made within schedule.
<b>Total Finance &amp; Corporate Services</b>		<b>2,851</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>(70)</b>	<b>3,250</b>		
<b>Strategic Director - (Place &amp; Performance) - Rina Singh</b>									
<b>ECONOMY</b>									
<b>Assistant Director - Martin Woods</b>									
<b>Portfolio Holder - Cllr Tim Carroll</b>									
Affordable Housing - Millfield, Chard	April 2013	0	49	0	49	49	98	C McDonald	Securing appropriate planning permission has caused delays with this scheme. Practical completion expected 2015/16.
Affordable Housing - Larkspur Crescent (Larkhill), Yeovil	July 13/June 14	0	84	84	0	0	84	C McDonald	Funding of scheme completed.
Affordable Housing - Raglan Housing, 5 Bed Conversion	August 2013	0	59	0	59	0	59	C McDonald	Scheme completed. Final payment soon.
Affordable Housing - Yarlinton, 5 Bed Conversion	August 2013	0	70	35	35	0	70	C McDonald	Due to be completed November 2014, therefore practical completion this financial year.
Affordable Housing - 6 Dwellings at Lyde Road Key Site	October 2013	0	30	30	0	0	30	C McDonald	Funding of scheme completed.
Affordable Housing - Knightstone Housing, Somerton Hybrid Rent	September 14	0	14	0	14	0	14	C McDonald	Payment likely this financial year.
Affordable Housing - Rural exception, Horton, Ilminster	October 2013	0	48	0	48	0	48	C McDonald	Update on scheme being obtained on likely date of acquisition.

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Affordable Housing - Rural exception, Font Villas, East Coker	November 13	72	71	0	71	0	143	C McDonald	Further portfolio holder decision is in progress. Still anticipated to complete in this financial year.
Affordable Housing - Rural exception, Broadway Farm, Merriott	September 14	0	240	0	240	0	240	C McDonald	This scheme is subject to Yarlinton bid to HCA, and appropriate planning permission.
Affordable Housing - 80 South Street, Bm'th Churches Hsg Ass	April 14	0	50	0	50	50	100	C McDonald	A number of issues with this building has caused delays with this scheme. Practical completion expected 2015/16.
Affordable Housing - Bought not built for 2 Crewkerne Properties	June 14	0	89	0	89	0	89	C McDonald	Acquisition of these are imminent, therefore completion expected during this financial year.
Affordable Housing - Bought not built Allocation	Mar 2012	99	201	0	201	0	300	C McDonald	Likely to slip into next financial year.
Affordable Housing - Yarlinton, Buy back of share property	September 14	0	65	0	65	0	65	C McDonald	Will complete this financial year.
Affordable Housing - Mortgage Reserve Contingency Fund	September 14	0	277	0	277	0	277	C McDonald	Timescale unpredictable, likely to slip into next financial year, funds will be drawn down as and when needed.
<b>Total Economy</b>		<b>171</b>	<b>1,347</b>	<b>149</b>	<b>1,198</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>1,617</b>		
<b>COMMUNITIES</b>									
Assistant Directors - Helen Rutter & Kim Close									
<b>THIRD SECTOR AND PARTNERSHIPS</b>									
Service Manager - Helen Rutter & Kim Close									
Portfolio Holder - Cllr Sylvia Seal									
Village Hall Grants	Feb 2006	930	15	0	15	0	945	L Davis	There are two small allocations awaiting to be claimed. Remaining unallocated balance is approximately £7K.

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<b>AREA SOUTH</b>									
<b>Service Manager - Kim Close</b>									
<b>Area Chairman - Cllr Peter Gubbins</b>									
Reckleford Gytratory (Eastern Gateway)	Feb 2007	1,633	0	0	0	88	1,721	M Ainsworth	Remaining budget to be spent on removal of traffic lights.
Local Delivery Vehicle (linked to Yeovil Vision)	Feb 2009	66	34	0	34	0	100	K Close	Remaining budget to be allocated to Yeovil Vision projects.
Foundry House	April 1999	879	0	0	0	4	883	K Close	New project to be identified to spend remaining money in line with DCLG grant.
South Western Terrace - Improvement Grants	Mar 2003	208	2	2	0	0	210	M Ainsworth	Project is complete. Post completion to be submitted as soon as possible.
Birchfield Trim Trail	Feb 2014	0	5	3	2	0	5	N Ross	Project is complete. Awaiting final invoices.
5 Additional CCTV Cameras in Yeovil	Aug 2014	0	29	0	29	0	29	S Brewer	Discussions and planning taking place with County Council for installation this financial year.
Area South Committee Allocation		269	2	0	2	0	271	K Close	Updates reported to Area Committee.
<b>AREA NORTH</b>									
<b>Service Manager - Charlotte Jones</b>									
<b>Area Chairman - Cllr Shane Pledger</b>									
Thorney Ringbank Flood Defence Grant		0	10	0	10	0	10	C Jones	Awaiting claim for this grant funding to Internal Drainage Board - construction underway.
Area North Committee Allocation		590	112	30	83	10	712	C Jones	Updates reported to Area Committee.

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<b>AREA EAST</b>									
Service Manager - Helen Rutter									
Area Chairman - Cllr Nick Weeks									
Market House Castle Cary	Feb 2010	216	(52)	2	(54)	0	164	P Williams	Major works complete. Finishing programme of minor work largely complete. Remaining retention to be held until the end of the defect period. Final invoice to be done for contribution as soon as the final valuation is in.
Land Acquisition in Waterside Rd, Wincanton	Feb 2008	0	11	0	11	0	11	P Williams	Offer under consideration by landowner.
Enhancements to Waterside Rd, Wincanton	Feb 2008	0	0	0	0	24	24	P Williams	Awaiting land acquisition. Funding previously reprofiled for 2015/16.
Area East Committee Allocation		5	81	25	56	0	86	H Rutter	Updates reported to Area Committee.
<b>AREA WEST</b>									
Service Manager - Andrew Gillespie									
Area Chairman - Cllr Angie Singleton									
Market Towns Visions	Feb 2006	287	99	25	74	43	429	A Gillespie	£12,500 budget moved out to Milbrook Gardens Car Park Extension. The majority of project allocations of £65k toward 5 projects in MTIG Programme 3 should also be drawn down this financial year when these projects are completed
Area West Committee Allocation		0	13	0	13	0	13	A Gillespie	Updates reported to Area Committee.
<b>Total Communities</b>		<b>5,083</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>5,613</b>		

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<b>Strategic Director - (Operations and Customer Focus) - Vega Sturgess</b>									
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>									
Assistant Director - Laurence Willis									
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH</b>									
Service Manager - Alasdair Bell									
Portfolio Holder - Cllr Peter Seib									
Disabled Facilities Grants (Expenditure)	Feb 2013	3,179	0	(264)	264	0	3,179	A Bell	Spend on target with remaining budget all allocated for 2014/15.
Empty Property Grants	Feb 2014	916	151	30	121	50	1,117	A Bell	Spend on target. Reprofiled £50K into 2015/16 based on predicted figures.
Home Repairs Assistance	Feb 2014	1,165	130	20	110	150	1,445	A Bell	Re-profiled £150K to 2015/16 based on take up being slightly less than anticipated.
HMS Grants	Feb 2014	464	39	13	26	20	523	A Bell	Re-profiled £20K into 2015/16.
Loan Scheme for Somerset	Feb 2013	335	100	0	100	0	435	A Bell	Payment for 50% of budget made in October 14. Remaining will be transferred this financial year.
Purchase of Caravan for Homeless Resident Affected by Flooding	Apr 2014	0	15	14	1	0	15	A Bell	Caravan purchased and in use.
Purchase of Van for Enforcement Team	Jun 2014	0	16	16	0	0	16	A Bell	New van funded from monies carried forward from Streetscene underspend in 2013/14.
<b>ENGINEERING AND PROPERTY SERVICES</b>									
Service Manager - Garry Green									
Portfolio Holder - Cllr Henry Hobhouse									
Capital Works associated with car parking proposals	Feb 2012	2	15	0	15	0	17	G Green	New signs to be ordered once accommodation issues complete and details known.
Car Park Enhancements	Feb 2013	0	36	36	0	0	36	G Green	Works programmed and completed at Petters Way, Abbey St, and Stars Lane. February 2013 allocation now spent.
Car Park Enhancements	Feb 2014	0	54	19	35	100	154	G Green	

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New Car Parks	Feb 2008	137	250	1	249	423	810	G Green	Investigating potential sites as per car park strategy.
Birchfield Sewer Pollution Easement Works	Feb 2005	342	2	2	0	0	344	G Green	Works completed, small retention to be paid over during this year.
Capital Works to the Councils Portfolio	Feb 2012	2,032	31	0	31	0	2,063	G Green	<u>Lace Mills electrics</u> - still on hold pending a decision on future of building. <u>Petters House</u> - mechanics has not been progressed.
Capital Works to the Councils Portfolio	Feb 2013	41	50	0	50	37	128	G Green	<u>Chard Youth Club doors</u> - Will be progress over next month or two. <u>Lufton Roof</u> - work not yet started on site but order placed for works. <u>Brympton Way windows</u> - Not progressed. <u>Churchfields door power</u> - planned for next year.
Capital Works to the Councils Portfolio	Feb 2014	0	230	30	200	164	394	G Green	<u>Lifts at Boden Centre, Churchfields, Petters and Lace Mill</u> - waiting for retendering of lift contract to go out at end of this month and will seek prices to commence work in November. <u>Brympton Way security</u> - Works for swipe access now complete and awaiting invoice. <u>Fire escapes</u> - Waiting for works to fire doors to be completed. <u>Service yard door</u> - Works ordered and awaiting delivery likely to be the end of the month. <u>Front Porch</u> - Not yet started and could hang over until next year if required. <u>Chard Museum Doors</u> - Shortly to be progressed. <u>Lace Mills Electrics</u> - Likely to be reallocated to replacement fire doors. <u>Externals</u> - Works to stairways which is underway at the moment. <u>Lufton</u> - Order placed for some works but not yet progressed very far. <u>Petters</u> - Doors part of larger door works as above. Some works done with windows, remaining works are weather permitting. <u>Yeovil Rec Works</u> - Waiting for revised quote before issuing order. Works to progress soon for completion before Christmas.

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Sharing Brympton Way Offices with SCC	Nov 2013	0	240	60	180	14	254	G Green	Works on schedule. SCC have started building works to red floor.
Adaptions to Petters House for CAB	April 2014	0	20	49	(29)	0	20	G Green	Works completed - costs being finalised in order to recover contribution from CAB.
Adaptions for lease of floor at Churchfields	Sept 2014	0	50	0	50	0	50	G Green	Application for planning permission submitted.
Transfer of Castle Cary Toilets	Feb 2013	0	42	42	0	0	42	G Green	Transfer completed.
Transfer of responsibility of Bruton Toilets	May 14	0	9	9	0	0	9	G Green	Transfer completed.
Gas Control System - Birchfield	Feb 2013	4	70	0	70	541	615	G Green	Initial works programmed for 2014/15.
Yeovil Crematorium		477	84	0	84	0	561	G Green	Reline of cremator No.1 and new Hearth to No. 2 scheduled for October 2014. Awaiting quotes for other scheduled works.
<b>STREETSCENE</b>									
Service Manager - Chris Cooper									
Portfolio Holder - Cllr Jo Roundell Greene									
Severalls Park Fencing, Crewkerne	Feb 2014	0	14	14	0	0	14	S Fox	All of the fencing works are completed.
<b>Total Environment</b>		<b>9,094</b>	<b>1,648</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>1,557</b>	<b>1,499</b>	<b>12,241</b>		

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			2014/15 Est Spend £'000	Actual Spend to 30/09/2014 £'000	2014/15 Remaining Budget £'000	Revised Future Est Spend £'000			
<b>HEALTH &amp; WELL-BEING</b>									
Assistant Director - Steve Joel									
Portfolio Holder - Cllr Ric Pallister									
<b>ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT</b>									
Service Manager - Adam Burgan									
Portfolio Holder - Cllr Sylvia Seal									
Octagon Theatre - Roof over Front of House	Feb 2013	0	30	0	30	0	30	A Burgan	Accessment of need for these works currently being carried out.
Octagon Theatre - Upgrade to facilities	Sept 14	0	26	26	0	0	26	A Burgan	Works completed to upgrade ladies toilets using revenue funding carried out from 2013/14.
<b>COMMUNITY HEALTH AND LEISURE</b>									
Service Manager - Linda Pincombe									
Portfolio Holder - Cllr Sylvia Seal									
Community Play Schemes	Feb 2007	412	35	30	5	38	485	R Parr	<u>Larkhill Road, Yeovil</u> - Construction well advanced. <u>Lavers Oak, Martock &amp; Packers Way, Misterton</u> - No progress yet, funding profiled for 2014/15.
Youth Facilities Development	Feb 2007	25	30	0	30	0	55	R Parr	Discussions being held over future of this funding allocation.
Multi Use Games Area	Feb 2008	265	45	45	0	70	380	R Parr	Project at Wincanton is all completed and paid for. No progress made with remaining projects at Ilminster & Castle Cary profiled for 2015/16.
Grants for Parishes with Play Area	Feb 2008	437	32	0	32	0	469	R Parr	Remaining planting at Gainsborough, Milborne Port is being progressed this month. Rickhayes, Wincanton actively funding and trying to progress project but our funding profiled for 2015/16. Grant to Ilton due to be offered soon. Henhayes are really keen to progress, hopefully late 14/15.
Grant to Summerhouse View Play Area	Feb 2014	0	10	0	10	0	10	R Parr	Still scheduled for payment of grant this financial year.



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Synthetic Grass Pitch	Feb 2007	796	21	1	20	0	817	L Pincombe	Snagging still being completed before retention paid. Retention will not be released before contractor confirms that a floodlighting contract is in place. Footpath lighting complete and remaining funding will be used to deliver CCTV in 14/15 providing staff capacity allows.
Yeo Rec - Phase 2 Works (Pitch & Putt Fencing)	Feb 2005	31	0	0	0	7	38	L Pincombe	This funding was originally allocated towards both the replacement of pitch and putt fencing (completed some years ago) and for the future replacement of the pitch and putt carpet. With careful maintenance, the carpet has lasted far longer than originally envisaged and while now showing signs of wear, will probably not need replacement until at least 2015/16.
Grant to Henhayes Sports & Community Centre	Feb 2010	252	14	0	14	0	266	L Pincombe	Demolition of old changing rooms and restatement of ground underway. Options for the delivery of a new playing pitch are still being explored by Crewkerne Town Council. Project may slip to 2015/16 as some S106 indexation still outstanding which will be required to complete the project.
Grant to Westfield AGP	Feb 2014	0	56	(43)	99	0	56	L Pincombe	Project finished; formal opening October 2014. Awaiting required paperwork before final payments are made.
Scoreboard Langport & Huish Cricket Club	Oct 2011	0	0	0	0	0	0	L Pincombe	The remaining £600 (approx) to be used for changing room improvements. Awaiting project proposals from club.
Grant to Milborne Port Rec Changing Rooms	March 2014	0	0	0	0	0	0	L Pincombe	Project complete. Still awaiting claim/required paperwork for final 10% retention.

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Yeovil Country Park Ranger Base	Feb 2010	7	118	10	108	0	125	K Munday	Two further invoices expected from construction company, one early October and one at the strat of November for the finish of the build. This will see the building and spend completed. The build is currently on track for on budget completion. Final outstanding grant contributions are being chased.
Dual Use Sport Centre Grants	Feb 2005	213	47	0	47	0	260	S Joel	Westfield AGP project complete, awaiting final payment claim. In-principle £40K grant award made to Holyrood Academy to support the replacement of the AGP Surface. Holyrood Scheme assembling remaining funding to enable the scheme to proceed.
Sports Zone- Inc	Feb 2008	0	0	0	0	(50)	(50)	S Joel	Construction of S106 related dwellings has commenced. Trigger point not reached for payment.
Goldenstones 10 year plan/repayment	Mar 2011	20	(27)	0	(27)	7	0	S Joel	Works for 2014-15 complete, currently planning 2015-16 programme. £27K repayment sum is on schedule to be paid at the end of Q4.
Wincanton Community Sports Centre 10 year plan	Sept 2012	77	29	0	29	72	178	S Joel	First phase of works commissioned and complete. Next phase of works currently being planned with Property Services.
<b>Total Health &amp; Well-being</b>		<b>2,535</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>397</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>3,145</b>		
<b>Total Capital Programme</b>		<b>19,734</b>	<b>4,291</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>3,804</b>	<b>1,841</b>	<b>25,866</b>		

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**Reserve Schemes Awaiting new Appraisal but Approved in Principle**

Old Town Station Reserve	321	0	321	0
Market Towns Vision	300	0	300	0
ICT Reserve	337	0	337	0
Affordable Housing - Unallocated	1,575	0	1,575	1,200
Affordable Housing - rural exception schemes	115	0	115	0
Housing & Planning Delivery Grant	96	0	96	0
Feasibility Fund - Unallocated	158	0	158	0
Crematorium Reserve	46	0	46	0
Contingency for Plant Failure	0	0	0	130
Ropewalk at 94 High Street West Coker	60	0	60	0
Home Farm, Somerton	53	0	53	0
Lufton 2000 - All Phases	0	0	0	(1,016)
Gypsy & Traveller Acquisition Fund	0	0	0	50
Infrastructure & Park Homes, Ilton - £60K Grant for MUGA	0	0	0	0
Infrastructure & Park Homes Contingency	0	0	0	54
	<b>3,061</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,061</b>	<b>418</b>

**Area Reserve Schemes Awaiting Allocation But Approved in Principle**

North	3	0	3	269
South	0	0	0	161
East	30	0	30	25
West	6	0	6	119
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>574</b>
Capital Programme	4,291	487	3,804	1,841
Contingent Liabilities and Reserve Schemes	3,099	0	3,099	1,009
<b>Total Programme to be Financed</b>	<b>7,390</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>6,903</b>	<b>2,850</b>

## Land Transfers

## Appendix B

### Agreed Transfers of land to Housing Associations at nil cost:

	Date of transfer	Perceived value of land £
Bund to the rear of Devonia, Furnham Road, Chard, TA20 1BE	11.3.2005	150,000
Land at New Close, Haselbury Plucknett, Crewkerne, TA18 7QY	18.07.2006	100,000
Land fronting 2-16 Furzehill, Chard, TA20 1AN	31.05.2007	12,000
Land at Wheathill Way, Milborne Port, Sherborne, DT9 5EZ	10.10.2006	20,000
Land at Bracey Road, Martock, TA12 6HE	20.01.2006	144,000
Land at Marl Close/Springfield Road, Yeovil, BA21 3NE	30.09.2005	80,000
Land adj 2 & 3 Horseshoe Cottages, Newtown, Coat Rd, Martock, TA12 6EX	20.12.2006	85,000
Land at Thomas Cross, Yeovil, BA21 4HF	18.08.2008	400,000
Birchfield Pavilion, Lyde Road, Yeovil, BA21 5QR	12.08.2008	55,000
Land at Woodhayes, High Street, Henstridge, Templecombe, BA8 0RF	10.10.2008	16,000
Land at Landseer, Blackacre Hill, North Cheriton, Templecombe, BA8 0AS	15.03.2007	10,000
Land at Lowther Road, Yeovil, BA21 5PE	15.04.2008	190,000
Land at Monmouth Road, Yeovil, BA21 5PB	16.11.2007	40,000
Drainage easement Devonia redevelopment, Furnham Rd, Chard, TA20 1BE	20.12.2007	15,000
Land at St Georges Avenue, Yeovil, BA21 4QX	24.06.2011	18,000
Greenhill Road, Yeovil	25.01.2012	1
Ruddock Close, West Coker, BA00 9BX	27.06.2012	40,000
Montague Way, Chard	01.10.2012	10,000
Minchingtons Close, Norton Sub Hamdon	13.08.2013	7,500
Northbrook Road, Yeovil	08.10.2013	1
Larkspur Crescent, Yeovil	10.12.2013	70,000
Parsons Close, Long Sutton	01.05.2013	2,000
Font villas, West Coker	27.11.2013	100,000
Land at Blackdown View, Ilminster	to be completed	8,000
		<b><u><u>1,572,502</u></u></b>

X3032 Deposits by Developers

Appendix C

Developer	Planning Reference	Deposit £	Date Deposited	Drawdown £	Balance £	Comments	Timeframe
Hopkins - Deansley Way, Wincanton		15,000.00	05-Jan-99		9,951.82	highway works	
Prowting homes SW Ltd. Re Station Rd Ilminster		10,000.00	13.June.02	-8,547.66	1,452.34	New footbridge across Dodham Brook to Summerhouse Hill	
Suncrest, Level Lane, Charlton Horethorne		4,000.00	13/05/05		4,000.00	For road improvement works - contact at SCC Claire Cornelius	
Waitrose Development South St Crewkerne	06/01012/FUL	100,000.00	22/05/07		100,000.00	Possible new sites being investigated by L Willis. Specifically for Crewkerne	
SSH - Beckington Cres, Auckland & Montague Way, Chard		23,168.00	03/12/08	-11,385.00	11,783.00	Strategic Sports Facilities £5,802 Equipped Play (Jocelyn Park, Chard) £11,385 Local playing pitch improvements £5,981	
Cassingham - Dodham Crescent	07/03834/FUL	31,681.00	10/06/09	-27,182.00	4,499.00	£27,181 Leisure and £4,500 for a foot bridge	
Yarlington Housing - Woodhayes Henstridge Phase 2	07/05552/FUL	40,727.00	13/07/09	-11,500.00	29,227.00	Play equipment provision (£11,500) Playing pitch contribution (£20,347) Strategic Leisure Contribution (£8,880)	
Jephsons Home - St Thomas Cross	07/04664/FUL	24,000.00	12/11/09	-8,923.00	15,077.00	Kickabout wall/equipped play (£5,337), Maintenance for Kickabout wall (£1,920), Playing pitches (£12,135) and Strategic Leisure contribution (£4,608)	
Abbey Manor Group - Former Seaton Road Garage, West Hendford	05/00677/OUT	159,230.00	04/05/10	-119,893.14	39,336.86	Open Space Maintenance (£13,111.14), Strategic Leisure (£52,447.54), Education - SCC (£54,336.66), Highways Improvements - SCC (£39,335.66)	
Hastoe West - Land at North Yard, 122 Station Road, Ilminster	07/05553/FUL	42,148.00	07/07/10	-7,000.00	35,148.00	Equipped Play Contribution (£6,958 - acquisition and installation/installation at Winterhay Lane, Ilminster Play Area. £5,692 commuted sum to maintain equipment), Playing Pitch Contribution (£20,845), Strategic Facilities Contribution (£7,020) and Youth Facility Contribution (£1,633)	Strategic Facilities Contribution over 10 years, all others within 5 years.
Yarlington Housing Group	08/04366/FUL	32,766.00	17/10/11	-19,913.24	12,852.76	Improvements to Milford Park Rereation Area (£12,852). Provision of Play Equipment (£10,953.24) and long-term maintenance of equipment (£8,960)	Must be spent within 5 years
Strongvox Homes - Prigg Lane, South Petherton development	09/03095/FUL	44,194.72	31/03/11	-17,108.00	27,086.72	Contribution towards off-site provision of open space and recreation facilities (£29,114.95) Contribution towards off-site provision of play space and youth facilities (£15,079.77)	
Yarlington Housing Group - Copse Road, Ilton	08/05090/FUL	98,101.00	19/12/11	-5,715.00	92,386.00	Off-site recreation contribution to be spent at Ilton Recreation Ground (£30,900). Play equipment contribution: Purchase of equipment (£14,186) and Commuted Sum Maintenance (£8,065); Youth Facilities (£7,411) and Commuted Sum Maintenance (£2,697)	
Persimmon Homes SW Ltd	07/03984/FUL	160,667.44	15/04/11	-72,005.00	88,662.44	Play & Youth Contribution (£117,434.43), Strategic Leisure Contribution (£43,243.01). Both sums to be spent within 5 years of the date of receipt.	

Developer	Planning Reference	Deposit £	Date Deposited	Drawdown £	Balance £	Comments	Timeframe
Strongvox Homes - Shudrick Lane, Ilminster	06/02906/OUT	138,994.62	20/06/11		138,994.62	Breakdown will be available once the monies are received	
C G Fry and Son Ltd	07/03534/FUL	149,253.33	25/07/11	-65,945.68	83,307.65	MUGA Contribution towards provision of a floodlit multiuse games area in Langport (£8,151.68), Playing pitch contribution towards the provision of playing pitches in Langport (£104,037.30), Sports Hall Contribution towards the provision of additional badminton courts in Langport (£24,288.36) and Swimming Pool Contribution: £12,776.09 towards the provision of additional swimming lanes or Pools in Langport.	
Summerfield - Cedar Close, Chard	09/01372/FUL	67,211.49	08/06/11		67,211.49	Sports, Art & Leisure Contribution: £41,208.64 for the provision of maintaining sports arts and leisure facilities in the area. Equipped Play & Youth Contribution: £26,002.85 for the provision of maintaining equipped play and youth facilities in the area.	
Betterment Properties	10/03721/FUL	55,000.00	25/07/11		55,000.00	Provision for Zebra Crossing (£50,000) and commuted sum for Misterton Parish Council for maintenance of bus stop (£5,000).	
Yarlington - St Georges Avenue, Yeovil	09/03801/FUL	138,678.00	17/10/11	-137,045.00	1,633.00	Off-site recreation contribution (£48,263.37) and long-term maintenance of the facilities (£19,629.63). Equipped Play Contribution for Milford Park Play Area (£43,934.15) and long-term maintenance of the facilities (£26,850.85)	Must be spent within 5 years
Yarlington - Eastover, Langport	09/02237/FUL	36,266.00	17/10/11	-20,605.37	15,660.63	Enhancement/improvements at Langport Cricket Club (£5,206.85), long-term maintenance (£2,648.63) and costs and expenses for improvements at Langport & Huish Memorial Rec Ground (£12,188.52). Equipped Play Contribution at Langport & Huish Memorial Rec Ground (£7,550) and long term maintenance (£4,293). Youth Facilities in Langport (£3,210) and long-term maintenance of facilities (£1,169).	Must be spent within 5 years
Yarlington - Greenhill Road	09/02228/FUL	63,024.00	17/10/11	-23,702.26	39,321.74	Contribution towards enhancement/improvement of community sports pitch and changing rooms at Yeovil Rec, a Yeovil School or Milford Park (£23,851.03) and long-term maintenance of facilities (£7,393.97). Play equipment at Birchfield Play Area (£14,951.26) and long-term maintenance (£5,871.87) and Youth Facilities at Birchfield Play Area (£5,871.87) and long term-maintenance (£2,198.72).	Must be spent within 5 years
Yarlington - Westfield Road, Curry Rivel	09/00023/FUL	35,167.00	17/10/11		35,167.00	Contribution towards improvement/enhancement of any recreation area or play area in Curry Rivel (£13,452). Installation of play equipment on the Recreation Ground, Westfield, Curry Rivel (£5,866.63) and long-term maintenance (£5,866.63). Youth Facilities in Curry Rivel (£4,053.95) and long-term maintenance (£1,473.04).	Must be spent within 5 years
Yarlington - Hillcrest Road, Templecombe	08/05323/FUL	39,654.00	17/10/11		39,654.00	Improvement of play facilities (£22,340) and provision of play equipment and safety surface (£?) and long-term maintenance of equipment	Must be spent within 5 years
Yarlington - Larkhill Road, Yeovil	08/05133/FUL	31,347.00	17/10/11	-17,516.00	13,831.00	Improvement to recreational area/open space within 2km radius (£8,228). Provision of Play Equipment at Monks Dale (£10,609.54) (£6,655.46 long term maintenance) and Youth Facilities (£4,166.29) (£1,687.71 long term maintenance).	Must be spent within 5 years
Yarlington - Cox's Close, Bruton	08/04305/FUL	23,965.00	17/10/11		23,965.00	Improvement to community sports pitches in Bruton (£5,676.21) and long term maintenance (£2,887.79). Play Equipment at Jubilee Park Play Equipment (£2,803.36) and long-term maintenance (£4,362.21) and Youth Facilities in vicinity (£2,803.36) and long-term maintenance (£1,096.59).	Must be spent within 5 years

Developer	Planning Reference	Deposit £	Date Deposited	Drawdown £	Balance £	Comments	Timeframe
Yarlington - Chard	10/01967	45,060.00	05/12/11	-16,560.00	28,500.00	Implementing of a MOVA traffic control system in Chard (£16,560). Enhancement to adjoining recreation areas at Upper & Lower Henson Park, Chard (£28,500)	
Persimmon Homes - Maiden Beech	07/04736/FUL	411,655.00	16/04/12	-363,281.00	48,374.00	Awaiting Breakdown	
Strongvox - Alvington Farm	08/04357/FUL	34,889.00	05/03/12	-31,385.00	3,504.00	Providing or enhancing existing off-site sporting and recreation facilities within 3 miles of site (£31,385) and long-term maintenance (£3,504)	Must be spent within 10 years
13 Primrose Lane	11/04443/FUL	29,381.67	23/03/12	-1,887.00	27,494.67	Equipped playspace contribution for Cavalier Way Play Area (£5,244) with commuted sum (£2,981). Youth Facilities contribution for Birchfield Park (£1,030) and commuted sum (£374.69). Playing pitch contribution for new rec ground in Yeovil or enhancement of existing site (£3,106) and commuted sum (£1,698.86). Changing room provision for new or enhanced in Yeovil (£4,920) and commuted sum (£388.87). Strategic off site provisions in Yeovil - Swimming Pool (£221), sports hall (£3,637), indoor tennis court (£1,422), synthetic turf pitches (£482) and theatre and arts centre - Octagon Theatre (£1,878)	Must be spent within 5 years (equipped play, youth facilities and playing pitches contribution), or 10 years (strategic contributions)
Persimmons Homes - Land at Alvington	Awaiting Details	4,941.22	15/02/12		4,941.22	Long term maintenance of the land transferring	
Yarlington - Land at Northbrook Road, Yeovil	09/04939/FUL	56,506.00	31/05/12		56,506.00	Off-Site Recreation Contribution (£35,145) with commuted sum of £10,380. Youth Facilities Contribution (£7,783) with commuted sum of £3198.	
Yarlington - Milford Road, Hillcrest Road and Wingate Avenue, Yeovil	08/04366/FUL	35,386.00	31/05/12		35,386.00	Playing Pitch Contribution: £35,386, as a contribution towards either laying out of new formal playing pitches on Milford Park and/or reconstruction/improvements to existing pitches at Milford Park	
Betterment Properties	Awaiting Details	4,000.00	16/05/12		4,000.00	Awaiting Breakdown	
GC Fry	07/03534/FUL	34,528.70	13/06/12		34,528.70	Equipped Play Contribution towards the cost and expenses of providing a new play area in Curry Mallet (£4,177) and commuted sum of £2,374 for the long term maintenance. Youth facilities contribution towards the cost and expenses of providing youth facilities in Curry Mallet (£820) and a commuted sum of £298 for long term maintenance. Strategic Communities Facilities Contribution towards expanding and enhancing the Octagon Theatre (£1,496); the development of a new 3G artificial grass pitch in Langport/Huish Episcopi (£384); the development of a new indoor swimming pool in Langport/Huish Episcopi area or towards the development of a centrally based 8 lane district wide competition pool in Yeovil (£1,767); the provision of a new indoor tennis centre in Yeovil (£1,330); enhancement of the sports hall at Huish Episcopi Academy School or towards the development of a centrally based sports hall in Yeovil (£2,897).	

Developer	Planning Reference	Deposit £	Date Deposited	Drawdown £	Balance £	Comments	Timeframe
Page, Gulliford & Gregory - Lyddons Farm, Curry Mallett	11/02783/FUL	15,500.00	18/06/12		15,500.00	Bus Shelter Contribution (£5,726); Youth Facilities Contribution towards youth facilities at Jubilee Park, Bruton or construction of new youth facilities serving the Bruton area at some location within radius of two miles of the site (£10,221); Sports Hall Contribution towards improvements to Wincanton Sports Centre or the construction of new sports hall serving the Bruton Area built within a 5 mile radius of this site (£26,321); Swimming Pool Contribution towards existing swimming pool & related wet facilities at the Wincanton Sports Centre or the construction of new facility serving the Bruton Area built within a 5 mile radius of this site (£13,845); Footpath Contribution (£5,156)	
Bellways Homes - Frome Road, Bruton	06/03915/OUT	61,269.00	13/08/12		61,269.00	Awaiting Breakdown	
Persimmons Homes	Awaiting Details	325,922.00	Outstanding		325,922.00	Breakdown will be available once the monies are received	
Porter Dodson	Awaiting Details	26,691.12	24/09/12		26,691.12	Awaiting Breakdown	
CG Fry and Son Ltd -	Awaiting Details	52,939.00	Outstanding		52,939.00	Breakdown will be available once the monies are received	
	Awaiting Details	1,500.00	01/10/12		1,500.00	Awaiting Breakdown	
	Awaiting Details	141,892.34	13/05/13	-8,166.75	133,725.59	Awaiting Breakdown	
	Awaiting Details	283,026.76	13/05/13	-36,844.00	246,182.76	Awaiting Breakdown	
Persimmons	Awaiting Details	129,059.00	Part Paid £104,028 30/9/13		129,059.00	Awaiting Breakdown	
Yarlington	Awaiting Details	112,655.00	23/09/13		112,655.00	Awaiting Breakdown	
	Awaiting Details	123,081.48	19/12/13		123,081.48	Awaiting Breakdown	
Elan Homes	07/04833/FUL	24,707.89	12/08/14		24,707.89	Awaiting Breakdown	
					<b><u>3,518,834.78</u></b>	<b><u>2,481,676.50</u></b>	



### Projects agreed before 2010

The table below highlights the schemes agreed before 2010, and provides a reason for the delay in their progression. Members need to confirm their approval for the project to stay in the capital programme.

Project	Date Funding Originally Agreed	Original Budget £'000	Remaining Budget £'000	Reason for Delay (Update from Officer)	Risks of not retaining funding (Update from Officer)
New Car Parks	Feb 2008	818	672	£249K profiled for 2014/15. Funding is set aside for Crewkerne, Ilminster, Bruton and Somerton as per the latest car parking strategy. Currently pursuing possible sites in Crewkerne & Somerton.	The Council would not be able to meet its requirements under the car parking strategy.
Dual Use Sports Grants	Feb 2005	260	47	£140,000 was paid out to two projects during 2013/14. £40,000 is allocated for the Holyrood project, and an in-principle offer has been made to the Academy. Project expected to commence in April 2015 subject to the outcome of an application to the English Hockey Board.	An in-principle offer has been made to the Academy. The loss of the £40,000 grant allocated to the Holyrood Academy in 2014/15 would prevent the AGP surface from being replaced, putting the facility at risk of being closed unless alternative funding can be found by the Academy. The reputational damage would be extremely detrimental to the future dual use provision at this site. This provision is a vital component of the sport and leisure strategy and the network of facilities for residents.
Reckleford Gyratory	Feb 2007	1,721	88	Remaining budget will be allocated to remaining works in 2015/16. This report includes a requested to reprofile the remaining budget into 2015/16.	The appointed contractor is required to complete some lighting works and to replant the majority of the landscaped areas. This retention is being held to ensure they carry out these works, once they have done this satisfactorily the retention will be paid. If the remaining money is no longer there SSDC will be in breach of the contract.

Project	Date Funding Originally Agreed	Original Budget £'000	Remaining Budget £'000	Reason for Delay (Update from Officer)	Risks of not retaining funding (Update from Officer)
Market Towns Vision	Feb 2006	438	117	MTIG was modelled on the concept of a local brokering table. Specific Capital Investment Programmes emerge through opportunity and negotiation. The total amount made available through MTIG is more like the capital programme managed in each of the Areas and will contain unallocated balances. It is not one scheme and does not have an end date as such and so has not been delayed in any formal sense. However, delivery is dependent on local capacity to champion schemes and public sector capacity to engage with delivery issues – e.g Coach Parking – both of which can be limited at times. The total capital budget of £450,000 was agreed in 07/08. Since then £ 329k has been spent on over 70 enhancement projects in 11 Market Towns agreed and supported by the Market Towns Investment Group.	The budget remains central to the continuation of this collaborative work. If the capital funds were withdrawn, the raison d'être for the MTIG would disappear. The MTIG model does work and was supported in the AD lean review and by Scrutiny. The rate of spending is mostly determined by the capacity of SSDC, town councils and local regeneration groups to organise and deliver sound schemes together. This is limited by a variety of local and district wide circumstances. Measures to increase that capacity are possible but would require either increased revenue spend or a further review and re focussing of Area Development Work in North, West and East to invest more in the specific development of MTIG.
Multi Use Games Area's	Feb 2008	370	70	Six new MUGA's have been created across the district with Wincanton being finished this year.  Ilminster are in the process of establishing a master plan for their recreation ground, which we expect to finalise their MUGA location.  Ilminster & the original allocation to Castle Cary have been re-profiled to 15/16.	The Council would be unable to provide financial support MUGA projects it has promoted. The reputational damage would be high in both communities.  No grant offer has been made to reallocate the £35,000 originally declined by Castle Cary. However, they are still looking at potential sites, and also Bruton TC has expressed an interest. Removal of the funding would prevent the Council from being able to support this scheme.
Community Play Schemes	Feb 2007	539	114	18 community play schemes have been completed. In terms of sites in progress the remaining projects:	The Council would be unable to maintain and replace the play areas it owns and manages to the required standards.

Project	Date Funding Originally Agreed	Original Budget £'000	Remaining Budget £'000	Reason for Delay (Update from Officer)	Risks of not retaining funding (Update from Officer)
				Larkhill Road, Yeovil - Construction well advanced. Lavers oak, Martock & Packers Way, Misterton - No progress yet, funding profiled for 2015/16.	Children would be put at risk. Non-payment of retention sums would place the Council in breach of contract. The reputational damage would be high.
Grants for Parishes with play	Feb 2008	718	73	12 grants to parishes with play areas have been completed and paid. Remaining schemes are in progress and include: <u>Area East:</u> Gainsborough – practically complete. Rickhayes – actively fundraising for scheme, profiled 15/16. <u>Area North:</u> Ilton – in progress and grant to be paid out shortly. <u>Area West:</u> Henhayes - keen to progress, hopefully late 2014/15.	The Council would be unable to financial support parish play area projects it has promoted and where local expectations have been raised.  Non-payment of retention sums would place Parish Councils in breach of contract. Children may be put at risk. The reputational damage would be high.
Land Acquisition & Enhancement at Waterside Road	Feb 2008	35	35	No spend. Negotiations have moved forward and an offer has been made to the land owner which is under consideration.	These works and our ability to exercise the option to acquire a car parking area would not happen if the capital allocation is withdrawn. The consequence would be long term decline of this amenity area and increased risk from the unmaintained area. Portfolio view is that we negotiate with the owner on a value of the car park area and proceed with this asap.
Youth Facilities Development	Feb 2007	55	30	No progress to date on the funding.	The Council would be unable to respond to demands for youth facility provision from smaller communities across South Somerset not being supported by the MUGA or Community Play Grant Scheme.
Local Delivery Vehicle (Yeovil Vision)	Feb 2009	100	34	Original budget changed as some transferred direct to individual projects. Remaining budget to be allocated to Yeovil Vision projects.	

<b>Project</b>	<b>Date Funding Originally Agreed</b>	<b>Original Budget £'000</b>	<b>Remaining Budget £'000</b>	<b>Reason for Delay (Update from Officer)</b>	<b>Risks of not retaining funding (Update from Officer)</b>
Village Hall Grants	Feb 2006	945	15		These would not be possible without the funding. This would leave £7K remaining unallocated, and if withdrawn would mean no further awards.
Foundry House	Apr 99 *	883	4	* Subsequent reports to DX since this date.	New project to be identified to spend remaining money in line with DCLG grant.

# Agenda Item 13

## **2014/15 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for the Quarter ending 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

*Executive Portfolio Holder:* Tim Carroll, Finance and Spatial Planning  
*Chief Executive:* Mark Williams, Chief Executive  
*Assistant Director:* Donna Parham, Assistant Director – Finance and Corporate Services  
*Service Manager:* Amanda Card, Finance Manager  
*Lead Officer:* Jayne Beevor, Principal Accountant Revenue  
*Contact Details:* Jayne.beevor@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462320

### **Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the current financial position of the revenue budgets of the Council and to report the reasons for variations from approved budgets for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

### **Forward Plan**

This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of 6<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

### **Public Interest**

This report gives an update on the revenue financial position and budgetary variations of the Council as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014.

### **1) Recommendations**

Members are recommended to:

- a) Note the current 2014/15 financial position of the Council;
- b) Note the reasons for variations to the previously approved budgets as detailed in paragraphs 3.3;
- c) Note the transfers made to and from reserves outlined in paragraph 11.1 and the position of the Area Reserves as detailed in Appendix C and the Corporate Reserves as detailed in Appendix D;
- d) Note the virements made under delegated authority as detailed in Appendix B;
- e) Approve the virements reported in paragraph 4.

### **2) Background**

- 2.1 The 2014/15 original budget was approved by Council in February 2014. Under the Council's Financial Procedure Rules, budgets are split between "above" and "below" the line items, with budget holders being responsible for "above" the line items only. As every item of expenditure and income within the Council's accounts is "above" the line under the responsibility of an individual budget holder, this is purely a means of ensuring that individual managers focus their attention on what they can control.

### 3) Summary of the Current Revenue Financial Position and Forecast Outturn

3.1 Managers have been asked in 2014/15 to outline the actual expected outturn for the year and the reasons for under or overspends are provided by them.

3.2 The table below shows the position of revenue budgets as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014. This includes any approved transfers to or from reserves.

<b>Approved base budget as at April 2014</b>	<b>£'000</b> <b>17,541</b>
Budget Carry Forwards approved June 2014 – Revenue Budgets	289
Savings from Area West markets returned to balances	(3)
Funding Empty Homes Officer	9
Funding of Legal costs	3
<b>Revised Budget as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014</b>	<b>17,839</b>

3.3 A summary of the revenue position as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014 is as follows:

Service	Original Budget £'000	Revised Budget £'000	Y/E Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comments on Major Variances (+/- £50,000)
Strategic Management	653.1	619.1	619.1	0.0	
Financial Services	1,386.1	1,450.1	1,269.0	(181.1)	Savings from reduced insurance premiums, secondment of a finance assistant and surplus interest receipts.
ICT Services	861.2	1,037.9	1,037.9	0.0	
Procurement & Risk Management	158.7	159.4	169.4	10.0	
Revenue & Benefits	223.8	226.4	226.4	0.0	
Democratic Services	994.0	1,031.7	981.7	(50.0)	Savings being made from reduced IT & printing & stationery costs.
Legal Services	208.9	228.4	199.4	(29.0)	
Fraud & Data Management	96.7	95.7	95.7	0.0	
Human Resources	303.9	307.0	307.0	0.0	
Place & Performance	271.9	115.8	115.8	0.0	
Economic Development	379.1	393.6	393.6	0.0	
Development Control	435.3	434.4	184.4	(250.0)	Planning fee income continues to exceed budget.

Service	Original Budget £'000	Revised Budget £'000	Y/E Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comments on Major Variances (+/- £50,000)
Spatial Policy	517.8	508.1	508.1	0.0	
Equalities	51.7	57.8	57.8	0.0	
Communities, Third Sector & Partnerships	419.2	421.6	421.6	0.0	
LSP	26.1	26.1	26.1	0.0	
Area East	199.1	221.2	221.2	0.0	
Area North	176.0	208.3	208.3	0.0	
Area South	255.4	269.2	269.2	0.0	
Area West	261.5	267.2	267.2	0.0	
Operations & Customer Focus	466.6	470.1	478.8	8.7	
Environmental Health	994.4	1,137.9	1,150.9	13.0	
Civil Contingencies	137.2	137.4	137.4	0.0	
Engineering & Property Services	(31.8)	(30.3)	(120.3)	(90.0)	Savings being made across a range of services. However they are offset by a predicted shortfall in car park income of £60k.
Building Control	(53.1)	(49.7)	(23.0)	26.7	
Streetscene	1,742.3	1,639.3	1,639.3	0.0	
Waste & Recycling	4,217.4	4,217.4	4,217.4	0.0	
Licensing	(43.5)	(37.8)	(42.8)	(5.0)	
Arts & Entertainment	334.4	382.1	371.0	(11.1)	
Sport & Leisure Facilities	232.2	232.2	232.2	0.0	
Community Health & Leisure	753.8	751.2	749.2	(2.0)	
Housing & Welfare	672.0	670.0	670.0	0.0	
Family Support Programme	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Countryside	239.4	240.3	240.3	0.0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,540.8</b>	<b>17,839.1</b>	<b>17,279.3</b>		
<b>Underspend</b>				<b>(559.8)</b>	

(Amounts shown in brackets are net income figures)

3.4 There is an expected net under spend on currently approved budgets of **£559.8k** by the end of the financial year. This will result in an under spend equivalent to 3.1% of the revised budget. Appendix A to this report sets out the detail of the current position on Council spending.

#### 4) Budget Virements

Under the Financial Procedure Rules, providing that the Assistant Director-Finance & Corporate Services has been notified in advance, Assistant Directors/Managers may authorise any virements for an individual cost centre within their responsibility. Strategic Directors & Assistant Directors can authorise virements, up to a maximum of £25,000, for an overall Directorate that is within their area of responsibility. Portfolio Holders can approve virements between services within their areas of responsibility, up to a maximum of £25,000 per virement. These virements are listed in Appendix B for District Executive to note and have been approved by the Assistant Director-Finance & Corporate Services.

All virements outside of the criteria set out above need the approval of District Executive and are detailed in the table below.

Amount £	From	To	Details
159,800	Dev Control Fee Income Budget	Dev Control Consultants-£105,000 P&S-£5,500 & Legal Fees-£6,300	To fund in current year the increased spending on consultants, p&s and legal fees from the additional fee income being received

## 5) Delivery of Savings

As part of budget monitoring it is important to monitor that savings proposed in the 2014/15 budget setting exercise are being delivered. The table below details the major savings (savings over £25,000) that were proposed and the expected achievement of those savings at year-end.

Major Savings (Savings over £25,000)	2014/15 Budget Saving Target £'000	Estimated Actual Saving at Year-End £'000	(Shortfall)  £'000
GIS-Reduction in IT & licence budgets	25.0	25.0	0.0
ICT-Changes to the Disaster Recovery Plan	26.6	26.6	0.0
Waste-Optimisation of Service	33.3	33.3	0.0
Property Services-Public Office utilities	51.0	51.0	0.0
Commercial Properties-Repairs & maintenance	35.0	35.0	0.0
Shared accommodation with SCC	94.6	94.6	0.0
HR-Transfer of Nursery	25.0	25.0	0.0
Essential user & mileage allowances	57.3	24.9	(32.4)
Travel costs	30.0	30.0	0.0
Crematorium Income	65.0	65.0	0.0
Licensing Income	30.0	30.0	0.0
Landcharges Income	50.0	50.0	0.0
Planning Fee Income	50.0	50.0	0.0
Area Restructure	89.0	89.0	0.0
Finance savings	29.5	29.5	0.0
<b>Total Major Savings</b>	<b>691.3</b>	<b>658.9</b>	<b>(32.4)</b>

## 6) External Partnerships and other Organisations



6.1 All key partnerships are monitored within SSDC's overall budget – there are currently no financial issues within SSDC's key partnerships. Members have requested some additional monitoring of the following substantial partnership:

**6.2 South Somerset Voluntary Community Action (SSVCA)** – In line with the service level agreement SSVCA has provided a statement on their financial position.

6.3 At the end of August the Management Accounts are predicting a small surplus figure at the year end.

## **7) Council Tax Reduction Scheme**

7.1 The Council Tax Reduction Scheme commenced in April 2013. For 2014/15 the authority set a budget of £9.319 million for annual discounts. Of this sum £9.066 million has been allocated for the year leaving £0.253 for additional growth during the year.

7.2 The Hardship Scheme budget for 2014/15 is £30,000. At the end of September 2014 SSDC had received 105 requests for hardship relief of which 78 were successful. The amount awarded by the end of September 2014 is £8,750.50. We currently have 8 applications outstanding.

7.3 The collection rate for Council Tax was 57.39% by the end of September compared to 56.83% last year. This is an improvement of 0.54%. The improvement is largely because we commenced recovery proceedings earlier this year compared with last year when the Council Tax Reduction Scheme was introduced. This has resulted in the collection improvement in the first half of the year as many people's payments are ahead of where they were at this point last year. However, this means that in effect those people are on target to pay by the end of the year rather than being behind. For this reason it is anticipated that the end of year outturn will show only a slight improvement on 2013/14 as the reason for the higher collection ceases to take effect.

## **8) Non Domestic Rates**

8.1 The collection rate for Non Domestic Rates was 54.94% at the end of September compared to 59.30% last year. We have had to put back the migration to a replacement Business Rate system which, along with a lack of resources in the Revenues Team has impacted the amount of recovery action we have been able to take in Q2. We are currently looking at how we can improve collection for the second half of this year.

## **9) Council Tax Reforms**

9.1 Members agreed to amend some discounts to Council Tax from 1 April 2013, one of which relates to long term empty properties (unfurnished and unoccupied for 2 years or more). The number of these long term empty properties is currently 229, up from 195 at the end of Q1 2014/15. The reason for this is believed to be due to unsold new property such as Mc Carthy and Stone type developments. A lot of this type of property has come on stream recently and developers would rather keep it on the market and try and sell it (and pay the extra council tax) as opposed to letting it. The empty property officer has continued to work on and reduce the number of older empty properties.

## **10) Discretionary Housing Payments**

10.1 From the Housing Benefit Subsidy monitoring at the end of September 2014, £95,018 DHPs have been made and £31,518 is committed for the second half of this financial

year. This compares to £83,210 paid and £37,663 committed for the same period in 13/14. We are currently projecting spend of 81% of the Government grant for DHP's. We currently have 54 outstanding applications so expect spend will increase as a percentage of the grant figure in the next quarter.

## 11) Reserves, Balances and Contingency

11.1 Reserves are amounts that have been set aside from annual revenue budgets to meet specific known events that will happen in the future. An example of such a reserve is the amount set aside annually to cover the cost of South Somerset District Council elections that occur every four years. Details of the reserves held within the Areas are provided in Appendix C. The complete list of specific Corporate Reserves and the current balance on each one is provided at Appendix D. The Appendix shows all transfers in or out of each one that has been actioned under the authority delegated in the Financial Procedure Rules.

Transfers out of specific reserves that require reporting to District Executive for noting are as follows:

Reserve	Balance at 01/07/14 £	Transfers In/(Out) £	Balance at 30/09/14 £	Reason for Transfer
Capital Reserve	1,942,507	12,330	1,954,837	Ring Bank Flood Defence re Area North (£10,000) and Repay PV Capital FIT 1.3.14 to 31.5.2014 (£2,330)
Insurance Fund	50,747	(3,425)	47,322	Claim for roundabout at Larkhill Road, Yeovil
Voluntary Redundancy and Early Retirement Fund	431,860	(24,200)	407,660	Redundancy for Area West Cleaners and Pest Control Officer
Revenue Grants Reserve	355,063	51,811	406,874	Family Support Programme return unused funds to reserve (£58,360) and release of other grants relating to 2013/14 (£6,549)
Council Tax/Housing Benefits Reserve	607,892	4,782	612,674	Housing Benefits Admin Grant
Closed Churchyards Reserve	7,176	1,520	8,696	Transfer for closed churchyard special levies
Into Somerset	12,500	(12,500)	0	Transfer to revenue from Reserve
LSP	78,959	(1,750)	77,209	Funding of MIND grant
Business Support Scheme	344,104	(67,298)	276,806	Flood Grant funding
Flooding Reserve	100,000	(10,000)	(90,000)	Ring Bank Flood Defence re Area North

(Figures in brackets denote a reduction in the reserve)

11.2 General Fund Balance represents the accumulated revenue surpluses. Within the total, however, there are amounts that have been earmarked by the District Executive for specific purposes. The table below shows the current position on the General Fund Balance compared to the start of the financial year:

As at 01/04/14 £'000	General Fund Balances	Movement	As at 30/09/14 £'000
5,708	Balance at 1 April 14		5,708
	<b>Less:</b>		
	Transfers from Balances	74	74
(289)	Carry forwards to services from 2013/14 (approved June 14)		(289)
	2014/15 budget once off use of balances		
	Earmarked for specific purposes:		
	▪ allocated to Committees:		
(60)	- Area East		(60)
(53)	- Area West		(53)
(27)	- Area North		(27)
(2)	▪ Economic Development Balance		(2)
	Estimated underspend on Revenue Budget 2014/15	560	560
<b>5,277</b>	<b>Estimated Unallocated General Fund Balance at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>5,911</b>

(Amounts shown in brackets are net income figures)

11.3 The latest review of risks to SSDC balances shows that balances need to remain within the range of £3.4 to £3.8 million to meet current financial risks. Current balances as at 30<sup>th</sup> September are therefore adequate to meet current risks.

11.4 The following transfer from balances is for noting by this Committee, as they have been undertaken under delegated authority:

Reserve	Balance at 01/07/14 £	Transfers In/(Out) £	Balance at 30/09/14 £	Reason for Transfer
Non-Earmarked Balances	5,279,980	(12,540)	5,267,440	Empty Homes Officer (April – July 2014) and Legal Costs (April – August 2014)

11.5 No provision was made for a District Executive Contingency Budget in the 2014/15 budget but committed funds were carried forward as follows:

	Approved	£'000
Symphony Project	Feb 14	10.0
Intern Funding	May 14	7.6
<b>Committed Funds:</b>		<b>17.6</b>

## 12) Risk

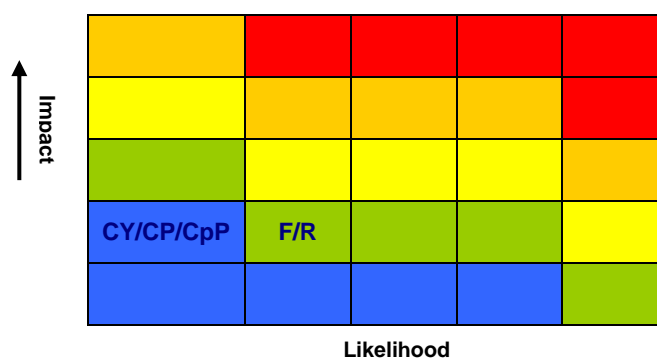
12.1 As part of monitoring an assessment of risk has been made. This review of balances and reserves has shown that SSDC currently has sufficient balances to cover major areas of financial risk. The balance at the year-end is estimated to be £5.9 million.

12.2 Details of the current key risks, as identified in the 2014/15 Budget Setting Report, are listed in the table below with an update from the responsible officer.

<b>Current Risk</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Officer's Update</b>
The Council Tax Reduction Scheme carries risks of additional demand and non-collection. This will need to be carefully monitored in 2014/15 to assess the overall impact.	Assistant Director- Finance & Corporate Services	The CTR scheme is now being monitored as part of the budget monitoring report.
Cost of living increases to pay budgets has been increased by 1% for 2014/15 in line with Government guidelines. Any local or national agreements in excess of this will need to be found from balances. A 1% increase equates to approximately £109,380.	Chief Executive	A new offer of 2.2% pay increase from Jan 2015 has been made and discussions with the Unions will be held in October.
There remains substantial risk in the banking sector and protection of SSDC's principal sums continues to be our primary concern. Interest rates within the budget are set with a continued base rate of 0.5%. The Finance team continues to take regular advice from its treasury advisors Arlingclose and are monitoring the situation closely. A loss of £6 million principal would mean a budget reduction of £30k through loss of interest.	Assistant. Director- Finance & Corporate Services	Current predictions are for the budget to be £153.3k over achieving on income.
Housing Benefit Subsidy is administered on behalf of Central Government by SSDC and a grant reimburses for expenditure incurred. Approximately £46m in benefit is paid out and the grant normally accounts for 100% of this, however adjustments reducing the grant are made for local authority errors.	Assistant Director- Finance & Corporate Services	Current predictions are for the housing benefit subsidy to be on budget at the year end.
Planning income improved during 2013/14 however it is still an area susceptible to the economic downturn. A further drop of 5% in income amounts to £52,500.	Assistant Director- Economy	Current predictions are for planning income to be, at the year-end, ahead of budget by £250k.
Building Control income was reduced by £44k for 2014/15 by offsetting vacant posts funding. It is still an area susceptible to economic downturn and a 5% reduction equals £25,330 loss of income.	Assistant Director- Environment	Current predictions are that there will be a £27k shortfall in fee income.

Car parking income has fallen in 2014/15 reflecting lower numbers of users in Yeovil. A further 5% reduction in usage across Yeovil car parks (which accounts for 70% of total income) is equivalent to £62,040 loss in car park income.	Assistant Director-Environment	Pay & Display and season ticket income is predicted to be down by £60k.
The risks for SSDC in Business Rate Retention are that there is no or negative growth, that companies with renewable energy schemes do not go ahead, that appeals may be greater than expected, or collection performance is worse than expected. The maximum risk to next year's budget is £245k which is the difference between the budget set and the safety net.	Assistant Director-Finance & Corporate Services	Collection rate is down on the previous year and the risk remains.

### Risk Matrix



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

### Corporate Priority Implications

The budget is closely linked to the Corporate Plan and growth bids are scored accordingly.

### Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

There are no implications currently in approving this report.

### Equality and Diversity Implications

When the budget was set any growth or savings made included an assessment of the impact on equalities as part of that exercise.

### Background Papers

Revenue Quarterly Monitoring Reports to District Executive

Group with Elements		Year to date			Outturn Forecast			Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
		a Budget to 30th September £	b Actual to 30th September £	c Variance to 30th September £	d Annual Budget £	e Expected Total by Year End £	e-d Variance expected 31/03/15 £	
<b>Chief Executive/ Strategic Director (Corporate Services)</b>								
<b>STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT</b>								
Chief Executive/Strategic Director (Corporate Services) : Mark Williams								
CORPORATE INITIATIVES & CONTINGENCY	Expenditure	0	0	0	10,000	10,000	0	<i>Funding for Symphony project 14/15.</i>
	Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	TOTAL	0	0	0	10,000	10,000	0	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Ric Pallister								
MANAGEMENT BOARD	Expenditure	265,585	255,134	(10,451)	609,060	609,060	0	
	Income	0	(7)	(7)	0	0	0	
	TOTAL	265,585	255,127	(10,458)	609,060	609,060	0	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Ric Pallister								
<b>TOTAL STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>265,585</b>	<b>255,134</b>	<b>(10,451)</b>	<b>619,060</b>	<b>619,060</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(7)</b>	<b>(7)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>265,585</b>	<b>255,127</b>	<b>(10,458)</b>	<b>619,060</b>	<b>619,060</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES</b>								
Assistant Director : Donna Parham								
<b>FINANCIAL SERVICES</b>								
Service Manager : Amanda Card								
AUDIT	Expenditure	52,770	86,061	33,291	105,540	112,080	6,540	Audit fees paid until 31st December.
	Income	0	(6,540)	(6,540)	0	(6,540)	(6,540)	
	TOTAL	52,770	79,521	26,751	105,540	105,540	0	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tim Carroll								
CORPORATE COSTS	Expenditure	953,050	894,924	(58,126)	1,421,560	1,426,100	4,540	Insurance Premiums, subscriptions, electronic bank charges less than budget but these savings will be offset by the shortfall in the £32.4k travel savings.
	Income	(16,460)	(26,996)	(10,536)	(510,950)	(524,490)	(13,540)	Amortisation of Public Works Loan Board loan.
	TOTAL	936,590	867,928	(68,662)	910,610	901,610	(9,000)	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tim Carroll								
ASSET MANAGEMENT	Expenditure	28,905	29,215	310	57,810	57,810	0	On target.
	Income	(1,000)	(1,557)	(557)	(2,000)	(2,000)	0	
	TOTAL	27,905	27,658	(247)	55,810	55,810	0	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tim Carroll								
FINANCIAL SERVICES	Expenditure	338,030	309,763	(28,267)	673,570	655,330	(18,240)	Secondment of Finance Assistant.
	Income	(5,025)	(3,559)	1,466	(28,770)	(29,390)	(620)	
	TOTAL	333,005	306,204	(26,801)	644,800	625,940	(18,860)	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tim Carroll								
TREASURY MANAGEMENT	Expenditure	51,649	44,945	(6,704)	73,700	(79,580)	(153,280)	Current estimates are predicting an overachievement of income in the region of £153k, this is due to extending the average length of investments to achieve higher returns and good performance from the property fund which we are assuming will continue however if there is a dip in the economy this could affect the forecasted return.
	Income	0	(72,943)	(72,943)	(340,340)	(340,340)	0	
	TOTAL	51,649	(27,998)	(79,647)	(266,640)	(419,920)	(153,280)	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tim Carroll								
<b>TOTAL FINANCIAL SERVICES</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>1,424,404</b>	<b>1,364,908</b>	<b>(59,496)</b>	<b>2,332,180</b>	<b>2,171,740</b>	<b>(160,440)</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(22,485)</b>	<b>(111,595)</b>	<b>(89,110)</b>	<b>(882,060)</b>	<b>(902,760)</b>	<b>(20,700)</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,401,919</b>	<b>1,253,313</b>	<b>(148,606)</b>	<b>1,450,120</b>	<b>1,268,980</b>	<b>(181,140)</b>	

Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September £	Actual to 30th September £	Variance to 30th September £	Annual Budget £	Expected Total by Year End £	Variance expected 31/03/15 £	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
<b>ICT SERVICES</b>								
Service Manager : Roger Brown								
INFORMATION SYSTEMS	Expenditure	598,918	545,152	(53,766)	1,058,380	1,058,380	0	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Henry Hobhouse	Income	(13,830)	(9,431)	4,399	(20,530)	(20,530)	0	
	TOTAL	585,088	535,721	(49,367)	1,037,850	1,037,850	0	Budget currently on track.
TOTAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS	Expenditure	598,918	545,152	(53,766)	1,058,380	1,058,380	0	
	Income	(13,830)	(9,431)	4,399	(20,530)	(20,530)	0	
	TOTAL	585,088	535,721	(49,367)	1,037,850	1,037,850	0	
<b>PROCUREMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT</b>								
Service Manager : Gary Russ								
PROCUREMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT	Expenditure	133,905	114,302	(19,603)	258,710	238,710	(20,000)	Central Support Services will have an anticipated underspend of £20k at the year end. This is significantly due to the reduction of expenditure for IS purchases, as the majority of this is being funded from capital with the current ongoing projects and reduced demand for printing and stationery.
	Income	(49,635)	(29,875)	19,760	(99,270)	(69,270)	30,000	The Canteen service has seen a decline of income, which is currently 10% down year to date on over the counter sales, compared to the previous year. It is estimated that the canteen will have a £30k shortfall on income. A survey will be distributed shortly to address the customers needs, which will potentially result in an increase in sales.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tim Carroll	TOTAL	84,270	84,427	157	159,440	169,440	10,000	
TOTAL PROCUREMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT	Expenditure	133,905	114,302	(19,603)	258,710	238,710	(20,000)	
	Income	(49,635)	(29,875)	19,760	(99,270)	(69,270)	30,000	
	TOTAL	84,270	84,427	157	159,440	169,440	10,000	
<b>REVENUES AND BENEFITS</b>								
Service Manager : Ian Potter								
REVENUES & BENEFITS	Expenditure	784,831	793,268	8,437	1,492,320	1,492,320	0	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tim Carroll	Income	(171,991)	(203,939)	(31,948)	(335,110)	(335,110)	0	There are no areas of concern and end of year outturn is expected to be on budget.
	TOTAL	612,840	589,329	(23,511)	1,157,210	1,157,210	0	
HOUSING BENEFIT SUBSIDY	Expenditure	23,042,375	22,565,464	(476,911)	46,084,750	46,084,750	0	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tim Carroll	Income	(23,631,073)	(23,636,792)	(5,719)	(47,015,580)	(47,015,580)	0	Our subsidy monitoring shows that we expect to be broadly on budget by end of year. No issues to report.
	TOTAL	(588,698)	(1,071,328)	(482,630)	(930,830)	(930,830)	0	
TOTAL REVENUES AND BENEFITS	Expenditure	23,827,206	23,358,732	(468,474)	47,577,070	47,577,070	0	
	Income	(23,803,064)	(23,840,731)	(37,667)	(47,350,690)	(47,350,690)	0	
	TOTAL	24,142	(481,999)	(506,141)	226,380	226,380	0	
TOTAL FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES	Expenditure	25,984,433	25,383,094	(601,339)	51,226,340	51,045,900	(180,440)	
	Income	(23,889,014)	(23,991,632)	(102,618)	(48,352,550)	(48,343,250)	9,300	
	TOTAL	2,095,419	1,391,462	(703,957)	2,873,790	2,702,650	(171,140)	

Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September £	Actual to 30th September £	Variance to 30th September £	Annual Budget £	Expected Total by Year End £	Variance expected 31/03/15 £	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
<b>LEGAL AND CORPORATE SERVICES</b>								
Assistant Director : Ian Clarke								
<b>DEMOCRATIC SERVICES</b>								
Service Manager : Angela Cox								
DEMOCRATIC & SUPPORT SERVICES	Expenditure	557,880	515,400	(42,480)	1,129,640	1,079,640	(50,000)	Electoral Registration and District and Parish Elections will remain on course until year end. A recharge has just been processed to Yeovil Town Council for a recharge for by-elections. <i>These budgets will be re-profiled in October to reflect planned income and expenditure for this year. Management Corp Dem Costs and Democratic Representation is predicted to have an estimated underspend of £70K, this is partly due to rationalisation of budget lines. A £20k carryforward will be requested for member training in 15/16.</i>
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Peter Seib	Income	(93,770)	(117,510)	(23,740)	(97,980)	(97,980)	0	
	TOTAL	464,110	397,890	(66,220)	1,031,660	981,660	(50,000)	
TOTAL DEMOCRATIC & SUPPORT SERVICES	Expenditure	557,880	515,400	(42,480)	1,129,640	1,079,640	(50,000)	
	Income	(93,770)	(117,510)	(23,740)	(97,980)	(97,980)	0	
	TOTAL	464,110	397,890	(66,220)	1,031,660	981,660	(50,000)	
<b>LEGAL SERVICES</b>								
Service Manager : Angela Watson								
LEGAL SERVICES	Expenditure	276,987	273,365	(3,622)	534,380	534,380	0	The County Council invoice for the LexisNexis subscription has now been received and paid. Otherwise, no areas of concern. <i>Budgets will be re-profiled in October to reflect the planned expenditure and income for this financial year. The year end position will be that the budgets will be on target.</i>
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tim Carroll	Income	(23,940)	(52,303)	(28,363)	(48,960)	(48,960)	0	
	TOTAL	253,047	221,062	(31,985)	485,420	485,420	0	
LAND CHARGES	Expenditure	55,840	27,483	(28,357)	111,680	121,680	10,000	<i>It is estimated that consultancy fees to date will cost £39.3k, with the current trend the consultancy budget is predicted to be over spent due to the volume of searches. This will be counteracted from the additional income.</i> <i>Income was 10.7% down based on a comparison of September last year. Income year to date is up by 5%.</i>
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tim Carroll	Income	(189,085)	(240,661)	(51,576)	(378,170)	(428,170)	(50,000)	
	TOTAL	(133,245)	(213,178)	(79,933)	(266,490)	(306,490)	(40,000)	
RIGHTS OF WAY	Expenditure	17,985	15,721	(2,264)	35,970	35,970	0	The only issue is lack of income from Diversion Order work: This will be addressed over the next couple of months, but there will be an estimated shortfall of £11k.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tim Carroll	Income	(13,250)	0	13,250	(26,500)	(15,500)	11,000	
	TOTAL	4,735	15,721	10,986	9,470	20,470	11,000	
TOTAL LEGAL SERVICES	Expenditure	350,812	316,569	(34,243)	682,030	692,030	10,000	
	Income	(226,275)	(292,964)	(66,689)	(453,630)	(492,630)	(39,000)	
	TOTAL	124,537	23,605	(100,932)	228,400	199,400	(29,000)	



Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September	Actual to 30th September	Variance to 30th September	Annual Budget	Expected Total by Year End	Variance expected 31/03/15	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
		£	£	£	£	£	£	
<b>FRAUD AND DATA MANAGEMENT</b>								
Service Manager : Lynda Creek								
FRAUD AND DATA MANAGEMENT	Expenditure	49,250	45,536	(3,714)	95,740	95,740	0	Some expenditure not expected till later in the year.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tim Carroll	Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	TOTAL	49,250	45,536	(3,714)	95,740	95,740	0	
TOTAL FRAUD AND DATA MANAGEMENT	Expenditure	49,250	45,536	(3,714)	95,740	95,740	0	
	Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	TOTAL	49,250	45,536	(3,714)	95,740	95,740	0	
<b>HUMAN RESOURCES</b>								
Service Manager : Mike Holliday								
HUMAN RESOURCES	Expenditure	162,880	142,540	(20,340)	319,260	319,260	0	Budgets broadly on target with a small staffing underspend expected by year end. <i>These will be part of the Lean savings.</i>
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Ric Pallister	Income	(4,990)	(7,675)	(2,685)	(12,310)	(12,310)	0	
	TOTAL	157,890	134,865	(23,025)	306,950	306,950	0	
TOTAL HUMAN RESOURCES	Expenditure	162,880	142,540	(20,340)	319,260	319,260	0	
	Income	(4,990)	(7,675)	(2,685)	(12,310)	(12,310)	0	
	TOTAL	157,890	134,865	(23,025)	306,950	306,950	0	
TOTAL LEGAL SERVICES AND CORPORATE SERVICES	Expenditure	1,120,822	1,020,045	(100,777)	2,226,670	2,186,670	(40,000)	
	Income	(325,035)	(418,149)	(93,114)	(563,920)	(602,920)	(39,000)	
	TOTAL	795,787	601,896	(193,891)	1,662,750	1,583,750	(79,000)	
TOTAL CHIEF EXECUTIVE	Expenditure	27,370,840	26,658,273	(712,567)	54,072,070	53,851,630	(220,440)	
	Income	(24,214,049)	(24,409,788)	(195,739)	(48,916,470)	(48,946,170)	(29,700)	
	TOTAL	3,156,791	2,248,485	(908,306)	5,155,600	4,905,460	(250,140)	
Strategic Director (Place and Performance): Rina Singh								
<b>PLACE AND PERFORMANCE</b>								
Service Manager : Rina Singh								
POLICY & PERFORMANCE	Expenditure	57,915	56,817	(1,098)	115,830	115,830	0	A small overspend on salaries predicted at year end, although this may be covered by underspend in other areas.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Ric Pallister	Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	TOTAL	57,915	56,817	(1,098)	115,830	115,830	0	
TOTAL PLACE AND PERFORMANCE	Expenditure	57,915	56,817	(1,098)	115,830	115,830	0	
	Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	TOTAL	57,915	56,817	(1,098)	115,830	115,830	0	

Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September	Actual to 30th September	Variance to 30th September	Annual Budget	Expected Total by Year End	Variance expected 31/03/15	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
		£	£	£	£	£	£	
<b>ECONOMY</b>								
Assistant Director : Martin woods								
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>								
Service Manager : David Julian								
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Expenditure	407,255	393,204	(14,051)	693,670	693,670	0	Running under budget with the vacant position(s) unfilled. Recent budget revisions will correct this. The overall budget is healthy
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Jo Roundell-Greene	Income	(452,760)	(500,516)	(47,756)	(482,280)	(482,280)	0	For YIC the net income variance looks very encouraging at this stage of the year.
	TOTAL	(45,505)	(107,312)	(61,807)	211,390	211,390	0	
TOURISM	Expenditure	99,330	81,329	(18,001)	198,660	198,660	0	Showing underspend, but most of the costs relating to Discover and other leaflets won't get taken until January. I think this budget is on target.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Sylvia Seal	Income	(40,525)	(45,516)	(4,991)	(81,050)	(81,050)	0	Showing ticket sales below budget, but that will only impact on around 10% on the corresponding income line. Rest of income looks very good, so the bottom line is about increased overall sales rather than major reductions in expenditure.
	TOTAL	58,805	35,813	(22,992)	117,610	117,610	0	
HERITAGE	Expenditure	35,790	35,470	(320)	65,200	65,200	0	All ok, the second invoice from South Somerset Voluntary & Community Action will make this budget very tight this year. We have committed to maintaining the volunteer service as an ongoing feature. It's getting tougher with so little resource.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Sylvia Seal	Income	(310)	(493)	(183)	(620)	(620)	0	
	TOTAL	35,480	34,977	(503)	64,580	64,580	0	
TOTAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	Expenditure	542,375	510,003	(32,372)	957,530	957,530	0	
	Income	(493,595)	(546,525)	(52,930)	(563,950)	(563,950)	0	
	TOTAL	48,780	(36,522)	(85,302)	393,580	393,580	0	
<b>DEVELOPMENT CONTROL</b>								
Service Manager : David Norris								
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL	Expenditure	758,585	762,054	3,469	1,511,180	1,511,180	0	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Peter Seib	Income	(540,775)	(985,240)	(444,465)	(1,076,750)	(1,326,750)	(250,000)	Another very healthy month for planning fees and we are only £200k off last year's total with several months to go.
	TOTAL	217,810	(223,186)	(440,996)	434,430	184,430	(250,000)	
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT CONTROL	Expenditure	758,585	762,054	3,469	1,511,180	1,511,180	0	
	Income	(540,775)	(985,240)	(444,465)	(1,076,750)	(1,326,750)	(250,000)	
	TOTAL	217,810	(223,186)	(440,996)	434,430	184,430	(250,000)	
<b>SPATIAL POLICY</b>								
Service Manager : Paul Wheatley								
PLANNING POLICY	Expenditure	132,035	122,572	(9,463)	288,780	288,780	0	<i>Current staffing vacancies but actively recruiting.</i>
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tim Carroll	Income	(7,740)	(8,664)	(924)	(11,820)	(11,820)	0	
	TOTAL	124,295	113,908	(10,387)	276,960	276,960	0	
TRANSPORT	Expenditure	20,290	19,628	(662)	40,580	40,580	0	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Henry Hobhouse	Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	TOTAL	20,290	19,628	(662)	40,580	40,580	0	
Service Manager : Martin Woods								
STRATEGIC HOUSING	Expenditure	95,295	92,972	(2,323)	190,590	216,670	26,080	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tim Carroll	Income	0	(26,080)	(26,080)	0	(26,080)	(26,080)	<i>Partnership levy fees.</i>
	TOTAL	95,295	66,892	(28,403)	190,590	190,590	0	

Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September £	Actual to 30th September £	Variance to 30th September £	Annual Budget £	Expected Total by Year End £	Variance expected 31/03/15 £	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
TOTAL SPATIAL POLICY	Expenditure	247,620	235,172	(12,448)	519,950	546,030	26,080	
	Income	(7,740)	(34,744)	(27,004)	(11,820)	(37,900)	(26,080)	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>239,880</b>	<b>200,428</b>	<b>(39,452)</b>	<b>508,130</b>	<b>508,130</b>	<b>0</b>	

Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September	Actual to 30th September	Variance to 30th September	Annual Budget	Expected Total by Year End	Variance expected 31/03/15	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
		£	£	£	£	£	£	
<b>EQUALITIES</b>								
<b>Service Manager : Jo Morgan</b>								
EQUALITIES & DIVERSITY	Expenditure	31,935	26,696	(5,239)	57,830	62,750	4,920	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Jo Roundell Greene	Income	0	(4,916)	(4,916)	0	(4,920)	(4,920)	
	TOTAL	31,935	21,780	(10,155)	57,830	57,830	0	
<b>TOTAL EQUALITIES</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>31,935</b>	<b>26,696</b>	<b>(5,239)</b>	<b>57,830</b>	<b>62,750</b>	<b>4,920</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(4,916)</b>	<b>(4,916)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(4,920)</b>	<b>(4,920)</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>31,935</b>	<b>21,780</b>	<b>(10,155)</b>	<b>57,830</b>	<b>57,830</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>TOTAL ECONOMY</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>1,580,515</b>	<b>1,533,925</b>	<b>(46,590)</b>	<b>3,046,490</b>	<b>3,077,490</b>	<b>31,000</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(1,042,110)</b>	<b>(1,571,425)</b>	<b>(529,315)</b>	<b>(1,652,520)</b>	<b>(1,933,520)</b>	<b>(281,000)</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>538,405</b>	<b>(37,500)</b>	<b>(575,905)</b>	<b>1,393,970</b>	<b>1,143,970</b>	<b>(250,000)</b>	
<b>COMMUNITIES</b>								
<b>Assistant Director : Helen Rutter &amp; Kim Close</b>								
<b>COMMUNITIES, THIRD SECTOR AND PARTNERSHIPS</b>								
<b>Service Manager : Helen Rutter &amp; Kim Close</b>								
CENTRAL COMMUNITIES TEAM	Expenditure	70,240	65,367	(4,873)	140,480	140,480	0	On track.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Ric Pallister	Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	TOTAL	70,240	65,367	(4,873)	140,480	140,480	0	
COMMUNITY SAFETY	Expenditure	23,420	22,820	(600)	46,840	46,840	0	On track.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Tony Fife	Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	TOTAL	23,420	22,820	(600)	46,840	46,840	0	
<b>Service Manager :</b>								
THIRD SECTOR AND PARTNERSHIPS	Expenditure	154,270	144,140	(10,130)	234,280	234,280	0	<i>Vacant post to be advertised.</i>
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Sylvia Seal	Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	TOTAL	154,270	144,140	(10,130)	234,280	234,280	0	
<b>TOTAL COMMUNITIES, THIRD SECTOR AND PARTNERSHIPS</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>247,930</b>	<b>232,327</b>	<b>(15,603)</b>	<b>421,600</b>	<b>421,600</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>247,930</b>	<b>232,327</b>	<b>(15,603)</b>	<b>421,600</b>	<b>421,600</b>	<b>0</b>	

Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September £	Actual to 30th September £	Variance to 30th September £	Annual Budget £	Expected Total by Year End £	Variance expected 31/03/15 £	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
<b>LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP</b>								
<b>Service Manager : Helen Rutter</b>								
LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP	Expenditure	36,150	35,293	(857)	50,450	50,450	0	
	Income	(23,850)	(23,350)	500	(24,350)	(24,350)	0	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,300</b>	<b>11,943</b>	<b>(357)</b>	<b>26,100</b>	<b>26,100</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>TOTAL LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>36,150</b>	<b>35,293</b>	<b>(857)</b>	<b>50,450</b>	<b>50,450</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(23,850)</b>	<b>(23,350)</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>(24,350)</b>	<b>(24,350)</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,300</b>	<b>11,943</b>	<b>(357)</b>	<b>26,100</b>	<b>26,100</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>AREA EAST</b>								
<b>Service Manager : Helen Rutter</b>								
EAST AREA DEVELOPMENT	Expenditure	95,860	96,848	988	185,650	198,670	13,020	
<b>Area Chairman : Cllr Nick Weeks</b>	Income	(1,755)	(16,530)	(14,775)	(3,510)	(16,530)	(13,020)	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>94,105</b>	<b>80,318</b>	<b>(13,787)</b>	<b>182,140</b>	<b>182,140</b>	<b>0</b>	
EAST GRANTS	Expenditure	26,910	6,549	(20,361)	39,070	39,070	0	
<b>Area Chairman : Cllr Nick Weeks</b>	Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>26,910</b>	<b>6,549</b>	<b>(20,361)</b>	<b>39,070</b>	<b>39,070</b>	<b>0</b>	
EAST PROJECTS	Expenditure	31,740	34,167	2,427	63,480	63,480	0	
<b>Area Chairman : Cllr Nick Weeks</b>	Income	(63,480)	(56,512)	6,968	(63,480)	(63,480)	0	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(31,740)</b>	<b>(22,345)</b>	<b>9,395</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>TOTAL AREA EAST</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>154,510</b>	<b>137,564</b>	<b>(16,946)</b>	<b>288,200</b>	<b>301,220</b>	<b>13,020</b>	Budgets all on track.
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(65,235)</b>	<b>(73,042)</b>	<b>(7,807)</b>	<b>(66,990)</b>	<b>(80,010)</b>	<b>(13,020)</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>89,275</b>	<b>64,522</b>	<b>(24,753)</b>	<b>221,210</b>	<b>221,210</b>	<b>0</b>	

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Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September	Actual to 30th September	Variance to 30th September	Annual Budget	Expected Total by Year End	Variance expected 31/03/15	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
		£	£	£	£	£	£	
<b>AREA NORTH</b>								
<b>Service Manager : Charlotte Jones</b>								
NORTH AREA DEVELOPMENT	Expenditure	93,135	89,394	(3,741)	198,270	198,270	0	No variance expected at year end, subject to allocation of provision for business support / flood recovery.
<b>Area Chairman : Cllr Shane Pledger</b>	Income	(10,000)	(10,000)	0	(10,000)	(10,000)	0	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>83,135</b>	<b>79,394</b>	<b>(3,741)</b>	<b>188,270</b>	<b>188,270</b>	<b>0</b>	
NORTH GRANTS	Expenditure	14,640	1,972	(12,668)	19,980	19,980	0	Annual budget includes committed grants from 2013/14 - all 2014/15 grants will be committed by year end - regular monitoring ensures payments made.
<b>Area Chairman : Cllr Shane Pledger</b>	Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14,640</b>	<b>1,972</b>	<b>(12,668)</b>	<b>19,980</b>	<b>19,980</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>TOTAL AREA NORTH</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>107,775</b>	<b>91,366</b>	<b>(16,409)</b>	<b>218,250</b>	<b>218,250</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(10,000)</b>	<b>(10,000)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(10,000)</b>	<b>(10,000)</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>97,775</b>	<b>81,366</b>	<b>(16,409)</b>	<b>208,250</b>	<b>208,250</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>AREA SOUTH</b>								
<b>Service Manager : Kim Close</b>								
SOUTH AREA DEVELOPMENT	Expenditure	143,670	132,013	(11,657)	282,470	282,470	0	
<b>Area Chairman : Cllr Peter Gubbins</b>	Income	(25,215)	(36,327)	(11,112)	(50,430)	(50,430)	0	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>118,455</b>	<b>95,686</b>	<b>(22,769)</b>	<b>232,040</b>	<b>232,040</b>	<b>0</b>	
SOUTH GRANTS	Expenditure	21,570	7,135	(14,435)	37,160	37,160	0	
<b>Area Chairman : Cllr Peter Gubbins</b>	Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>21,570</b>	<b>7,135</b>	<b>(14,435)</b>	<b>37,160</b>	<b>37,160</b>	<b>0</b>	
SOUTH PROJECTS	Expenditure	0	396	396	0	10,000	10,000	<i>Contribution to Yeovil Vision from TC, now transferred to Reserve.</i>
<b>Area Chairman : Cllr Peter Gubbins</b>	Income	0	(10,000)	(10,000)	0	(10,000)	(10,000)	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(9,604)</b>	<b>(9,604)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>TOTAL AREA SOUTH</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>165,240</b>	<b>139,544</b>	<b>(25,696)</b>	<b>319,630</b>	<b>329,630</b>	<b>10,000</b>	Budgets all on track.
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(25,215)</b>	<b>(46,327)</b>	<b>(21,112)</b>	<b>(50,430)</b>	<b>(60,430)</b>	<b>(10,000)</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>140,025</b>	<b>93,217</b>	<b>(46,808)</b>	<b>269,200</b>	<b>269,200</b>	<b>0</b>	

Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September	Actual to 30th September	Variance to 30th September	Annual Budget	Expected Total by Year End	Variance expected 31/03/15	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
		£	£	£	£	£	£	
<b>AREA WEST</b>								
<b>Service Manager : Andrew Gillespie</b>								
WEST AREA DEVELOPMENT	Expenditure	130,130	129,676	(454)	239,490	246,790	7,300	No expected variation.
<b>Area Chairman : Cllr Angie Singleton</b>	Income	(9,375)	(18,428)	(9,053)	(11,130)	(18,430)	(7,300)	
	TOTAL	120,755	111,248	(9,507)	228,360	228,360	0	
WEST GRANTS	Expenditure	18,120	15,250	(2,870)	31,240	31,240	0	No expected variation.
<b>Area Chairman : Cllr Angie Singleton</b>	Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	
	TOTAL	18,120	15,250	(2,870)	31,240	31,240	0	
WEST PROJECTS	Expenditure	20,455	16,085	(4,370)	38,530	38,530	0	No expected variation.
<b>Area Chairman : Cllr Angie Singleton</b>	Income	(23,965)	(21,532)	2,433	(30,930)	(30,930)	0	
	TOTAL	(3,510)	(5,447)	(1,937)	7,600	7,600	0	
<b>TOTAL AREA WEST</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>168,705</b>	<b>161,011</b>	<b>(7,694)</b>	<b>309,260</b>	<b>316,560</b>	<b>7,300</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(33,340)</b>	<b>(39,960)</b>	<b>(6,620)</b>	<b>(42,060)</b>	<b>(49,360)</b>	<b>(7,300)</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>135,365</b>	<b>121,051</b>	<b>(14,314)</b>	<b>267,200</b>	<b>267,200</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>TOTAL STRATEGIC DIRECTOR - PLACE &amp; PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>2,518,740</b>	<b>2,387,847</b>	<b>(130,893)</b>	<b>4,769,710</b>	<b>4,831,030</b>	<b>61,320</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(1,199,750)</b>	<b>(1,764,104)</b>	<b>(564,354)</b>	<b>(1,846,350)</b>	<b>(2,157,670)</b>	<b>(311,320)</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,318,990</b>	<b>623,743</b>	<b>(695,247)</b>	<b>2,923,360</b>	<b>2,673,360</b>	<b>(250,000)</b>	
<b>Strategic Director - (Operations and Customer Focus): Vega Stubbins</b>								
<b>OPERATIONS AND CUSTOMER FOCUS</b>								
<b>Service Manager : Jason Toogood</b>								
CUSTOMER SERVICES	Expenditure	245,735	239,357	(6,378)	493,790	478,000	(15,790)	Underspend from vacancy. Recruitment now completed but retention of casual staff members not totally successful.
<b>Portfolio Holder : Cllr Nick Weeks</b>	Income	0	(1,198)	(1,198)	0	(1,200)	(1,200)	
	TOTAL	245,735	238,159	(7,576)	493,790	476,800	(16,990)	
RESOLUTION AND PRINTING	Expenditure	43,055	41,039	(2,016)	86,110	82,000	(4,110)	Reduced use of printing service causing under achievement of income. Monitoring affect of changed pricing structure in place for 2014/15 - new pricing structure from Aug 14 for external work based on full cost recovery has initially caused loss of work/income.
<b>Portfolio Holder : Cllr Nick Weeks</b>	Income	(54,885)	(32,204)	22,681	(109,770)	(80,000)	29,770	
	TOTAL	(11,830)	8,835	20,665	(23,660)	2,000	25,660	
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONS AND CUSTOMER FOCUS</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>288,790</b>	<b>280,396</b>	<b>(8,394)</b>	<b>579,900</b>	<b>560,000</b>	<b>(19,900)</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(54,885)</b>	<b>(33,402)</b>	<b>21,483</b>	<b>(109,770)</b>	<b>(81,200)</b>	<b>28,570</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>233,905</b>	<b>246,994</b>	<b>13,089</b>	<b>470,130</b>	<b>478,800</b>	<b>8,670</b>	

Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September	Actual to 30th September	Variance to 30th September	Annual Budget	Expected Total by Year End	Variance expected 31/03/15	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
		£	£	£	£	£	£	
<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>								
Assistant Director : Laurence Willis								
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH</b>								
Service Manager : Alasdair Bell								
HOUSING STANDARDS	Expenditure	124,505	112,726	(11,779)	240,070	230,070	(10,000)	Some small savings on travel and professional fees, helping to assist income variance at present. Home Aid income still down. Final figure expected to be down as linked to Disabled Facilities Grants.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Peter Seib	Income	(33,725)	(21,194)	12,531	(67,450)	(52,450)	15,000	
	TOTAL	90,780	91,532	752	172,620	177,620	5,000	
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & COMMUNITY PROTECTION	Expenditure	453,465	437,814	(15,651)	917,990	907,990	(10,000)	Overall budget running on target. Some natural savings arising from pest control budget linked to reduced income e.g. less materials needed & less travel being made. Variance largely due to pest control income being well below budget due to lack of wasps during summer season. Pollution, Prevention & Control income also down against budgeted income.
	Income	(63,825)	(56,278)	7,547	(85,220)	(67,220)	18,000	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Peter Seib	TOTAL	389,640	381,536	(8,104)	832,770	840,770	8,000	
ENFORCEMENT	Expenditure	73,073	71,842	(1,231)	135,510	135,510	0	Budget currently on target against forecast.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Peter Seib	Income	(1,500)	(2,821)	(1,321)	(3,000)	(3,000)	0	Income currently on target against forecast.
	TOTAL	71,573	69,021	(2,552)	132,510	132,510	0	
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>651,043</b>	<b>622,382</b>	<b>(28,661)</b>	<b>1,293,570</b>	<b>1,273,570</b>	<b>(20,000)</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(99,050)</b>	<b>(80,293)</b>	<b>18,757</b>	<b>(155,670)</b>	<b>(122,670)</b>	<b>33,000</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>551,993</b>	<b>542,089</b>	<b>(9,904)</b>	<b>1,137,900</b>	<b>1,150,900</b>	<b>13,000</b>	
<b>CIVIL CONTINGENCIES MANAGER</b>								
Service Manager : Pam Harvey								
CIVIL CONTINGENCIES	Expenditure	69,105	60,515	(8,590)	138,210	139,470	1,260	Somerset Local Authorities Civil Contingencies Partnership fee of £32K to be paid. EDDC to be invoiced in October for work carried out during first half year.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Henry Hobhouse	Income	(430)	(2,120)	(1,690)	(860)	(2,120)	(1,260)	
	TOTAL	68,675	58,395	(10,280)	137,350	137,350	0	
<b>TOTAL CIVIL CONTINGENCIES</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>69,105</b>	<b>60,515</b>	<b>(8,590)</b>	<b>138,210</b>	<b>139,470</b>	<b>1,260</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(430)</b>	<b>(2,120)</b>	<b>(1,690)</b>	<b>(860)</b>	<b>(2,120)</b>	<b>(1,260)</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>68,675</b>	<b>58,395</b>	<b>(10,280)</b>	<b>137,350</b>	<b>137,350</b>	<b>0</b>	



Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September £	Actual to 30th September £	Variance to 30th September £	Annual Budget £	Expected Total by Year End £	Variance expected 31/03/15 £	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
<b>ENGINEERING AND PROPERTY SERVICES</b>								
Service Manager : Garry Green								
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT	Expenditure	647,468	585,454	(62,014)	1,310,340	1,260,340	(50,000)	Large variance made up of smaller variances across all budgets, but routine maintenance under profile due to staff shortages. Underspend on salaries. Anticipate year end saving. 0 Commercial income outside of profile so needs adjusting again for more tenants being billed annually rather than quarterly. No variance expected at year end. Service charges for SCC moving into Brympton Way built into budget from September so that may create adverse variance at year end depending on office moves and timescales.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Henry Hobhouse	Income	(293,016)	(299,809)	(6,793)	(685,500)	(685,500)		
	TOTAL	354,452	285,645	(68,807)	624,840	574,840	(50,000)	
CAR PARKING	Expenditure	560,971	493,927	(67,044)	1,169,230	1,129,230	(40,000)	Expenditure largely on profile with some savings anticipated on utilities & payments to contractors (weather dependant). Anticipate year end saving to help reduced income. £6.5k payment due to Crewkerne TC for shared income arrangement. Pay & Display and Season Ticket income below revised budget. Underachievement of budget predicted from previous years income.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Henry Hobhouse & Cllr Tim Carroll	Income	(1,212,530)	(1,090,159)	122,371	(2,463,100)	(2,403,100)	60,000	
	TOTAL	(651,559)	(596,232)	55,327	(1,293,870)	(1,273,870)	20,000	
ENGINEERING SERVICES	Expenditure	375,947	301,485	(74,462)	708,280	648,280	(60,000)	Underspend on public conveniences maintenance, CCTV, land drainage, and Birchfield. Year end variance depending on winter weather conditions for land drainage, so will vary as year continues. 0 Income slightly up due to external funding for CCTV carried forward from last year - budget being adjusted to create an expenditure budget from this income. Street naming & numbering income up on profile.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Henry Hobhouse	Income	(40,415)	(49,299)	(8,884)	(69,580)	(69,580)		
	TOTAL	335,532	252,186	(83,346)	638,700	578,700	(60,000)	
<b>TOTAL ENGINEERING AND PROPERTY SERVICES</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>1,584,386</b>	<b>1,380,866</b>	<b>(203,520)</b>	<b>3,187,850</b>	<b>3,037,850</b>	<b>(150,000)</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(1,545,961)</b>	<b>(1,439,267)</b>	<b>106,694</b>	<b>(3,218,180)</b>	<b>(3,158,180)</b>	<b>60,000</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38,425</b>	<b>(58,401)</b>	<b>(96,826)</b>	<b>(30,330)</b>	<b>(120,330)</b>	<b>(90,000)</b>	

Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September £	Actual to 30th September £	Variance to 30th September £	Annual Budget £	Expected Total by Year End £	Variance expected 31/03/15 £	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
<b>BUILDING CONTROL</b>								
<b>Service Manager : Dave Durrant</b>								
BUILDING CONTROL	Expenditure	236,620	224,469	(12,151)	630,750	630,000	(750)	Income for September was £45k - on profile . I would anticipate a year end fees and charge income of around £480k and not the budgeted £507k.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Peter Seib	Income	(283,707)	(255,887)	27,820	(680,420)	(653,000)	27,420	
	TOTAL	(47,087)	(31,418)	15,669	(49,670)	(23,000)	26,670	
<b>TOTAL BUILDING CONTROL</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>236,620</b>	<b>224,469</b>	<b>(12,151)</b>	<b>630,750</b>	<b>630,000</b>	<b>(750)</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(283,707)</b>	<b>(255,887)</b>	<b>27,820</b>	<b>(680,420)</b>	<b>(653,000)</b>	<b>27,420</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(47,087)</b>	<b>(31,418)</b>	<b>15,669</b>	<b>(49,670)</b>	<b>(23,000)</b>	<b>26,670</b>	
<b>STREETSCENE</b>								
<b>Service Manager : Chris Cooper</b>								
HORTICULTURE & GROUNDS MAINTENANCE & STREETCLEANING	Expenditure	1,495,356	1,640,372	145,016	2,900,860	2,900,860	0	Expenditure is higher this year due to additional costs incurred obtaining additional income & spending has been focussed at the first part of the year in order to meet seasonal work loads and to obtain equipment required to work more efficiently. Income is higher than profiled due to these measures & considerable income is still owed and when paid will considerably reduce the deficit. The rest of the deficit will be addressed through additional works during the winter period - as is the 'normal' pattern for the service.
	Income	(542,840)	(580,747)	(37,907)	(1,261,520)	(1,261,520)	0	Income levels are higher than profiled due to additional contracts being 'won'. A considerable amount of income has not yet been completed and invoiced for, however this is only a matter of time and is in line with the seasonal nature of the service. We are already receiving orders for additional works which will further improve the financial position of the service over the remaining months of the financial year.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Jo Roundell Greene	TOTAL	952,516	1,059,625	107,109	1,639,340	1,639,340	0	I am confident that the service will end the year with a positive budget position.
<b>TOTAL STREETSCENE</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>1,495,356</b>	<b>1,640,372</b>	<b>145,016</b>	<b>2,900,860</b>	<b>2,900,860</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(542,840)</b>	<b>(580,747)</b>	<b>(37,907)</b>	<b>(1,261,520)</b>	<b>(1,261,520)</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>952,516</b>	<b>1,059,625</b>	<b>107,109</b>	<b>1,639,340</b>	<b>1,639,340</b>	<b>0</b>	

Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September £	Actual to 30th September £	Variance to 30th September £	Annual Budget £	Expected Total by Year End £	Variance expected 31/03/15 £	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
<b>WASTE &amp; RECYCLING</b>								
<b>Assistant Director : Laurence Willis</b>								
WASTE COLLECTION	Expenditure	2,777,973	2,826,259	48,286	5,622,600	5,622,600	0	The waste budget is currently underspent by £12k. The sustained marketing of the Garden Waste service is leading to greater sales and income, meaning that it is performing higher than predicted income targets. This is positive news as the most volatile line in the waste budget is the recycling credits. This strong performance of the garden waste is masking a deterioration in the income from recycling credits. Initial estimates for 2014/15 indicated that South Somerset will be 4% below target on recycling credits (although given the volatility, this could change in either direction as the year progresses). The additional unwanted effect of a drop in recycling is on the Marks and Spencer's bonus which is dependent on dry recyclables. We are also aware of a higher than usual demand for bins and containers.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Jo Roundell Greene	Income	(932,253)	(992,612)	(60,359)	(1,405,160)	(1,405,160)	0	
	TOTAL	1,845,720	1,833,647	(12,073)	4,217,440	4,217,440	0	
<b>TOTAL WASTE COLLECTION</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>2,777,973</b>	<b>2,826,259</b>	<b>48,286</b>	<b>5,622,600</b>	<b>5,622,600</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(932,253)</b>	<b>(992,612)</b>	<b>(60,359)</b>	<b>(1,405,160)</b>	<b>(1,405,160)</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,845,720</b>	<b>1,833,647</b>	<b>(12,073)</b>	<b>4,217,440</b>	<b>4,217,440</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>LICENSING</b>								
<b>Service Manager : Nigel Marston</b>								
LICENSING	Expenditure	123,335	135,015	11,680	241,670	251,670	10,000	Variance due to an initial once off software purchase, staffing expenditure for covering maternity leave, together with costs of necessary scanning of documents for office move. Income slightly above budget for this time of year. Anticipate small surplus at year end.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Peter Seib	Income	(90,233)	(113,565)	(23,332)	(279,510)	(294,510)	(15,000)	
	TOTAL	33,102	21,450	(11,652)	(37,840)	(42,840)	(5,000)	
<b>TOTAL LICENSING</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>123,335</b>	<b>135,015</b>	<b>11,680</b>	<b>241,670</b>	<b>251,670</b>	<b>10,000</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(90,233)</b>	<b>(113,565)</b>	<b>(23,332)</b>	<b>(279,510)</b>	<b>(294,510)</b>	<b>(15,000)</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>33,102</b>	<b>21,450</b>	<b>(11,652)</b>	<b>(37,840)</b>	<b>(42,840)</b>	<b>(5,000)</b>	
<b>TOTAL ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>6,937,818</b>	<b>6,889,878</b>	<b>(47,940)</b>	<b>14,015,510</b>	<b>13,856,020</b>	<b>(159,490)</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(3,494,474)</b>	<b>(3,464,491)</b>	<b>29,983</b>	<b>(7,001,320)</b>	<b>(6,897,160)</b>	<b>104,160</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,443,344</b>	<b>3,425,387</b>	<b>(17,957)</b>	<b>7,014,190</b>	<b>6,958,860</b>	<b>(55,330)</b>	

Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September	Actual to 30th September	Variance to 30th September	Annual Budget	Expected Total by Year End	Variance expected 31/03/15	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
		£	£	£	£	£	£	
<b>HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</b>								
Assistant Director : Steve Joel								
<b>ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT</b>								
Service Manager : Adam Burgan								
ARTS	Expenditure	885,060	770,769	(114,291)	1,740,610	1,924,400	183,790	Key trading period are ahead and look positive at this stage. <i>The overspend is mainly due to an increase in performance costs, which will result in an increase in income.</i>
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Sylvia Seal	Income	(679,934)	(1,076,975)	(397,041)	(1,358,520)	(1,553,390)	(194,870)	
	TOTAL	205,126	(306,206)	(511,332)	382,090	371,010	(11,080)	
<b>TOTAL ARTS</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>885,060</b>	<b>770,769</b>	<b>(114,291)</b>	<b>1,740,610</b>	<b>1,924,400</b>	<b>183,790</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(679,934)</b>	<b>(1,076,975)</b>	<b>(397,041)</b>	<b>(1,358,520)</b>	<b>(1,553,390)</b>	<b>(194,870)</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>205,126</b>	<b>(306,206)</b>	<b>(511,332)</b>	<b>382,090</b>	<b>371,010</b>	<b>(11,080)</b>	
<b>SPORT AND LEISURE FACILITIES</b>								
Service Manager : Steve Joel								
GOLDENSTONES	Expenditure	132,360	60,168	(72,192)	264,720	264,720	0	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Sylvia Seal	Income	(54,755)	(44,637)	10,118	(109,510)	(109,510)	0	
	TOTAL	77,605	15,531	(62,074)	155,210	155,210	0	
SPORT FACILITIES	Expenditure	77,245	88,534	11,289	138,010	138,010	0	<i>Contract payment for WCSC paid to December 2014.</i>
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Sylvia Seal	Income	(30,500)	(23,979)	6,521	(61,000)	(61,000)	0	
	TOTAL	46,745	64,555	17,810	77,010	77,010	0	
<b>TOTAL SPORT AND LEISURE FACILITIES</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>209,605</b>	<b>148,702</b>	<b>(60,903)</b>	<b>402,730</b>	<b>402,730</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(85,255)</b>	<b>(68,616)</b>	<b>16,639</b>	<b>(170,510)</b>	<b>(170,510)</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>124,350</b>	<b>80,086</b>	<b>(44,264)</b>	<b>232,220</b>	<b>232,220</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>COMMUNITY HEALTH AND LEISURE</b>								
Service Manager : Lynda Pincombe								
RESOURCE CENTRE	Expenditure	28,475	28,362	(113)	56,950	61,820	4,870	Providing that there are no unexpected buildings maintenance costs, the outturn should be within budget. In addition, SSDC is entitled to a 1/3 share of surplus revenue generated in year 1 of circa £4,800 which is expected to be taken at the end of year 2.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Sylvia Seal	Income	0	(981)	(981)	0	(5,500)	(5,500)	
	TOTAL	28,475	27,381	(1,094)	56,950	56,320	(630)	
COMMUNITY HEALTH & LEISURE	Expenditure	446,352	419,682	(26,670)	856,650	897,010	40,360	Currently operating within budget.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Sylvia Seal	Income	(95,175)	(126,287)	(31,112)	(162,420)	(204,100)	(41,680)	
	TOTAL	351,177	293,395	(57,782)	694,230	692,910	(1,320)	
<b>TOTAL COMMUNITY HEALTH AND LEISURE</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>474,827</b>	<b>448,044</b>	<b>(26,783)</b>	<b>913,600</b>	<b>958,830</b>	<b>45,230</b>	
	<b>Income</b>	<b>(95,175)</b>	<b>(127,268)</b>	<b>(32,093)</b>	<b>(162,420)</b>	<b>(209,600)</b>	<b>(47,180)</b>	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>379,652</b>	<b>320,776</b>	<b>(58,876)</b>	<b>751,180</b>	<b>749,230</b>	<b>(1,950)</b>	

Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September £	Actual to 30th September £	Variance to 30th September £	Annual Budget £	Expected Total by Year End £	Variance expected 31/03/15 £	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
<b>HOUSING AND WELFARE</b>								
<b>Service Manager : Kirsty Larkins</b>								
WELFARE	Expenditure	155,814	162,191	6,377	320,650	320,650	0	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Ric Pallister	Income	(326,491)	(336,326)	(9,835)	(366,450)	(366,450)	0	
	TOTAL	(170,677)	(174,135)	(3,458)	(45,800)	(45,800)	0	
HOUSING	Expenditure	494,606	439,905	(54,701)	1,009,350	1,009,350	0	Underspent on:- Postage-we are encouraging the use of online services. Printing- again we are encouraging online use of forms rather than paper, although we still have them available for deposit guarantee schemes. Void and under occupation- had fewer property appeals and have managed to deal with them more quickly when they have come in. B&B- at the moment managing to be proactive with cases and making better use of the temporary accommodation stock and private sector accommodation, RIA & Furniture Prevention fund. Traveller's site -salaries, maintenance and travelling expenses.
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Ric Pallister	Income	(146,775)	(108,657)	38,118	(293,550)	(293,550)	0	Overspent on:- IS Maint- due to the way Abritas invoice for the whole year. Legal fees- more cases have been passed to legal which has led to greater cost however we have seen an increase in income. Below expected levels of income on Housing Benefit, RIA, furniture and prevention fund but this is balanced out by the reduced expenditure & increased income on legal fees and costs recovered. Building maintenance should recoup some of the money from rental income as Woodland Grove is due to be leased out in the next week or so.
	TOTAL	347,831	331,248	(16,583)	715,800	715,800	0	I am expecting Housing to be on budget for the end of the financial year.
TOTAL HOUSING AND WELFARE	Expenditure	650,420	602,096	(48,324)	1,330,000	1,330,000	0	
	Income	(473,266)	(444,983)	28,283	(660,000)	(660,000)	0	
	TOTAL	177,154	157,113	(20,041)	670,000	670,000	0	
<b>FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMME</b>								
<b>Service Manager : Steve Joel</b>								
FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMME	Expenditure	123,005	132,176	9,171	220,560	220,560	0	
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Ric Pallister	Income	(148,725)	(131,631)	17,094	(220,560)	(220,560)	0	SCC invoiced in Oct for reward payment to Feb 14-£139k
	TOTAL	(25,720)	545	26,265	0	0	0	
TOTAL FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMME	Expenditure	123,005	132,176	9,171	220,560	220,560	0	
	Income	(148,725)	(131,631)	17,094	(220,560)	(220,560)	0	
	TOTAL	(25,720)	545	26,265	0	0	0	

Group with Elements		Budget to 30th September £	Actual to 30th September £	Variance to 30th September £	Annual Budget £	Expected Total by Year End £	Variance expected 31/03/15 £	Budget Holders' Comments on Variances to Profiled Budgets & Outturn <i>Accountants' Comments in Italics</i>
<b>COUNTRYSIDE</b>								
Service Manager : Katy Menday								
COUNTRYSIDE	Expenditure	172,830	154,383	(18,447)	345,980	345,980	0	Expenditure as expected for the period. Can expect increased fuel spend as autumn and winter work progresses. There will be final expenditure linked to Heritage grant over next 3 months after which a claim will be generated to secure grant money (see income comments). Event expenditure remaining on Yeovil Halloween trail and some autumnal events across the sites.
	Income	(35,540)	(42,694)	(7,154)	(105,670)	(105,670)	0	Income as expected for time of year. In November expecting further income from Ham Hill Grazing tenant, Chard Angling Club and Yeovil Town Council. Will also be generating a claim for Heritage Lottery Fund to cover expenditure on project officer and various other linked items. Will also expect wood income to increase from ..
Portfolio Holder : Cllr Sylvia Seal	TOTAL	137,290	111,689	(25,601)	240,310	240,310	0	As expected for this period, on target for on budget year end.
TOTAL COUNTRYSIDE	Expenditure	172,830	154,383	(18,447)	345,980	345,980	0	
	Income	(35,540)	(42,694)	(7,154)	(105,670)	(105,670)	0	
	TOTAL	137,290	111,689	(25,601)	240,310	240,310	0	
TOTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	Expenditure	2,515,747	2,256,170	(259,577)	4,953,480	5,182,500	229,020	
	Income	(1,517,895)	(1,892,167)	(374,272)	(2,677,680)	(2,919,730)	(242,050)	
	TOTAL	997,852	364,003	-633,849	2,275,800	2,262,770	-13,030	
TOTAL STRATEGIC DIRECTOR - OPERATIONS AND CUSTOMER FOCUS	Expenditure	9,742,355	9,426,444	(315,911)	19,548,890	19,598,520	49,630	
	Income	(5,067,254)	(5,390,060)	(322,806)	(9,788,770)	(9,898,090)	(109,320)	
	TOTAL	4,675,101	4,036,384	(638,717)	9,760,120	9,700,430	(59,690)	
TOTAL SSSDC	Expenditure	39,631,935	38,472,564	(1,159,371)	78,390,670	78,281,180	(109,490)	
	Income	(30,481,053)	(31,563,952)	(1,082,899)	(60,551,590)	(61,001,930)	(450,340)	
	TOTAL	9,150,882	6,908,612	(2,242,270)	17,839,080	17,279,250	(559,830)	

## Appendix B

The following virements should be noted:

<b>Value £</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>Description</b>
5,530	Savings to be Identified	Planning Policy	Staff turnover savings
6,780	Housing Standards	Food Safety	Transfer of salary budget
8,940	Housing Standards	Non Earmarked Balance	Fund Empty Homes Officer
3,420	Savings to be Identified	Information Systems	Staff turnover savings
3,740	Savings to be Identified	Revenues	Staff turnover savings
12,800	Public Offices Boden Centre, Chard	Area Development – West	Funding for cleaning contract
10,130	Area Development – West	Public Offices	Service recharge for Lace Mill
24,690	Careline	Housing Welfare Benefits	Housing & Welfare restructure
2,640	Strategic Management	Building Control	Unused funding for Intern
7,130	GIS Team	Information Systems	Income budget
12,170	Technical Services	Property Services	Transfer budget to follow staff reporting lines
94,600	Public Offices	Commercial Properties	Transfer budget re rental income for Brympton Way
4,320	Yeovil Bus Station	Public Conveniences	Transfer budget for cleaning of bus station toilets
880	Area Development East	Discretionary Grants	Wincanton Business Signage
10,000	Fleet Management	Street Cleansing	Maintenance of street cleaning vehicles
390	Savings to be Identified	Information Systems	Staff turnover savings
170	Savings to be Identified	Accountancy	Staff turnover savings
2,240	Savings to be Identified	Revenues	Staff turnover savings
5,000	Savings to be Identified	Policy & Performance	Staff turnover savings

## Appendix C

### AREA RESERVES Quarter 2 2014/15

Allocation of Reserves	Approval Date	Approved Allocation	Balance 14/15	Transfer from Reserves during 2014/15
		£	£	£
<b>Area East</b>				
<b>Balance B/fwd 1st April 2014</b>			<b>60,190</b>	
Community Planning - Project Spend	Apr-05	50,000	26,930	
Securing of BMI Site	Jun-05	4,000	4,000	
Rural Business Units	Nov-05	25,000	15,800	
Retail Support Initiative	May-09	10,000	10,000	
Totals			56,730	0
<b>QSP balance of Reserve</b>				<b>60,190</b>
<b>Unallocated Balance 30th September 2014</b>			<b>3,460</b>	
<b>Area North</b>				
<b>Balance B/fwd 1st April 2014</b>			<b>26,600</b>	
Support towards progressing affordable rural housing schemes	Mar-09	15,000	10,000	
Totals			10,000	0
<b>QSP balance of Reserve</b>				<b>26,600</b>
<b>Unallocated Balance 30th September 2014</b>			<b>16,600</b>	
<b>Area West</b>				
<b>Balance B/fwd 1st April 2014</b>			<b>53,120</b>	
Underwrite Community Grants	Mar, Aug, Nov 10, Sept 14	39,620	39,620	
Markets (approved in principle)	Nov-10	14,340	13,500	
Totals			53,120	0
<b>QSP balance of Reserve</b>				<b>53,120</b>
<b>Unallocated Balance 30th September 2014</b>			<b>0</b>	

(Area South has no reserve remaining)



## Summary of Usable Reserves

The following table shows the current balance on each usable reserve and the movements since 1 April 2014:

<b>Reserves</b>	<b>Balance as at 01/04/14 £'000</b>	<b>Movement £'000</b>	<b>Balance as at 30/09/14 £'000</b>
Usable Capital Receipts	36,396	10	36,406
Capital Reserve	1,916	39	1,955
Cremator Replacement Capital Reserve	300	0	300
CAMEO Reserve	363	0	363
Voluntary Redundancy/Early Retirement Fund	432	(24)	408
Local Authority Business Growth Initiative Reserve	37	0	37
Planning Delivery Reserve	32	0	32
Yeovil Athletic Track Repairs Fund	81	0	81
Local Plan Enquiry Reserve	41	0	41
Save to Earn Schemes Reserve	50	0	50
Insurance Fund	48	(1)	47
Bristol to Weymouth Rail Reserve	22	0	22
Election Reserve	194	0	194
Risk Management Reserve	12	0	12
Eco-Town Reserve	125	0	125
Revenue Grants Reserve	547	(140)	407
New Homes Bonus	1,683	(26)	1,657
Yeovil Vision	90	0	90
Housing Benefits Reserve	577	36	613
Closed Churchyards Reserve	9	(1)	8
Deposit Guarantee Claims Reserve	17	0	17
Park Homes Replacement Reserve	104	0	104
Into Somerset	13	(13)	0
Car Park Income	5	0	5
Health Inequalities	28	0	28
Planning Obligations Admin Reserve	31	0	31
Wincanton Sports Centre Reserve	21	0	21
LSP	71	6	77
Artificial Grass Pitch Reserve	21	0	21
Business Support Scheme	380	(103)	277
Flooding Reserve	100	(10)	90
Sharing Office Space	88	0	88
Infrastructure Reserve	1,000	0	1,000
<b>Total Usable Reserves</b>	<b>44,834</b>	<b>(227)</b>	<b>44,607</b>

The list above excludes the reserves which are not usable by Members. These are the Capital Adjustment Account, Revaluation Reserve, Available for Sale Reserve. Financial Instrument Adjustment Account, Pensions Reserve and Collection Fund Adjustment Account.

# Agenda Item 14

## **Wyndham Park Community Facilities**

*Executive Portfolio Holder:* Ric Pallister, Strategy and Policy, Peter Gubbins, Area Chair  
*Ward Member(s)* Pauline Lock, Graham Oakes, Jon Gleeson  
*Strategic Director:* Rina Singh, Place and Performance  
*Assistant Director:* Kim Close, Communities  
*Service Manager:* Kim Close, Area Development Manager (South)  
*Lead Officer:* Kim Close, Area Development Manager (South)  
*Contact Details:* Kim.close@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462708

### **1. Purpose of the Report**

1.1 To seek, approval for a grant of up to £400,000 towards the cost of providing community facilities for the new development at Wyndham Park, Yeovil.

### **2. Forward Plan**

2.1 This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan/ with an anticipated Committee date of 6<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

### **3. Public Interest**

3.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for a grant of £400,000 towards the cost of providing community facilities for the development at Wyndham Park. SSDC is working with the community, Parish Council, the Wyndham Park Partnership and other local partners to provide community facilities and in particular to secure a community hall on the estate. Unfortunately the deficit in the provision of community facilities in this area of the district has been greatly compounded by the development at Wyndham Park. The provision of a community hall has been identified as a top priority for the community during a number of consultation events and also supports SSDC's focus on Health and Communities.

3.2 The Lyde Road Key Site was allocated in the previous local plan. During the Local Plan Enquiry the Planning Inspector commented that the site had reasonable access to the town centre and that there was employment, education, retail and other facilities and services within reach by modes of transport other than the car. Consequently the allocation policy omitted the requirement for a doctors' surgery, community hall and shops etc.

### **4. Recommendations**

4.1 That District Executive approve a grant of up to £400,000 towards the cost of providing community facilities for the development at Wyndham Park.

Subject to the following conditions:

- The grant will be held by SSDC until it is required in order to facilitate the provision of community facilities on Wyndham Park subject to a formal agreement and in accordance with SSDC's financial regulations.
- The grant will be made as a capital contribution towards the cost of the provision of community facilities at Wyndham park, on the understanding that Yeovil Without Parish Council take ownership of the hall on behalf of the community, if required, and

will be responsible for the management and maintenance of the facility once it is complete.

- Any land purchase would be subject to a District Valuer valuation together with clarity in terms of the likely planning issues relating to the selected site.
- The VAT implications of any future delivery model will be fully considered before implementation.
- That authority to agree the final conditions is delegated to the Leader, Portfolio holder and the Assistant Director – Communities.

## **5. Background**

5.1 The Lyde Road Key Site was allocated in the previous local plan. During the Local Plan Enquiry the Planning Inspector commented that the site had reasonable access to the town centre and that there was employment, education, retail and other facilities and services within reach by modes of transport other than the car. Consequently the allocation policy omitted the requirement for a doctors' surgery, community hall and shops etc.

5.2 The development has since proceeded with minimal onsite community infrastructure; there are play areas and a MUGA, but no other facilities such as a pre-school facility or a community hall, both of which are much needed in the area. The existing deficit in the provision of community halls in this area of the town has now been compounded by the development at Wyndham Park (over 850 dwellings in total). This is now a major issue for residents and local stakeholders as the site is steadily built out.

5.3 There is an established Community Association on the estate and their top priority is to secure a community hall within their neighbourhood. Wider community consultation has further added weight to the pressing need for onsite provision.

5.4 The lack of community facilities on the site has also lead to the creation of the Wyndham Park Partnership. Members of this group include SSDC, the Parish Council, Church Leaders, Housing Associations, a representative from the Community Covenant, a representative from the developer and members of the community association. The terms of reference for the group are "A joint venture to deliver the necessary facilities that enable Wyndham Park to develop as a community, for the benefit of all its residents."

5.5 It is clear that there is strong support and evidenced need for the provision of facilities on this site. Community buildings play a crucial role in local communities as a focal point for community activity, local service point and a base for local groups. They help to build capacity within local communities, encouraging active citizenship and developing social cohesion. Community facilities help to make communities stronger and healthier.

5.6 It is recognised that for Wyndham Park to become a safe, cohesive and sustainable community in the long term, it is essential that as many of the social, (informal) educational, health and recreational needs of the community can be met from within the site itself.

5.7 Failure to provide the necessary facilities could lead to social isolation and migration away from the site in order to access community buildings. This will add unnecessarily to traffic movements in and out of the site, increase traffic congestion and pollution and create a 'community' that has little or no opportunity for residents to engage with one another.

## **6. Key objectives of the Grant**

- To provide residents with a suitable and sustainable community facility in response to local consultation.
- To provide residents with a community owned (rather than SSDC owned) community facility.
- To reduce the overall deficit in community hall provision within Yeovil.

## **7. Anticipated Benefits**

- 7.1 The provision of Community Facilities will benefit the residents of Wyndham Park by helping to tackle the health and social issues in one of the most deprived areas in the district. Wyndham Park has been build adjacent to Yeovil East which is the most deprived ward in South Somerset.
- 7.2 The project will help SSDC to achieve objectives detailed in the Sustainable Community Strategy, the strategy for Health and Wellbeing, the Corporate Plan and the LAA. It is also a key action within the Area South Development Plan for 2014/2015.
- 7.3 The project will benefit residents who are isolated (there is no bus service linking Wyndham Park to the town) and provide opportunities for residents to get together for parent and toddler groups, fitness classes (improving health), youth clubs and other important community activities.

## **8. Options for provision**

- 8.1 There is a huge range of variables which impact on the type and location of the community facilities that can be provided within this site. These are exceptional circumstances, but the allocation of this grant will greatly aid the negotiations that are currently taking place by providing some certainty regarding immediately available resources.
- 8.2 The build costs of the Community hall will require contributions from different sources including S106 contributions from existing and future developments in the area together with grants from other organisations, for example the Community Covenant. However, the biggest constraint on the project has been the lack of available land and this is the most important factor at this stage in the project and is likely to be where SSDC's capital contribution will be utilised.
- 8.3 An immediate opportunity has presented itself with the submission of a planning application for the Primrose Lane development for the land adjacent to Wyndham Park. This application includes space for a 7 class school. If approved this would lead to the provision of a 7 class school on Wyndham Park and a separate 7 class school on the adjacent Primrose Lane development. Clearly, significant savings would be made if a 14 class school could be provided to serve both developments and this is the preferred option of the Education Authority (SCC). However, bringing the two school sites together to provide a single larger school requires careful negotiations with SSDC, SCC and the respective developers. If these negotiations are successful it is envisaged that the single large school will be located on the Primrose Lane site to serve both developments. This would be phased to deliver a 7 class facility initially to open in September 2016. This could potentially release the existing, much smaller, school site

located within the Wyndham Park estate for the development of a Community Hall to serve both the Wyndham and Primrose Lane communities.

8.4 Alternatively, if agreement cannot be reached or the application for the Primrose Lane development is not successful, then the option of a dual use school on the Wyndham Park school site would become the most realistic way of achieving some community space for the residents in this area.

8.5 The reason for bringing forward this request for grant funding before the final mode of delivery for the Community facilities has been identified, is to enable negotiations to take place in confidence, knowing that the resources are available to fund the next stage of the process and to take advantage of any emerging opportunities.

8.6 The funding could be used in a number of ways for example:

- the purchase of additional land to enable plans for the larger school on the Primrose Lane site to proceed and thereby releasing the existing school site for community use
- the purchase of land to provide addition parking for a dual use 7 class room school on the Wyndham park site should this be required. In order to enable the creation of a dual use facility.

8.7 The allocation of this funding proves an excellent opportunity for SSDC to help meet the shortfall of community facilities in this area and also to facilitate the development of a much needed school serving the eastern side of Yeovil. In response to pressing need Somerset County Council plans to start construction of the new school in 2015 on which ever site is available at that time.

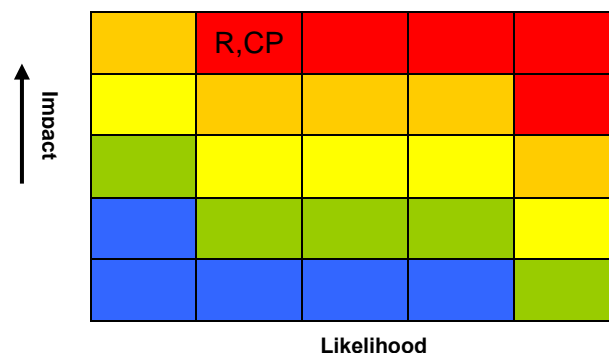
## 9. Financial Implications

9.1 The payment of up to £400,000 will be made as a grant from useable capital receipts. District Executive has delegated authority to approve the use of up to 5% of capital receipts in any one year (approx. £1.5million). Allocation of this funding does not exceed this limit.

9.2 As this is a grant payment, and no asset will be owned by SSDC, there will be no future revenue implications for SSDC.

9.3 Approval for the grant is needed at this stage rather than as part of a capital bid through the budget setting process in February 2014, so that the funding is available to support current negotiations and to enable the best use of the emerging opportunities for the community at Wyndham Park.

## 10. Risk Matrix



**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

**11. Council Plan Implications**

Focus Four: Health and Communities

*We will continue to provide country parks, the Octagon Theatre, support local play areas and community buildings.*

*We will continue to help communities to identify their own needs and priorities in order to take more control over shaping the places where they live and work. Our dedicated area teams and area committees ensure that we are well placed to work creatively with partners (at a parish, district or county level) to support practical ways for people to influence or take control of important local facilities and services.*

**12. Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications**

The community facilities are not provided on the site then this will lead to mass migration out of the key site in order to access community buildings and retail facilities. This of course will add unnecessarily to traffic movements in and out of the estate, increase traffic congestion and therefore increase pollution.

**13. Equality and Diversity Implications**

An accessible community building will be of positive benefit to all groups. Local community facilities can play a vital role in reducing health inequalities, social isolation and may contribute towards community cohesion.

**14. Privacy Impact Assessment**

N/A

**15. Background Papers**

N/A

# Agenda Item 15

## **Draft Proposals of the Community Governance Review of Lopen Parish Council**

*Executive Portfolio Holder:* Peter Seib, Regulatory and Democratic Services  
*Strategic Director:* Mark Williams, Chief Executive  
*Assistant Director:* Ian Clarke, Legal and Corporate Services  
*Lead Officer:* Angela Cox, Democratic Services Manager  
*Contact Details:* Angela.cox@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462148

### **Purpose of the Report**

To report the outcome of the initial public consultation (Community Governance Review) which has taken place in the parish of Lopen on the proposal to increase the number of Parish Councillors (under the provisions of Part 4 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007).

### **Public Interest**

A Community Governance Review is a review of the whole or part of a district to consider one or more of the following:

- creating, merging, altering or abolishing parishes;
- the naming of parishes and the style (i.e. whether to call it a town council or village council etc) of new parishes;
- the electoral arrangements for parishes – the ordinary year of election, the size of the council, the number of councillors to be elected and parish warding;
- grouping parishes under a common parish council, or de-grouping parishes.

The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act, 2007, sets down the principal legal framework within which councils must undertake these reviews.

A valid request was received from Lopen Parish Council in May 2014, requesting that the District Council conduct a consultation (Community Governance Review) of all the electors and local interested groups to ask if they would be agreeable to increase the number of Parish Councillors from five to seven. Initial consultation within the parish has now taken place and this report details the outcome of that consultation.

### **Recommendation(s)**

That District Executive recommend that Council:

1. note the results of the consultation;
2. note that the significant majority of the valid responses received were in favour of the original proposal by Lopen Parish Council and therefore the draft recommendation for further consultation to Council be: "To accept the majority vote from the people of Lopen and to agree to increase the number of Parish Councillors to seven".
3. agree to publish the results of the consultation;
4. note that a further period of consultation on the results of the initial consultation responses will take place;

- note that a further report will be brought to Council in order that a decision may be made in respect of the final recommendations of the Review.

## Background

Council at its meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014 (Minute 29 refers) approved the commencement of a Community Governance Review for the parish of Lopen following the receipt of a valid request from the Parish Council.

## Proposal

In their request, the Parish Council gave the following reasons to support their request to increase the size of the Parish Council to seven members:-

- Apart from relatively brief casual vacancy periods (mainly due to house moving) the Council has maintained a full quota of members since 2007.
- At the 2007 elections, a local election was held as there were more candidates than vacancies.
- Whilst the 2011 elections did not trigger an election, the single remaining vacancy was filled through co-option near immediately after the election.
- Applications to fill a recent casual vacancy (as a result of a Councillor house move) was oversubscribed.
- The National Association of Local Councils promotes a minimum Council size of 7 irrespective of the local population size.
- A larger pool of Councillors is more likely to represent a more accurate local view.
- With only 5 members and a quorum of three, it can be difficult to arrange a quorate meeting especially during the holiday seasons.
- Quite often members live close to each other and this can cause difficulties maintaining a quorum when common interests are involved. Increasing the council size will reduce such occurrences.
- More workload is being passed on to Parish Councils and “many hands make light work”.

## Consultation

The initial consultation period was held from 4<sup>th</sup> August to 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014. Consultation leaflets were delivered to all registered electors within the two Parishes (a total of 203 people) together with the Ward Members, Member of Parliament, Member of the European Parliament, Somerset Association of Local Councils, Somerset County Council, and the Police. Public comments were also invited by e-mail.

A total of 66 responses were received (33% of the total electorate). The responses were as follows:-

Proposal	In favour	Against
Increase Parish Councillors from five to seven	57	9

Part of the consultation leaflet asked for any comments on the proposals and 10 varied responses were received. They were broadly supportive of the proposals, however, several raised the point that five Parish Councillors had managed very well in the past and questioned the need for two extra.





### **Corporate Priority Implications**

None at the current time.

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

None at the current time.

### **Equality and Diversity Implications**

All local government electors within the parish of Lopen have been consulted on the proposal and their views considered as part of the consultation process. The council must have regard to the need to secure that the community governance arrangements for the area reflects the identities and interests of the community in the area and are effective and convenient.

### **Background Papers**

Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007

The Electoral Commission Guidance on Community Governance Reviews, April 2008

Terms of Reference of the Community Governance Review of the Parish Arrangements for Lopen as agreed by Council on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2014

Consultation responses provided by local residents

# Agenda Item 16

## **District Executive Forward Plan**

*Executive Portfolio Holder:* Ric Pallister, Leader, Strategy and Policy  
*Assistant Director:* Ian Clarke, Legal and Corporate Services  
*Lead Officer:* Ian Clarke, Legal and Corporate Services  
*Contact Details:* [ian.clarke@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:ian.clarke@southsomerset.gov.uk) or (01935) 462184

### **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 approve the updated Executive Forward Plan for publication as attached at Appendix A.

### **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. There are currently no consultations which the Council are responding to.

### **6. Background Papers**

6.1 None.

## Appendix A - SSDC Executive Forward Plan

Date of Decision	Decision	Portfolio	Service Director	Contact	Committees	Approval of Council Required	Date of Council	Consultation
December 2014	Commercial Property Disposals – Winsham Allotments and Band Hut	Finance and Spatial Planning	Assistant Director (Legal & Corporate Services)	Ian Clarke, Assistant Director (Legal and Corporate Services)	Scrutiny and District Executive	No		Yes
December 2014	Council Tax Resources	Finance and Spatial Planning	Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)	Donna Parham, Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)	Scrutiny, District Executive			
December 2014	Upgrading of ICT Helpdesk System	Property and Climate Change	Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)	Roger Brown, ICT Manager	Scrutiny, District Executive	No		
December 2014	Proposed capital schemes for 2015/16	Finance and Spatial Planning	Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)	Donna Parham, Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)	Scrutiny, District Executive, Council	Yes	February 2015	Yes
December 2014	Community Right to Bid Update	Strategy and Policy	Strategic Director (Place and Performance)	Helen Rutter, Assistant Director (Communities)	Scrutiny and District Executive	No		
December 2014	Securing Future Facilities for Chard (Confidential)	Leisure and Culture	Assistant Director (Health and Well-Being)	Andrew Gillespie, Area Development Manager (West)	Scrutiny, District Executive	No		
January 2015	Update on Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Programme	Finance and Spatial Planning	Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)	Donna Parham, Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)	Scrutiny and District Executive	No		Yes
January 2015	Scrutiny Review of Somerset Civil Contingency Partnership	Finance and Spatial Planning	Assistant Director (Legal & Corporate Services)	Emily McGuinness, Scrutiny Manager	Scrutiny and District Executive	No		
January 2015	Updated Local Development Scheme	Finance and Spatial Planning	Assistant Director (Economy)	Martin Woods, Assistant Director (Economy)	Scrutiny and District Executive	Yes	February 2015	

Date of Decision	Decision	Portfolio	Service Director	Contact	Committees	Approval of Council Required	Date of Council	Consultation
February 2015	Budget for 2015/16 and Capital Programme	Finance and Spatial Planning	Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)	Donna Parham, Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)	Scrutiny, District Executive, Council	Yes	February 2015	Yes
February 2015	Capital & Revenue Budget monitoring reports for Quarter 3	Finance and Spatial Planning	Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)	Donna Parham, Assistant Director (Finance & Corporate Services)	Scrutiny and District Executive	No		
February 2015	Anti - Social Behaviour - New Tools and Powers	Strategy and Policy	Assistant Director (Communities)	Kim Close Assistant Director (Communities)	Scrutiny and District Executive	No		
February 2015	Family Focus Programme Update	Strategy and Policy	Strategic Director (Operations and Customer Focus)	Steve Joel, Assistant Director (Health and Well-Being)	Scrutiny and District Executive	No		
February 2015	Member Induction Programme 2015	Regulatory and Democratic Services	Assistant Director (Legal & Corporate Services)	Angela Cox, Democratic Services Manager	Scrutiny and District Executive	No		
March 2015	Districtwide Grants – approval of funding for SSVCA and SSCAB	Strategy and Policy	Strategic Director (Place and Performance)	Helen Rutter, Assistant Director (Communities)	Scrutiny and District Executive	No		
March 2015	Community Right to Bid Update	Strategy and Policy	Strategic Director (Place and Performance)	Helen Rutter, Assistant Director (Communities)	Scrutiny and District Executive	No		
April 2015	South Somerset Together LSP Annual Review	Strategy and Policy	Strategic Director (Place and Performance)	Helen Rutter, Assistant Director (Communities)	Scrutiny and District Executive	No		
To be confirmed	Formal Decision on the Somerset Rivers Board	Strategy and Policy	Strategic Director (Operations and Customer Focus)	Vega Sturgess, Strategic Director (Operations and Customer Focus)	Scrutiny and District Executive	Yes		

## Monthly Performance

### Snapshot



This monthly snapshot shows our recent performance:

- An average of just **8 days** to process Housing Benefit new claims and changes in circumstances. This figure has been maintained for the last three months.
- Over 23,000 tickets already sold in advance of the official release of the Octagon Winter/Spring 2015 Theatre Brochure. It is clear that patrons are loving what Somerset's Premier Theatre has to offer and are looking forward to many nights of first class entertainment to brighten those Winter evenings. The Octagon Theatre is owned by the residents of South Somerset and managed by South Somerset District Council.
- The Environmental Protection team responded to 86 requests for services relating to a range of pollution matters from noisy neighbours to oil spills, an increase of 23% from last year.
- September saw a large increase in the amount of planning fees received by the council as a result of an increase in the submission of applications. The Council received approximately £200k, as opposed to £70k received in September 2013. Whilst this does have workload implications, this additional income is beneficial to the whole council and demonstrates the increased confidence in the development industry.

Latest headlines:

- Total Job Seekers Allowance claimants are down to just 0.8% in September. A drop of 0.1% on the previous month. Just 461 males and 333 females now claiming JSA in South Somerset. Nationally the figure is 2.2% and in the South West 1.3%.
- South Somerset District Council welcomed the Citizens Advice Bureau to its Advice HUB at Petters House, Yeovil. CAB opened its new office on the ground floor of Petters House on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September and is expected to increase footfall into the building to over 2,000 visitors a week.
- Yeovil Literary Festival will take place at the Octagon Theatre on 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> November. Speakers include David Mitchell, Michael Portillo, Shirley Williams, Jonathan Dimbleby, Polly Toynbee and many local authors. As of 23<sup>rd</sup> October ticket sales are over 2,500 for the performances but expected to rise considerably over the coming weeks heading towards the start of the festival.
- A new floodlit multi-court and skate park floodlighting has been supported and delivered at Cale Park in conjunction with Wincanton Town Council. A new £330k Artificial Grass Pitch project was also completed and opened at Westfield Academy, Yeovil. Approximately 48% (£140k) of funding was made available from SSDC through developer contributions (£84k) and capital funding (£56k).

# Agenda Item 19

## **Exclusion of Press and Public**

The Committee is asked to agree that the following item (agenda item 20) 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 20

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

Document is Restricted



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

Document is Restricted