



## Public Document Pack

North Devon Council  
Brynsworthy Environment Centre  
Barnstaple  
North Devon EX31 3NP

K. Miles  
Chief Executive.

### **STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

A meeting of the Strategy and Resources Committee will be held in the Barum Room - Brynsworthy on **MONDAY, 6TH DECEMBER, 2021 at 10.00 am.**

**(NOTE: A location plan for the Brynsworthy Environment Centre is attached to the agenda front pages. From the 7 May 2021, the law requires all councils to hold formal meetings in person. The council is also ensuring that all venues used are Covid secure and that all appropriate measures are put in place. There are a limited number of spaces available for members of the public to attend. Please check the Council's website for the latest information regarding the arrangements that are in place and the requirement to book a place 2 working days prior to the meeting [Taking part in meetings \(northdevon.gov.uk\)](http://northdevon.gov.uk))**

Members of the Strategy and Resources Councillor Worden (Chair)  
Committee

Councillors Crabb, Knight, Lane, Lofthouse, Patrinos, Pearson, Prowse, L. Spear, Wilkinson and Yabsley

### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence
2. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2021 (attached). (Pages 7 - 14)
3. Items brought forward which in the opinion of the Chair should be considered by the meeting as a matter of urgency.
4. Declarations of Interests.  
(Please telephone the Corporate and Community Services team to prepare a form for your signature before the meeting. Interests must be re-declared when the item is called, and Councillors must leave the room if necessary).
5. To agree the agenda between Part 'A' and Part 'B' (Confidential Restricted Information).

### **PART 'A'**

6. **Approval and release of S106 open space funds - Filleigh, Newton Tracey and Witheridge** (Pages 15 - 18)

Report by Project, Procurement and Open Space Officer (attached).

7. **Tarka Leisure Centre Update**

Head of Environmental Enhancement to report.

8. **Work of North Devon+ (Pages 19 - 26)**

Report by Chief Executive/Leader of the Council (attached).

9. **Environmental Impact Assessment for Committee Reports**

Chief Executive to report.

10. **Litter Working Group (Pages 27 - 30)**

Report by Lead Member for the Environment (attached).

11. **Urgent Decisions Taken by the Chief Executive (Pages 31 - 38)**

To note the urgent decisions that have been made by the Chief Executive in accordance with paragraph 3.48, Annexe 2, Part 3 of the Constitution (attached).

12. **Exclusion of Public and Press and Restriction of Documents**

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) That under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3, Part 1 Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended from time to time), namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)
- (b) That all documents and reports relating to the items be confirmed as "Not for Publication"

**PART 'B' (CONFIDENTIAL RESTRICTED INFORMATION)**

13. **Barnstaple Pannier Market - Consultancy Report on Future Operating Model (Pages 39 - 108)**

Report by Head of Place, Property and Regeneration (attached).

14. **Seven Brethren - Agreeing a Way Forward (Pages 109 - 124)**

Report by Head of Place, Property and Regeneration (attached).

**If you have any enquiries about this agenda, please contact Corporate and Community Services, telephone 01271 388253**

26.11.21



## **North Devon Council protocol on recording/filming at Council meetings**

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The rules that the Council will apply are:

1. The recording must be overt (clearly visible to anyone at the meeting) and must not disrupt proceedings. The Council will put signs up at any meeting where we know recording is taking place.
2. The Chairman of the meeting has absolute discretion to stop or suspend recording if, in their opinion, continuing to do so would prejudice proceedings at the meeting or if the person recording is in breach of these rules.
3. We will ask for recording to stop if the meeting goes into 'part B' where the public is excluded for confidentiality reasons. In such a case, the person filming should leave the room ensuring all recording equipment is switched off.
4. Any member of the public has the right not to be recorded. We ensure that agendas for, and signage at, Council meetings make it clear that recording can take place – anyone not wishing to be recorded must advise the Chairman at the earliest opportunity.
5. The recording should not be edited in a way that could lead to misinterpretation or misrepresentation of the proceedings or in a way that ridicules or shows a lack of respect for those in the recording. The Council would expect any recording in breach of these rules to be removed from public view.

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For more information contact the Corporate and Community Services team on **01271 388253** or email **memberservices@northdevon.gov.uk** or the Communications Team on **01271 388278**, email **communications@northdevon.gov.uk**.

North Devon Council offices at Brynsworthy, the full address is:  
Brynsworthy Environment Centre (BEC), Roundswell,  
Barnstaple, Devon, EX31 3NP.

Sat Nav postcode is EX31 3NS.

At the Roundswell roundabout take the exit onto the B3232, after about ½ mile take the first right, BEC is about ½ a mile on the right.

Drive into the site, visitors parking is in front of the main building on the left hand side.

On arrival at the main entrance, please sign in using the Track and Trace App and follow the signage and instructions in order to access the Meeting Rooms. Alternatively, dial 8253 for Corporate and Community Services if you have any problems.





## **NORTH DEVON COUNCIL**

Minutes of a meeting of Strategy and Resources Committee held at Barum Room - Brynsworthy on Monday, 1st November, 2021 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Members:

Councillor Worden (Chair)

Councillors Lane, Lofthouse, L. Spear, Wilkinson and Yabsley

Officers:

Chief Executive, Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive, Solicitor and Data Protection Officer, Museum Manager, Public Protection Manager, Accountancy Services Manager, Head of Governance and Project and Procurement Officer

Also Present:

Councillors Biederman and D. Spear

### **74. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Knight, Patrinos, Pearson and Prowse.

### **75. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 OCTOBER 2021 (ATTACHED).**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2021 (circulated previously) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **76. ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE MEETING AS A MATTER OF URGENCY.**

(a) Spending Review Update

The Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive provided the Committee with an update following the Government's Autumn Budget and Spending Review announcements made on 27 October 2021. The announcements were slightly more positive for Local Government, however the full details had not yet been published for individual Councils. The headline announcement included 3% increase in real terms on spending powers which was positive and also included the ability to raise Council Tax levels. The review included £4.8 billion new funding for Local Authorities, which would equate to £1.6 billion per year. No announcement had been made in relation to the New Homes Bonus funding. The financial settlement for

individual Councils would be announced in December 2021. This would be shared with Members and further Members Briefings on the budget would be arranged.

(b) Housing Crisis

The Chief Executive advised that following the meeting of the Housing Panel (of Policy Development Committee) on 21 October 2021, a further meeting would be convened within the next 3 weeks. The first session was to gather evidence and the second session would debate and formulate recommendations. This would produce a series of actions for the Council to act upon and issues that the Council could lobby the Government. Officers were also having discussions with Homes England and undertaking a review of empty homes.

**77. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS.**

There were no declarations of interest received.

**78. PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT QUARTER 2 2021-22**

The Committee considered a report by the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive (circulated previously) regarding the Performance and Financial Management for Quarter 2 of 2021/22.

The Accountancy Services Manager highlighted the following:

- The revenue budget for 2021/22 was approved at Council on 24 February 2021 at £13,639,000.
- As at 30 September 2021, the latest forecast net budget was £13,617,000, which produces a forecast budget surplus of £22,000. Details were shown in "Appendix A – Variations in the Revenue Budget".
- There was still pressure on the 2021/22 budget due to the Covid-19 pandemic with continued additional costs being incurred and forecast decline in core income sources.
- Factored within the approved budget included a government grant in relation to Covid-19 pressures of £536,710 and also budgeted for £375,000 of additional costs and reduced income. These were already incorporated into Appendix A along with the latest forecast for each service area.
- The Government grant of £536,710 was approved and received and it was anticipated the Council would receive £80,000 re-imburement for Quarter 1 loss of Sales, Fees and charges, from the continued Government 75% income reimbursement scheme. This was an estimate as the scheme had been extended to include the period April to June 2021 only.
- At the end of 2020/21 the Council placed £375,000 into a Covid Budget management reserve to help mitigate any further adverse variances due to the pandemic in 2021/22. This future protection was still available if required.
- As at 31 March 2021 the Collection Fund reserve balance was £9,810,252 as detailed in paragraph 4.1.8 of the report.
- An additional provision had been included within the forecast figures shown in Appendix A for the National Pay Award potentially being settled higher than



the original 1% budgeted amount. Negotiations were ongoing between the Unions and the Employers and the outcome of these discussions would be included within the next report.

- “Appendix B – Movement in reserves and Balances” detailed the movements to and from earmarked reserves in 2021/22.
- Full details of the Strategic Contingency Reserve movements and commitments were detailed in “Appendix C – Strategic Contingency Reserve”.
- The 2021/22 Capital Programme was detailed in “Appendix D – Capital Programme 2021/22”.
- The Budget and Financial Framework report to Full Council on 24 February 2021 outlined the Capital Programme for the 2021/22 financial year of £22,419,916. Project underspend of £917,121 was bought forward from 2020/21 year and further variations of £1,479,065 were approved as part of the performance and financial management report to Strategy and Resources Committee, to produce a revised 2021/22 Capital Programme of £24,816,102.
- Overall variations of £4,213,427 were proposed to the 2021/22 Capital Programme as detailed in paragraph 4.4.3 of the report.
- Actual spend on the 2021/22 Capital Programme as at 30 September 2021 was £4,292,304.
- The overall Capital Programme for 2021/22 to 2024/25 was £46,151,018 and was broken down as detailed in paragraph 4.4.6 of the report.
- The Programme of £46,151,018 was funded by Capital Receipts / Borrowing (£28,274,889), External Grants and Contributions (£16,154,193) and Reserves (£1,721,936).
- It was recommended that the funds for the Fendering and Fish Stores Enhancements project of £163,650 be released from the 2021/22 Capital Programme.
- Treasury Management as detailed in paragraph 4.5 of the report.
- Debt Management as detailed in paragraph 4.6 of the report.
- General debtors as detailed in paragraph 4.7 of the report. All Heads of Service had been tasked to review their outstanding debts and review processes for effective debt recovery. In the first two quarters of this financial year no amounts were written off due to a backlog in the Finance Team. Since 30 September 2021, 47 invoices have been written off to the value of £27,199 to bring the write offs up to date.
- Performance information as detailed in Appendix E of the report.

In response to questions, the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive advised the following:

- The flood defence scheme at Seven Brethren had not been included within the capital programme as an approved scheme had not yet been brought forward for approval.
- When the budget for 2021/22 had been approved, it had been anticipated that a new CCTV hub and upgrade of the system would have taken place which would have increased 3<sup>rd</sup> party uptake. This did not take place at the beginning of the year as expected and took place part way through the year. Therefore it was anticipated that the CCTV income would increase moving forwards.

- £9m had been included within capital programme for 2021/22 for the purchase of the strategic asset. £2m had been included within the capital programme 2022/23 for capital enhancements to be made to the strategic asset.

In response to questions, the Accountancy Services Manager advised the following:

- The collection of business rates achieved to date was 50.03%. It was anticipated that the collection rate would rise for the remainder of the year.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the actions being taken to ensure that performance was at the desired level be noted;
- (b) That the contributions to/from earmarked reserves be approved as detailed in section 4.2 of the report;
- (c) That the movement on the Strategic Contingency Reserve as detailed in section 4.3 of the report be noted.
- (d) That funds be released for the capital schemes listed as detailed in section 4.4.10 of the report;
- (e) That the sections dealing with Treasury Management (section 4.5 of the report), and Debt Management (sections 4.6 and 4.7 of the report) be noted.

RECOMMENDED:

- (f) That Council approve the variations to the Capital Programme 2021/22 to 2024/25 as detailed in sections 4.4.3 of the report.

## **79. MID YEAR TREASURY MANAGEMENT REPORT 2021-22**

The Committee considered a report by Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive (circulated previously) regarding the Mid Year Treasury Management Report for 2021-22.

The Head of Governance highlighted the following:

- The Council was required through regulations issued under the Local Government Act 2003 to produce a mid year treasury report reviewing treasury management activities and the prudential and treasury indicators for 2021/22.
- The Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) for 2021/22 was approved by Council on 24 February 2021.
- The underlying TMSS approved previously required revision in the light of economic and operational movements during the year. The proposed changes were set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report.
- Section 4.3 of this report provided further information on the Capital Financial Requirement and the Operational Boundary. The change to the upper borrowing limit over 10 years would allow greater flexibility for long term borrowing.

- Revised estimated for capital expenditure and the changes since the capital programme had been agreed as part of the budget as detailed in paragraph 4.2 of the report.
- Changes to the capital financing requirement as detailed in paragraph 4.3 of the report. Internal borrowing was most prudent and cost effective for the Council.
- Annual Investment Strategy as detailed in paragraph 4.8 of the report. The Council held £40m of investments as at 30 September 2021 (£22.8m at 31 March 2021) and the investment portfolio yield for the first six months of the year was 0.05% against the benchmark 7 day LIBID of -0.08%.

In response to questions, the Head of Governance advised the following:

- External borrowing was currently required for £0.5m at a rate of 1.43% interest. Interest rates were kept under review.

In response to questions, the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive advised the following:

- For larger projects such as the Leisure Centre, payment of interests on external borrowing was included within the budget at a higher level than the current interest rates to allow protection should interest rates increase. The Council produced borrowing models with its treasury advisors.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) That the changes to the prudential indicators be approved;
- (b) That the report and the treasury activity be noted.

**80. MUSEUM OF BARNSTAPLE AND NORTH DEVON COLLECTIONS POLICY**

The Committee considered a report by the Museum Manager (circulated previously) regarding the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon Collections Development Policy.

The Museum Manager highlighted the following:

- The Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon was an Accredited Museum. Museum Accreditation was a national scheme for maintaining and improving the quality of museums and is managed by Arts Council England.
- Arts Council England required a number of policies and procedures to be in place.
- The Collections Development Policy was required to follow a certain format and include specific wording as required by Arts Council England.
- Although the Barnstaple and North Devon Museum Development Trust and its membership organisation the Friends of the Museum have a role in raising funds for and securing items for the collection, any donations received by this route were subject to the same decision-making process as any other donation to the Museum.

- There had been no changes to the specific wording required by Arts Council England since the last policy approved in 2015; however the collecting and disposal priorities had been reviewed to limit further expansion of the collections. This was outlined in sections 4.1 – 4.13 of the policy.
- The museum was embarking on a programme of collections rationalisation to free up space in the stores. The likely disposals arising from this will be of unaccessioned items (excavated pottery, items in the handling collection and uncollected loans). Further rationalisation will require a formal disposal process as outlined in the policy sections 5.1 – 5.3.

In response to questions, the Museum Manager advised the following:

- The likely disposal of unaccessioned items included excavated pottery from the Barnstaple library site. There were approximately 2,000 boxes. The Museum Development Trust was working with Devon County Council and the Arts Council England and it was anticipated that the number of boxes held would reduce by 95%.

RESOLVED that the Collections Development Policy 2021- 2026 for the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon be adopted.

**81. APPROVAL AND RELEASE OF SECTION 106 PUBLIC OPEN SPACE FUNDS - BARNSTAPLE, CHULMLEIGH, NEWTON TRACEY AND WITHERIDGE**

The Committee considered a report by the Project, Procurement and Open Space Officer (circulated previously) regarding the allocation of section 106 public open space funds towards a number of projects within the District, across communities of Barnstaple, Chulmleigh, Newton Tracey and Witheridge.

The Project, Procurement and Open Space Officer advised the following:

- That since the publication of the report a request had been received from Witheridge Parish Council to defer consideration of the projects at Witheridge until such a time that was mutually agreed by both parties. If the Committee was in agreement then the recommendation in paragraph 2.2 would be required to be amended to "...vary the capital programme by £139,635...."
- Details of the projects as detailed in paragraphs 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.8 of the report.
- Financial details of the projects as detailed in paragraph 5 of the report.

Councillor Biederman declared a personal interest as a Member of Horwood, Lovacott and Newton Tracey Parish Council.

RESOLVED:

(a) that following section 106 funds be allocated as follows:

- (i) £1,015 towards enhancement of the Square Fountain, Barnstaple (NDC).

- (ii) £80,000 to Chulmleigh Playing Field Association towards the cost of a new pavilion extension.
  - (iii) £38,000 to Chulmleigh Parish Council towards the enhancement of Davy Park, Chulmleigh.
  - (iv) £6,096 to Newton Tracey Cricket Club towards the provision of a Non Turf Practice Bay.
  - (v) £6,096 to Horwood, Lovacott and Newton Tracey Parish Council towards the provision of a Wooden Gazebo at Lovacott Playing Field.
  - (vi) £8,428 towards Tarka Play Area, Barnstaple (NDC)
- (b) That consideration of allocation of section 106 funds to Witheridge Parish Hall towards the enhancement of the Village Hall and the enhancement of the Adventure Playground be deferred until such a time that was mutually agreed by both Witheridge Parish Council and the Council;

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (c) That Council be recommended to vary the capital programme by £139,635 and that funds be released, subject to a Funding Agreement upon such terms and conditions as may be agreed by the Senior Solicitor, for external projects.

**82. GAMBLING STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES**

The Committee considered a report by the Public Protection Manager (circulated previously) regarding the review of the Gambling Statement of Principles.

The Public Protection Manager highlighted the following:

- The Council was under a legal obligation to review its Gambling Statement of Licensing Principles on a three yearly basis.
- A consultation exercise had been undertaken in respect of a draft proposed revision to the Council's Gambling Statement of Licensing Principles, which contained minor variations to the existing statement. The results of the consultation were contained in Appendix A of the report.
- The main proposed amendments to the Statement of Principles as detailed in paragraph 4.7 of the report.
- The low number of consultation responses was not unusual and nationally Local Authorities received a low number of responses to this type of consultation.

In response to questions, the Public Protection Manager advised the following:

- One consultation had been received from a member of the public and the other consultation received was from Gosschalks acting on behalf of the Betting and Gaming Council. Gosschalks had also previously submitted a representation in respect of the Gambling statement of Principles 3 years ago.

**RECOMMENDED** that the proposed revised Gambling Statement of Licensing Principles be recommended to Full Council (a tracked changes document

# Agenda Item 2

Strategy and Resources Committee - 1 November 2021

highlighting the amendments made to the current policy as contained in Appendix B) for approval.

Chair

The meeting ended at 10.42 am

NOTE: These minutes will be confirmed as a correct record at the next meeting of the Committee.



## North Devon Council

Report Date: 6 December 2021

Topic: Approval and release of S106 open space funds – Filleigh, Newton Tracey and Witheridge

Report by: Project, Procurement and Open Space Officer

### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This report seeks to allocate S106 public open space funds towards a project in Filleigh, Witheridge and Newton Tracey.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. That Strategy and Resources allocates:

2.1.1. £36,394 to Filleigh Village Hall towards village hall enhancement scheme.

2.1.2. £50,000 to Witheridge Parish Hall towards the enhancement of the Village Hall.

2.1.3. £130,000 to Witheridge Parish Council towards the enhancement of the Adventure Playground.

2.1.4. £3,216 to Newton Tracey Cricket Club towards the provision of a Non Turf Practice Bay.

2.2. Subject to approval of 2.1.1 to 2.1.4 above, that Strategy & Resources Committee recommends Council vary the capital programme by £219,610 and that funds be released, subject to a Funding Agreement upon such terms and conditions as may be agreed by the Senior Solicitor, for external projects.

### 3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. To allocate funds in line with the requirement of S106 agreements.

3.2. To protect and enhance public open space, including land and buildings.

### 4. REPORT

#### 4.1. Filleigh Village Hall

Filleigh Village Hall is a very busy and successful community building. The hall committee have set out to undertake a range of projects at the facility, in a phased approach to tie in with available funding. Phase 1 has already been completed, which created an extension costing £120,000 with a mix of their own funds and grants. Phase 2 is looking to refurbish part of the original facility including the main hall, meeting room and foyer. The proposed works include replacement of windows and patio doors, new electrics and lighting, redecoration, new flooring, and new ceiling tiles with great insulation



capacity. Quotes have been sought for the works and the village hall will fund any deficit in project costs.

#### **4.2. Witheridge Village Hall**

Witheridge Village Hall was originally constructed in 1963 (with an extension in 1974) and is in need of a major update. It is used by many local groups and organisations which are only increasing in size with the population in Witheridge rising over the years.

The funding will be used to upgrade the toilets within the hall to make them accessible for all members of the community especially the disabled. The project will also modernise the kitchen facilities to create a greater capacity for larger events. The scope of works will also include installation of an upgraded security and electrical system in order to comply with today's building regulations. Further works will take place outside the hall to resurface existing potholes and worn areas to create a safer environment for those with mobility issues, parents and children.

#### **4.3. Witheridge Adventure Playground**

Members of the Witheridge community have been working closely with the Parish Council to help establish what they would like to see at their Adventure Playground. Through public consultations and school surveys, it has been decided what facilities would be included within this project.

The funding will be used to install the following play equipment: climbing tower, Rope Bridge, rope swing, trampoline, small children basket swing, small children roundabout, accessible roundabout, share swing seat, rocker boat and an accessible springer/seesaw. This range of equipment will allow children of all ages and abilities to be able to play within the play area. An exercise route and bike trail will also be installed around the field to allow all members of the public to travel and exercise safely within the area including those with limited mobility and pushchairs. There will also be benches and picnic tables located at the site for the community to enjoy the landscape.

#### **4.4. Newton Tracey Cricket Club Practice Bay**

Newton Tracey Cricket Club have seen a rise in memberships within the last few years. The funding will be used to purchase and install a new practice bay at Newton Tracey Cricket Club as the current bays are no longer fit for purpose. This will ensure that users have a more accessible and safe area to practice their sport within a contained area. The project has support of the parish council.





Pursuant to Strategy and Resources Committee on 1 November, £6096 was allocated to this project. We have subsequently received a further £3,216 from the same development which identifies the same project within the S106 agreement. This additional amount is the remaining amount from the contribution that will aid the club in their purchase of a better practice bay.

## 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

### 5.1 Filleigh Village Hall

Financial – The total project cost is: £56,000

That £36,394 be funded from the S106 capital budget from the following sources:

Development description:	Land adj Filleigh Village Hall, Filleigh
Application number:	66349
Amount:	£36,394
Total:	£36,394

The remaining balance and any overspend be met by Filleigh Village Hall.

### 5.2 Witheridge Village Hall

Financial - The total project cost is £55,556.28

That £50,000 be funded from the S106 capital budget from the following sources:

Development description:	Land south of Butts Close, Witheridge
Application number:	62777
Amount:	£50,000
Total:	£50,000

The remaining balance and any overspend will be met by the hall committee.

### 5.3 Witheridge Adventure Playground

Financial – The total project cost is £130,000

That £130,000 be funded from the S106 capital budget from the following sources:

Development description:	Land south of Butts Close, Witheridge
Application number:	62777
Amount:	£130,000



Total: £130,000

Any overspend or change in project costs will be met by Witheridge Parish Council.

## **5.4 Newton Tracey Cricket Club Practice Bay**

Financial – The total project cost is £14,795

That £3,216 be funded from the S106 capital budget from the following sources:

Development description:	Higher Westaway
Application number:	62777
Amount:	£3,216
Total:	£3,216

Pursuant to Strategy and Resources Committee on 1 November 2021, an allocation of £6,096 from S106 has already been allocated to this project. The remaining balance and any overspend will be met by Newton Tracey Cricket Club.

## 6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. An EIA has been completed identifying improvements to provision

## 7. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

7.1. Part 3, Annexe 1, Delegated

7.2. Article 4.5.22, referred.

## 8. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1. This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1. The background papers are available for inspection and kept by the author of the report.

## 10. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

10.1. The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers: L. Wheeler, Project, Procurement & Open Space Officer. S.Hambleton, Project, Procurement & S106 Assistant.



## North Devon Council

Report Date:

Topic: Work of North Devon +

Report by: Chief Executive/Leader

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. North Devon + is a company owned jointly with Torridge District Council which operates as a local authority/private sector partnership.
- 1.2. It seeks to support local businesses through grants and advice and administers local and national funds in order to achieve this. It also has experience of project management and supports both authorities with expertise and resources to support bid writing etc.
- 1.3. This report sets out the current main workload of the company and is brought to Council to highlight to members the positive impact that the two councils and the company are having.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That Members note this report

### 3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. To appraise members of the work of North Devon +

### 4. REPORT

- 4.1 North Devon + is a local authority company that is operated jointly with Torridge District Council. It operates as a partnership with the private sector which has representatives on its board. One of its main purposes is to provide business support to existing and new businesses within the northern Devon area and also to support both councils in their economic development and regeneration functions.
- 4.2 The company has 6 employees and is largely self-funded, although both councils do contribute relatively small amounts of funding each year.
- 4.3 In the past the team has successfully administered very large grant schemes such as the Leader programmes but with the European funded schemes now coming to an end, the team have been concentrating on building up their "portfolio" of schemes and working in partnership with other business support providers.
- 4.4 The Appendix to this report goes into more detail about the current schemes being administered by the team but some highlights are worth mentioning.



## **Kickstart**

4.5 ND+ operates as an approved Gateway for the government's Kickstart scheme. This is a scheme that seeks to match young DWP claimants with local employers who provide 6 month placements with the hope that permanent roles will result.

4.6 So far, of the 11 young people that have completed their placements, 9 have been given permanent roles with local employers which has to be seen as a success. A further 37 people are currently completing their placements and so hopefully this number will increase further.

## **Business Boost**

4.7 Both councils received central government funding to deliver Additional Restrictions Grants (ARG) as a result of the various lockdowns. The guidance allowed councils to use a proportion of the funding for longer term support as well as direct grants. As a result, both councils agreed to retain £100,000 each and to put those funds into a new business support and small grant scheme designed and delivered by North Devon +. That scheme is named "Business Boost" and has currently helped 35 local businesses, examples of which are set out in the Appendix.

4.8 The team will also be involved in delivering elements of some of the projects funded by the recently announced Community Resilience Fund.

## 5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. There are none from this report.

## 6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. (Please detail if there are/are not any equalities implications anticipated as a result of this report. If so, please complete the Equality Impact Assessment Summary form available on Insite and email to the Corporate and Community Services Team at [equality@northdevon.gov.uk](mailto:equality@northdevon.gov.uk)).

6.2. There are no equality issues

## 7. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

7.1. This item is to note with no decisions required

## 8. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

8.1. This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1. The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: (The background papers are available for inspection and kept by the author of the report).

Appendix



## 10. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

- 10.1. The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers: Leader and Deputy Leader, Solicitor, Director of Resources and Chief Executive

Ken Miles, Chief Executive.

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## ND+ Programme Update – 05.11.2021

### Additional Restrictions Grants

ND+ are continuing to process grant applications on behalf of Torridge District Council for final round of BEIS COVID support funding. North Devon Council have administered its own ARG funds and have now paid out the full allocation.

To date across the Additional Restrictions Grant Schemes ND+ has received and processed 1,428 grant applications, supporting 431 Small and Medium sized business across Torridge by awarding grants to the value of £2,253,991

### ARG Business BOOST programme

With the support of ARG funding, ND+ has launched a new business support programme to support both new and existing business across Northern Devon. The programme will support both new start up business and existing business to recover from the effects of the pandemic and adapt to a changed operating environment.

The programme is called **Business BOOST** and went live in October, a press release for the scheme went out in early October.

To date (as of 05.11.2021) we have already seen a positive uptake of the programme in its first month with a combination of business and grant enquiries. We have engaged with 35 local SME clients, 21 have now had 1-1 appointments with a Business Advisor with a further 8 appointments booked. This is alongside receiving small grant applications which we are currently processing. Of these 29 businesses, 14 are from Torridge and 15 from North Devon.

Further promotion of the scheme is due to follow, if Councillors would like any scheme further details to share with their local businesses, please contact Vicky Fether [vfether@northdevonplus.co.uk](mailto:vfether@northdevonplus.co.uk).

**North Devon** –A selection of business supported to date include:

- Health / Fitness instructor seeking a health check of her business and considering a grant for website development.
- Retailer seeking business support and possible grant support for a new stock management system to assist with business efficiency / online sales.
- A new start-up businesses looking for help in making sure their plans are robust - we are helping with support/advice on developing a business plan and marketing strategy. Covered benefits of a Business Plan and Marketing strategy.

- Business seeking support to ensure their investment is maximised and how this is best structured. Also exploring another unrelated business regarding how to best set up structure a charitable organisation

**Torrige** A selection of business supported to date include:

- A small cosmetic manufacturer looking for grant assistance to develop their website to improve their online presence and attract more sales.
- A charitable organisation helping homeless and vulnerable people seeking support to create a centre for people in need to drop in for a meal or a coffee and tap into help and support.
- Rural garage business, looking to improve efficiency and considering applying for a grant to help with the cost of buying a piece of equipment to assist with development of their operations.
- Potential property development pre-start venture seeking support on how to structure the business.
- Pre-start venture looking to set up a new tourist activity.
- Start-up support for a mobile catering business touring rural area offering quality take-away food.

### **Kickstart Scheme**

In October 2020 the Government announced a £2 billion fund to create high quality 6-month work placements for young people aged 16-24, who are claiming Universal Credit. With the support of our local authorities, Torrige District Council & North Devon Council; Barnstaple Chamber & North Devon+ are operating as an approved Gateway for employers to access the scheme through the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP). We are providing support to micro and small businesses who individually have less than 30 placements to access the scheme.

To date we have had 38 companies approved by the DWP for a Kickstart Placement with 86 placements in total.

Out of 86 placements the DWP have matched their clients with 48 placements to date.

So far 11 young people have completed their 6-month placement and 9 (82%) have already been kept on in permanent roles by companies such as Atlas Packaging, Moo Free Chocolates, Lineal Software Solutions and 514 Elemental which is a fantastic success. Atlas Packaging have now also registered further placement opportunities.

We are still working hard with the Employers and the Kickstart team at the Job Centres to find suitable candidates for the remaining placements.



The scheme was officially due to complete recruitment in December 2021; however, the government has now extended this until March 2022 with placements running up to 6 months beyond the cut-off date.

### **Future Farm Resilience Programme**

ND+ is currently working in partnership with West Devon Business Information Point to deliver the Future Farm Resilience Programme.

This is offering free, tailored one to one advice, webinars, and business skills development workshops to help farmers and land managers navigate the changes brought about by the Agricultural Transition.

Between 2021 and 2027, the government will gradually reduce and then stop Direct Payments. Instead, farmers will be supported to improve the environment, improve animal health and welfare, and reduce carbon emissions.

There will be three levels of support aimed at paying for sustainable farming practices, creating habitats for nature recovery, and making landscape-scale change, such as establishing new woodland and other ecosystem services.

The move away from Direct Payments will be a big change for some farmers, so they will happen over a 7-year transition period to give time to plan and adjust. The Future Farming Resilience Fund has been funded by Defra to allow us to support farmers and land managers with this transition.

The support is free and available from September 2021 to February 2022 to any farmer or land manager currently in receipt of BPS payments. The scheme is running throughout Devon and Somerset, and North Devon + is supporting business across Devon.

### **DCC 'Growth Hub Services for All' Programme –**

North Devon + has successfully bid to run the Devon County Council 'Growth Hub Services for All' business support programme within North Devon, Torrington, and West Devon.

This programme will provide a mix of one-to-one support, specialist advice and group workshops to help businesses across the area to grow. Through the programme, businesses can receive up to 12 hours' of support.

The programme will run until March 2023

The support will include a combination of workshops, 1-2-1 advice and follow-up support and will run until March 2023.

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**North Devon Council**

**Strategy and Resources Committee – 6 December 2021**

## **Litter Working Group**

### **Report by Lead Member for the Environment**

#### **Introduction**

The impact of litter on the social, economic, and environmental fabric of our communities cannot be overstated. All over the country local authorities and local communities are trying to find effective ways to address the problems created by the increase in litter. We are no different.

The litter working group discovered that the mapping does not always tally with the location of bins; there is no established procedure for requesting a bin; no established procedure for determining if the right bin is in the right place, and no readily available record of the number and types of bin in stock.

Around the district there are obvious hotspots for littering, disappointingly bad around educational establishments, but also where there are transport interchanges, and verges of main roads as a result of the inexplicable tendency of drivers to eject rubbish from their vehicles whilst in transit. Areas which look uncared-for are areas which attract antisocial behaviour and both are on the rise.

We need to address the causes of litter in as much as we can, incorporating known techniques for effecting behaviour change, as well as delivering an effective litter collection service.

The working group considers that partnership working with businesses, parishes and community groups will be key and that clearly defined practices and processes are necessary to improve the service.

#### **Recommendation**

- Note the report
- Consider an annual purchasing plan for litter bins that takes into account the baseline data collected, with a view to removing and/or replacing broken bins with the right size, colour, and type of bin and an understanding of appropriate placement.
- Consider developing a website dedicated to litter campaigns.
- Read Litterology to get an insight into the psychology of littering.

## Report

Earlier this year NDC adopted a Litter Strategy: this is quite high level and may need to be revisited once the baseline data about the existing bins and litter zones have been identified and mapped.

The litter working group found that there is a lack of accurate information on the types and locations of litter bins across the district. Ideally the mapping of bins should include all NDC and parish council maintained and emptied bins, plus an indication of the zone in which the bins are placed, e.g. rural, high pedestrian traffic, public transport interchange, bus shelter. It would also be useful to know of any privately installed and emptied bins when reviewing the appropriateness of bin placement.

Once the bins have been mapped then an exercise to identify litter hotspots will need to be undertaken: the teams who keep the streets clean will no doubt know very well which these are, but all waste and recycling staff could be encouraged to report them.

The waste and recycling team keeps a stock of litter bins available on request, however there is no formal process for determining whether the request is appropriate for the location nor is there a record of exactly what bins are in store.

At the moment we are concerned with litter bins only although will need to consider how best to roll out on-street recycling bins, for which there is definitely a demand, and will need to consider methods of ensuring bins are correctly identified, e.g. by colour, and style. The logical colour for litter bins is black.

This information is needed before a detailed programme of work can be undertaken. With a map of the bins, the types of location, and identification of litter hotspots, then there can be a more measured approach to bin placement – and replacement. If a request for a bin is received it would need to fit with the placement strategy.

Partnerships will play a key part in making sure our streets are litter-free. The litter working group is planning to run a workshop early in the new year with parish councils, finding out what they perceive to be the main problem areas and agreeing plans of action to address them together.

Education is also key: during term time the roads around many of our schools and colleges are a disgrace and the neighbourhood warden team, working with the litter group are planning to meet shortly with Petroc staff to work on a litter-free campaign. This can then be used to inform a structured programme for educational and youth organisations.

The group has reviewed the litter pages on the NDC website and agreed improvements in the way information is displayed and with input from community litter-picking groups has facilitated the access to request collections and borrowing of equipment. It would be worth considering a lively, colourful, website for North Devon (and Torridge, perhaps?) dedicated to litter education and campaigns, cf. [Litter Free Dorset website](#)

The communications team provide not only essential support for litter campaigns but also have great ideas for getting messages across to the public, some of which will require expenditure on signage.

This report only addresses the bins and an understanding of the places where they are – or are not – used currently. Further effort will be required to gather data about people's littering habits, cf Litterology (reading material for the working group), and to experiment with signage to see what is most effective: the ultimate goal is to raise people's awareness and change their behaviour.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

REGISTER OF URGENT  
DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

NORTH DEVON COUNCIL CONSTITUTION  
– Part 3 Annexe 2: Officer Delegations –  
Chief Executive



Reference No:

- 
- 1) SUBJECT: North Devon Household Support Fund
  
  - 2) REQUESTED DECISION: To approve the local policy as shown attached and to allow the Head of Customer Focus to make any future amendments to the policy following consultation with the Director of Resources and Leader.
  
  - 3) STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE REQUEST AND WHY IT IS URGENT:  
The scheme has been set up by DCC from new government funding and is due to be introduced on the 15<sup>th</sup> November. There has been no opportunity to take the matter to a committee for approval.
  
  - 4) FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: (NOTE: Please state if there are any financial implications. If so, state whether there are sufficient funds within the agreed budget. If there are insufficient funds please state how the decision will be financed).  
There are none, NDC will be administering funds allocated to it under the scheme.
  
  - 5) ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED:  
There were no other alternatives really other than not being involved in the scheme.
  
  - 6) A RECORD OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED:  
None
  
  - 7) A NOTE OF ANY DISPENSATION IF GRANTED:  
None
  
  - 8) LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS (but not including published works or those which disclose exempt or confidential information (as defined in paragraph 10.4 and 10.5 of the Access to Information Procedural Rules Part 4 of the Constitution):

Policy attached

10) CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN:

The following have been consulted on this urgent decision:

Consultee	Consulted Yes/No	Date
Leader of Council ( <i>or Deputy Leader</i> )	Y	7/11/21
Chair of Committee (with the Authority to take the decision) <i>(or Vice-Chair)</i>		
Lead Member		
Ward Member(s)		
Head of Service (name)	Y	7/11/21
Finance	y	7/11/21
Legal		

11) OFFICER REQUESTING URGENT DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE:

Head of Customer Focus

12) APPROVED BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE: YES



13) DATE OF DECISION:

9<sup>th</sup> November 2021

14) CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S COMMENTS:

Approved for the reasons set out. There is insufficient time to take this matter to a committee but not being involved in the scheme would go against the principles that have grown up through Team Devon and would disadvantage residents of ND.



15) DATE TO BE PRESENTED TO STRATEGY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE:

## GUIDANCE NOTES

### NOTE:

#### PROCEDURE FOR URGENT DECISIONS:

1. Completed form to be passed to the Chief Executive following consultation with the interested parties.
2. If a decision is specific to a Ward, efforts should be made to ascertain the views of the local Councillor (s).
3. The Chief Executive will make his decision.

#### PROCEDURE FOR URGENT DECISION MAKING AS PER THE CONSTITUTION

#### **Officer Delegations: the Chief Executive:**

#### **Urgent Decision Making**

- 3.48 To take a decision on any matter falling within the remit of any Committee in cases of urgency where it is not reasonably practicable to obtain prior approval of a Committee SUBJECT TO:
- 3.48.1 the prior consultation, where practicable, with the Leader or Deputy Leader and the Chair or Vice Chair of the relevant Committee, and
  - 3.48.2 the proviso that this power will not extend to the determination of any application submitted pursuant to the Planning Acts or under the Licensing Act 2003 or the Gambling Act 2005, and
  - 3.48.3 the decision being reported to the next meeting of the relevant Committee and the next meeting of Strategy and Resources Committee.



## North Devon Council Household Support Fund Policy

The purpose of this document is to set out the objectives of the scheme and to outline the methods and working practices to meet these.

The Household Support Fund is intended to help individuals and families with rapid short-term financial support to address economic vulnerability and financial hardship until the end of March 2022. It is designed to ensure that people who are most in need can access emergency short-term support with regard to food, energy, water bills and wider essential costs.

### Scheme Eligibility

The Household Support Fund is intended to help residents who have limited income and do not have ready access to other funds.

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Be over the age of 16; and
2. Live in North Devon Council district (as your main residence); and
3. Be without sufficient resources to meet the immediate short-term needs of themselves or dependents.

### Types of assistance that can be provided

The NDC Household Support Fund can provide assistance for the following items:

- **Food** – via food/High Street vouchers
- **Energy and water bills**- support with energy bills for any form of fuel that is used for the purpose of domestic heating, cooking or lighting, including oil or portable gas cylinders. It can also be used to support with water bills including for drinking, washing, cooking, and sanitary purposes and sewerage.
- **Essentials linked to energy and water** - including sanitary products, warm clothing, soap, blankets, boiler service/repair, purchase of equipment including fridges, freezers, ovens, etc.
- **Wider essentials** – support with essential household items which may include, but are not limited to, support with other essential monthly expenditure which cannot be deferred including broadband or phone bills, clothing, and essential transport-related costs such as repairing a car, buying a bicycle or paying for fuel.
- **Housing Costs** - in exceptional cases of genuine emergency where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need, the Fund can be used to support housing costs with caveats (see **Appendix A**)

The type and level of assistance will take account of the circumstances of the household and each application will be assessed on its own merits.

- Payments will be made via vouchers, into bank accounts via BACS or direct purchasing of items.

- There is no maximum award, however any awards over £500 will be by exception and will be agreed by the Head of Service. It is anticipated the majority of awards will be much lower than this.

## **Consideration of the budgetary provision**

- Funding for the North Devon Household Support Fund, £128k is provided by Devon County Council (DCC) as part of their allocation of the national Household fund
- The budget will be monitored weekly and the standard Management Information (MI) reporting template, provided by the Department for Works and Pension to record the amount provided or paid to vulnerable households under the remit of this grant, will be completed.
- Extensions to this funding allocation will be considered by DCC, however if funds are exhausted before 31 March 2022 then the fund will be closed.

## **Repeat Applications**

Support will usually be provided from the fund once, however repeat applications will be considered dependent on circumstances and assessed on its own merits.

## **Fraudulent applications**

- The officer assessing the application will need to pose questions or seek evidence to establish the facts before making a decision.
- Failure by the applicant to disclose a material fact or to make a false application will be treated as a fraudulent application.
- Where fraud has been detected the applicant will be refused any further assistance and where appropriate, the Council may prosecute the applicant.

## **Data**

- Any request for supporting evidence will be reasonable and proportionate according to the merits of the case.
- North Devon Council will only collect data relevant to an individual's Household Support Fund application.
- Data will be held in Firmstep (our Customer Relationship Management software) with all appropriate security measures in place
- Data will be used to
  - Determine eligibility for the Household Support Fund
  - Make contact about decisions or updates related to an application
  - Issue the Household Support Fund payment to a nominated Bank or Building Society account where appropriate
- Data may be shared with both internal and external organisations for the purposes of validating any applications. Information will be cross matched with other data held by the Council and third-party agencies e.g. Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) for verification purposes.

- Data may be shared within the organisation to support efforts to redirect an applicant to other support that may be available.
- Data may also be shared within the organisation or with other Government agencies in order to prevent and/or detect potentially fraudulent activity. Subject to a legal gateway, information may also be shared for the prevention of fraud and criminal activity with other organisations such as
  - The police
  - Immigration Service, Absconder Services and/or UK Border Agency
  - Health and social care organisations
  - Other Local Authorities
- Personal data will not be kept longer than necessary

## **Award Process**

Applications can be made online or by telephone by the customer or 3<sup>rd</sup> party such as 365 Energy, Citizens Advice Bureau, Encompass etc.

The application will be subject to a verification process where the assessor may request further information to enable an accurate assessment.

The assessor will consider all relevant information and take into account amongst other things:

- The applicant's financial circumstances and those of their household members
- The applicant's access to other forms of financial support
- The circumstances and reasons for the application
- Preventative measures taken by the applicant and their household members
- The potential impact of making or not making the award
- The budgetary situation of the fund

This will then be passed to a Manager for a final decision and arrangement of payment.

A declaration will be made by the Applicant which will allow the Council to share information with third parties to help prevent fraud. Records will be kept on each application received for the duration of the scheme.

Applications will be assessed as soon as practicable and usually within 3 working days.

## Appendix A

In exceptional cases of genuine emergency where existing housing support schemes do not meet this exceptional need, the Fund can be used to support housing costs with the following caveats:

- Where eligible, ongoing housing support for rent must be provided through the housing cost element of Universal Credit (UC) and Housing Benefit (HB) rather than the Household Support Fund.
- Eligibility for Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) must first be considered before emergency housing support is offered through the Household Support Fund. The Authority must also first consider whether the claimant is at statutory risk of homelessness and therefore owed a duty of support through the Homelessness Prevention Grant (HPG).
- In exceptional cases of genuine emergency, households in receipt of HB, UC, or DHPs can still receive housing cost support through the Household Support Fund if it is deemed necessary by their Authority. However, the Fund should not be used to provide housing support on an ongoing basis or to support unsustainable tenancies.
- Individuals in receipt of some other form of housing support could still qualify for the other elements of the Household Support Fund, such as food, energy, water, essentials linked to energy and water and wider essentials.

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