



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, 8TH APRIL, 2024 at 10.00 am.**

(NOTE: A location plan for the Brynsworthy Environment Centre is attached to the agenda front pages. For meetings held at Brynsworthy only, you can join the meeting virtually via Microsoft Teams. There are also limited spaces to attend the meeting in person. 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)

Membership of the Strategy and Resources Committee will be appointed at Annual Council on the evening of 27 March 2024

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2024 (attached). (Pages 5 - 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. A declaration of interest under the Code of Conduct will be a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, an Other Registrable Interest or a Non-Registrable Interest. If the item directly relates to your interest you must declare the interest and leave the room for the item, save in the case of Other Registrable Interests or Non-Registrable Interests where you may first speak on the item as a member of the public if provision has been made for the public to speak. If the matter does not directly relate to your interest but still affects it then you must consider whether you are affected to a greater extent than most people and whether a reasonable person would consider your judgement to be clouded, if you are then you must leave the room for the item (although you may speak as a member of the public if provision has been made for the public to speak) or, if you are not, then you can declare the interest but still take part).

5. To agree the agenda between Part 'A' and Part 'B' (Confidential Restricted Information).

PART 'A'

6. **Notice of Motion from Council** (Pages 15 - 16)
Notice of Motion referred from Council on 17 January 2024 (attached).
7. **361 Energy CIC Contract** (Pages 17 - 28)
Report by Service Lead - Private Sector Housing (attached).

PART 'B' (CONFIDENTIAL RESTRICTED INFORMATION)

Nil.

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

27.03.24



North Devon Council protocol on recording/filming at Council meetings

The Council is committed to openness and transparency in its decision-making. Recording is permitted at Council meetings that are open to the public. Members of the public that attend meetings must be aware that these meetings are open to the public and so therefore both individuals and the Council itself have the right to record the meeting. The Council understands that some members of the public attending its meetings may not wish to be filmed. The Chair of the meeting will make sure any request not to be filmed is respected.

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 Chair 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 recording should leave the room ensuring all recording equipment is switched off.
4. Any member of the public has the right not to be filmed. We ensure that agendas for, and signage at, Council meetings make it clear that recording can take place – anyone not wishing to be filmed must advise the Chair at the earliest opportunity to allow them to be directed to an area in the room where they will not be caught on camera. Subject to paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 above, audio recordings shall be permitted at all times during public meetings.
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 dial 8253 for Corporate and Community Services.

All public meetings held at Brynsworthy Environment Centre are held on the ground floor and are accessible through the main entrance to the building or via a ramp located adjacent to the main entrance



NORTH DEVON COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Strategy and Resources Committee held in the Barum Room - Brynsworthy on Monday, 4th March, 2024 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: Members:

Councillor Roome (Chair)

Councillors Bell, Clayton, D Knight, R Knight, Lane, C Leaver, Maskell, Prowse, Wilkinson and Worden

Officers:

Chief Executive, Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Customer Focus, Senior Solicitor and Monitoring Officer, Place Manager (Town Centres), Head of Place, Property and Regeneration and Sustainability and Climate Officer

Also Present in person:

Councillors Haworth-Booth, Norman and Spear.

Also Present virtually:

Councillor Cann

95. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Crabb and Milton.

96. TO APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5 FEBRUARY 2024

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 5 February 2024 (circulated previously) be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to a correction on minute 87, Approval and Release of S106 Public Open Space Funds – Barnstaple, South Molton and Tawstock as follows:

RECOMMENDED that Council vary the capital programme by £358,019.97 and the funds be released subject to a funding agreement upon such terms and conditions as may be agreed by the Senior Solicitor and Monitoring Officer for external projects.

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

There were no items brought forward, which in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered as a matter of urgency.

98. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS.

Councillors C Leaver, Maskell and Roome declared an other registerable interest in item 10, Devolution Offer, as they were all Devon County Councillors.

99. FUNDING PROPOSAL FOR THE ROLE OF A CLIMATE ENGAGEMENT COMMUNICATIONS INTERN AT THE DEVON CLIMATE EMERGENCY PARTNERSHIP

The Committee considered a report by the Sustainability and Climate Officer (circulated previously) regarding Funding Proposal for the role of a Climate and Engagement Communications Intern at the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership.

The Lead Member for Climate and Biodiversity, Cllr R Knight introduced the report as follows:

The Climate and Engagement and Communications Intern position was vacated in November 2023. Pressure on resources at Devon County Council mean that the position would not be replaced using the authority's funds. It was unlikely that Communications Officers within the partnership would be able to fulfil this role between them. Coordinating meetings and managing the newsletter and social media platforms took up a lot of time and required specialised attention. While North Devon Council communications Officers were willing to help, they considered a leading communications officer was necessary for the success of such a significant project.

At its meeting in December 2023 the Climate Task Force recommended that resourcing on behaviour change and engagement should be increased and monitoring the implementation of the plans needed a dedicated resource to carry this out effectively.

The Sustainability and Climate Officer advised that all the other Devon Authorities had agreed to contribute towards the post with the exception of South Hams, who were still going through their budget process and Plymouth, who had recently contributed to the partnership by leading on a £3million funding bid.

RESOLVED that, subject to other partners agreeing to contribute, £2,000 be allocated from the Environment Initiatives earmarked reserves for four years to fund a Climate Engagement and Communications Intern position as set out in the report.

100. THE DEVON, CORNWALL AND ISLES OF SCILLY ADAPTATION STRATEGY

The Committee considered a report by the Sustainability and Climate Officer (circulated previously) regarding the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Adaptation Strategy.

The Sustainability and Climate Officer highlighted the following:

- The adopted Carbon reduction plan set out how the Council would cut down on carbon emissions.
- This Adaptation Strategy set out how to adapt to Climate change and the challenges that presented.
- The geographical area covered depicted a regional picture of circumstances which was easier to account for as opposed to pinpointing on a smaller geographical area.
- The proposal was to endorse this Strategy which in no way involved any additional officer hours or funding.

In response to a question in relation to ensuring all Town and Parish Councils were engaged with this Strategy. The Sustainability and Climate Officer advised that she was having a meeting to discuss this very issue and would ensure the information was disseminated.

The Chair added that the Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC) would be good ambassadors for distribution of the message as they had a considerable of Parish and Town Council members.

RESOLVED that the Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Adaptation Strategy be endorsed.

101. STREET MARSHAL SCHEME

The Committee considered a report by the Place Manager (Town Centres), (circulated previously), regarding the Street Marshal Scheme.

The Place Manager (Town Centres) highlighted the following:

- The Council had agreed, at a meeting in September 2023, to earmark reserves to extend the Street Marshal scheme from October 2023 until 31 March 2024.
- The extension was to allow Officers to explore funding opportunities to provide a long-term solution to the provision of street marshals in Barnstaple and Ilfracombe.
- The Scheme initially only operated in Barnstaple and the extension was agreed to include Ilfracombe with an evaluation of the benefits of widening the provision to both towns reported to a future meeting.
- During the six month extension period the scheme had operated in Barnstaple five days a week and in Ilfracombe for two days a week.
- The scheme had contributed to a significant reduction in overall crime and incidents of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) reported to the Police.
- No towns in Devon were invited to apply for funding from the Safer Streets round 5.
- A further extension to fund this scheme by the Council was being sought as seen in the report at 2.1 to 2.4.
- The results of a recent survey of businesses and general public in both Barnstaple and Ilfracombe showed that:
 - 92% of respondents (352) had seen a reduction in ASB
 - 80% of respondents (352) had seen a reduction in violence
 - 79% of respondents (352) had seen a reduction in criminal damage

- 93% of respondents (352) had seen a reduction in street drinking
- 79% of respondents (352) had seen a reduction in theft
- Businesses felt that the presence of street marshals had a positive impact on the day-to-day running of their business.
- 96% of Businesses felt that the street marshals had a positive impact on the community.

The Place Manager (Town Centres), in response to a question on deploying the marshals to other towns and villages confirmed discussions with other parish and town councils could be held and that there could be flexibility to use marshals in other areas.

In response to a question in relation to money being saved by not funding this resource in light of there being CCTV, Police and security at Green Lanes. The Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive responded that external funding to continue this service was currently not forthcoming and that earmarked reserves had been made available to continue the service without interruption while external funding could be looked into further. The visual presence of street marshals in the town centre had shown to be of great benefit for the businesses and shoppers in the town.

In response to a question about whether the requested deadline extension of 30 June 2024 was long enough to secure alternative funding. The Place Manager (Town Centres) advised that the deadline was needed and hoped a solution would be found by then.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) The Contract Procedure Rules be waived and approved that a new contract be entered into, up to 30 June 2024, with the existing provider (subject to agreeing terms), on the basis that they have been delivering the service for the last 15 months and have established trusted, invaluable contacts and relationships with Council staff, Police, businesses, Town Council and wider community;
- (b) Authority be delegated to the Place Manager (town centres) and the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive to determine the exact operating hours of the scheme in consultation with key partners such as the Police and Town Councils, based on demand and available budget;
- (c) Authority be delegated to the Place Manager (town centres) and the Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive to determine whether an external contract is the most effective and efficient operating model to deliver the service in the medium to long term or whether employing staff directly would be better value and provide a better service; and
- (d) The cost of the Street Marshal scheme be funded from the Town Centre Management earmarked reserve and any financial contribution from Town Councils' as set out in section 5 of the report.

102. REVIEW OF THE NORTH DEVON COUNCIL (OFF-STREET PARKING PLACES) ORDER 2024

The Committee considered a report by the Parking Manager (circulated previously) regarding the Review of the North Devon Council (Off Street parking Places) Order 2024.

The Head of Place, Property and Regeneration highlighted the following:

- The Off Street Parking order had been reviewed and adopted by Strategy and Resources at a meeting earlier this year.
- The report today contained a small number of additional updates required to complete the review.
- The amendments could be seen at section 4.1 to 4.8 of the report.

The Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive advised the Committee that a full review of the parking strategy was underway and once complete a report would be presented at a future meeting for Members consideration.

Councillor Lane asked for it to be noted that he had received confirmation from the Carpark Manager that there were in fact no car parking spaces in Swimbridge and he asked that Swimbridge be removed from the Order.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) The amendments to the Off Street Parking Order as listed be approved:
 - (i) Barnstaple: Lower Pilton – the addition of D4 (Monday to Saturday (including Bank holidays)).
 - (ii) Braunton: (a) Caen Street Car Park – the removal of D3 (Monday to Saturday inclusive) and (b) Chaloners Road Car Park – the removal of D3 (Monday to Saturday inclusive)
 - (iii) Combe Martin: (a) Kiln Car Park – the addition of P1 (Virtual and paper tickets are only valid for the period of purchase. Paper tickets must be clearly displayed in the vehicle at all times) and (b) The Parade Car Park – the addition of P1 (Virtual and paper tickets are only valid for the period of purchase. Paper tickets must be clearly displayed in the vehicle at all times).
 - (iv) Ilfracombe: (a) Hele – the addition of D4 (Monday to Saturday (including Bank holidays)) and (b) Ropery Road Car park – the addition of H3 (8:00am to 8:00pm from 15 March to 31 October).
 - (v) Instow: (a) Instow Marine Car park – the removal of H2 (8:00am to 6:00pm), (b) Instow Marine Car park – the addition of H22 (8:00am to 10:00pm) and (c) Instow Marine Car park – the increase of permits to £175.00.
 - (vi) Lynton and Lynmouth: (a) Manor Foreshore – the addition of P1 (Virtual and paper tickets are only valid for the period of purchase. Paper tickets must be clearly displayed in the vehicle at all times) and (b) Manor Gardens Roadway – the removal of all codes except H21 (parking prohibited at any time).
 - (vii) South Molton: (a) Sheep Pen Car park – the addition of D4 (Monday to Saturday (including Bank holidays)) and (b) South Molton Central – the addition of D4 (Monday to Saturday (including Bank holidays)).

- (viii) Charges: (a) the removal of C58 in its entirety (£120 per annum for Adelaide Terrace Resident's Association only) and (b) the addition of C62 (3hrs: £3.90, 4hrs: £5.20, 5hrs: £6.50, 6hrs: £7.80, 7hrs: £9.10 and All Day: £10.00); and

- (b) Delegated power be given to the Head of Place, Property and Regeneration in consultation with the Leader, Senior Solicitor and Monitoring Officer to make the Order following the consultation subject to there being no material objections or amendments necessary.

103. DEVON AND TORBAY DEVOLUTION OFFER

The Committee considered a report by the Chief Executive (circulated previously) regarding the Devon and Torbay Devolution Offer.

The Chief Executive introduced Phil Adams, Service Manager, Economic Inclusion, Skills and Knowledge Economy / Programme Lead, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Devolution at Devon County Council who gave the Committee a presentation on the proposed Devon and Torbay Devolution as follows:

- Devolution is the transfer of powers and funding from central government to local government.
- Decisions can be made closer to the communities and businesses they affect.
- It would mean more effective, better targeted public services, greater growth and stronger partnerships between public, private and community leaders in local areas.
- It is the Government's ambition for every part of England that wants a devolution deal to have one by 2030.
- Devolution deals agreed or proposed to date cover 60% of England's population.
- The devolution framework continues to evolve, Combined County Authorities (CCA) were a new model that have been designed for rural areas.
- There were different levels of deal on offer depending on the type of governance model.
- The powers and funding available now ranged from the highest level 4 to the lowest level 1.
- A non-mayoral governance, such as Devon, attracted Level 2 powers, other level 2 proposed deals currently accepted by government were from Cornwall, Lancashire (Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Council, and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council) as well as Devon and Torbay.
- A Combined County Authority would give the area a stronger voice in Whitehall.
- The priorities of the Authority would include:
 - Maximising our economic potential – skills and education; and supporting local businesses
 - Addressing our housing pressures
 - Improving local transport
 - Meeting net carbon zero ambitions
 - Delivering investment in Devon and Torbay
 - Creating a strong and sustainable local economy

- Benefits of the deal would help in areas such as Economy and Growth, Skills and adult education, housing, transport and net zero and low carbon.
- The immediate impacts of the devolution offer for 2024-25 would mean local control over the Adult Education Budget, input into the development of the Local Skills Improvement Plan, Democratic control of the functions and roles of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), Capital funding of £16million for Green Homes investment programme, green business transition, green skills capacity building, transition to low carbon shipping, stronger partnership with Homes England and a platform for further devolution over time.
- The Principles of the CCA would be:
 - Effective Leadership
 - Sensible Geography
 - Flexibility
 - Appropriate accountability
 - Partnership
 - Inclusivity
 - Additionality
 - Subsidiarity
 - Collaboration
- The CCA would consist of Constituent Members – Three members each nominated by Devon County Council and Torbay Council.
- Non-Constituent Members – up to four members, including two representatives of the Devon District Councils.
- Associate Members – two members representing business and skills sectors.
- There would be A CCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee, an Audit Committee, Advisory Boards and the Team Devon Joint Committee – made up of representatives of the Devon District Councils, National Park Authorities and Devon Association of Local Councils.
- The six constituent members would have full voting rights.
- Non- constituent members will have voting rights on all but a small list of reserved matters. Reserved matters included approval of annual CCA budget, constitution changes, the appointment of the Chief Executive Officer and significant financial decisions.
- The Act did not allow associate members to vote.
- There would be no casting vote for the Chair.
- It was hoped that the intent of the CCA would be to seek consensus on decisions between all members, with that principle to be embedded within the Constitution.
- The Constitution was still being drafted.
- Assurance would be provided in the form of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee.
- The political balance of the CCA would be a reflection of the political balance of the constituent authorities.
- The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would not be a member of the same political party as their Lead Member.
- Both the Overview and Scrutiny and Audit Committee's would include at least two members of each constituent authority and there would be District Council representatives on both committees.
- The Audit Committee would include an independent member.

- The consultation that was being run to establish the Devon and Torbay CCA was open until 24 March 2024.
- A submission to Government would be made in April with the Secretary of State seeking Parliamentary approval during May.
- A letter from the Secretary of State to the two Councils seeking consent to the Statutory Instrument would be expected in June.
- The Statutory Instrument would be laid in Parliament in July this would take 6-8 weeks.
- If legislative process was approved the regulation order would be signed creating the CCA expected in October.
- More information can be found at www.devontorbaydeal.org.uk

The Committee debated the issues and concerns they had with the proposal. The Chief Executive summarised the points that the Committee raised as follows:

- On the whole members agreed in principle with the devolution offer and the idea of more local powers to make decisions.
- There were concerns around the democratic deficit.
- Concerns around the District councils not being involved in heavy decisions – around major investment projects as an example.
- A Member appointed to the Board by Devon County Council should be a representative for the North Devon area.
- Greater clarity around what a reserved decision was for example which decisions District Councils would not be a part of.
- Transport functions it was felt District Councils should be involved in those in some way.
- Major investment decisions it was felt District Councils should be involved in the making of them somehow.
- Delivery of projects at a local level.
- Skills delivery.
- The use of the Devon Housing Task force for the delivery of housing.
- Ensuring the relationship District Council already has with Homes England wasn't damaged by having another layer of Council.
- The Pipeline of projects referred to in paragraph 69; "...combining their skills and capacity to reduce the barriers to affordable housing delivery, regeneration and wider housing growth through the development of a shared development pipeline for the region.", of the document – District Councils should be involved around this pipeline of projects.
- Mention of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Business support being delivered locally.
- A strong accountability process was very important with District members involved in that.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and that the Council were in principle in agreement with the formation of a CCA. To give the Chief Executive delegated power to formulate the response to be shared with the Leader and the three party leaders.

Chair

The meeting ended at 12.33 pm

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

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Strategy and Resources Committee

Meeting on 4 March 2024

To consider the following Notice of Motion referred by Council on 17 January 2024:

City of Sanctuary UK is a national movement to ensure the UK is a welcoming place of safety for all people fleeing violence and persecution.

This motion recognises that people seeking sanctuary not only need to have their basic needs met but also deserve our compassion and support. North Devon Council is already central in supporting Government-led refugee relocation programmes in our communities, partnering with the Home Office, Ministry of Defence, DHLUC and local charities to deliver resettlement through: Homes for Ukraine; the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP); the UKRS Community Sponsorship scheme, and the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme (ACRS).

In becoming a member of the City of Sanctuary network, North Devon Council will benefit from the sharing of best practice, resources and initiatives amongst a national network.

Becoming a member of the City of Sanctuary network will signal an ongoing commitment within North Devon Council towards spreading a culture of compassion and welcome to migrants and refugees, both across its operations and out into our communities.

Consequently, the Council resolves to:

1. Join the City of Sanctuary Local Authority Network.
2. Work to implement the City of Sanctuary pledges through its actions and policies, and with its partners in the statutory and voluntary sectors.
3. Consider working towards the full City of Sanctuary award.
4. Acknowledge the contribution of refugees and people seeking sanctuary in North Devon."

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North Devon Council

Report Date: Monday, 8 April 2024

Topic: 361 Energy CIC Contract

Report by: Wendy Slate, Service Lead - Private Sector Housing

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Members approved the commissioning of 361 Energy CIC, to provide a home energy service at the Strategy & Resources meeting on 12th April 2021 (minute 9 – 21st April 2021 refers).

1.2. The contract was for a 3 year period (October 2021 to September 2024) and was to provide a tailored support service to around 200 households per year.

1.3. This paper provides an update on the contract and seeking approval to enter into a revised contract from October 2024, for a further 3 year period.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. To approve NDC entering into a revised contract with 361 Energy CIC from October 2024, for a further 3 year period (£24k per year; total contract £72k).

2.2. To approve setting aside Constitutional requirements to seek at least 3 quotes.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. To continue to commission 361 Energy CIC for a home energy service for a further 3 years, as the households assisted have received an estimated financial gain of £158,325.15, but with some enhancements (detailed within 4.13).

3.2. Working with 361 Energy CIC, who are already commissioned to provide complementary services through the Local Energy Advice Partnership (LEAP), represents the best value option for providing an energy advisory service based upon the price, quality and expertise offered by them (which is recognised by other statutory partners) and therefore, for these reasons, seeking at least three quotes will not result in a better value solution.



3.3.361 Energy CIC is a not-for-profit community interest company that is based in North Devon and Torridge, who support households in fuel poverty. They are an integral partner for energy efficiency projects, including Energy Company Obligation, Local Authority Delivery Scheme and Home Upgrade Scheme. They work in partnership with the other 4 Community Energy Groups covering other parts of Devon. They're trained in working with the fuel poor, providing energy advice and managing works.

4. REPORT

4.1. NDC commissioned 361 Energy CIC to provide a home energy service for a 3 year period for £20k yr-1 and the advice would include:

- 4.1.1. Behaviour tips – simple lifestyle changes that can make significant savings (e.g. turning appliances off standby, limiting hot water usage, low energy lighting, etc.).
- 4.1.2. Fabric measures – information on insulation systems for different properties with guidance on the financial benefits and CO₂ savings.
- 4.1.3. Heating – promoting the benefits of thermostatic heating controls and how to maximise comfort whilst saving energy.
- 4.1.4. Funding – the latest local, regional or national schemes that offer support towards the cost of energy efficiency measures.
- 4.1.5. Fuel switching – advice on the most cost-effective and low carbon fuel sources relevant to a property's location.
- 4.1.6. Tariff switching – helping resident switch to the best energy deals.
Renewable energy – advice on the best systems, ancillary products (e.g. solar batteries) and Government incentives (e.g. Domestic RHI).

4.2. The service was to be targeted at residents who need more support and are at most risk of fuel poverty, namely, in order of priority:

- 4.2.1. Residents who have applied for a Disabled Facilities Grant.
- 4.2.2. Homeless applicants who have been supported to move into private rented accommodation.
- 4.2.3. Residents in receipt of state benefits in relation to Affordable Warmth Criteria.
- 4.2.4. Residents that meet the criteria in North Devon Council's Statement of Intent.
- 4.2.5. Residents with a low household income that live in a property with high running costs (this can be determined via a fuel poverty assessment).



- 4.3. The client would initially receive a detailed telephone advice call followed by a home assessment. The home assessment is carried out by a fully trained Home Energy Advisor and this assessment can take up to 2 hours. The advisor would ascertain the householders circumstances and requirements; some of this can be met by quick interventions i.e. provision of curtains, radiator foils. Other interventions will require appropriate follow up work and can be resource intensive. The advisor has access to wider services and will assist the client in making applications and provide support throughout the process; this could include Household Support Fund schemes (DCC provided funding for small energy efficiency measures) and/or replacement boiler (via LEAP).
- 4.4. Since the service has been in operation 272 households have been referred. Below is a breakdown of completed referrals and assistance provided:
- 4.4.1. October 2021 – March 2022: 45 households with an estimated financial benefit of £30,366
 - 4.4.2. April 2022 – March 2023: 118 households with an estimated financial benefit of £78,414.
 - 4.4.3. April 2023 – December 2023: 42 households with an estimated financial benefit of £34,415.35.
 - 4.4.4. January 2024 to 29th February – 20 households with an estimated financial benefit of £15,129.80.
 - 4.4.5. Total estimated financial benefit to date is £158,325.15 (examples of the financial benefits are detailed within 4.6)
 - 4.4.6. 30 households declined a home visit post telephone call or were not available when the home visit was scheduled.
- 4.5. As at 1st March there are 17 households awaiting either a home visit or completion of interventions.
- 4.6. The financial benefits householders received came under 5 categories: (a) income maximisation & debt advice, (b) energy efficiency measures, (c) behaviour change, (d) technology and (e) home measures & wider support. Assistance included vouchers (fuel top up voucher & household support fund), assistance with new benefit claims, provision of energy efficiency measures to reduce energy costs (LED bulbs, heated throws, curtains, upgraded white goods & radiator foils), advice on behaviour change to reduce energy costs (thermostat, wash at 30 degrees, defrosting freezer) and provision of Smart meters.



- 4.7. In addition to these financial benefits, households were assisted to be added to the Priority Service Register, referrals to other organisations, including Fire Service for a home safety check, South West Water and WiserMoney to enable the resident to receive a very holistic service.
- 4.8. The Government announced in the Spring Budget the extension of the Household Support Fund for a 6 month period (April to September 2024), together with an additional £500 million, to continue providing targeted support to vulnerable households with the cost of essentials such as food and utilities.
- 4.9. The majority of the referrals were from residents who have applied for a Disabled Facilities Grant and referrals from the other categories were difficult to achieve. There were a few referrals from those households who met the criteria in NDC's Statement of Intent, but many of these had already engaged with the approved installers and were aware of the eligible energy measures under the Energy Company Obligation scheme. In agreement, we expanded the definition of 'homelessness applicants' to include those under homelessness prevention and this did increase the referrals for this client group. Training was provided to colleagues within the housing team and reminders were issued to reiterate the benefit of the service.
- 4.10. Whilst acknowledging that we didn't receive our target of 200 householders per year, we are confident that the service has been invaluable for those receiving the assistance. The initial aim to assist 200 householders was based on number of Disabled Facilities Grant applications received in a year. All applicants applying for a Disabled Facilities Grant were contacted to offer the service and some declined as they were either already engaged with 361 Energy CIC, or receiving assistance from their landlords support service. Others declined as they felt that they didn't need the assistance (some had already carried out their own energy efficiency measures) or they were just managing their health conditions.
- 4.11. NDC has benefited from having a dedicated Private Sector – Energy Efficiency Officer from December 2023, but they are not a fully trained Home Energy Advisor. Their role will be to monitor this contract to ensure that the specification is being adhered to and to ensure that referrals are being made from all relevant departments of the Council. This post holder also oversees Energy Company Obligation Flex Scheme and where relevant make referrals to 361 Energy CIC for a householder to receive the holistic service.



- 4.12. National Energy Action have produced their UK Fuel Poverty Monitoring Report 2022-23 and outlines the benefits for individuals receiving assistance; which include energy cost savings, improvement in debt repayment and improvements in household safety, health & well-being. Research has evidenced that when vulnerable households access support, the benefits can be life changing.
- 4.13. Taking the lessons learnt from the current contract, we have been in discussion with colleagues and representative at 361 Energy CIC to review and enhance the contract from October 2024. The enhancements would include expansion of the resident group eligible to be referred (i.e. those applying for Energy Company Obligation grant funding, Care Leavers moving from supported accommodation, those in financial difficulties) and detailing the provisions of energy efficient measures that could be funded via Better Care Fund grants (contained with our Financial Assistance Policy for the Better Care Fund).
- 4.14. The new contract will not include a target of householders who should be supported via the scheme as referrals are reliant upon identifying a householder, the householder meeting the criteria and their willingness to engage with 361 Energy CIC. However, output measures will be monitored by our Private Sector – Energy Efficiency Officer.
- 4.15. Our strategy to increase participation for the next 3 years will include:
- 4.15.1. Continuing to contact all Disabled Facilities Grant applicants
 - 4.15.2. Liaising regularly with colleagues within our Housing Options Service to encourage referrals from:
 - 4.15.2.1. Homelessness / prevention applicants
 - 4.15.2.2. Care Leavers assisted into accommodation
 - 4.14.3 Households identified by other departments of the Council i.e. Customer Service Centre, Private Sector Housing Team
 - 4.14.4 Households enquiring and/or applying for energy efficiency measures via the Energy Company Obligation Flex Scheme (or other Government funded scheme)
- Our Private Sector – Energy Efficiency Officer will provide promotional information to all departments within the Council and continually monitor the referral rates.



5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. A £24k yr-1 contract with 361 Energy CIC for a 3 year period to provide a home energy advice service; total contract £72k and this amount has been incorporated to the baseline revenue budget.

6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. An equality impact assessment for this project has been completed.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

7.1. Potential improvements in energy efficiency from increased housing standards may impact positively on the environment.

8. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

8.1. What impact, positive or negative, does the subject of this report have on:

8.1.1. The commercialisation agenda:

8.1.1.1. None

8.1.2. Improving customer focus and/or

8.1.2.1. Providing residents of North Devon a free home energy advice service to reduce their carbon footprint and save money

8.1.3. Regeneration or economic development

8.1.3.1. Improvement in housing standards

9. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

9.1 The decision in respect of the recommendations in this report can be made by this Committee pursuant to delegated powers provided in paragraph 1 of Annexe 1 to Part 3 of the Constitution and also paragraph 12.1 of the Contract Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Constitution.

10. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

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

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- Strategy & Resources meeting on 12th April 2021 (minute 9 – 21st April 2021 refers).
- Financial Policy for the Better Care Fund



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

12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers: Wendy Slate: Service Lead – Private Sector Housing

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Equality Impact Assessment

Service Area: Environmental Health & Housing Services

Head of Service: Nina Lake

Lead Officer: Wendy Slate

Date of Assessment: 01/03/2024

Name of policy/function/project/service area to be assessed: Home Energy Service

Brief description of proposal to be assessed: Commissioned Home Energy Service to assist residents to increase home energy efficiency and reduce fuel poverty.

Proposed implementation date of project/proposal: October 2024

Brief description of the anticipated outcomes of the proposal:

Proposal	Current Arrangement	Proposed Arrangement	Comment
Domestic energy advice service	Commissioned service	Continuation of commissioned service	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

Consultation:

Brief description of any consultation undertaken with stakeholders and summarise the results and how it has influenced the proposal. Please attach a summary of consultation results or other relevant reports:

Consultation with NDC Officers and representatives from 361 Energy CIC. Both parties are keen to continue this contract as the service has been proven to be beneficial to North Devon residents. Both NDC & 361 Energy CIC have received positive feedback from residents; who commented on the professional service, representatives from 361 Energy being knowledge, kind and very helpful.

Demographic Data by protected characteristic:

Please detail the Census 2021 data for protected characteristics for North Devon (as detailed in the EIA Guidance for Managers and on NDC website):

Within the North Devon District area the population is: 48.7% male and 51.3% female.

Age: 16.7% are aged 15 and under, 4% Aged 16 to 19, 31.4% Aged 20 to 49, 35.6% Aged 50 to 74, 12.3% Aged 75 and above.

Disability / Long term health: 72.7 % stated they were not disabled under the Equality Act – with no long term physical or mental health conditions, 11.6 % stated they were disabled under the equality act –with day-to-day activities limited a little, 8 % stated they were disabled under the equality act –with day-to-day activities limited a lot, 7.8 % stated they were disabled under the equality act – having a long term physical or mental health condition but day-to-day activities were not limited.

Equality Data by protected characteristic from consultation:

Please detail the equality data obtained as part of the consultation and compare this data to the Census 2021 data (as detailed in the EIA Guidance for Managers and on NDC website) and identify where this data does not reflect the demographics for North Devon and any disparities in outcomes by characteristic:

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Other Data:

Please detail any other data that has been obtained and taken into consideration (for example, other Census 2021 data which is not related to protected characteristics such as no household members having English as main language, vulnerable groups, education, economy, housing, access to transport etc, Public Health and NHS data, deprived neighbourhoods, workforce profile data):

National Energy Action have produced their UK Fuel Poverty Monitoring Report 2022-23 and outlines the benefits for individuals receiving assistance; which include energy cost savings, improvement in debt repayment and improvements in household safety, health & well-being. Research has evidenced that when vulnerable households access support, the benefits can be life changing.

Impact:

Summarise any positive impacts or benefits, any negative impacts (i.e. potential for discrimination, disadvantage or disproportionate treatment) and any neutral impacts and the evidence/data you have taken into account to reach this

conclusion. Be aware that there may be positive, negative and neutral impacts within each characteristic. (NOTE: please refer to the EIA Guidance for Managers or Equality Strategy for the characteristics) Where an impact is unknown, state so, and identify what steps will be taken to address any gaps in data:

Characteristic	Impact (what information was used to assess impact? Data/feedback etc. Describe whether this is positive or negative)	Scale of Impact (High/Med/Low)	Mitigation Required (what needs to be done to reduce/remove the impact? Have service users been involved in providing this insight?)
Age	Positive	High	Click or tap here to enter text.
Disability	Positive	High	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

Consideration of Alternatives:

Describe what alternatives have been considered and/or what actions will be taken to remove or minimise any potential negative effect identified above (attach evidence to appropriate data, reports, etc):

The re-commissioning of the home energy service aims to assist those people who are most vulnerable to the impacts of fuel poverty and ensure that a tailored service is provided.

Funding Considerations:

ECO, Better Care Fund

Monitoring Arrangements:

Briefly describe the monitoring arrangements/systems that will be put in place to monitor the effects of this proposal.

NDC's Private Sector – Energy Efficiency Officer will monitor the contract to ensure that it's meeting its aims.

Date on which you will be re-considering the project/report and submitting a further EIA if applicable.

Click or tap here to enter text.

The completion of an Equality Impact Assessment is an ongoing process. Impacts will be continually reviewed during projects and the decision making process and the Assessment will be updated accordingly and published.

A further assessment will also be required between 6 to 12 months following the implementation of the policy, project, decision or service change which has been implemented.

Reporting and Publication:

Equality Impact Assessments will be published on North Devon Council's website with committee reports as part of the democratic decision making process.

For Equality Impact Assessments that are produced which are not part of the democratic decision making process, please forward to equality@northdevongov.uk for publication.

Corporate and Community Services Use Only: Date of publication to NDC

Website: Click or tap to enter a date.