people and place

Planning for our future together

People and Place Stakeholder Workshop Feedback Report

2022

v1 | Oct 2022

TORRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

northdevon COUNCIL

v1 | Oct 2022

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1 Introduction

Introduction

1.1 North Devon Council and Torridge District Council have adopted a joint local plan setting out the vision, strategies, and policies to guide development in northern Devon. The North Devon and Torridge Local Plan ("The Local Plan") was adopted 2018. During this review the Councils have recognised the importance of engaging with a variety of stakeholders who are able to offer valuable insight to the Local Plan review. They can contribute by identifying issues which may arise in our local communities as well as opportunities that could be valuable to their own organisations while benefiting northern Devon. The stakeholder workshop was the start of engagement with stakeholders as part of the People and Place project which gives communities a role in shaping the future of northern Devon through a review of the Local Plan. The People and Place project encourages everybody to get involved and stay informed throughout the process.

1.2 As part of the early engagement, the Councils held a stakeholder workshop in June 2022 so that the views of the stakeholders could be explored. The main aim of this workshop was to gain an understanding of how much stakeholders knew about local plans and to see their key priorities for the future. They were also asked to consider issues and challenges from the perspective of their own organisations. The workshop was the first opportunity for stakeholders to gather in person and give their views on the Local Plan as well as how it could be shaped to support and benefit local areas more in the future.

2 The Workshop

June 2022 Event

2.1 The stakeholder workshop was held in the afternoon on Monday 20th June 2022 (14:00-17:00). This was an in-person event which took place at Caddsdown Business Support Centre. The workshop took three hours with a mixture of presentations, group discussions and a question-and-answer session. Only one event was planned to begin the engagement for stakeholders with the aim to look at future events based on the response from participants.

Figure 2.1 Information From the June 2022 Stakeholder Workshop

Participants

2.2 The initial invitation went out to 49 organisations representing a variety of areas across North Devon and Torridge. This included organisations who focus on social issues, environmental issues, groups who work closely with local communities and those involved in farming and agriculture. The workshop was attended by 24 people each representing their organisations during the discussions. From North Devon Council and Torridge District Council there were 9 facilitators attending to present, observe and listen to the group discussions.

Format

2.3 The workshop was three hours long and included three activities, the first two involving group discussions and presentations. The third activity being a question-and-answer session to finish the afternoon and ensure that stakeholders had any initial questions answered. The stakeholders were split into four groups with a mixture of organisations in each to allow a variety of views within each discussion. There were two facilitators to support each group and they were there to keep the focus on the question for each activity as well as make a record of discussions.

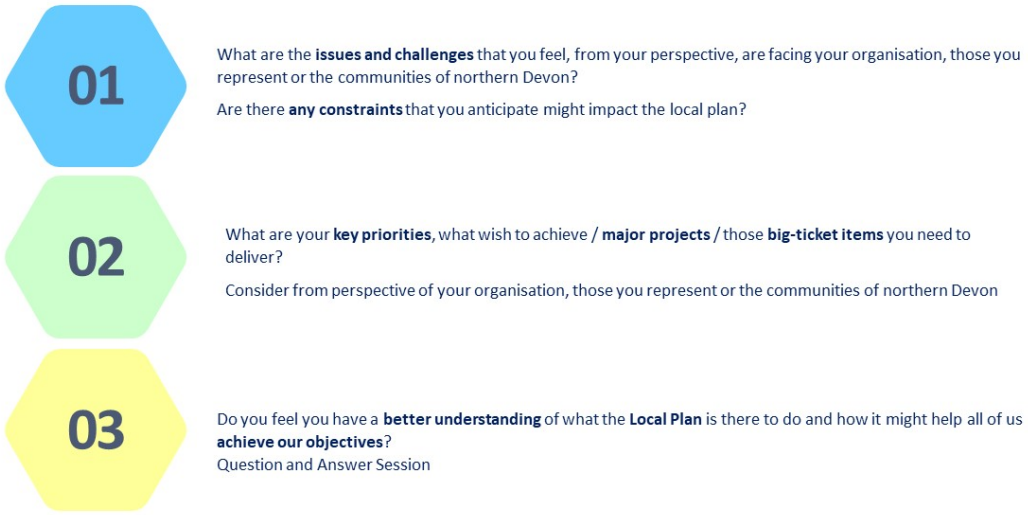
2.4 The workshop began with an introduction, agenda, and housekeeping to welcome the participants and explain how the afternoon would run. An icebreaker aimed to briefly explore the question 'What do you think is the purpose of the Local Plan?'. Three questions were asked to show the level of understanding amongst the stakeholders with the stakeholders being asked to raise their hands if questions applied to them. The questions were followed by a five-minute discussion in the breakout groups. Post-it notes were used to record what the stakeholders thought a local plan was; at this stage it was not important if the responses were correct as it was important to gauge the level of understanding. The three main activities followed this introduction with a short conclusion and goodbye at the end.

3 Activities

Overview

3.1 The three activities have been outlined below. During each activity the stakeholders stayed within the same four groups which had been organised to provide a mixture of interests or areas of expertise within each group. The aim was to create discussion and draw out the connections between different areas of interest such as housing and environmental or social and economic.

Figure 3.1 Activity Questions



Activity One

Activity One - Issues and Challenges
Activity one had a brief introduction to set up the discussion and highlight the key points needed. The stakeholders discussed issues and challenges in the four smaller groups and had 33 minutes in this first breakout session. During the discussion a leader was identified to present the main points from each group. They presented to the other three groups so that all the stakeholders were aware of any issues and challenges raised. A flipchart was provided to each group so that the main points could be recorded and post-it notes were available for more detailed comments from individuals. The aim was to split the flipchart to show internal factors and external constraints.

Activity Two

Activity Two - Key Priorities and Major Projects
Activity two started with another quick introduction with some examples given before the group discussion. The stakeholders discussed their key priorities and major projects in the same small groups as in the previous activity. There were 40 minutes available to discuss these questions. As before, a flipchart and post-it notes were available with facilitators attempting to build the discussion around a few main themes. Another leader was nominated from within each group to feedback to everyone following the discussion.

Activity Three

Activity Three - Question-and-Answer Session
Activity three was a question-and-answer session instead of a group discussion and was focused on the understanding that stakeholders had gained from the workshop. This activity was 20 minutes long and completed the afternoon's activities by summarising and reminding stakeholders that their involvement in the Local Plan would be of value. It was reiterated that the Councils want stakeholders onboard and feeling as though they are able to influence the shape of northern Devon. All facilitators were ready to answer the questions asked at this stage and a brief ‘what next’ presentation followed the questions.

4 Outcomes

Icebreaker

4.1 The outcome from the icebreaker was that most stakeholders had at least some knowledge of what a local plan was and what it could involve. The questions asked allowed the facilitators to see that most had heard of a local plan, several knew what it involved, and a few had been involved in a local plan before.

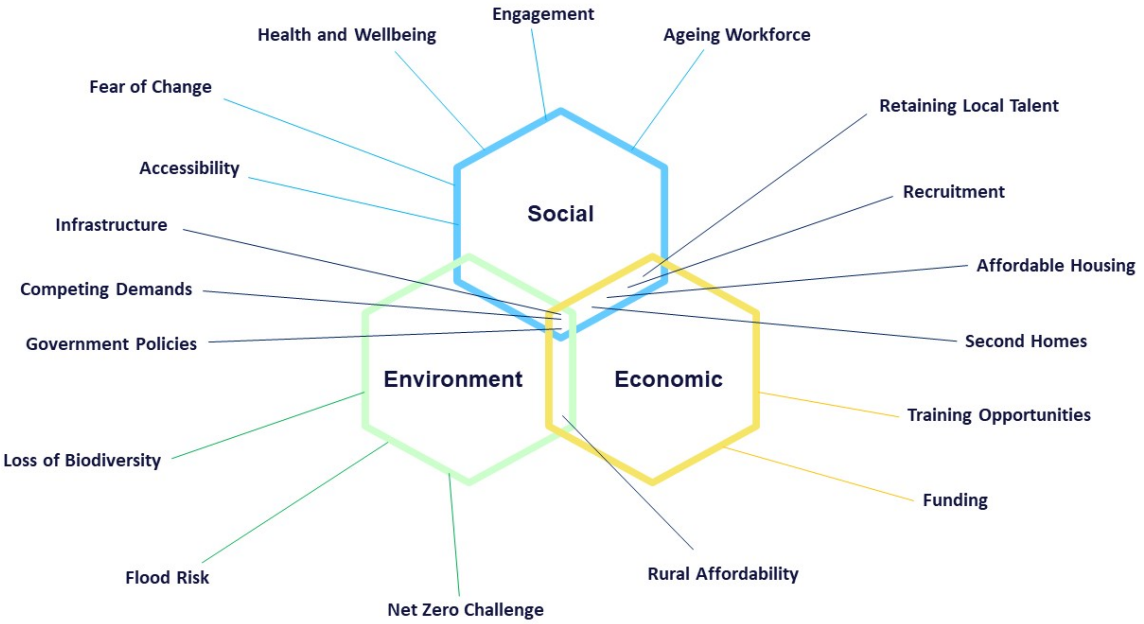
4.2 This activity showed that there was a good level of understanding amongst the stakeholders with most saying that a local plan is a framework which guides development and growth in the local area. Stakeholders recognised that the Local Plan could direct development and infrastructure and was a delivery plan for the Council. Most saw it as a blueprint for all development which aimed to direct how and where development will occur with future sustainable development being of great importance. The Local Plan was also viewed as a document which provides frameworks to assist organisations in planning for the future of the area alongside monitoring what is currently taking place. It was understood that local plans could protect landscape and character by managing growth, this should however be done in an open and transparent way. Furthermore, it was noted that the Local Plan can support the ambitions and goals of local communities, stakeholders, and their partners.

Figure 4.1 Icebreaker Word Cloud

Activity One

4.3 The aim of activity one was to focus on any issues and challenges that stakeholders were aware of in their own organisations or facing others they may represent. The issues and challenges identified were seen across a variety of areas such as environmental, economic and social. There is often a crossover between these areas as well, with many having an impact across more than one. Across all four breakout groups there was a similarity in the issues faced by all of the stakeholders with a few organisations providing perspective on some more unique issues. The main issues and challenges are themed below, these have been taken from the discussion across all four of the breakout groups. The main issues and challenges are set out below showing where there is a crossover within the three main themes.

Figure 4.2 Activity One Themes and Key Words



4.4 The stakeholders found that engagement was an important issue as having a greater understanding of the bigger picture for local plans was beneficial to themselves and the public. Making the process accessible to everyone is a big consideration as it gets more people on board with ideas, allows stakeholders to be more involved and enables them to explain local plans to clients. Stakeholders found that engagement in the past was not explored as much as they would like and commented that it is not only engaging with themselves that was important but also with landowners, the public and other authorities. Building important relationships could benefit everyone involved by driving forward locally supported schemes which benefit locals and improve the relationship with nature and natural spaces.

4.5 Some stakeholders have found recruitment to be a challenge with ageing workforces shrinking as people look at retirement. This is exacerbated by the issue of retaining local talent causing a lack of young skilled workers to fill the spaces being left. Limited housing availability and costs are driving young people away to look for work in other places and leaving some organisations struggling to recruit. This is especially true of smaller companies who are unable to offer competitive wages to attract new workers. Digital working is allowing people to live locally but work online for companies based in areas where wages are higher, this attractive offer is contributing to the difficulty of recruitment in Devon. There is a need for inward investment and new industry to keep young skilled workers in the area or attract them in from elsewhere.

There is also a need to ensure that people want to live and work in the area, they should feel safe and have pride in where they live. The consideration of safety and security in design could have an impact on this as well as health and wellbeing. In such a rural area isolation can be a key challenge to overcome and supporting health and wellbeing would have positive benefits which could also help with employment opportunities. If people love their area and want to contribute to the local economy or work where they live, then this would support organisations at all levels.

4.6 Improvements to accessibility could be beneficial to organisations and the public. This relates to problems such as limited transport options where people find commuting between home and work difficult in more rural areas. Accessibility could also relate to opportunities within rural areas, especially further education opportunities. Better public transport links locally would enable a wider group of people to access employment opportunities in their local area without reliance on owning a car, which may not be practical for everyone. Connecting rural areas may involve improved infrastructure to allow for better public transport while improving infrastructure generally could make town centres more accessible to everybody. Making local centres more accessible would further support smaller businesses who may then be able to offer more attractive wages for staff or invest in new projects. Improved infrastructure encourages investment opportunities in further education establishments therefore benefiting young local people. Alongside infrastructure, improvements to housing are important as one issue identified is a lack of appropriate affordable housing available to young workers who want to live and work locally. Better quality housing with locally sourced materials could allow a greater provision of new homes and therefore more affordable or suitable local needs dwellings. High quality digital infrastructure is essential in rural areas but providing this is currently an issue for organisations. Being able to provide improved digital infrastructure would improve accessibility in rural areas as well as contributing to higher quality infrastructure overall. Stakeholders agreed that improvement is necessary and would likely encourage employees who want to work for organisations with access to the best technology. Improved internet connection is another way to keep rural communities connected and making general resources more accessible is of greater importance now with so many resources moving online. A further consideration for infrastructure is that stakeholders have seen an increased cost and need to examine whether delivery remains achievable with the available funding.

4.7 The issues surrounding affordable housing create challenges for many stakeholders with most associating the lack of housing in general to second home ownership. The stakeholders recognised that this is especially an issue for younger people in northern Devon however it is beginning to affect more residents. There were questions around whether the wider housing crisis reflects a low-wage economy combined with the increase of costs locally, this combination of factors creates a challenge for organisations where they see people spending less and budgeting more. While this occurs there are several areas seeing a rise in staycations which has increased the number of holiday rentals (e.g. Airbnbs) and second homes in Devon. These issues are not unique to Devon and appear to be creating a challenge in other areas of the country with a lack of affordable homes or suitable local needs dwellings. The pressure and demand on new housing is causing tension between the delivery on environmental priorities and the release of land for housing. The issue of rural affordability also needs to be considered with in-migration impacting housing affordability. Stakeholders have seen consequences such as accessibility to housing for local people which has led to other impacts such as reduced roles for schools. In many areas infrastructure has not grown enough to support communities and there has been an increase of pressure on local facilities and rural services. Stakeholders have found that several competing demands are putting pressure on their organisations as they attempt to address local issues.

4.8 In terms of economic issues the challenges identified by stakeholders mostly relate to funding and training opportunities. Many stakeholders found that a lack of funding available to their organisations, or the communities they supported, was creating a challenge as they move forwards with projects or look to improve their facilities and infrastructure. Stakeholders have seen costs increasing but often the funding available does not reflect this change, despite the pressure to complete projects remaining. There is a need for more public sector funding to allow confidence in completing projects, it would also benefit organisations if it was not so difficult to apply for funding. It was suggested that partnership working could provide more opportunities with further engagement events benefiting stakeholders as they allow for networking opportunities. It is possible that workloads could be reduced where work may have already been completed by others, this could lessen the need for funding in some areas thus reducing pressure on applying for funding. Many agreed that northern Devon needs to sell itself more and additional funding is likely to encourage investment in the area. As well as funding, some stakeholders have found that some training opportunities are not as easy to access as they might be in more urban areas. There are often costs associated which has been a big consideration to organisations. Sometimes it is not possible to send employees away to take part in training opportunities, mainly due to costs as they often need to travel to attend. The rise in training undertaken online has improved these opportunities however many are now moving back to being in-person events.

4.9 There are several environmental considerations for stakeholders which can create issues for their organisations. One of the main issues comes from the challenge of achieving net zero as this has put pressure on a variety of organisations. The issue comes from the need to provide new infrastructure such as electric car charging points or to adapt how their organisation runs to ensure that they are ready when government policies change. The delivery of Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW) was discussed as something which could bring future impacts on infrastructure and questions were raised around what the impact on northern Devon could be. There were also concerns around flood risk and loss of biodiversity for a couple of stakeholders. These challenges were more specific to just a few stakeholders rather than a majority however they could be a challenge which affects more people in the future. Flood risk is something that stakeholders involved in development or working at other Councils considered an important issue as effective management and mitigation is necessary to safeguard land and protect communities. Agriculturally based stakeholders shared these concerns and look at how biodiversity in northern Devon will be impacted and change in the future. It appears that a factor behind these concerns is government policies as these can be difficult for smaller organisations to navigate. The policies can be restrictive and not always flexible around local issues as they need to guide decisions so certain targets can be reached. A greater understanding of how local government makes decisions could benefit stakeholders and further engagement could remove some barriers between the two.

Activity Two

4.10 Activity two allowed the stakeholders to discuss their key priorities and major projects that need to be delivered. With a variety of stakeholders in the room, these priorities covered a wide range of topics. Most of these priorities relate to the social theme with environmental and economic considerations also being discussed. The main topics from activity two are set out below.

Figure 4.3 Activity Two Themes and Key Words

4.11 For many stakeholders, the delivery of affordable housing is a key priority as this is important for helping young people remain in the local area. If this housing is well placed and high quality, then it could help retain young skilled workers in the area therefore maximising opportunities for those young people as well as employers who need their skills. It will be important to ensure that future housing meets the local needs and can support those who want to continue living where they have grown up. While the affordable housing is being considered, developers should be pushed towards new sustainable methods with development meeting high standards while bringing more organic development of settlements to rural areas. The high standards should be seen across all developments whether affordable or not and should further contribute to creating vibrant town centres. While discussing affordable housing and development, the community infrastructure in northern Devon was a consideration for a key priority. Community infrastructure should be improved without overlooking what we already have, stakeholders recognise that locally there are already many community assets however improvements could allow investment into more spaces. This would benefit smaller organisations or charities who rely on investment and could benefit town centres in general as better community infrastructure could improve transport links and the overall impression of local areas. Creating nice looking areas within vibrant town centres can allow communities to feel pride in where they live and want to create safe spaces to enjoy. A key priority for some stakeholders was a sense of community and safety, with the Local Plan seen as a tool which could draw out these considerations and help safe spaces appear within developments. The Local Plan could also give individual places their own role and recognise the importance of places such as Barnstaple as a service centre. Services and development could then be planned appropriately within such areas.

4.12 Having the ability to work collaboratively across organisations seems to be a key priority for many stakeholders as this could have a variety of benefits. There is an opportunity to work together through One Public Estate which could be used to review locations of facilities or release surplus land for development. There could also be an opportunity to share resources to strengthen cases for funding, something many organisations are looking to secure more in the future. Collaboration could help to improve local infrastructure and therefore encourage more inward investment which, alongside funding, would support local organisations. While

thinking about the economic benefits to working together, the stakeholders recognised how a circular economy could be a benefit with some identifying this as a key priority. A circular economy aids businesses and could provide better resources for housing and infrastructure while connecting small businesses and supporting rural areas. A circular economy would help organisations to save money by recycling and reusing where possible while creating valuable resources which will still be useful in the future. Alongside working collaboratively, stakeholders identified that considerations such as health and wellbeing should be made a priority when considering communities and resources as well as within their own organisations.

4.13 As seen in activity one there were several environmental considerations which were more specific to individual organisations. Tackling some of these environmental issues have become a key priority to stakeholders especially as they move forwards with major projects. Providing more sustainable options is a priority for most especially as it seems government policy will change to incorporate more guidance around sustainability. Being able to work towards sustainable agriculture is a priority for stakeholders with some looking for more support for agriculture and farming generally. The support would help local agricultural businesses to invest further in sustainable practises and the infrastructure required to achieve this. Those working in agriculture may be best placed to lead northern Devon in driving forward sustainability with the support from other organisations. This could benefit communities as well as the local economy and may be something else which attracts inward investment. Renewable energy was a priority for stakeholders as they recognised the shift to increase use of this in the future. They understand that it will be important to get their own organisations ready to move towards using more renewable energy and preparing for the possible new costs associated here. Sustainable agriculture will be significant in the future as it may become increasingly important to be able to provide for peoples needs without compromising any supply in the future.

Activity Three

4.14 Activity Three was a question-and-answer session which involved all the participants and facilitators. The discussion was not within the four breakout groups to allow everybody to hear each other's questions and to allow the facilitators to answer everything together. The main finding from activity three was that stakeholders would appreciate a simplified version of the Local Plan so that they could better explain it to the public and their clients. They recognised that a better understanding could help people to understand the process as a whole and see how the Local Plan guides decision making for planners. Local plans can be impenetrable if people do not see what a plan is and how it works in their local area. It was noted that having the Local Plan as a legal document with all the technical work set out is obviously necessary however a simplified version could be published alongside the Local Plan. This could simplify what it is and how it works while setting out what a plan can or cannot do.

4.15 The questions asked showed that while stakeholders have a good understanding of local plans, further engagement events would be beneficial and keeping stakeholders informed throughout the process should be a consideration. They appeared to enjoy the in-person engagement event and were pleased that the public were becoming more involved through engagement and the branding for People and Place.

Figure 4.4 Question One

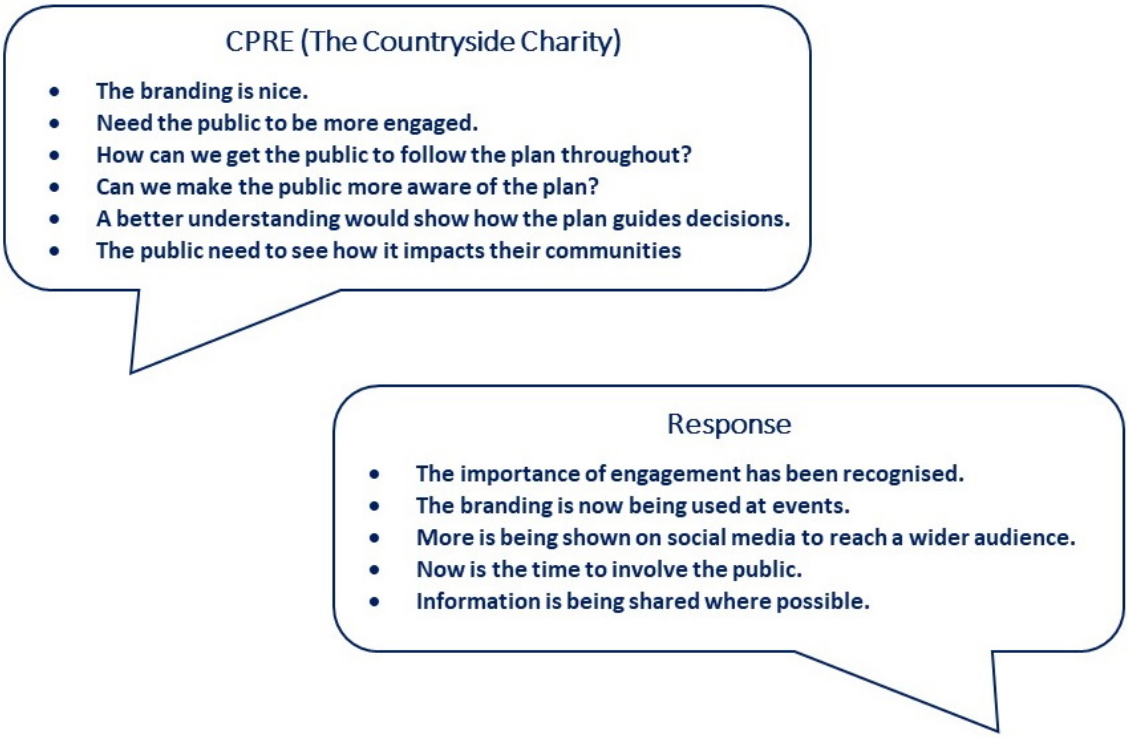


Figure 4.5 Question Two

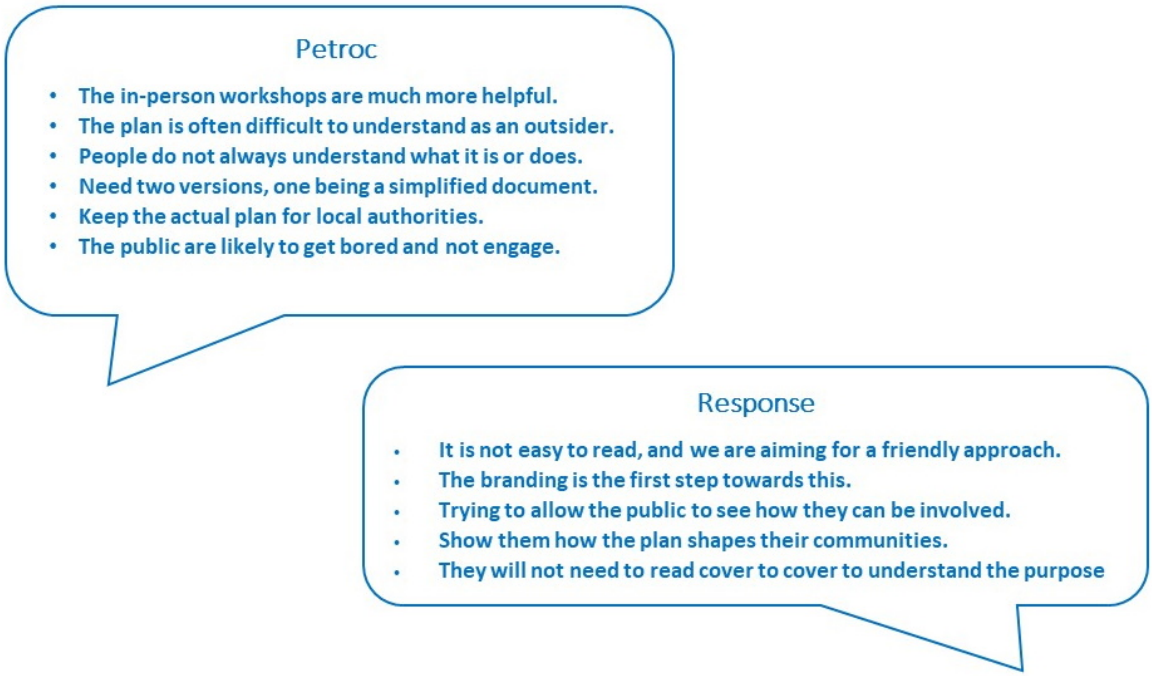


Figure 4.6 Question Three

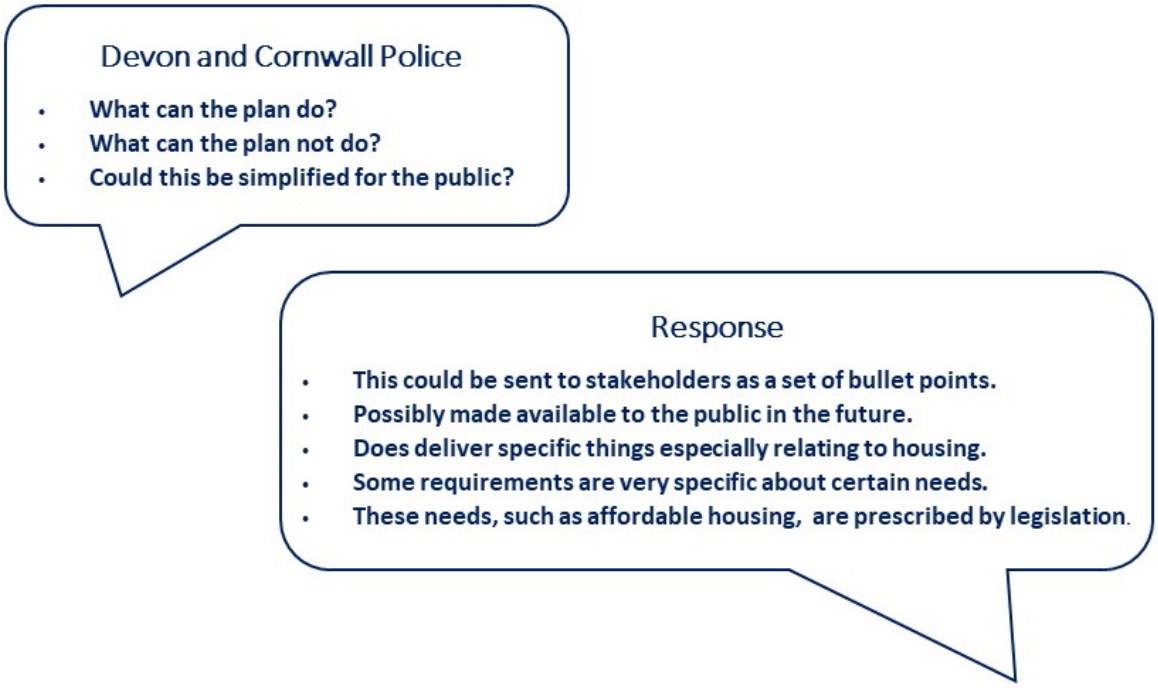


Figure 4.7 Question Four

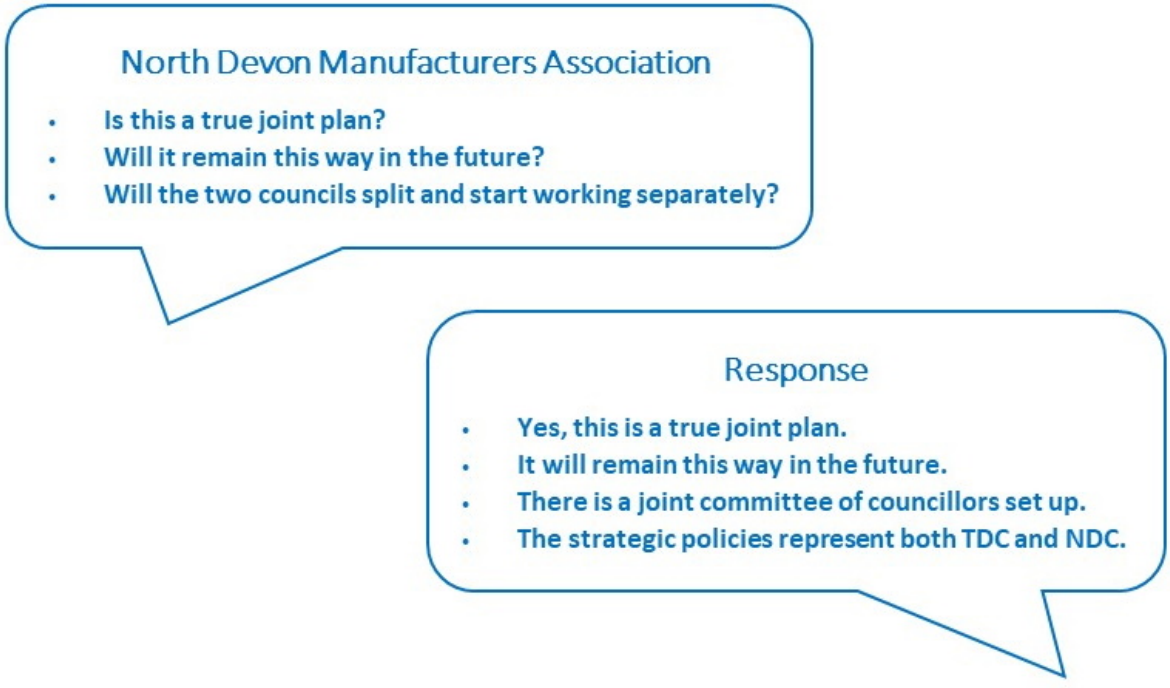
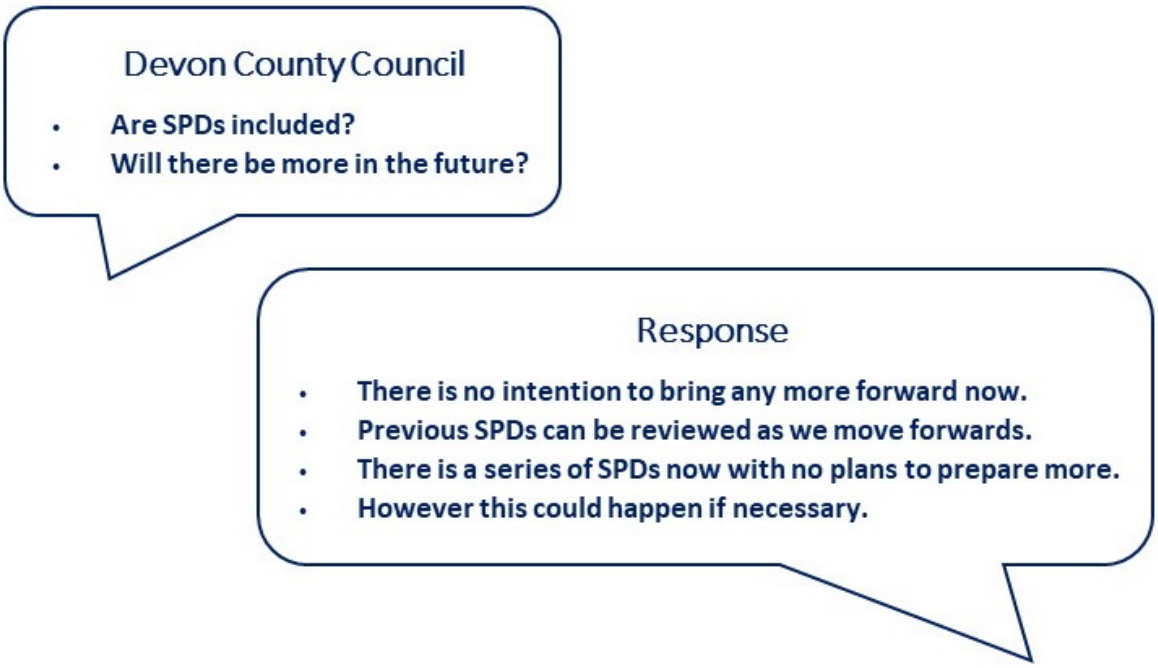


Figure 4.8 Question Five



5 Conclusion

Main Themes

5.1 In conclusion, there were several clear themes that could be identified from the stakeholder workshop. These are set out in the table below and can be grouped into three main themes which are social, environmental, and economic. Within each main theme there were several issues and priorities which were discussed across all four of the breakout groups. Although some groups found that more unique ideas were presented, generally there was agreement as to what is currently most important for northern Devon. Improving infrastructure could fall into each of the main themes for different reasons. It could be social as improved infrastructure would benefit the public by connecting local places better. It may be an economic consideration as improvements could allow organisations to benefit from the best technology available. Infrastructure also falls under environmental as new sustainable methods need to be considered now and improved in the future. The issues and challenges and the key priorities or major projects were quite similar as issue identified by stakeholders were then often identified as a priority or something to change.

Table 5.1 Main Themes Identified at the Stakeholder Workshop

Social	Environmental	Economic
Affordable Housing	Net-Zero Challenge	Circular Economy
Health and Wellbeing	Renewable Energy	Inward Investment and Funding
Accessibility	Sustainable Agriculture	One Public Estate
Recruitment	Support for Farming	Rural Affordability

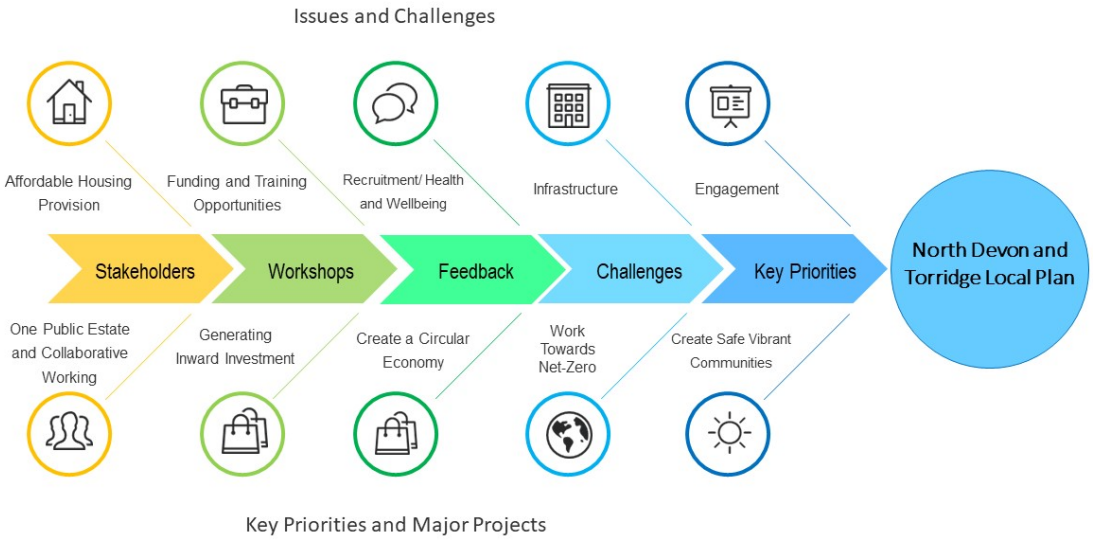
5.2 Where stakeholders discussed social themes the most common topic was surrounding affordable housing with the need and delivery of this being highly important. It was emphasised that all new housing should be built to a high standard and consider sustainable materials, preferably from local sources. Meeting the local housing needs was a popular point of discussion, with stakeholders concluding that from their perspective this is currently a need for more affordable housing. Health and wellbeing was a topic which was seen as a challenge for organisations and a key priority in the future. This related to services provided within organisations across northern Devon as well as services which are available to support the public. Similarly the topic of accessibility was covered in activities one and two with stakeholders recognising it as an issue in some places. Accessibility may impact people as resources become digital and it could be that getting access to physical services can be difficult for those living in rural areas. A final main topic within the social theme was recruitment with many stakeholders having issues or being aware of the difficulty of recruitment. This was for a variety of factors such as being unable to offer a competitive wage or a lack of skilled workers to fill a position.

5.3 Stakeholders had several environment related issues and priorities with some noting the main challenges resulting from uncertainty around future government policy changes. Supporting local farming and agriculture was a priority as stakeholders thought this could help provide more locally sourced resources for the area. It was also discussed that supporting local farmers was essential for a variety of reasons, especially as sustainable agriculture is currently a key priority. For many organisations being able to tackle the net-zero challenge may be difficult without support and this should come from government as well as collaborations allowing

organisations to support each other. It is likely that a shift to renewable energy will be seen in the future and some stakeholders are aware that being prepared for any changes would be advantageous. They recognised the benefits of being ready to embrace change within their organisations but identified a serious need for support when there are changes to make in the future.

5.4 Economic considerations were important to all stakeholders as this is something which affects all organisations as well as anyone they may be representing. Rural affordability in northern Devon was highlighted as an issue in terms of housing and training opportunities with some stakeholders finding that being in a rural area had economic impacts on their organisations. A key priority was inward investment and funding which would benefit rural communities and any organisations based in rural areas. One Public Estate was a topic which was discussed by a couple of groups with the benefits of working together a clear priority for many. Working this way alongside a circular economy model would allow collaborative working to reduce economic issues within organisations. A circular economy, much like sustainable agriculture, allows stakeholders to have an impact on the value of items or design in the future. It is hoped that any feedback and comments from stakeholders can be incorporated into future decision making and feed into work on the Local Plan.

Picture 5.1 Stakeholder challenges and priorities feeding into the Local Plan



6 What Next

6.1 The outcomes of the stakeholder workshop on the 20th of June 2022 are a good starting point to begin understanding the main priorities for stakeholders as well as key issues they face. It is useful to know how the Local Plan could impact stakeholders' major projects and support them with any challenges. The range of stakeholders is useful as the responses cover a wide variety of interests and will be beneficial to the Councils as the Local Plan develops. Stakeholders will continue to be involved with the process as work on the Local Plan is ongoing.

1 Appendix

2 Initial Invitation

28 The following text is the initial invitation sent to stakeholders inviting them to the event at Caddsdown Business Support Centre.

29 Dear Sir/ Madam,

30 North Devon Council and Torridge District Council are pleased to launch our **People and Place project,** which will empower our local communities and other stakeholders to play a key role in shaping the future of northern Devon. This project encompasses a comprehensive review of the two Councils' joint Local Plan and will explore how we can use the planning system to help tackle the challenges that face northern Devon, ensure that we take opportunities and deliver in the best way possible for the area and the future of our communities.

31 We are at an early stage of the project and are keen to engage with you as key stakeholders, as we recognise the importance of your perspectives and the contribution you and your organisation can offer to inform and shape the future of northern Devon.

32 To start this conversation we would like to **invite you to a stakeholder workshop** at **Caddsdown Business Support Centre, Bideford**from **2pm – 5pm** on **Monday 20th June 2022**. The workshop will provide us with the first opportunity to engage with you to find out what is important to you, your organisation and who you represent. We will look to explore the concerns and issues that you feel are important to be tackled across northern Devon, what you feel are the opportunities that should be taken and how we can work with together to contribute towards doing so. It will also provide us with the chance to tell you a bit more about the people and place project.

33 Could I please ask you to RSVP by return of email, no later than the close of **Monday 6th June**. We are keen to ensure that your organisation is represented at the event, so if you are unable to personally attend, please do feel free pass this invitation on to a colleague.

34 If you have any questions about the workshop or the wider people and place project please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Planning Policy Teams at the Councils. You can contact the teams via:

- North Devon Council: peopleandplace@northdevon.gov.uk/ 01271 388317
- Torridge District Council: peopleandplace@torridge.gov.uk/ 01273 428700

3 Further Information

35 The following text is an email sent a few days before the event with directions to Caddsdown and some resources for stakeholders.

36 Dear Partner(s),

37 Thank you so much for agreeing to take time out of your busy schedules and attend our People & Place Project Workshop (part of the Local Plan Review). The workshop will run from **2pm to 5pm** on **Monday 20th June** in the Taw and Torridge Rooms at **Caddsdown Business Support Centre, Bideford, EX39 3BE**. You are **welcome to arrive from 1.45pm** for refreshments and to allow us to make a prompt start at 2pm. Car parking is available free of charge adjacent to the venue, accessible from Farm Road (see attached map). We are really looking forward to seeing you all there.

38 The **Purpose** of this initial workshop is to refresh everyone on what the Joint Local Plan is and how it might help your organisation to achieve your vision and strategic objectives.

39 **Understand** what issues and constraints you face in northern Devon.

40 **Share** with everyone your organisation's roadmap and establish how this project, with your help and engagement, might just help us all shape an even better place and deliver our ambitions.

41 We have carried out a similar visioning workshop with our Councillor's and an Executive Summary of those outputs is attached for your reading pleasure.

42 This is the link to the current: Torridge District Council - North Devon and Torridge Local Plan 2011-2031 it isn't essential you read this in advance of the workshop – we just wanted to make it easy for you if you did.

43 So if you could come to the event with those northern Devon issues and/or constraints and your roadmap for the future in the forefront of your mind, hopefully we will have a really valuable session.

44 If you have any questions about the workshop or the wider people and place project please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Planning Policy Teams at the Councils. You can contact the teams via:

- North Devon Council: peopleandplace@northdevon.gov.uk / 01271 388317
- Torridge District Council: peopleandplace@torridge.gov.uk / 01273 428700

Figure 3.1 Directions to Caddsdown

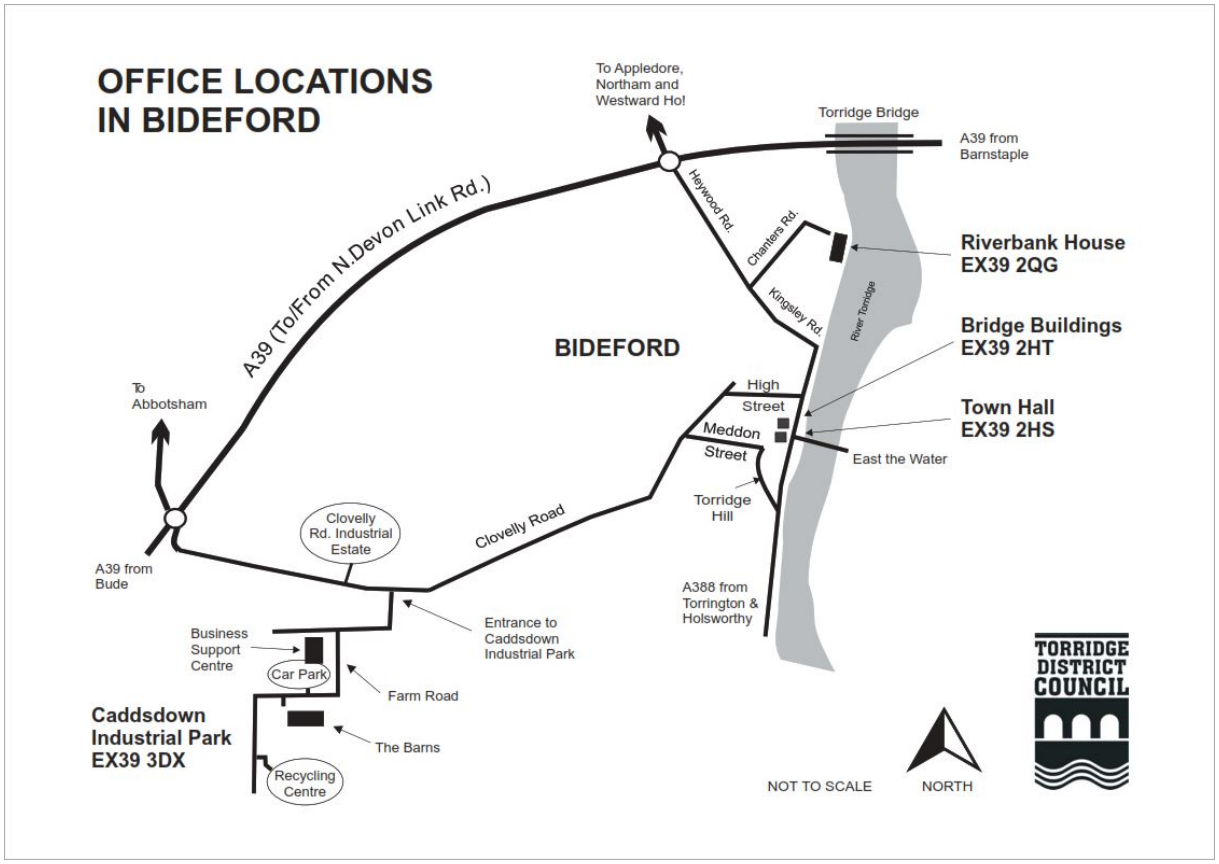
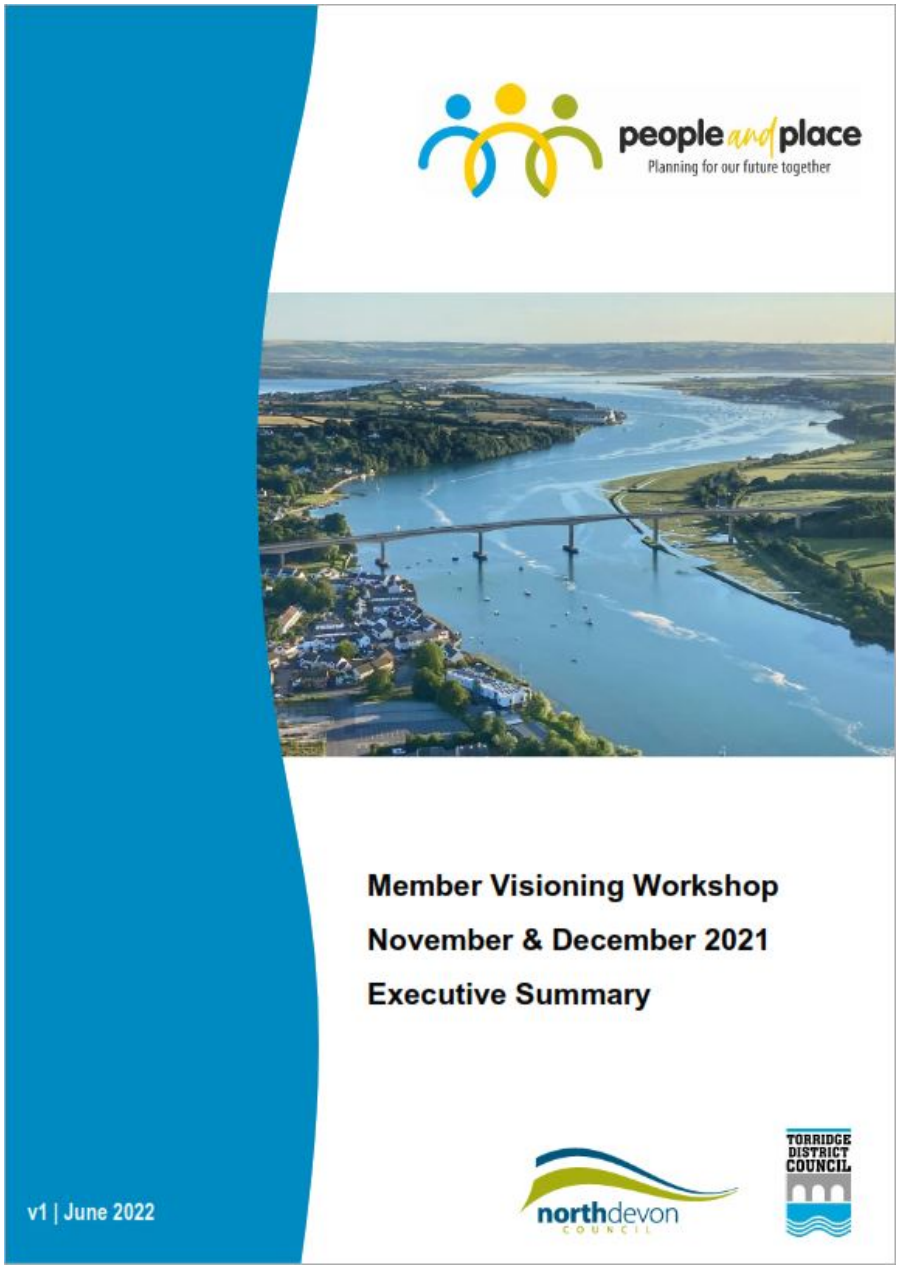


Figure 3.2 Member Visioning Workshop



v1 | June 2022

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1. Introduction

1.1. North Devon and Torridge District Councils are updating the North Devon and Torridge Local Plan (adopted 2018). As a key early project, the Councils are reviewing the exiting Spatial Planning Vision which includes looking forward to an extended plan period.

1.2. To gain Members initial views on a new vision for northern Devon a series of joint workshops were held during November and December 2021. The objectives for the workshops were to establish Member views on the on-going relevance of the current Spatial Planning Vision, the content of an updated vision and to identify the issues that would need to be addressed through an updated Local Plan and how they would wish to see northern Devon grow and develop over the next 20 years.

1.3. This Executive Summary provides a brief outline of the structure and outcomes of the workshops, the detail of which is set out in the following report.

2. Member activity and engagement outcomes

2.1. In advance of the workshops Members were asked to complete an online "homework exercise", to enable consideration of visioning matters prior to the workshops and to guide officers in respect of emerging issues. The following matters were raised by the 21 Members who participated in this exercise:

- the current North Devon and Torridge Local Plan vision is out of date;
- the length of the current vision is about right;
- the new vision needs to be more comprehensive and dynamic;
- the new vision needs a stronger commitment and to be more ambitious in responding to climate change;
- the new vision should add strength to the delivery of affordable housing, and the means by which employment will increase and the economy will develop; and
- a mix of opinions were provided on tourism, a few comments suggested tourism is detrimental to the housing stock and price.

2.2. The three officer facilitated workshops were attended by 62 Members. Members participated in four activities, which together with the outcomes are summarised below.

2.3. Activity 1 **Prioritising your future -** Members were asked to rank, by considered significance, a range of issues, which embraced topics relating to housing, renewable energy, the environment, biodiversity, climate change, economic growth and community services and facilities. The top five priorities from the workshops were:

1. Addressing the affordability of housing
2. Enabling economic growth
3. Increased resilience to climate change

1

4. Protecting the natural and historic environment

5. Delivery of sustainable travel options.

2.4. Activity 2 **Imagine our futures -** Members were asked to consider what they wanted to achieve from a new vision, taking account of the outcomes of Activity 1. The topics that were subject to most discussion within this activity related to the following themes:

1. Transport

2. Utilising the natural environment

3. Retaining the younger generation

2.5. Activity 3 **Branding the Local Plan -** Members were asked to consider the importance of branding and what they would like the branding of the new local plan to depict and illustrate in terms of the vision. Wide ranging positive views were provided in respect of a new Local Plan brand, which were focused on the themes of: inclusion, community, progression and being vibrant and caring.

2.6. Activity 4 **Postcard from the future -** Members were asked to write a postcard to the present day from 20 years in the future, to identify what they would be proud of achieving in respect of making a positive impact on northern Devon. Wide ranging improvements were identified, the following being the most popular:

1. An appropriate supply of housing, by tenure, increasing the supply of affordable housing, and mix, by size and type to meet the accommodation needs of local people;

2. The protection and restoration of northern Devon's unique natural environment;

3. Northern Devon has responded to the climate change emergency, carbon emission are reduced to the point of "net zero" and our communities live and work in a sustainable more self-sufficient environment;

4. Increased connectivity within northern Devon is delivered by a network of sustainable travel options; and

5. Communities across northern Devon are enjoying a work life balance, enabled by adequate and quality homes, good employment opportunities, access to services and facilities, all within an attractive environment.

3. Conclusion

3.1. The outcomes from the Members workshops will provide the basis for preparing a new vision for northern Devon. Some clear themes have been identified, which will be developed as progress is made on a new vision. Development of this vision will progress through future engagement with our communities and stakeholders.

2

3 Further Information

4 Facilitator Notes

Figure 4.1 Facilitator Notes

Stakeholder Workshop : 20 June 2022

Facilitator Notes

No.	Item	Lead	Duration	Time
	Arrivals Tea / Coffees		15 mins	13:45 – 14:00
1	Welcome & Introductions	SarahJane & Helen	1	14.00 – 14.01
2	Agenda	SarahJane	1	14.01 – 14.02
3	Housekeeping	Helen	1	14.02 – 14.03
4	**Action:** Script required if they accept.	Await to hear from Cllr Hicks & Prowse	5	14.03 – 14.08
5	Ice Breaker: What do you think is the purpose of the Local Plan?	Eleanor Goodhead	7	14.08 – 14.15
6	What is the Local Plan, why it is so important and the part we can all play.	SarahJane Mackenzie-Shapland Helen Smith	15	14:15 – 14.30
7	**Activity 1: In Two Parts** **What are the issues and challenges that you feel, from your perspective, are facing your organisation, those you represent or the communities of northern Devon?** **Are there any constraints that you anticipate might impact the local plan? E.g. Infrastructure capacity.** **Breakout into 4 small groups.** **Scribe to record on flipchart + allow more detailed comments via post-it notes (inc. who)** **Action:** Have flipcharts reading in advance split into two identifying Internal Factors and External Constraints.			
	Introduction	Helen Smith	2 min	14.30 – 14.32
	Breakout Sessions Plus identify Lead	Facilitators	**33 mins**	14.32 – 15.05
	Feedback	Nominated Lead	10 mins	15.05 – 15.15
8	Comfort Break		10 mins	15:15 – 15:25
9	**Activity 2 – What are your key priorities, what wish to achieve / major projects / those big-ticket items you need to deliver?** **Consider from perspective of your organisation, those you represent or the communities of northern Devon** **Examples: Link Road, Biodiversity Net Gain, Petroc** **Breakout into 4 small groups.** **Scribe to record on flipchart + allow more detailed comments via post-it notes (inc. who)** Action: As the session develops try and theme with post it notes as the feedback is received.			
	Intro & Examples	Ian Rowland & Elizabeth Dee	5 mins	15.25 – 15.30
	Breakout Sessions Plus identify Lead	Facilitators	**40 mins**	15.30 – 16.10
	Group Feedback	Nominated Lead	10 mins	16.10 – 16.20

10	**Activity 3 – Sense Check.** **Do you feel you have a better understanding of what the Local Plan is there to do and how it might help all of us achieve our objectives?** **We want you to come on this journey with us.** **We want you to feel involved and that you are able to influence the shape of northern Devon.** **We need your help to get as many people involved in this project, as early as possible.** **Question and Answer Session.**			
	Q&A	All	20 mins	16.20 – 16.40
11	So what's next	Ian Rowland	5 mins	16.40 – 16.45

Meeting Details

1400 - 1700

Chair – SarahJane Mackenzie-Shapland & Helen Smith

Welcome – Await confirmation from Cllrs

Facilitators

Group	Principal	Support
1	Sarah Jane Mackenzie Shapland	Eleanor Goodhead
2	Helen Smith	Ian Rowland
3	Dawn Burgess	Mark Alcock
4	Elizabeth Dee	Ben Lucas

Keep it simple and focus on the core activities for each exercise – i.e. just getting the cards on the board, or brainstorming their best ideas for the area.

Assistants

Keep an eye on the **clock!** It will go very quickly!

Required to type up content post the event.

After the event add your group number to the file name and email to localplan@torridge.gov.uk and localplan@northdevon.gov.uk

Stakeholders

Name	Business / Company	Group
Andrew Bell	North Devon Biosphere	1
Joshua Lewis	Devon County Council	1
Toby Davies	Devon and Cornwall Police	1
Tabitha Witherick	Libraries Unlimited	1
Steve Crowther	CPRE	1
Marc Rostock	North Devon Homes	1
Ruth McArthur	Exmoor National Park Authority	1
Jenny Carey-Wood	North Devon AONB	2
Hannah Elcocks	Devon County Council	2
Andy Wills	Devon and Cornwall Police	2
Simon Rapsey	One Communities	2
Neil Schofield	Royal Devon University Healthcare Trust	2
Paul Mullen	North Devon Manufacturers Association	2
Bill Blythe	Petroc	2
Mike Deaton	Devon County Council	3
Karen Evans	NDVS	3
Poppy Millar	Environment Agency	3
Andrew Butler	National Farmers Union	3
Andrew Manning	Western Power	3
David Holt	Heanton Punchardon PC	3
Matt Collins	Devon County Council	4
Stephanie Parker-Stephenson	Natural England	4
Simone Thompson	TTVS	4
Tim Jones	SW Business Council	4
Andy Bowman	One Northern Devon Active Travel	4
Sam Novak	Westward Housing	4

5 Session Attendance (Stakeholders)

Stakeholder Attendance

Stakeholder Name	Stakeholder Organisation
Andrew Bell	North Devon Biosphere
Bill Blythe	Petroc
Andrew Butler	National Farmers Union
Jenny Carey-Wood	North Devon Coast AONB
Matt Collins	Devon County Council
Steve Crowther	CPRE (The Countryside Charity)
Toby Davies	Devon and Cornwall Police
Mike Deaton	Devon County Council
Hannah Elcocks	Devon County Council
Karen Evans	NDVS (North Devon Voluntary Services)
Cllr David Holt	Heanton Punchardon PC
Tim Jones	SW Business Council
Joshua Lewis	Devon County Council
Andrew Manning	Western Power
Ruth McArthur	Exmoor National Park Authority
Poppy Millar	Environment Agency
Paul Mullen	North Devon Manufacturers Association
Sam Novak	Westward Housing
Stephanie Parker-Stephenson	Natural England
Simon Rapsey	One Communities
Marc Rostock	North Devon Homes
Simone Thompson	TTVS (Torridge Voluntary Services)
Andy Wills	Devon and Cornwall Police
Tabitha Witherick	Libraries Unlimited

6 Session Attendance (Officers)

Officer Attendance

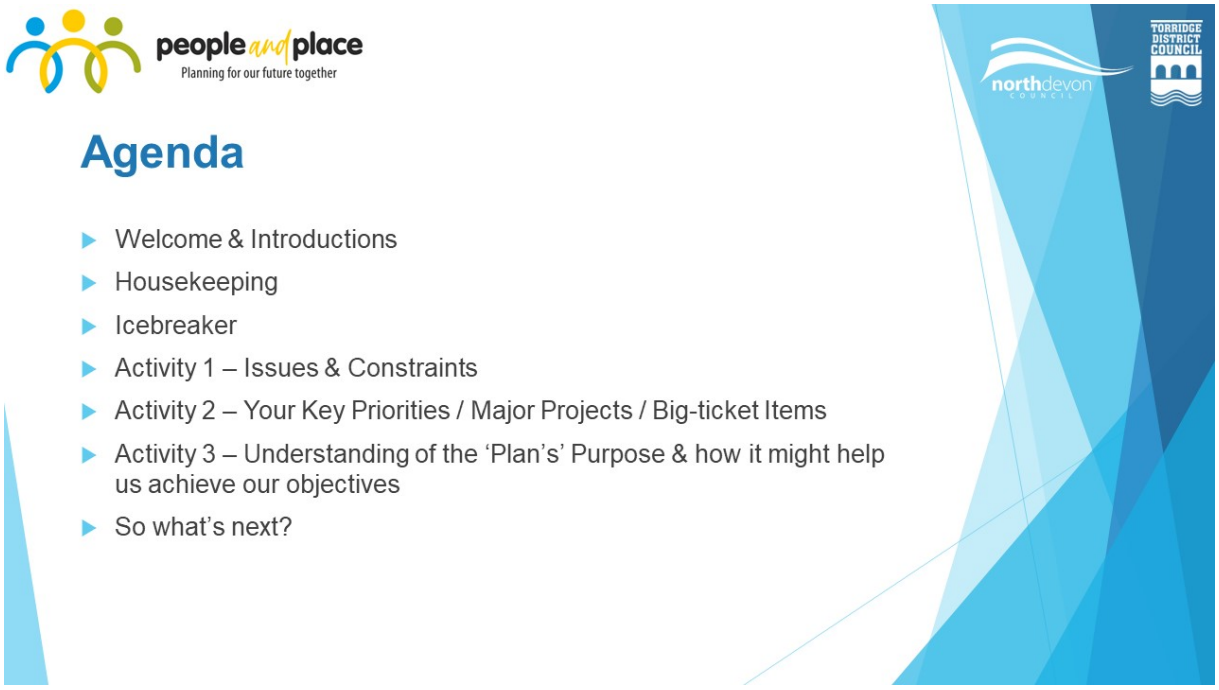
Facilitator/Officer Attendance	
Sarah Jane Mackenzie-Shapland	NDC Head of Place, Property and Regeneration
Nina Lake	NDC Head of Programme Management and Performance
Elizabeth Dee	NDC Senior Planning Policy Officer
Mark Alcock	NDC Planning Policy Officer
Helen Smith	TDC Planning Manager
Ian Rowland	TDC Senior Planning Policy Officer
Dawn Burgess	TDC Senior Planning Policy Officer
Ben Lucas	TDC Planning Policy Officer
Eleanor Goodhead	TDC Planning Policy Technical Officer

7 Workshop Presentation

Slide One

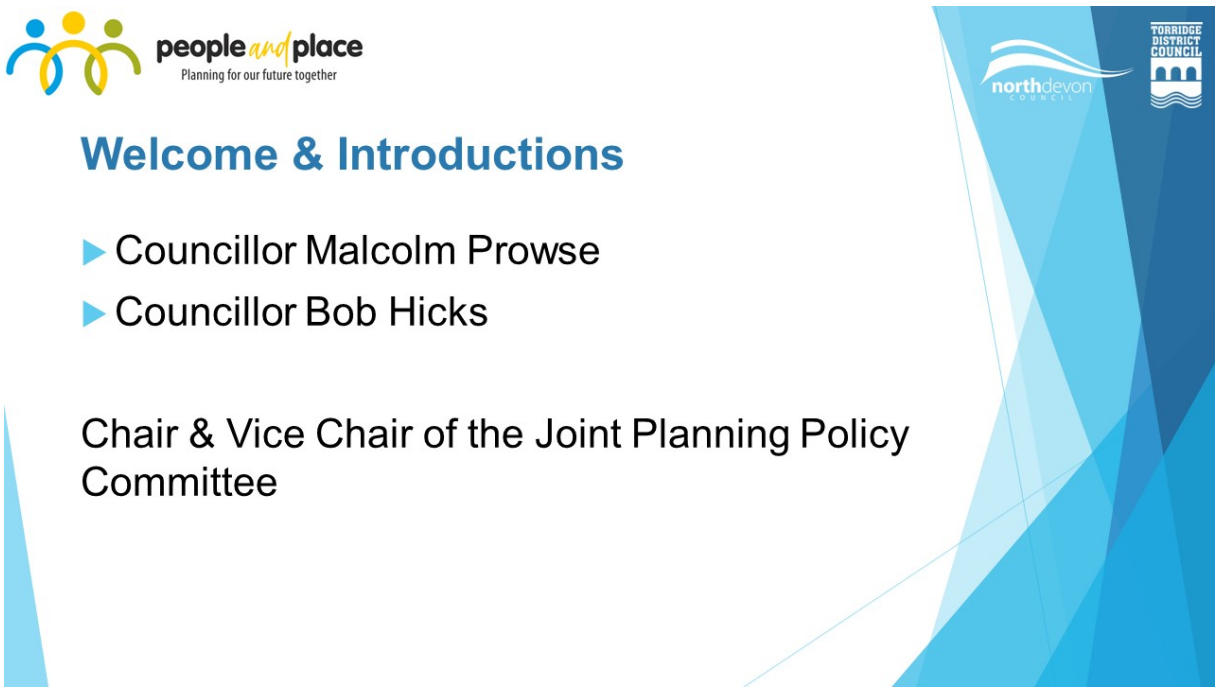
Slide Two

Slide Three



Slide Four

Slide Five



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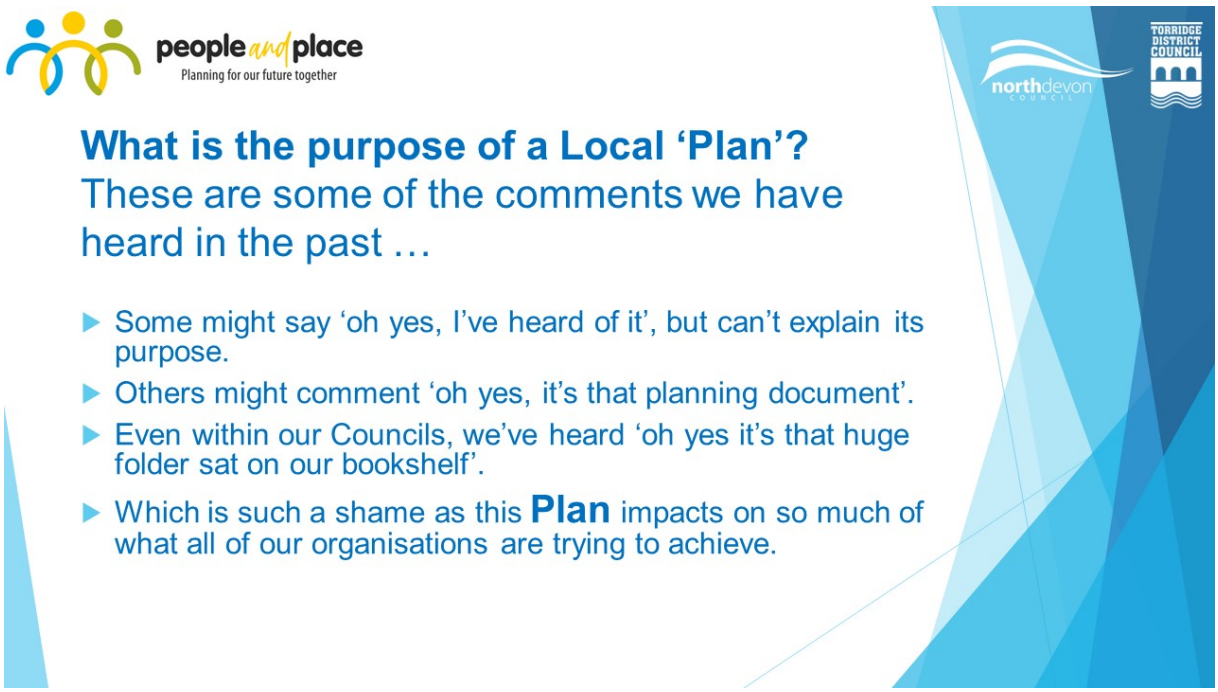

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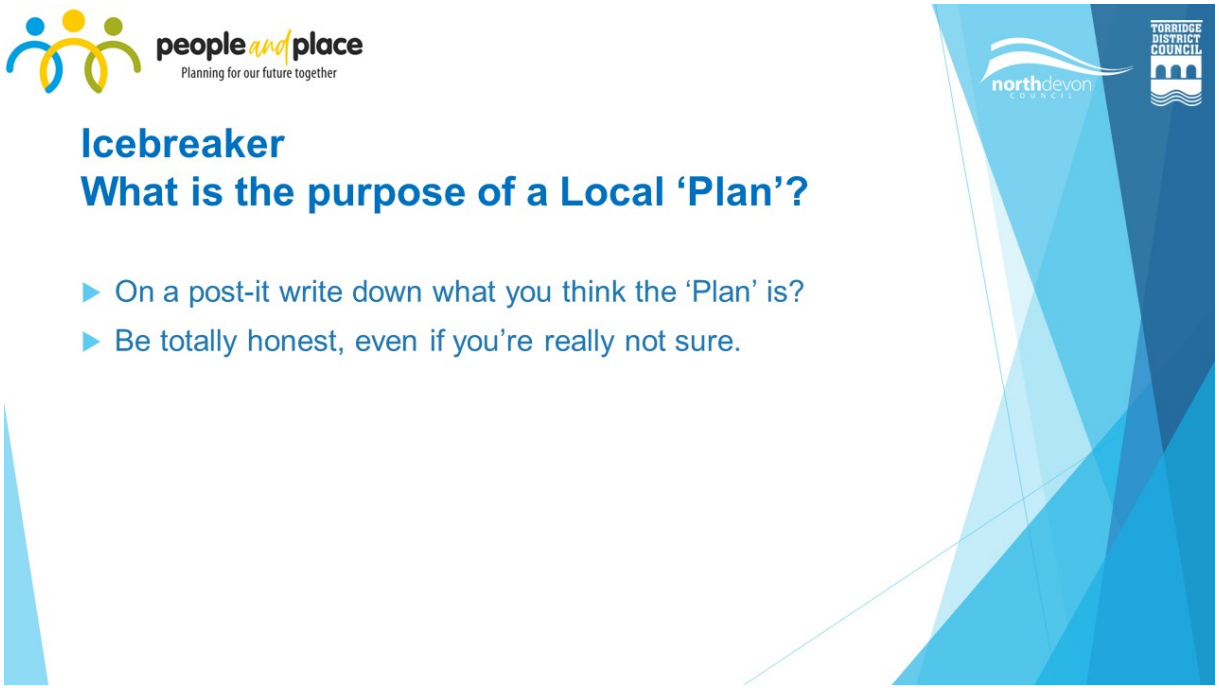
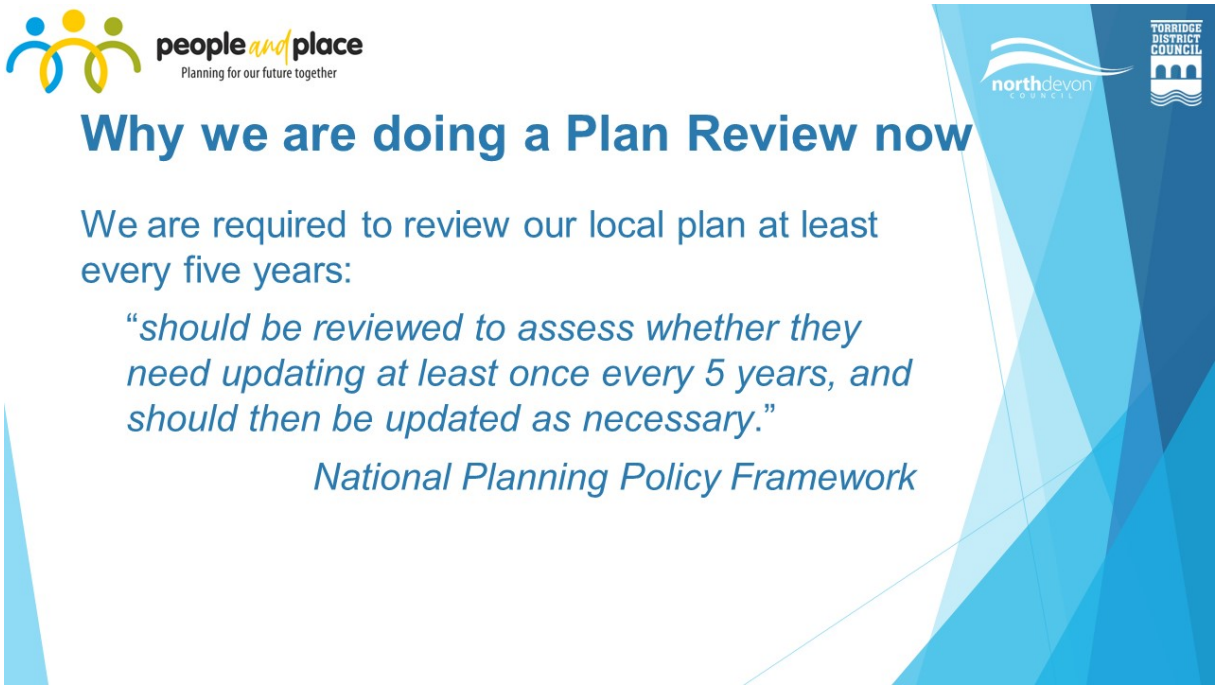


Picture 7.1 Slide Eight

Slide Nine



Slide Ten

Slide Eleven

Background & Context & How You Can Be Part of the Plan Making Process

- The Plan gives absolutely everyone an opportunity to say how they would like North Devon as a whole or particular towns, villages or wards to look – from where housing and investment should be focused to environmental objectives for our area.
- We can't promise that every wish and desire will be incorporated into the Plan but all feedback and representations will be considered.
- What we wish for you all is to gain an understanding of the plan making process & to feel confident to contribute.

Slide Twelve

This is where your influence is essential

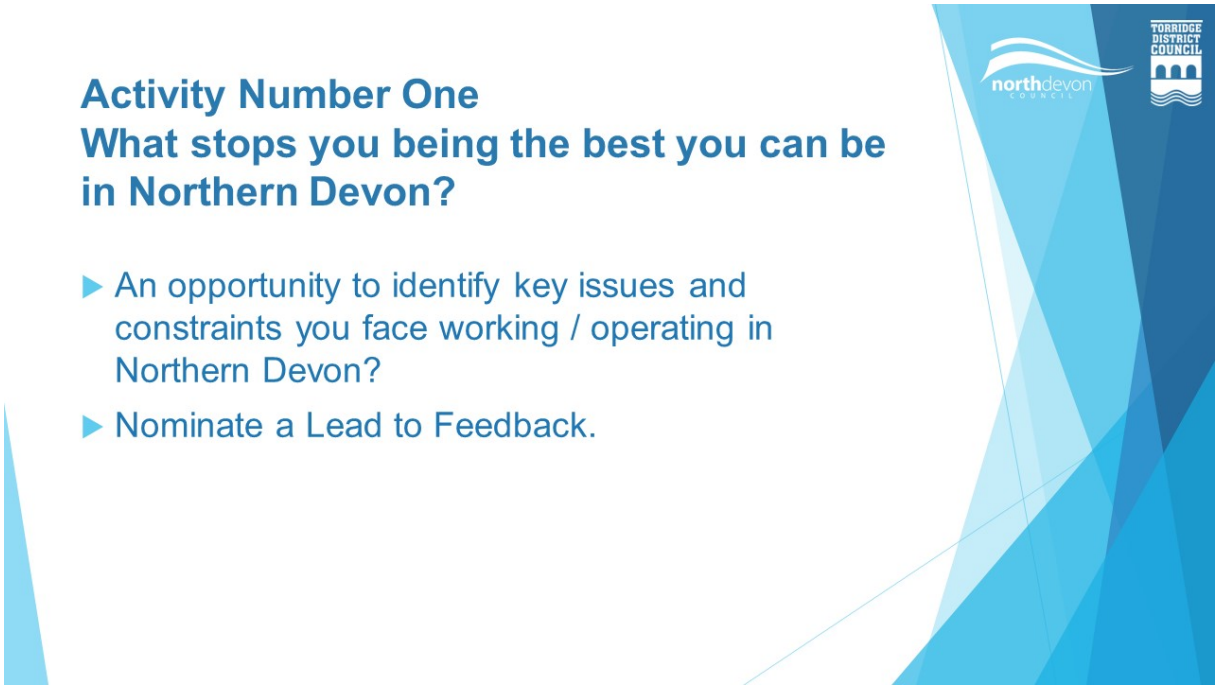
Slide Thirteen

Slide Fourteen

Slide Fifteen

Slide Sixteen

Slide Seventeen



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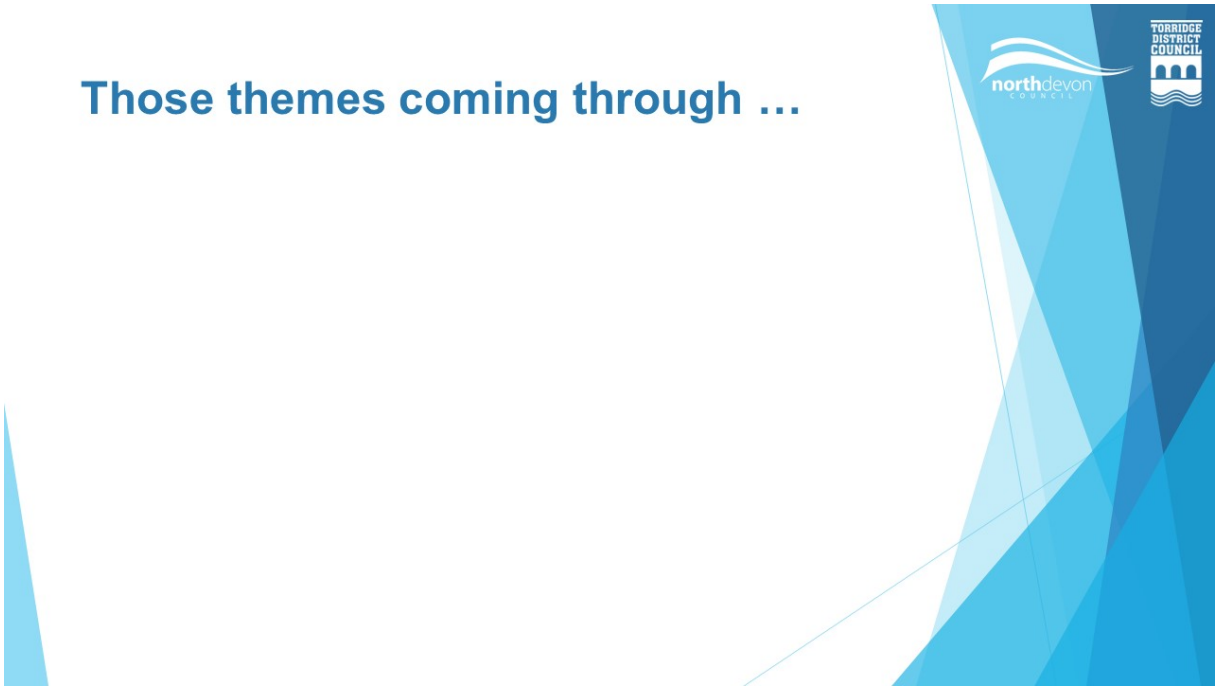

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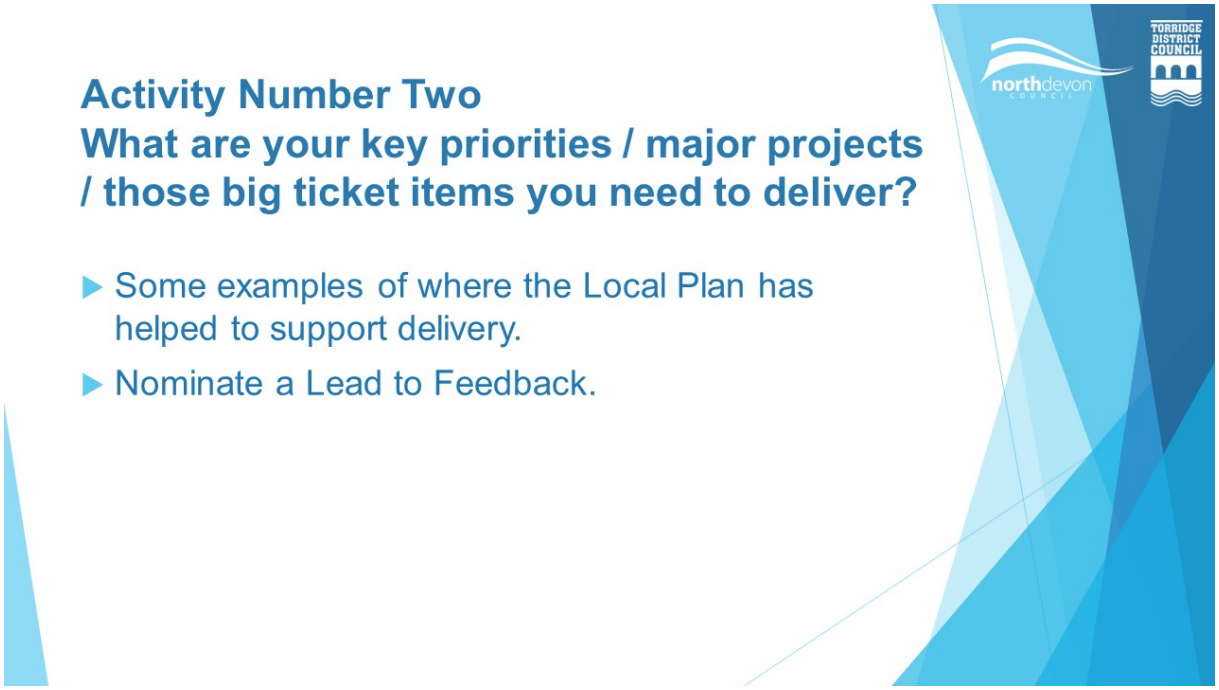
Slide Twenty



Slide Twenty One

Why is it so important you know what is going on …

- To ensure that the ambitions of our councils, our businesses our partners and our communities are captured to reflect our economic, social and environmental goals.
- Often our stakeholders don't get involved in the planning system until there is something that is being proposed on their doorstep that they don't like, by which time it is often too late to have their say as the land has been allocated in the **Plan** for a certain use, but they believe this is the first time they have heard of it.
- Early engagement and involvement is key. Use this review as the opportunity set out your 'asks' and really influence how our place is shaped.

Slide Twenty Two

Activity Number Three
Do you feel you have a better understanding of what the Local Plan is there to do?

Do you feel this Plan will be able to help you achieve your objectives.

We want you to come on this journey with us.

We want you to feel involved and that you are able to influence the shape of Northern Devon.

We need your help to get as many people involved in this project, as early as possible.

Slide Twenty Three

8 Group One Notes

Stakeholder Workshop 20th June 2022

Group 1 Notes

Group 1:

Facilitators:

Sarah Jane Mackenzie-Shapland (NDC)

Eleanor Goodhead (TDC)

Stakeholders:

Joshua Lewis (Devon County Council)

Ruth McArthur (Exmoor National Park Authority)

Toby Davies (Devon and Cornwall Police)

Marc Rostock (North Devon Homes)

Tabitha Witherick (Libraries Unlimited)

Andrew Bell (North Devon Biosphere)

Steve Crowther (CPRE)

Icebreaker Notes:

Who has heard of a local plan?

A large majority of the stakeholders raised their hands to say they had heard of a local plan.

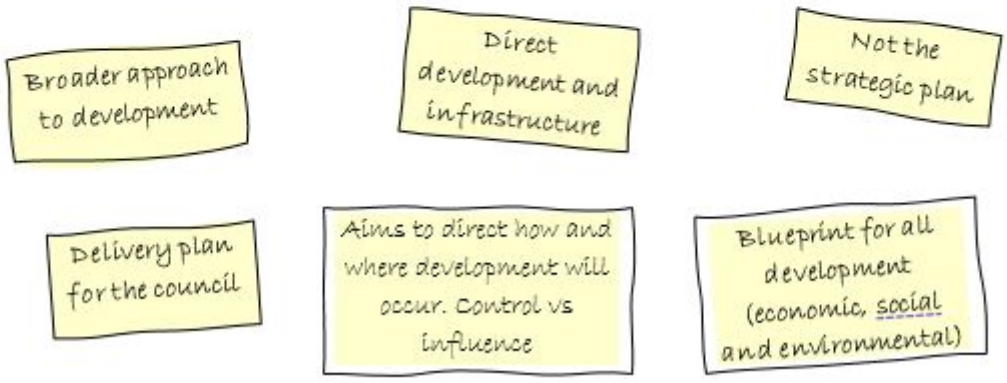
Who has some understanding of what a local plan is?

Lots of stakeholders raised their hands however it was fewer than for the previous question.

Who has been involved in preparing a local plan or had any involvement in the NDC/TDC plan so far?

A few stakeholders raised their hands for this question.

Group 1 ice breaker post it notes:



Activity 1:

What are the issues and challenges that you feel, from your perspective, are facing your organisation, those you represent or the communities of northern Devon?

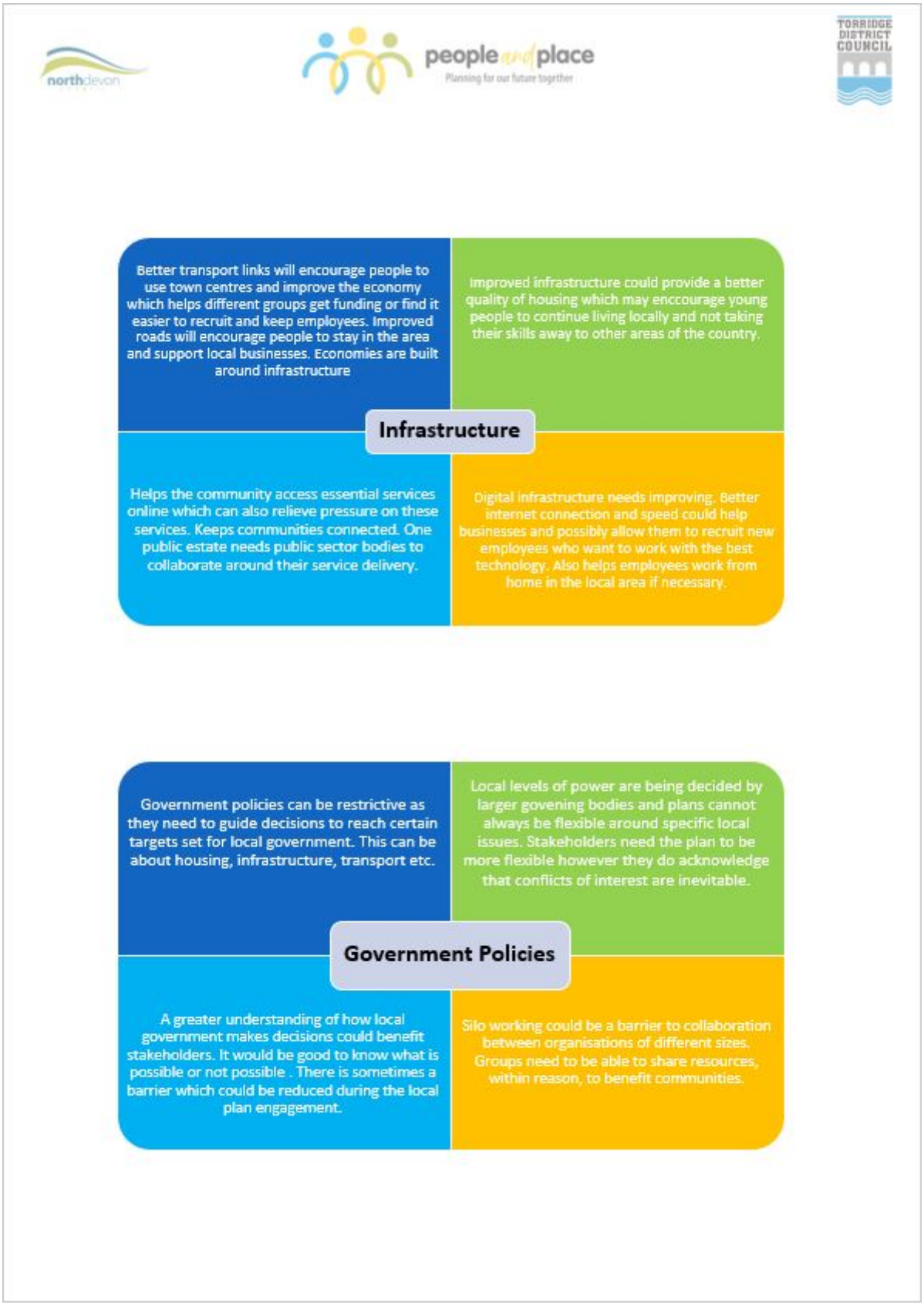
Are there any constraints that you anticipate might impact the local plan?

Recruitment

- Digital working allows people to live in this area but work online for other places e.g. London where wages are higher. People are living here but working elsewhere.
- Cost of living means young skilled workers move away to cheaper areas. Housing type and tourism is a factor here (e.g. second homes / air B&Bs. Lack of local needs accomodation e.g. available and affordable rental homes or first time buyer homes.
- Smaller charities / businesses cannot recruit on current salaries and need to offer more to be attractive to new staff. Community safety is important as people must have a positive perception of the area, feel safe and have pride in where they live and work.
- Need inward investment to encourage young people into jobs. Digital hubs, better infrastructure and new industry could help this.

Funding

- Need more public sector funding to allow confidence in completing projects. Sometimes difficult process to get funding.
- Partnership working could possibly provide more oppourtunities. Working with other stakeholders could be beneficial as it could reduce workloads and need for funding if resources or findings are shared.
- Rural vs urban funding is different and the timings can be difficult e.g. planning ahead and longer projects that are more unpredictable.
- Would help with being able to offer better wages as funding could allow businesses to put more money towards recruitment by providing more incentives.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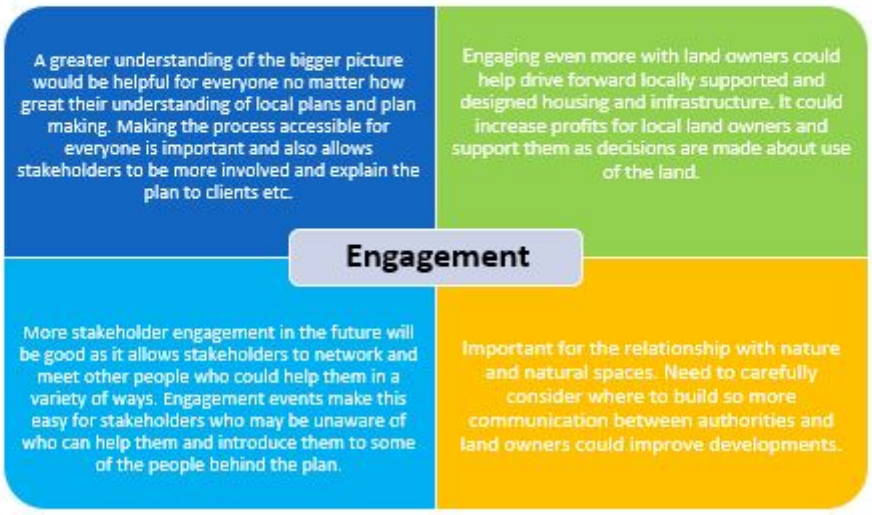
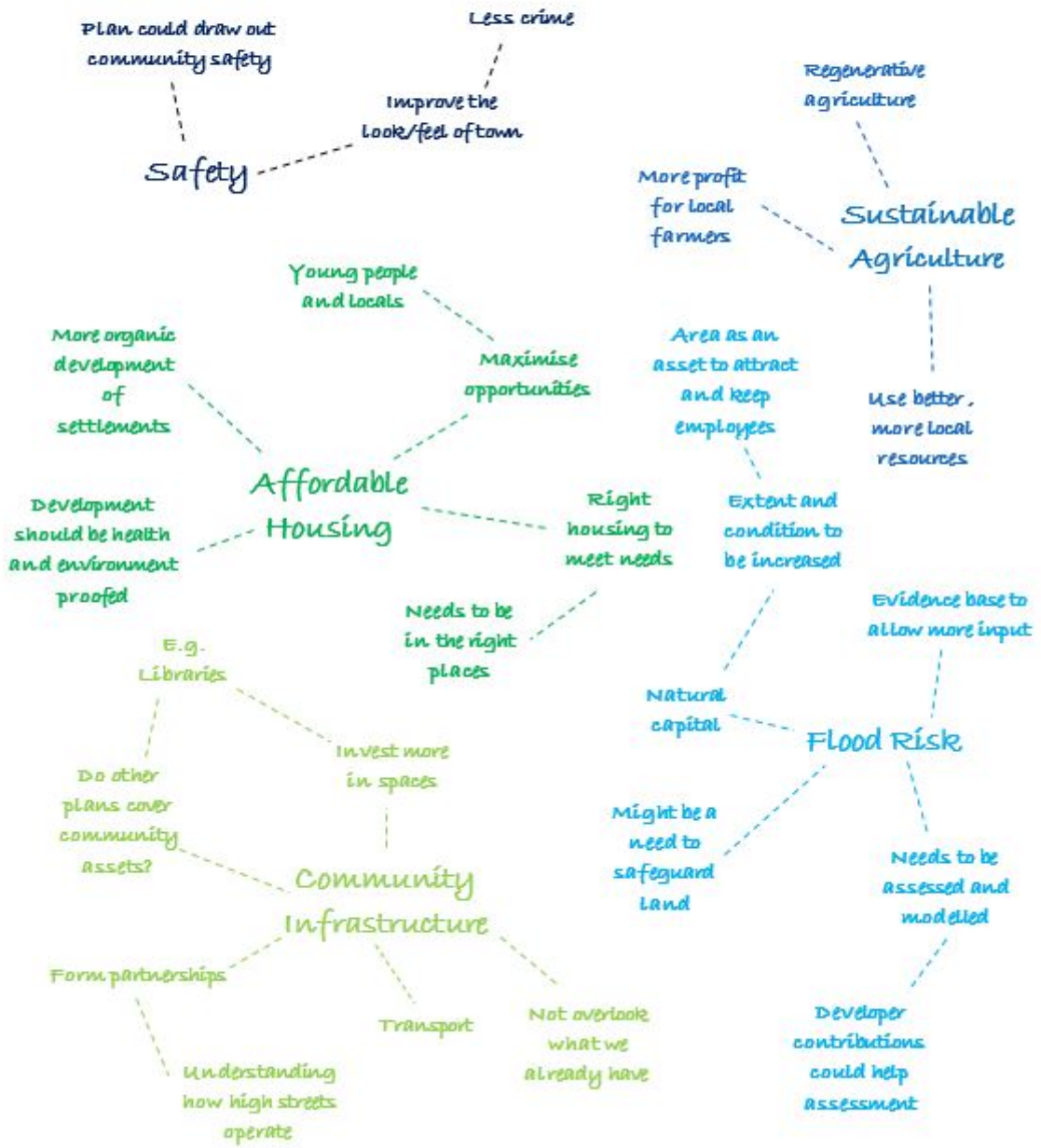
Infrastructure
Better transport links will encourage people to use town centres and improve the economy which helps different groups get funding or find it easier to recruit and keep employees. Improved roads will encourage people to stay in the area and support local businesses. Economies are built around infrastructure
Improved infrastructure could provide a better quality of housing which may enccourage young people to continue living locally and not taking their skills away to other areas of the country.
Helps the community access essential services online which can also relieve pressure on these services. Keeps communities connected. One public estate needs public sector bodies to collaborate around their service delivery.
Digital infrastructure needs improving. Better internet connection and speed could help businesses and possibly allow them to recruit new employees who want to work with the best technology. Also helps employees work from home in the local area if necessary.
Government Policies
Government policies can be restrictive as they need to guide decisions to reach certain targets set for local government. This can be about housing, infrastructure, transport etc.
Local levels of power are being decided by larger govening bodies and plans cannot always be flexible around specific local issues. Stakeholders need the plan to be more flexible however they do acknowledge that conflicts of interest are inevitable.
A greater understanding of how local government makes decisions could benefit stakeholders. It would be good to know what is possible or not possible . There is sometimes a barrier which could be reduced during the local plan engagement.
Silo working could be a barrier to collaboration between organisations of different sizes. Groups need to be able to share resources, within reason, to benefit communities.


A greater understanding of the bigger picture would be helpful for everyone no matter how great their understanding of local plans and plan making. Making the process accessible for everyone is important and also allows stakeholders to be more involved and explain the plan to clients etc.
Engaging even more with land owners could help drive forward locally supported and designed housing and infrastructure. It could increase profits for local land owners and support them as decisions are made about use of the land.
Engagement
More stakeholder engagement in the future will be good as it allows stakeholders to network and meet other people who could help them in a variety of ways. Engagement events make this easy for stakeholders who may be unaware of who can help them and introduce them to some of the people behind the plan.
Important for the relationship with nature and natural spaces. Need to carefully consider where to build so more communication between authorities and land owners could improve developments.

Activity 2:

What are your key priorities, what you wish to achieve / major projects / those big-ticket items you need to deliver?

Consider from the perspective of your organisation, those you represent or the communities of northern Devon.



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Sustainability
Benefits businesses
Circular Economy
Connects small businesses
Better resources for housing and infrastructure
Supports rural areas
Save money by recycling and reusing where possible
Use local resources
Modular housing produced locally
Local Manufactured Housing
More sustainable employment opportunities
Education and transport etc
Health and equality etc
Access to services
Community
Bring people together through the plan
Need the correct infrastructure and economy to support a strong community
Provide a sense of place and encourage pride in your community
Links back to safety
Needs to be balanced
Viability
Economy
Infrastructure
Sustainability
One Public Estate
Work closely with partners
Funding opportunities
Come together and share
Strengthen case for funding

- The plan could draw out community **safety** by influencing the look and feel of town centres and the type of housing being built. People can feel safer where they live and pride in your community could help lower crime rates.
- **Sustainable agriculture** can provide more profit for local farmers so they can continue farming rather than needing to sell the land. This can also help local communities to use resources better and reduce food miles. **Regenerative agriculture** could be a good approach to support this. There is also a need to **support ecosystem services** for growth such as that of the estuary. This support is needed across Devon, especially national parks.
- **Flood risk** needs to be assessed and modelled more effectively as having an evidence base can allow more input and support other decision making. Natural capital could benefit people and the economy. It would be good to be able to **safeguard land** which may be at risk and monitor these areas and feed back to planners making decisions. Developer contributions could help with assessing areas and modelling any risk.
- Investing in better spaces and **community infrastructure** will benefit communities although we need to be careful not to overlook what we already have. Possible partnerships could give authorities a better understanding of how high streets operate. It would be good to know if other plans cover community assets such as libraries. Better transport links can also help to attract people to an area and make it easier to commute to nearby towns.
- There is a need to ensure that the right type of housing is being built for the right people, at the right time and in the right places. **Affordable housing** is essential to maximise opportunities and allow people to be able to live and work in Devon and be involved in their local communities. The housing must meet the needs of people, and this will also help companies recruit new staff. Organic growth should be considered as well so that housing, infrastructure and transport is developing as the need arises.
- **Locally manufactured housing** which is modular and uses local resource would benefit businesses in Devon as well as the potential for more sustainable employment in the area. It would be good to be able to find resources, build modular houses and put them up locally. This would help with costs and keep the process more local.
- Using a **circular economy** as a model could benefit more businesses in rural areas as it could help connect smaller businesses and support local growth and industry. This allows businesses and developers to provide a better area or type of housing for locals.
- Promoting **community** and a sense of space could bring communities together through the plan. This could link back to the idea of safety in your community and pride in where you live. Being able to provide people with access to services should be a priority with equality considered when regarding health and services. Local governments would need to be able to support the implementation of infrastructure to support this as well as supporting the economy to allow the infrastructure to be of use to locals. **Culture strategy** should create strong community spaces.
- **Viability** assessments must be balanced and consider factors such as infrastructure and economy.
- **One public estate** could help by bringing different groups together and supporting funding opportunities or sharing resources. If groups can work together it could help with funding as it would strengthen any case.
- **Could the plan be an opportunity to test ideas locally? Would be good to understand what we can control in terms of local issues such as the number of air B&Bs. Stakeholders give a strong basis for argument.**

Activity 3:

Do you feel you have a better understanding of what the Local Plan is there to do and how it might help all of us achieve our objectives?

Most stakeholders appeared to be happy with this initial session and felt they had a better understanding of how the Local Plan could benefit their organisations as we move forward.

Question and answer session:

(Steve Crowther, CPRE)

Q. The branding is nice, but we want the public to be more engaged. It would be worth popularising the concept of the local plan and letting the public know that it is a thing, it happens everywhere, and it affects your community. Can we engage the public and get them to follow the plan throughout the process? Can we make them more aware of what it is and the concept of the plan, so it is not just local government and stakeholders that understand it? Having a better understanding of the plan could help people to understand the whole planning process as they could see how the plan guides decision making for planners.

A. We have recognised this and have been more active in getting the public more involved. We have got the branding out at events and are sharing information where possible. We are using more social media than before to try and reach a wider audience. Now is the time for the public to be involved and we are looking at how this can be done well and reach as many people as possible.

(Bill Blythe, Petroc)

Q. The way you can engage is important and the in-person workshops are much more helpful and engaging, they work well. When engaging with the public and some stakeholders, the plan is often impenetrable as people do not always understand what the plan is or do not get what a plan does. You almost need two versions of it, a version for stakeholders and the general public which explains everything in a smaller and simpler document. Then have the actual plan and all the legal documents that the populace do not need to try and understand. Without this the public are likely to get bored and will be less willing to engage and be enthusiastic.

A. It is not an easy read, and we are starting with a friendly approach by sorting out the branding for the plan. We need to be able to make use of this friendly approach to allow the public to see how they can be involved and how the plan shapes the communities where they live. Hopefully by doing this they will not necessarily have to read the plan cover to cover to understand the purpose and how they can get involved.

(Andy Wills, Devon and Cornwall Police)

Q. What can the plan do and what can't it do? Could this be simplified for people?

A. This could be sent out to stakeholders (and possibly the public in the future) as a set of bullet points outlining what is possible and what is not possible. The plan does need to deliver certain things especially in relation to housing. There are some requirements which can be quite specific about certain needs, such as affordable housing, and these are prescribed by legislation.

(Paul Mullen, North Devon Manufacturers Association)

Q. Is this a true joint plan and will it remain this way in the future, or will the two councils split and start doing work separately?

A. Yes, it is a true joint plan and will remain as such. There is a true joint committee (councillors) set up and the strategic policies represent both NDC and TDC.

(Joshua Lewis, Devon County Council)

Q. Are SPDs included? Will there be more in the future?

A. There is no intention to bring any more forward at the moment but previous SPDs can be reviewed as we move forwards. There is a series of SPDs now with no current plans to prepare more, however it could happen if necessary.

9 Group Two Notes

Stakeholder Workshop 20th June 2022
Group 2 Notes

Facilitators:
Helen Smith (TDC)
Ian Rowland (TDC)

Stakeholders:
Bill Blythe, Petroc
Jenny Carey-Wood, North Devon Coast AONB
Hannah Elcocks, Devon County Council (Education)
Paul Mullen, North Devon Manufacturers Association
Simon Rapsey, One Communities
Andy Wills, Devon and Cornwall Police

Icebreaker Notes:
Who has heard of a local plan?
A large majority of the stakeholders raised their hands to say they had heard of a local plan.
Who has some understanding of what a local plan is?
Lots of stakeholders raised their hands however it was fewer than for the previous question.
Who has been involved in preparing a local plan or had any involvement in the NDC/TDC plan so far?
A few stakeholders raised their hands for this question.

Group 2 ice breaker post it notes:

9 Group Two Notes

Activity 1:

What are the issues and challenges that you feel, from your perspective, are facing your organisation, those you represent or the communities of northern Devon?

Are there any constraints that you anticipate might impact the local plan?

- Lack of key worker housing
- Accessibility
    - Limited transport options
    - Challenges of rurality and lack of connectivity to rural areas
    - Constraining future opportunities for youth due to difficulties accessing further education establishments
- Increasing cost of infrastructure – resulting in increasing calls on development – with questions on whether funding and resultant delivery remain achievable?
- Competing demands and calls on development – for example, the provision of biodiversity net gain vs the need to provide infrastructure
- Longevity of rural services, such as schools, due to increased costs, budget pressures, changing demographics and lifestyles.
- Rural affordability – impact of in-migration on housing affordability, with consequences of accessibility to housing for local households and leading to other impacts – such as reduced roles for schools.
- Regionalisation of school planning – with less opportunity to influence based on local knowledge – resulting in likely pressure on smaller, less efficient schools – with consequential loss of community identity and cohesion.
- Ageing workforce that is contracting due to losses through retirement – limited pool of skilled workforce with challenge of attracting and retaining – low wages (relatively) and high housing costs, along with lack of housing availability.
- Challenges of transition to electric vehicles
    - Integration of charging infrastructure into towns and other settlements
    - Issues of rurality and need for own transport
- Lack of an effective and reliable care sector, which is likely to be exacerbated with the challenges brought by an ageing population.
    - Not an attractive sector to those seeking work and difficult to recruit, even though care training courses are well subscribed.
    - Increasing reliance on voluntary sector.
- Pressures placed on policing from development. Significant issues of seasonality arising from tourism, with core funding directly related to core population. Question whether developer contributions could support provision of service.
- Recruitment to policing is challenging – in part due to there being a national pay scale but high local housing costs and a lack of stock availability.
- Question whether it would be possible to fund further education provision / infrastructure from development contributions?
- Question whether the wider housing crisis is a reflection of a low-wage economy?
- Higher living costs in northern Devon – for example, with most needing a car for commuting and to access services and facilities.
- New opportunities for remote working bringing "city wages" but with local costs – increasing prices.

- Seeing compression of salary scales with increase in national minimum (living) wage but not associated increases across the scale.
- Reductions in funding and budgets causing a reduction of community services, resulting in a consolidation of services to hubs in particular localities (i.e. Barnstaple) resulting in a concentration of issues such as anti-social behaviour.
- Prevalence of a minimum wage economy, particularly for the youth, with many redirected away from further education due to a need to "earn their way" and support wider households.
- Need for a balance between living and working and the protection of the environment.
- There is a transition with tourism – moving, for example, from camping to glamping. This is delivering a changing offer with associated impacts on affordability.
- North Devon Coast AONB has commissioned work on tourism, looking at how we retain offer and uniqueness of northern Devon.
- Impact of recent surge in 'staycation' activity, with increase in propensity of AirBnB and second homes; with concerns that this has had a resultant impact of an increase in fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Tension between the delivery on environmental priorities vs the release of land for housing.
- Question whether the proposed ferry route between Ilfracombe and South Wales will result in traffic congestion.
- Question what will be the impacts of Floating Offshore Wind (FLOW) development on local infrastructure.
- Sense of northern Devon being a "backwater" with a lack of aspiration, innovation and funding, resulting in limited investment.
- Manufacturing is a significant sector in northern Devon but often not recognised.
- Need for northern Devon to sell itself better and not be so wary of innovation and change.

Activity 2:

What are your key priorities, what you wish to achieve / major projects / those big-ticket items you need to deliver?

Consider from the perspective of your organisation, those you represent or the communities of northern Devon.

- Need for first time buyer housing – with discount upon purchase and realising full value on subsequent sale.
- Important to ensure delivery of necessary infrastructure – increases in sub-station capacities, sewerage, drainage, etc.
- Opportunity to work together through One Public Estate to review locations of facilities and opportunities for consolidation, co-location and release of surplus land for redevelopment.
- Delivery of "university town" feel for Barnstaple, with ambition to centralise facilities for Petroc, with potential for land swaps – i.e. town centre sites for those at Roundswell.
- Important to secure appropriate sites for schools.
- Need to embed a sense of public safety – for example by enhancements to the public realm, in order to improve confidence and vitality of places.
- Important to consider ways of improving the quality of places and designing out of crime.
- Need to think about what is the role of each place. Acknowledge the specific roles of individual places – i.e. Barnstaple as a service centre – and plan services and development appropriately.

9 Group Two Notes

- Health and wellbeing should underpin any approach – ensure that there is an awareness of the challenges faced by particular places and localities and focus on addressing these specific issues.
- Consider the impact of societal change – such the need of many households to be supported by "two incomes" – due to, for example, housing affordability – with a consequential impact on volunteering, etc.
- Desire to achieve a "caring" community and the need to adapt our economy appropriately.
- Seek innovation in the delivery of services – however recognise that this often costs much more to implement.
- Transform approach to employment and productivity – by recognising the value of people and investing in them.
- Question whether there is a need to intervene in the tourism sector – help transform to a higher value product.
- Support agriculture and farming, recognising and responding to the challenges the sector faces – food production vs landscape and environmental protection – use of diversification? – or how?

10 Group Three Notes

TABLE 3 – Dawn Burgess & Mark Alcock (TDC / NDC)

Attendees : Mike Deaton (DCC); Karen Evans (NDVS); Poppy Millar (EA); Andrew Butler (NFU); Andrew Manning (WP); David Holt (HPPC)

Comments from the Icebreaker (Item 6)

- Co-ordinate budget spending
- Guide for future planning
- Sustainable development
- Framework structure
- Basis for planning decisions
- Provide a framework for development
- Allocate development
- Guidance – Local detail of vision / aims
- Ambition and goals of local communities and stakeholders / partners
- Interpretation of Government policy
- Identifying infrastructure for development;
- Working together to get the best for the area

10 Group Three Notes

TABLE 3 – Dawn Burgess & Mark Alcock (TDC / NDC)

Attendees : Mike Deaton (DCC); Karen Evans (NDVS); Poppy Millar (EA); Andrew Butler (NFU); Andrew Manning (WP); David Holt (HPPC)

Comments from Activity 1 (Item 7)

What are the issues and challenges that you feel, from your perspective, are facing your organisation, those you represent or the communities of northern Devon?

Are there any constraints that you anticipate might impact the local plan? Eg. infrastructure capacity.

- Flood risk / Climate change
- Sustainable development
- Coastal Change Management Area (CCMA) / Fluvial Change Management Area (FCMA)
- Mix of hard / soft infrastructure to reduce flooding
- Better land management
- Manage future change within the environment
- Net zero challenge
- Being aware of future development and locations. Infrastructure pre-planning
- Future funding to deliver infrastructure in the right place
- Employment opportunities for young people
- Retaining local talent within well-paid jobs
- Affordable housing
- Build more homes??
- Reduce the amount of second homes / Air BnB
- Reduce the loss of habitat / biodiversity
- Onerous on farmers to deal with legislation on environmental uplift
- Reduce pollution in Taw / Torridge estuary from current farming practices
- Future funding will allow for smaller sub-stations to be moved outside of flood-zones
- Get infrastructure plan in place
- Rapid Response Catchments (RRCs)
- Critical Drainage Aeas (CDAs)
- Loss of biodiversity – biodiversity net gain
- Public transport – Exeter to Bideford

TABLE 3 – Dawn Burgess & Mark Alcock (TDC / NDC)

Attendees : Mike Deaton (DCC); Karen Evans (NDVS); Poppy Millar (EA); Andrew Butler (NFU); Andrew Manning (WP); David Holt (HPPC)

Comments from Activity 2 (Item 9)

What are your key priorities, what you wish to achieve / major projects / those big-ticket items you need to deliver?

Consider from the perspective of your organisation, those you represent or the communities of northern Devon eg. NDLR, Biodiversity Net Gain, Petroc

- Net zero – Tackling climate change!
- Vibrancy of town centres
- Energy security
- Community scale on-shore wind projects
- Don't compromise northern Devon's environmental assets
- New development should be built to the highest standards
- Maximise solar gain within new development
- Go beyond Building Regulations in energy / design standards
- Increase community spaces within new development (green / built)
- Infrastructure delivery must match future growth aspirations
- Business resilience
- Build more homes (particularly affordable housing)
- Encourage inward investment (jobs / infrastructure)
- Flood risk / Shoreline management plan
- Adaptation
- Work with communities to address flooding concerns
- Increase capacity of Tarka line between Barnstaple and Exeter
- Innovative resilience (CCMA, FCMA)
- EA current capital programme / s106 / partner funding (2021 – 2027)
- Need to link local plan review with CCMA, FCMA and Shoreline Management Plan

11 Group Four Notes

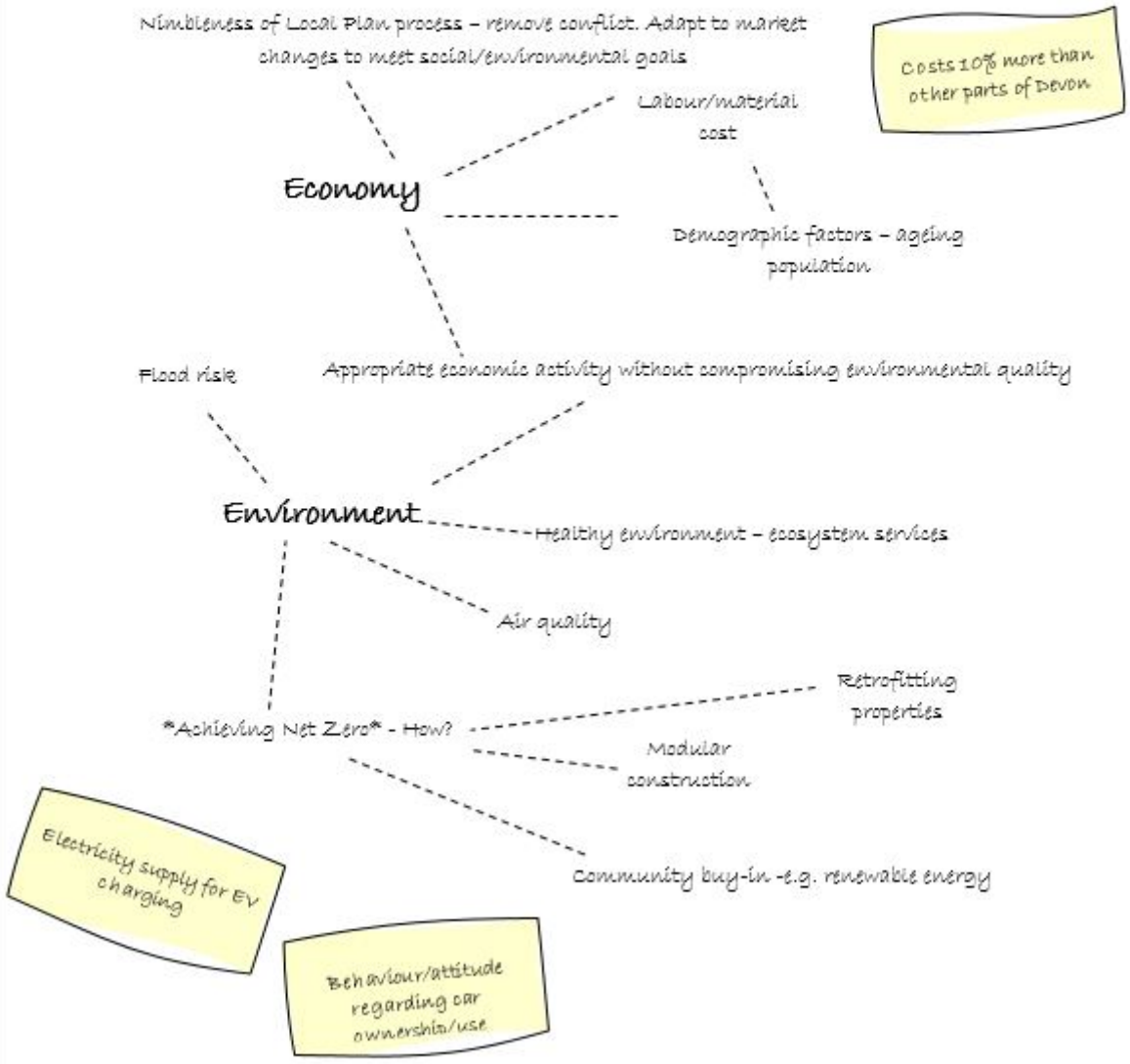
TABLE 4: STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP NOTES

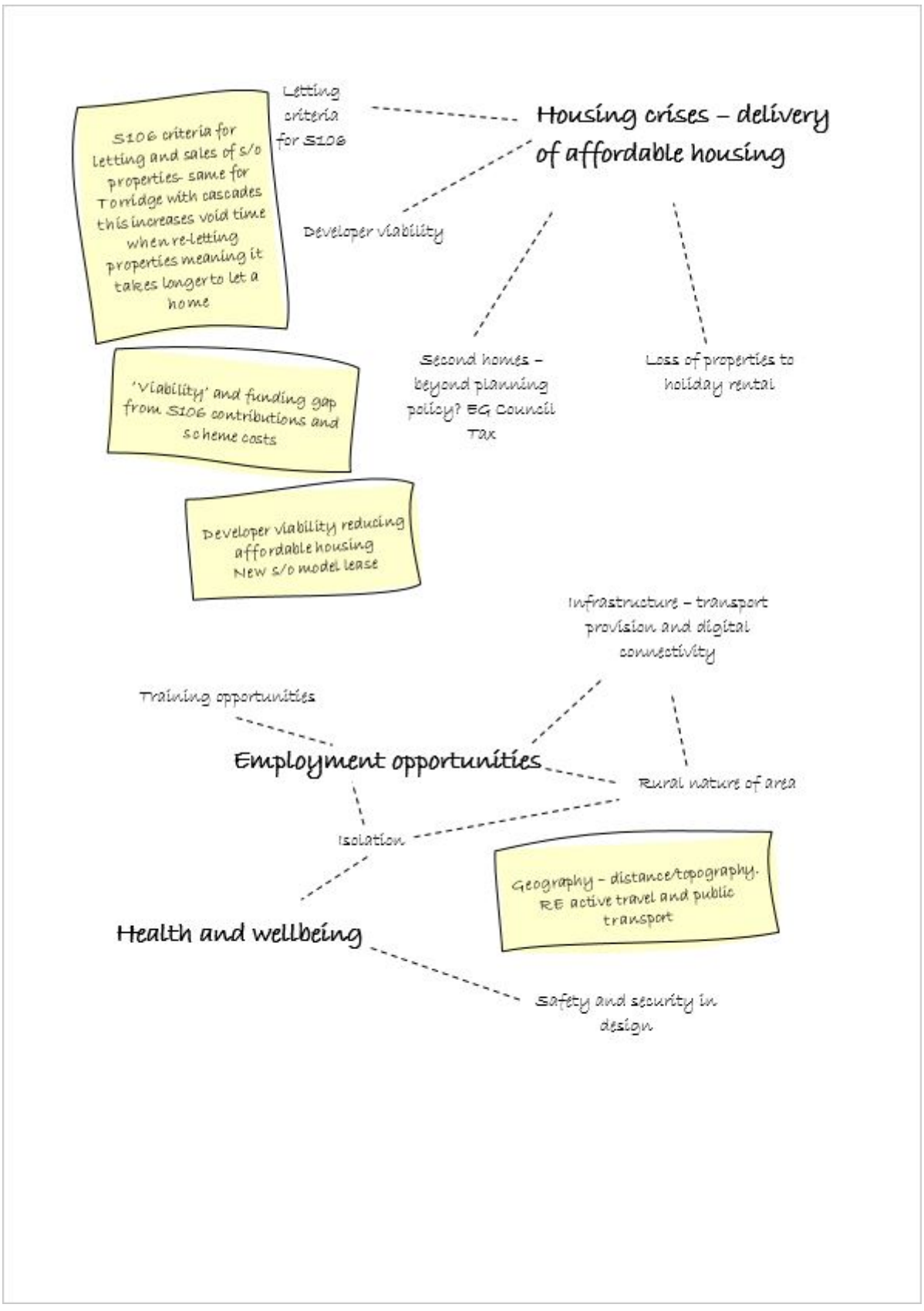
Attendees: Matt Collins (DCC), Tim Jones (SW Business Council), Sam Novak (Westward Housing), Stephanie Parker-Stephenson (Natural England), Simone Thompson (TTVS)

Activity 1:

What are the issues and challenges that you feel, from your perspective, are facing your organisation, those you represent or the communities of northern Devon?

Are there any constraints that you anticipate might impact the local plan?




Housing crises – delivery of affordable housing
Letting criteria for S106
S106 criteria for letting and sales of s/o properties- same for Torridge with cascades this increases void time when re-letting properties meaning it takes longer to let a home
Developer viability
'Viability' and funding gap from S106 contributions and scheme costs
Second homes – beyond planning policy? EG Council Tax
Loss of properties to holiday rental
Developer viability reducing affordable housing New s/o model lease
Infrastructure – transport provision and digital connectivity
Training opportunities
Employment opportunities
Rural nature of area
Isolation
Geography – distance/topography. RE active travel and public transport
Health and wellbeing
Safety and security in design

11 Group Four Notes

Activity 2:

What are your key priorities, what you wish to achieve / major projects / those big-ticket items you need to deliver?

Consider from the perspective of your organisation, those you represent or the communities of northern Devon.

General Priorities

Biodiversity Net gain/ Local Nature Recovery Strategy: On industrial scale or for protection?

Green and Blue economies: new opportunities, upskilling

Productivity: opportunities to maximise, benefits for small business

Funding for communities: promote health and well-being , diversity

Meeting basic needs of community – housing, food

Vision that represents scale of ambition

Approach to climate change emergency. Coastal management

Organisational Priorities

Westward Housing

- 700 new homes by 2025 across Devon (Torridge is core area)
- Deliver net-zero: district heating and modern construction methods (modular)
- Devon rural housing partnership: increase affordable housing in rural areas

Devon County Council

- Net-zero, Active Travel, LC-WIP, multi-use trails strategy
- Digital: reducing need to travel
- Buses and bus priority
- Schools
- Flood defences
- Road safety, community safety

Natural England

- Green infrastructure – links to health and well being

Others

- Hospitality & Tourism: Health tourism, seasonality (365 days per year), farm diversification

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