

# Public Document Pack

Mid Devon District Council

## Economy Policy Development Group

Thursday, 11 March 2021 at 5.30 pm  
Remote meeting

Next meeting  
Thursday, 20 May 2021 at 5.30 pm

**Important - this meeting will be conducted and recorded by Zoom only. Please do not attend Phoenix House. The attached Protocol for Remote Meetings explains how this will work.**

To join the Zoom Meeting please use the following link:

<https://zoom.us/j/96018543067?pwd=K0JiWm5VSkZMR1hoaG5Bem82bDNtQT09>

Meeting ID: 960 1854 3067  
Passcode: 648009

One tap mobile

08003582817,,96018543067#,,,,\*648009# United Kingdom Toll-free  
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Meeting ID: 960 1854 3067  
Passcode: 648009

## Membership

Cllr J M Downes (Chairman)  
Cllr Mrs C Collis  
Cllr N V Davey  
Cllr R J Dolley  
Cllr Mrs S Griggs  
Cllr B Holdman  
Cllr D F Pugsley  
Cllr R F Radford  
Cllr J Wright

# AGENDA

*Members are reminded of the need to make declarations of interest prior to any discussion which may take place*

- 1      **Apologies and Substitute Members**  
To receive any apologies for absence and notice of appointment of substitutes.
- 2      **Protocol for remote meetings** *(Pages 5 - 12)*  
The Group to note the protocol for remote meetings.
- 3      **Public Question Time**  
To receive any questions relating to items on the Agenda from members of the public and replies thereto.
- 4      **Declaration of Interests under the Code of Conduct**  
Councillors are reminded of the requirement to declare any interest, including the type of interest, and reason for that interest, either at this stage of the meeting or as soon as they become aware of that interest.
- 5      **Minutes** *(Pages 13 - 16)*  
Members to consider whether to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on 14 January 2021.
- 6      **Chairman's Announcements**  
To receive any announcements that the Chairman may wish to make.
- 7      **Covid 19 Economic Response** *(Pages 17 - 28)*  
To receive a report from the Head of Planning, Economy and Regeneration providing Members with an update regarding the Growth, Economy & Delivery team's latest COVID19 emergency economic and community response activities.
- 8      **Performance and Risk Report** *(Pages 29 - 50)*  
To receive a report from the Operations Manager for Performance, Governance and Health & Safety providing Members with an update on performance against the Corporate Plan and local service targets for 2020-21 as well as providing an update on the key business risks.
- 9      **Financial Monitoring** *(Pages 51 - 54)*  
To receive the month 10 financial monitoring report.
- 10     **Town Centre Health checks**  
To receive a presentation on Town Centre Health Checks.
- 11     **White Paper: Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth** *(Pages 55 - 58)*  
To receive a briefing paper from the Head of Planning, Economy and Regeneration providing information in relation to a Government White

Paper on Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth.

12 **Chairmans Annual Report for 2020/2021** (Pages 59 - 64)

To receive the Chairman's Annual Report for 2020/2021.

13 **Identification of items for the next meeting**

Members are asked to note that the following items are already identified in the work programme for the next meeting:

- Election of Chairman
- Election of Vice Chairman
- Covid19 Economic Response Update
- EHOD Economic Development Strategy (tbc)
- Performance and Risk
- Financial Monitoring
- Start time of meetings

Note: This item is limited to 10 minutes. There should be no discussion on the items raised.

**Stephen Walford**  
Chief Executive  
Wednesday, 3 March 2021

### **Covid-19 and meetings**

Meetings will not be held in person at Phoenix House until the Covid-19 crisis eases. Instead, the meetings will be held remotely via Zoom and you will be able to join these meetings via the internet. Please see the instructions on each agenda and read the Protocol on Remote Meetings before you join.

If you want to ask a question or speak, email your full name to [Committee@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:Committee@middevon.gov.uk) by **no later than 4pm on the day before the meeting**. This will ensure that your name is on the list to speak and will help us ensure that you are not missed – as you can imagine, it is easier to see and manage public speaking when everyone is physically present in the same room. Notification in this way will ensure the meeting runs as smoothly as possible.

If you require any further information, please contact Sarah Lees on:  
[slees@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:slees@middevon.gov.uk)

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## **Mid Devon District Council - Remote Meetings Protocol**

### **1. Introduction**

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations permit remote attendance in Local Authority meetings.

Remote attendance is permitted as long as certain conditions are satisfied. These include that the Member is able to hear and be heard by the other Members in attendance. Also, being able to hear and be heard by any members of the public entitled to attend the meeting (in line with the public participation scheme). A visual solution is preferred, but audio is sufficient.

This also relates to members of the public attending the meeting also being heard.

The regulations are clear that a meeting is not limited to those present in the same place, but includes electronic, digital or virtual locations (internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers).

### **2. Zoom**

Zoom is the system the Council will be using for the time-being to host remote / virtual meetings. It has functionality for audio, video, and screen sharing and you do not need to be a member of the Council or have a Zoom account to join a Zoom meeting.

### **3. Access to documents**

Member Services will publish the agenda and reports for committee meetings on the Council's website in line with usual practice. Paper copies of agendas will only be made available to those who have previously requested this and also the Chair of a virtual meeting.

If any other Member wishes to have a paper copy, they must notify the Member Services before the agenda is published, so they can arrange to post directly – it may take longer to organise printing, so as much notice as possible is appreciated.

Printed copies will not be available for inspection at the Council's offices and this requirement was removed by the Regulations.

### **4. Setting up the Meeting**

This will be done by Member Services. They will send a meeting request via Outlook which will appear in Members' Outlook calendar. Members will receive a URL link to click on to join the meeting.

### **5. Public Access**

Members of the public will be able to use a weblink and standard internet browser. This will be displayed on the front of the agenda.

## 6. Joining the Meeting

Councillors must join the meeting early (i.e. at least five minutes before the scheduled start time) in order to avoid disrupting or delaying the meeting. Councillors should remember that they may be visible and heard by others, including the public, during this time.

## 7. Starting the Meeting

At the start of the meeting, the Member Services Officer will check all required attendees are present (viewing the participant list) and that there is a quorum. If there is no quorum, the meeting will be adjourned. This applies if, during the meeting, it becomes inquorate for whatever reason.

The Chair will remind all Members, Officers and the Public that **all microphones will be automatically muted**, unless and until they are speaking. This prevents background noise, coughing etc. which is intrusive and disruptive during the meeting. The Hosting Officer will enforce this and will be able to turn off participant mics when they are not in use. Members would then need to turn their microphones back on when they wish to speak.

## 8. Public Participation

Participation by members of the public will continue in line with the Council's current arrangements as far as is practicable. However, to ensure that the meeting runs smoothly and that no member of the public is missed, all those who wish to speak must register **by 4pm on the day before the meeting**. They should email their full name to [Committee@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:Committee@middevon.gov.uk). If they wish to circulate their question in advance, that would be helpful.

At public question time, the Chair will invite the public by name to speak at the appropriate time. At that point, all public microphones will be enabled. This means that, to avoid private conversations being overheard, no member of the public should speak until it is their turn and they should then refrain from speaking until the end of public question time, when all microphones will be muted again. In the normal way, the public should state their full name, the agenda item they wish to speak to **before** they proceed with their question.

Unless they have registered, a member of the public will not be called to speak.

If a member of the public wishes to ask a question but cannot attend the meeting for whatever reason, there is nothing to prevent them from emailing members of the Committee with their question, views or concern in advance. However, if they do so, it would be helpful if a copy could be sent to [Committee@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:Committee@middevon.gov.uk) as well.

## 9. Declaration of Interests

Councillors should declare their interests in the usual way. A councillor with a disclosable pecuniary interest is required to leave the room. For remote meetings, this means that they will be moved to a break-out room for the duration of this item and will only be invited back into the meeting when discussion on the relevant item has finished.

## **10. The Meeting and Debate**

The Council will not be using the Chat function.

The Chair will call each member of the Committee to speak - the Chair can choose to do this either by calling (i) each member in turn and continuing in this way until no member has anything more to add, or (ii) only those members who indicate a wish to speak using the 'raise hand' function within Zoom. This choice will be left entirely to the Chair's discretion depending on how they wish to manage the meeting and how comfortable they are using the one or the other approach.

Members are discouraged from physically raising their hand in the video to indicate a wish to speak – it can be distracting and easily missed/misinterpreted. No decision or outcome will be invalidated by a failure of the Chair to call a member to speak – the remote management of meetings is intensive and it is reasonable to expect that some requests will be inadvertently missed from time to time.

When referring to reports or making specific comments, Councillors should refer to the report and page number, so that all Members of the Committee have a clear understanding of what is being discussed at all times.

## **11. Voting**

On a recommendation or motion being put to the vote, the Chair will go round the virtual room and ask each member entitled to vote to say whether they are for or against or whether they abstain. The Member Services Officer will announce the numerical result of the vote.

## **12. Meeting Etiquette Reminder**

- Mute your microphone – you will still be able to hear what is being said.
- Only speak when invited to do so by the Chair.
- Speak clearly and please state your name each time you speak
- If you're referring to a specific page, mention the page number.

## **13. Part 2 Reports and Debate**

There are times when council meetings are not open to the public, when confidential, or "exempt" issues – as defined in Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 – are under consideration. It is important to ensure that there are no members of the public at remote locations able to hear or see the proceedings during such meetings.

Any Councillor in remote attendance must ensure that there is no other person present – a failure to do so could be in breach of the Council’s Code of Conduct.

If there are members of the public and press listening to the open part of the meeting, then the Member Services Officer will, at the appropriate time, remove them to a break-out room for the duration of that item. They can then be invited back in when the business returns to Part 1.

Please turn off smart speakers such as Amazon Echo (Alexa), Google Home or smart music devices. These could inadvertently record phone or video conversations, which would not be appropriate during the consideration of confidential items.

#### **14. Interpretation of standing orders**

Where the Chair is required to interpret the Council’s Constitution and procedural rules in light of the requirements of remote participation, they may take advice from the Member Services Officer or Monitoring Officer prior to making a ruling. However, the Chair’s decision shall be final.

#### **15. Disorderly Conduct by Members**

If a Member behaves in the manner as outlined in the Constitution (persistently ignoring or disobeying the ruling of the Chair or behaving irregularly, improperly or offensively or deliberately obstructs the business of the meeting), any other Member may move 'That the member named be not further heard' which, if seconded, must be put to the vote without discussion.

If the same behaviour persists and a Motion is approved 'that the member named do leave the meeting', then they will be removed as a participant by the Member Services Officer.

#### **16. Disturbance from Members of the Public**

If any member of the public interrupts a meeting the Chair will warn them accordingly. If that person continues to interrupt or disrupt proceedings the Chair will ask the Member Services Officer to remove them as a participant from the meeting.

#### **17. After the meeting**

Please ensure you leave the meeting promptly by clicking on the red phone button to hang up.

#### **18. Technical issues – meeting management**

If the Chair, the Hosting Officer or the Member Services Officer identifies a problem with the systems from the Council’s side, the Chair should either declare a recess while the fault is addressed or, if the fault is minor (e.g. unable to bring up a presentation), it may be appropriate to move onto the next item of business

in order to progress through the agenda. If it is not possible to address the fault and the meeting becomes inquorate through this fault, the meeting will be adjourned until such time as it can be reconvened.

If the meeting was due to determine an urgent matter or one which is time-limited and it has not been possible to continue because of technical difficulties, the Chief Executive, Leader and relevant Cabinet Member, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, shall explore such other means of taking the decision as may be permitted by the Council's constitution.

For members of the public and press who experience problems during the course of a meeting e.g. through internet connectivity or otherwise, the meeting will not be suspended or adjourned.

### **19. Technical issues – Individual Responsibility (Members and Officers)**

Many members and officers live in places where broadband speeds are poor, but technical issues can arise at any time for a number of reasons. The following guidelines, if followed, should help reduce disruption. Separate guidance will be issued on how to manage connectivity – this paragraph focusses on the procedural steps. Joining early will help identify problems – see paragraph 6.

- Join public Zoom meetings by telephone if there is a problem with the internet. Before all meetings, note down or take a photograph of the front page of the agenda which has the necessary telephone numbers. Annex 1 to this protocol contains a brief step-by-step guide to what to expect
- Consider an alternative location from which to join the meeting, but staying safe and keeping confidential information secure. For officers, this may mean considering whether to come into the office, subject to this being safe and practicable (childcare etc.)
- If hosting a meeting via Zoom (briefings etc.), consider creating an additional host when setting up the meeting. The additional host can step in if the main host has problems – remember that without a host, the meeting cannot close and any information on the screens will remain on view
- Have to hand the telephone number of another member or officer expected in the meeting – and contact them if necessary to explain the problem in connecting
- Officers should have an 'understudy' or deputy briefed and on standby to attend and present as needed (and their telephone numbers to hand)
- For informal meetings and as a last resort, members and officers may be able to call another member or officer in the meeting who can put the 'phone on loudspeaker for all to hear – not ideal, but it ensures some degree of participation and continuity

- Member Services will hold a list of contact details for all senior officers

## Phone only access to zoom meetings

(Before you start **make sure you know the Meeting ID and the Meeting Password**) – Both of these are available on the agenda for the meeting

**Call the toll free number** either on the meeting agenda or on the Outlook appointment (this will start with 0800 --- ----)

(Ensure your phone is on 'speaker' if you can)

A message will sound saying *“Welcome to Zoom, enter your meeting ID followed by the hash button”*

- **Enter Meeting ID followed by #**

Wait for next message which will say *“If you are a participant, please press hash to continue”*

- **Press #**

Wait for next message which will say *“Enter Meeting Password followed by hash”*

- **Enter 6 digit Meeting Password followed by #**

Wait for the following two messages:

*“You are currently being held in a waiting room, the Host will release you from ‘hold’ in a minute”*

**Wait.....**

*“You have now entered the meeting”*

### Important notes for participating in meetings

Press **\*6** to toggle between **‘mute’ and ‘unmute’** (you should always ensure you are muted until you are called upon to speak)

If you wish to speak you can **‘raise your hand’** by pressing **\*9**. Wait for the Chairman to call you to speak. The Host will lower your hand after you have spoken. Make sure you mute yourself afterwards.

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## MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

**MINUTES** of a **MEETING** of the **ECONOMY POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP** held on 14 January 2021 at 5.30 pm

### **Present**

#### **Councillors**

J M Downes (Chairman)  
N V Davey, R J Dolley, Mrs S Griggs,  
B Holdman, D F Pugsley, R F Radford and  
J Wright

### **Apologies**

#### **Councillor(s)**

T G Hughes

### **Also Present**

#### **Councillor(s)**

R J Chesterton, R M Deed and R Evans

### **Also Present**

#### **Officer(s):**

Adrian Welsh (Strategic Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery), John Bodley-Scott (Economic Development Team Leader), Ian Chilver (Group Manager for Financial Services), Dean Emery (Corporate Manager for Revenues, Benefits and Recovery) and Sally Gabriel (Member Services Manager)

#### **46 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (00-02-53)**

Apologies were received (retrospectively) from Cllr T G Hughes.

#### **47 REMOTE MEETING PROTOCOL (00-03-23)**

The protocol for remote meetings was noted.

#### **48 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (00-03-37)**

There were no questions from members of the public present.

#### **49 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT (00-03-42)**

No interests were declared under this item.

#### **50 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING (00-04-03)**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2020 were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

#### **51 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS (00-04-32)**

The Chairman voiced concern with regard to the grave news of the escalation of the pandemic and the ongoing affect on the economy and the residents of Mid Devon.

The main role of the Group would be to continue to monitor the management and administration of the affect of the pandemic on the district as a whole.

## 52 COVID 19 ECONOMIC RESPONSE UPDATE (00-05-10)

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report \* from the Head of Planning, Economy and Regeneration providing it with an update regarding the Growth, Economy and Delivery team's latest COVID19 emergency economic recovery work and seeking Members' endorsement for the current business support and economic recovery activities.

The Strategic Manager for Growth Economy and Delivery informed the meeting that since the publication of the report so much had changed as the country was now in another lockdown situation and therefore there was a need to focus on the variances to the published report:

- The relevant figures in relation to the number of positive cases of coronavirus across the country, the increase in the number of deaths and the percentage of new cases in Mid Devon
- The roll out of the vaccination programme
- The impact on the economy of Mid Devon following another lockdown situation and the period of time it would take for the country to recover from the recession
- The different Government support schemes that were now in place and the additional sum of £7.3m of Government funding which was due to be received and the total amount of government funding received to date (£30.6m)
- 3 more officers had been relocated to assist the team with grant payments
- The timing of the Chancellors budget and the impact that this may have on Business Rate relief
- The Covid Support Hub had been reinstated; all clinically vulnerable people would be required to register for assistance, although many people had supports mechanisms in place. The Financial Hardship Fund was seeing a number of repeat applications. Across the district there had been an increase in local stakeholder services.
- A Town Centre Health Check was underway in Cullompton and it was hoped that the health checks would be extended to the other main towns as soon as staff resource allowed. In addition to this, and with the assistance of seconded leisure staff, a business survey had been undertaken of town centre businesses in the three main towns to better understand the effect of the pandemic on their businesses. Brexit preparedness, feedback on safety measures in the town centres etc.. Key findings were outlined which included the need for training for the creation of webpages. Officers had been putting those businesses in contact with the LEP digital training programme which many of the businesses had already benefitted from.
- The Reopening of the High Streets initiative continued and whilst the country was in lockdown, work would be undertaken to review arrangements in the town centre and refresh pavement stencilling and signage as necessary in readiness for future easing of restrictions
- The Cullompton High Street Heritage Action Zone Project continued
- Devon recovery work continued and the detailed work was explained

Consideration was given to:

- The impact of the pandemic/lockdown on independent stores in the main towns
- The Income Compensation Scheme
- The impact of the pandemic on the budget
- The roll out of the grant support schemes
- The need to review the signage in the towns
- Whether there was any tourism support grants available

The Chairman on behalf of the Group recorded thanks and appreciation to staff for the work that was taking place.

Note: \* Report previously circulated; copy attached to the minutes.

### 53 **FINANCIAL MONITORING (00-56-34)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a month 8 financial monitoring report \* which was presented by the Group Manager for Financial Services.

Key highlights within the report were listed as follows:

- Month 8 reporting showed a forecast improvement of £131k which now indicated a surplus of £109k
- The uncertain times that we were living with and how the figures could fluctuate
- Any surplus monies would be added to reserves to support any future gaps in budget
- The Medium Term Financial Plan and estimates of budget gaps for future years
- November saw a second period of lockdown which from a financial perspective stalled the recovery in service activity and therefore income
- The income compensation scheme was active and the first payment of £530k relating to return period April to July had been received. The second return (August to November) had been accelerated and submission was currently in progress.
- A further £53k had been received in furlough monies for November
- The variances outlined within the report
- Month 8 reporting for the Housing Revenue Account which showed a forecast reduction in the deficit by £34k to £324k

Discussion took place with regard to the Income Compensation Scheme and the recruitment of a Market Manager for Tiverton Pannier Market.

Note: \* Monitoring report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

### 54 **BUDGET 2021-2022 - UPDATE (1-08-29)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report \* from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) reviewing the revised draft budget changes. This had been previously considered by the Cabinet on 7 January 2021 and the Group was asked to discuss any changes that it may require prior to the formal recommendation of the budget proposals to Cabinet and Council in February.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- The current snapshot of where the council was at the current time, the deficit was down to £490k but that there was more work to do.
- Key movements and assumptions shown within the report highlighting the Government Income Protection Scheme, the Autumn Statement, the funding settlement, the New Homes Bonus, the Lower Tier Service Grant and an adjustment to the pay settlement
- The ongoing unknown impact of the pandemic on the budget

Discussion took place with regard to:

- Whether Members had any additional saving suggestions, savings on grass verges maintenance was suggested together with additional income generation
- A possible reduction in services and that difficult decisions would have to be made
- Any increase in Council Tax above the capped level would require a referendum

Note: \* Report previously circulated; copy attached to the signed minutes.

## 55 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (1-35-52)**

The Group requested that COVID19 activities continue to be it's only consideration at the current time (other than those reports which were statutorily necessary to come to each meeting).

(The meeting ended at 7.08 pm)

**CHAIRMAN**

**ECONOMY PDG  
11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2021**

## **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING, ECONOMY AND REGENERATION**

### **COVID 19 ECONOMIC RESPONSE UPDATE**

**Cabinet Member(s):** Cllr Richard Chesterton

**Responsible Officer:** Mrs Jenny Clifford, Head of Planning, Economy and Regeneration

**Reason for Report:** To continue to provide members with update information regarding the Growth, Economy & Delivery team's latest COVID19 emergency economic and community response activities, to update members on the Devon-wide economic recovery work and seek members' endorsement for the current business support and economic recovery activities.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the report be noted and that members endorse the current support and economic recovery activities set out in this report.

**Financial Implications:** There have been extreme impacts on the local economy, individual businesses, and the wider community as a result of the pandemic and the resulting lockdowns.

The Government's emergency financial response has been to make grant funding available to help support businesses. Many of these grants have been administered by the District Council. A breakdown of these funds is provided later in the report.

The recent roll out of a vaccine is encouraging; however the current lockdown restrictions continue to have a dramatic impact on our businesses. Whilst the 'roadmap' to lifting restrictions is welcomed we await more information from the Chancellor's budget announcements as to further government grant assistance for the next financial year.

**Budget and Policy Framework:** The focus of this report is on the wider economic impacts rather than on how the Council's own budget and income have been affected.

Economic Strategies are being reviewed as a result of the pandemic. A future report will update members on any suggested changes to policy. In the meantime the current economic strategies will inform the focus of some of the recovery plans read in conjunction with the Devon Economic Recovery Prospectus. Importantly there is a high degree of synergy between the themes in our existing Economic Strategy and those emerging through the Devon-wide recovery work.

**Legal Implications:** There are no legal implications arising from this information report.

**Risk Assessment:** The impact on the economy has been significant. Ongoing work will be focussed on mitigating risk to aid recovery.

In considering measures to support the safe reopening of the high streets within the District as a result of COVID-19, a risk assessment led approach has purposely been followed. Risk assessments have been carried out for all towns within the district incorporating a series of on-site assessments. These assessments have been reviewed to reflect changing circumstances and government restrictions. Guidance and advice on COVID-19 safety requirements has been at the core of this risk assessment process and is vital to ensure that risk is reduced and customer and trader confidence restored.

Advice has also been provided on our website to assist businesses in undertaking their own risk assessments before reopening.

**Equality Impact Assessment:** There have been unequitable impacts of the lockdown with it being felt greatest by many economically vulnerable individuals and households. There have been huge impacts on the medically vulnerable as a result of the need to be shielded from the wider community.

A range of initiatives have been put in place to seek to reduce the impact on the economically and medically vulnerable such as the Mid Devon COVID 19 Support Fund (Devon County Council funded).

Recovery impacts need to continue to consider equality issues carefully.

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** The work of the Growth, Economy and Delivery team supports the Corporate Plan priority strand: the economy, and specifically:

- Developing and delivering regeneration plans for our town centres
- Economic opportunities
- Economic and community confidence
- Promoting the development of the farming economy and local food production

These objectives have even greater significance following the effects of the COVID19 pandemic.

**Impact on Climate Change:** Putting recovery plans in place to rebuild the local economy will present opportunities to further the climate change agenda, encourage greater use of renewables and support green tech businesses.

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 At the time of writing there were 2,098 tested cases in Mid Devon and 70 deaths (with a COVID-19 positive test result). There were 19,150 in Devon (excluding Plymouth and Torbay) out of a total population of 802,375. In terms of the national situation, the UK has more than 4,144,577 confirmed cases and 121,747 deaths (Total deaths within 28 days of a positive test result for COVID-19). There have been 644 deaths in Devon within 28 days of a positive test result for COVID-19.

1.2 These figures are alarming and have increased substantially since the last meeting; however there is some positive news. At the time of writing 18,242,873 people have received a first dose of a vaccine and 669,105 have received a second dose. It is pleasing that at the time of writing the number of daily cases and hospitalisations are falling as the vaccine programme is being rolled out. This has given the Government sufficient confidence to set out its

roadmap out of lockdown and the related gradual lifting of restrictions. The Prime Minister set out an indicative programme for the lifting of restrictions subject to evidence that: the vaccine programme remains successful and that vaccines are sufficiently effective in reducing hospitalisations and deaths, infection rates do not risk a surge in hospitalisations, or that new variants do not appear that fundamentally affect this course of action. The roadmap therefore sets the following dates which are five weeks apart for the relaxation of restrictions. These dates are the earliest at which each of the stages will be undertaken. These dates are wholly contingent on the data and are subject to change.

**Step 1: 8 March**

- Schools and colleges are open for all students. Practical Higher Education Courses.
- Recreation or exercise outdoors with household or one other person. No household mixing indoors.
- Wraparound childcare.
- Stay at home.
- Funerals (30), wakes and weddings (6)

29 March

- Rule of 6 or two households outdoors. No household mixing indoors.
- Outdoor sport and leisure facilities.
- Organised outdoor sport allowed (children and adults).
- Minimise travel. No holidays.
- Outdoor parent & child groups (up to 15 parents).

**Step 2: At least five weeks after Step 1, no earlier than 12 April.**

- Indoor leisure (including gyms) open for use individually or within household groups.
- Rule of 6 or two households outdoors. No household mixing indoors.
- Outdoor attractions such as zoos, theme parks and drive-in cinemas.
- Libraries and community centres.
- Personal care premises.
- All retail.
- Outdoor hospitality.
- All children's activities, indoor parent & child groups (up to 15 parents).
- Domestic overnight stays (household only).
- Self-contained accommodation (household only).
- Funerals (30), wakes, weddings and receptions (15).
- Minimise travel. No international holidays.
- Event pilots begin.

**Step 3: At least five weeks after Step 2, no earlier than 17 May.**

- Indoor entertainment and attractions.
- 30 person limit outdoors. Rule of 6 or two households (subject to review).
- Domestic overnight stays.
- Organised indoor adult sport.
- Most significant life events (30).
- Remaining outdoor entertainment (including performances).
- Remaining accommodation.

- Some large events (expect for pilots) - capacity limits apply. •Indoor events: 1,000 or 50%.
- Outdoor other events: 4,000 or 50%.
- Outdoor seated events: 10,000 or 25%.
- International travel - subject to review.

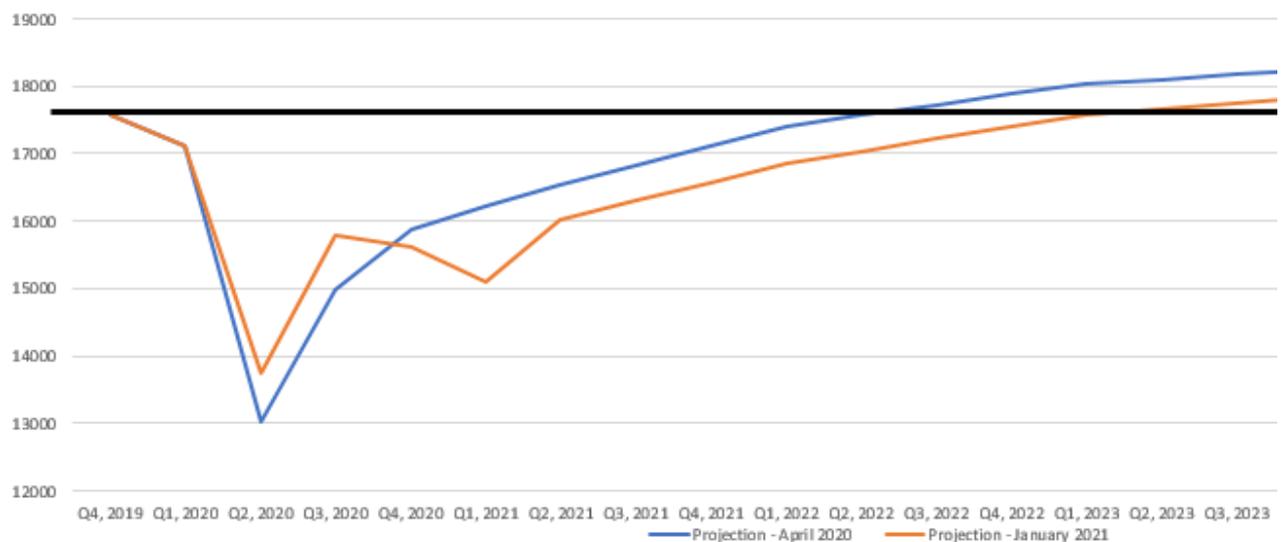
**Step 4:** At least five weeks after Step 3, no earlier than 21 June.

- No legal limits on social contact
- Nightclubs.
- Larger events.
- No legal limit on life events.

## 2.0 Economic Impacts of the pandemic

2.1 The effect of the pandemic continues to have an enormous impact on the national economy. As previously reported at previous meetings the UK formally entered a recession last year and witnessed the largest decline seen in the UK since quarterly records began. Some reports suggest that between January and November 2020 over 4,500 shops closed in town and city centres around the UK leading to the loss of almost 100,000 jobs.

2.2 Work undertaken by Devon County Council, set out in the diagram below, shows the predicted size of the Economic impact of the pandemic. The economic impacts are unprecedented. Importantly the Economy was slowing down prior to COVID shutdown and the events of the last year have exacerbated the situation unimaginably. The chart shows two modelling scenarios the first undertaken in April 2020 and the second in January 2021. This latter estimate shows a deterioration in the economy due to the third lockdown which is much deeper than originally expected.



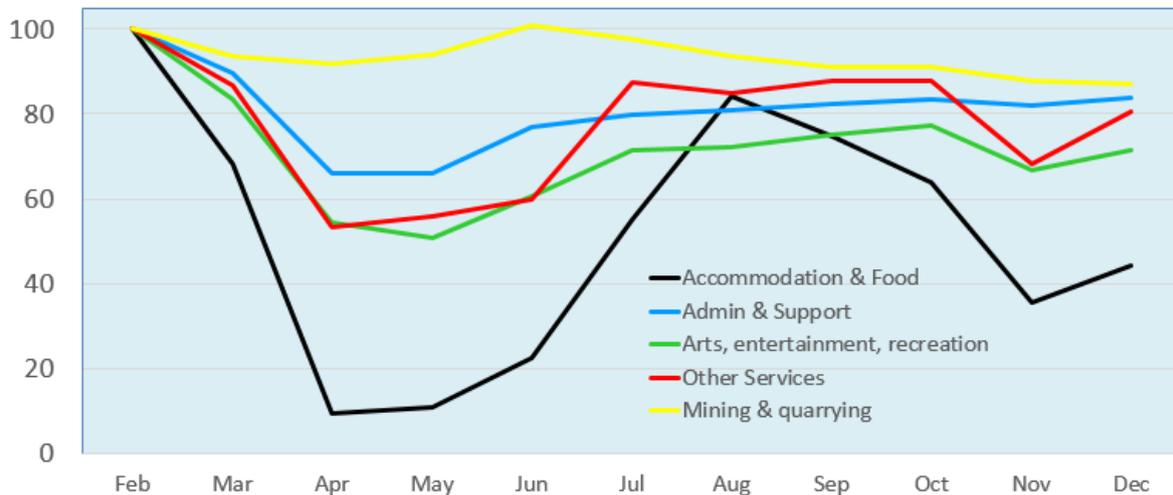
Source: Devon County Council

2.3 Devon County Council officers have been refining this information still further and now expect a double dip recession, though with a shallower second dip through q1 of 2021 (a reduction of around 4% in Gross Value Added (GVA)). This will mean a total reduction in 2020/21 financial year of around 14%.

2.4 There are however encouraging signs that the Devon economy will start to bounce back quickly over the summer, returning to growth by Q2 2021. Economy will then recover steadily into 2022 and 2023, six months later than previously predicted. The picture for Mid Devon however, is bleaker as it is expected to lag behind other areas of the County by potentially a further three to four years.

2.5 The graph below shows the sectors in the UK economy which remain hardest hit by the Pandemic at the end of 2020.

Feb = 100



Source: Devon County Council

2.6 The noticeable effect on the Accommodation and Food sector (the bottom line on the graph above) is a particular problem for the Mid Devon economy given the importance of the hospitality industry and related food supply chains (including agriculture). The high street retail sector has also been badly affected in the District as will be referred to in a subsequent item on the agenda.

2.7 The biggest concern for the District is the rise in unemployment. Since the start of the pandemic the rate of unemployment has risen from 1.7% in March 2020 to 3.9% in December 2020. The latest figures for January indicate a thousand more unemployed than this time last year. With over 10% of Mid Devon employees currently furloughed, there is a significant risk that the number of claimants could substantially increase when the scheme comes to a close (April 2021). To counter this risk, the team is exploring projects with DWP and Devon County Council to provide support to help people get back into work as quickly as possible. We will report to members on the development of any jobs support programmes as they advance.

### 3.0 Ongoing Emergency Response

3.1 Since the start of Lockdown restrictions in March 2020 there has been a wide range of emergency COVID support activities undertaken by the District Council for local businesses and for the vulnerable. These have largely been funded from central government funds; some of which have now closed. The following paragraphs summarise these various activities:

### Business Assistance

3.2 Since the last report the GED team officers have been ensconced in the delivery of business grant payments with respect to ten currently live grant schemes. Grant distribution is going well and the team have received very good feedback from businesses. Businesses have been delighted that the District Council has managed to turn around these payments so quickly and as such we understand is one of the best performing in the UK.

3.3 The table below sets out the financial assistance provided to Mid Devon businesses since the start of the pandemic. This information is current at the

<b>Funding Assistance</b>	<b>Paid</b>	<b>Status</b>
RHL & Small Business Grants	£20,007,500.00	Closed
Discretionary Grants	£1,129,000.00	Closed
Nursery Relief	£19,937.00	Closed
Extended Retail Relief	£7,623,799.00	Ongoing
November Lockdown	£898,686.00	Open
Additional Restrictions Grants	£1,497,957.00	Fully Spent awaiting potential top up from Government
ARG Top Up (Jan Lockdown)	£731,173.00	Open
Tier 2 & 3 Closed	£111,349.00	Open
Tier 2& 3 Open	£508,212.00	Open
January Lockdown Closed	£1,306,023.00	Open
January Lockdown Top Up	£2,615,000.00	Open
Christmas Support Payments	£51,000.00	Open
Council Tax Hardship	£450,899.00	Ongoing
DCC & MDDC Welfare Support Scheme	£29,000.00	Ongoing
Test & Trace (Self Isolation Payments) Both Schemes	£17,000.00	Ongoing
<b>Total</b>	<b>£36,996,535.00</b>	

time of writing an update will be provided at the meeting.

3.4 At the time of writing we are awaiting confirmation from government as to whether or not grant schemes will be extended and if so in what format and at what scale.

### COVID-19 Community Support Response - Vulnerable Residents

3.5 Referrals to the Community Support Hub remain low, with the majority being self or local referrals through our switchboard and on-line enquiry form. With the Leisure staff now focusing on the Community Testing, all enquiries are now being fielded by the Customer First team. In total we have received 68 referrals since the beginning of the January lockdown, 33 through the national registration website and 35 locally.

3.6 As of the 16<sup>th</sup> February a further 1.7 million people nationally have been identified as having an equivalent risk through a combination of medical and social risk factors to those who are Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and are being advised to Shield. At the same time the period of shielding has been extended to 31st March 2021. This addition represents a 42% increase in the Shielding list. The initial tranche of newly identified vulnerable, those between

the ages of 16-69, amounts to 5,753 in Devon, which may translate to approximately 600 people in Mid Devon being added to the shielding list.

- 3.7 This is likely to increase the number of enquiries considerably as many of these will be new to shielding. The Council will continue to provide a point of contact for these residents, and help them with priority supermarket slots and access other essential needs as needed.

#### COVID-19 Local Support Fund (Financial Hardship Fund)

- 3.8 Since the beginning of the latest lockdown we have had 149 applications to the hardship fund. The number of applications remains high at 20-25 per week. Nearly 50% are repeat applications. Also since the beginning of the pandemic we have now received 554 applications to the fund and distributed over £48k in emergency relief. Devon County Council has recently announced further funding of £600k across the county to relieve financial hardship, so we will hopefully soon be receiving a top-up to our depleted funds.
- 3.9 Discussions continue both internally and with partners in the Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector on how best to address financial hardship in the medium to longer-term once the initial restrictions are eased, and how best to support families with both immediate emergency support and more long-lasting advice to help them get onto a more sustainable financial footing.
- 3.10 Details regarding the scheme can be found on the District Council website: <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/do-it-online/covid19-support/covid19-local-support-fund/>
- #### Reopening our High Streets Safely
- 3.11 Work on minimising and mitigating the risk of the spread of COVID19 in our High Streets continues. This involves putting in place measures to establish a safe trading environment for businesses and customers, particularly in high streets. Interventions include communications/public information, business facing awareness raising activities and temporary public realm changes to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely. Liaison continues with the Town Councils and other partners with regard to ongoing review of the risk assessments for the towns and another meeting with the Town Mayors will be scheduled prior to the expected reopening in April.
- 3.12 Our Communication Strategy continues to guide the approach to publicising the changes to the town centres, reinforce safety messages and provide increased confidence to visitors. Further to our previous media campaigns and adverts we will intend to be running additional campaigns over the coming months promoting Mid Devon towns and crucially reinforcing safety measures prior to the latest reopening. Social media updates have also been used through the campaign and our website is regularly updated.

## **4.0 Recovery Update**

- 4.1 The following section provides an update on some of the Mid Devon initiatives which contribute towards recovery and also wider Devonwide projects being taken forward through the 'Team Devon' partnership.

#### Cullompton High Street Heritage Action Zone Project

- 4.2 An important part of the team's recovery work is the Cullompton High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) project, co-funded by Historic England. There are a number of elements to the project. Recent developments are outlined below:
- 4.3 At the time of writing the Fore Street Grants Scheme is nearing its launch and associated press coverage. This scheme will allow building owners and repairing leaseholders in the Fore Street area to apply for grant funding to support structural and historic reinstatement works. Similarly the Shopfront Improvement Grants Scheme is due to be launched at the same time. This will allow building owners and repairing leaseholders in the conservation area to apply for grant funding to support shopfront improvement works.
- 4.4 The updated Cullompton Conservation Area Management Plan and Mid Devon Shopfront Design Guide is being drafted. These will be presented to PPAG in March 2021 with consultation and community engagement to begin in April 2021.
- 4.5 At the time of writing officers are awaiting the outcome of the recent Cullompton Cultural Programme bid to Historic England. An update will be provided at the meeting. Once confirmed the Cultural Programme of activities to support the HAZ can be set out in more detail.

#### Town Centre Masterplans

- 4.6 During the last year the emerging Tiverton masterplan work has been revisited to take account of the Covid-19 pandemic and to seek the opportunity to embed tackling climate change into town centre regeneration. Key areas for intervention have been the subject of presentations and informal discussions with Cabinet, Ward Members, the Tiverton Town Council and the Tiverton Town Centre Partnership. This work will inform external funding bids and support current lobbying by officers for investment in the town.
- 4.7 Following consultation that took place last year, to inform a draft Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan, a second round of consultation is due to take place later in the year.

#### Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points

- 4.8 Officers are currently exploring opportunities for installation of EV charging points across the District which could have further benefits as a potential basis for the implementation of eco car clubs. This work is in its infancy and further updates will be provided as the project takes shape.

#### Re-opening of Cullompton Railway Station

- 4.9 Members may recall that Mid Devon District and Somerset West and Taunton Councils were successful in securing government funding through the 'Restoring Your Railways - Idea's Fund' for development of a Strategic Outline

Business Case to reopen stations at Cullompton and Wellington. An important milestone was recently achieved as the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) was submitted to the Department for Transport (DfT). Officers will update members with regard to the next steps once the SOBC has been formally assessed by DfT.

#### Team Devon Recovery

- 4.10 The 'Team Devon' approach to economic recovery continues; although public sector resource across the County has been prioritised on an extension of emergency response work following the latest national lockdown and the subsequent uncertainty as to when restrictions will be lifted.
- 4.11 'Team Devon' is a public and private sector partnership drawing in expertise from business, education, skills and public sector organisations to respond to the need for economic recovery in the County. Mid Devon Officers have been active partners in the process. Other contributors to the 'Team Devon' recovery work include business representatives, Devon's County, District and City Councils, the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership, Dartmoor National Park and Devon's MP's. Devon County Council has recently approved £6m of investment into recovery measures to start to implement the Team Devon Recovery Prospectus. Mid Devon Officers continue to contribute towards these projects.
- 4.12 An important current area of activity for 'Team Devon' partners is development of a pipeline of projects in anticipation of forthcoming national funding opportunities. Whilst it is unclear the scale and nature of these funding opportunities the Government has made a pledge to 'Build Back Better' as part of its UK Coronavirus Recovery Campaign and attempt to 'level up' economic geographic disparity. This pipeline work, in association with the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership, aims to ensure that there are appropriate projects lined up ready for delivery should funding become available. Mid Devon Officers are actively pursuing opportunities for the District through this process.
- 4.13 The following paragraphs set out a brief update on a number of activities currently being undertaken within the County as part of the recovery agenda.

#### Listening Ear Programme

- 4.14 In response to the increasing number of calls for support from a range of business owners, a new 'Listening Ear' support service for businesses in Devon has been launched by Devon County Council, with 121 appointments bookable online.
- 4.15 The Service is offering businesses a safe and friendly space where they can talk to an experienced volunteer of the stresses and challenges, they face in running their business during the COVID-19 pandemic. Volunteers can also signpost businesses to other services if they need them. This pilot Listening Ear Service runs until 31st March 2021, working with Devon Communities Together and aims to support at least 40 businesses with at least 5 volunteers.
- 4.16 The service will also feature 2 x webinar/peer support style group sessions – the first of which is scheduled for 23rd February 2021.

- 4.17 Businesses who consider they could benefit from the programme are encouraged to go directly to the website to find out more and book a listening ear session online. <https://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/listening-ear>

#### Devon Sustainable Food Partnership

- 4.18 This is a partnership across several themes/challenges from healthy food to food governance and everything in between. In January 2021, 'Sustainable Food Places' (SFP) awarded Devon County Council a grant of £5,000 for the development of a Devon Food Partnership. The partnership is in its very early stages of development. A 'Devon Strategic Food Partnership – The Beginning of the Journey' Webinar was held on 11 February 2021. The aim of the webinar was to share progress so far, hear from some key speakers with food partnership experience locally and nationally, and start the conversation around building a strategic food partnership for Devon. The webinar recording is available online. It is intended that working groups will emerge to carry this initiative forward in line with the SFP 6 key principles. More information will be provided to members as more details emerge.

#### Start Up Support – Social Entrepreneurs

- 4.19 The programme is designed to offer start up support to unemployed people or people at risk of unemployment because of the economic impact COVID 19. The focus is on turning social enterprise business ideas into reality and capitalising on the added social value to our communities.
- 4.20 Dartington School for Social Entrepreneurs have been contracted to deliver the project. Participants on the online learning initiative, which is made up of ten weekday sessions spread over eight weeks, will have the chance to learn from experts and existing entrepreneurs and creating a supportive network of people to overcome the challenges they are facing and build resilient social enterprises.
- 4.21 The course is for between 15 and 18 beneficiaries and will run between 1st Feb and 25th March 2021. Recruitment is currently underway with a social media campaign and referrals from job centres, Learn Devon and District Councils and community organisations to ensure a good geographical spread across the county. A press announcement will be released <https://www.devonnewscentre.info/devon-start-up-programme-for-social-entrepreneurs/>

#### Made in Devon Programme

- 4.22 The Made in Devon scheme was launched in September 2020 with an initial offer of free membership for the first twelve months to fifty local businesses. To date 33 applications have been received and are being processed. Applicants so far include food and drink producers, a garden centre, a hotel and a furniture company.
- 4.23 The full-time marketing officer for the programme has worked with a local design company to create a logo which can be used with service, hospitality, making and growing sectors.
- 4.24 Marketing and promotional work continues. The Scheme has a website: [www.madeindevon.org.uk](http://www.madeindevon.org.uk). Devon County Council has launched a radio campaign encouraging businesses to apply for Scheme membership. In addition, local businesses are being contacted directly. The initial aim is for the scheme to have at least fifty members by the end of March 2021.

#### **Contact for more Information:**

Adrian Welsh, Group Manager - Growth,  
Economy and Delivery  
[awelsh@middevon.gov.uk](mailto:awelsh@middevon.gov.uk)

**Circulation of the Report:**

Cllr Richard Chesterton  
Cllr John Downes

**List of Background Papers:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021>

<https://www.middevon.gov.uk/residents/coronavirus-support-for-communities-and-businesses/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/coronavirus-data/>

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/coronavirus-advice-in-devon/document/team-devon-covid-19-economy-and-business-recovery-prospectus/>

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## ECONOMY PDG 11 MARCH 2021

### PERFORMANCE AND RISK REPORT

**Cabinet Member** Cllr Richard Chesterton  
**Responsible Officer** Catherine Yandle, Operations Manager for Performance, Governance and Health & Safety

**Reason for Report:** To provide Members with an update on performance against the corporate plan and local service targets for 2020-21 as well as providing an update on the key business risks.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):** That the PDG reviews the Performance Indicators and Risks that are outlined in this report and feeds back any areas of concern to the Cabinet.

The PDG is invited to review the targets suggested for 2021/22 against the Corporate Plan Performance framework and recommend their approval to Cabinet. (Appendix 4)

**Relationship to Corporate Plan:** Corporate Plan priorities and targets are effectively maintained through the use of appropriate performance indicators and regular monitoring.

**Financial Implications:** None identified

**Legal Implications:** None identified

**Risk Assessment:** If performance is not monitored we may fail to meet our corporate and local service plan targets or to take appropriate corrective action where necessary. If key business risks are not identified and monitored they cannot be mitigated effectively.

**Equality Impact Assessment:** No equality issues identified for this report.

**Impact on Climate Change:** No impacts identified for this report.

#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Appendix 1 provides Members with details of performance against the Corporate Plan and local service targets for the 2020-21 financial year.
- 1.2 Appendix 2 shows the section of the Corporate Risk Register which relates to the Economy Portfolio. See 3.0 below.
- 1.3 Appendix 3 shows the profile of all risks for the Economy at present.
- 1.4 All appendices are produced from the corporate Service Performance And Risk management system (SPAR).

## 2.0 Performance Appendix 1

- 2.1 Regarding the Corporate Plan Aim: **Identify strategic and tactical interventions to create economic and community confidence and pride in the places we live. This includes a continued focus on Town Centre Regeneration: Empty shops;** we are now giving data on retail units owned by MDDC, occupancy rates are reasonable.
- 2.2 There has been positive movement on the number of Business rate accounts and empty NNDR properties.
- 2.3 Mid Devon District Council is launching a Call for Sites process to inform a new Local Plan for Mid Devon. The development potential of sites put forward during the Call will be assessed by local authority officers and a panel of representatives from the housing and economic development industries. The conclusions will be published in a 'Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment' (HELAA). The HELAA will form part of the evidence base for a new Local Plan for Mid Devon.

### Targets

- 2.4 The targets for the next financial year against the Corporate Plan Performance framework will need to be approved by Cabinet at their meeting on 8 April. The proposals are attached as appendix 4.

## 3.0 Risk

- 3.1 Risk reports to committees include strategic risks with a current score of 10 or more in accordance with the Risk and Opportunity Management Strategy. (See Appendix 2)
- 3.2 Operational risk assessments are job specific and flow through to safe systems of work. These risks go to the Health and Safety Committee biannually with escalation to committees where serious concerns are raised.
- 3.3 The Corporate risk register is regularly reviewed by Corporate Managers and Leadership Team and updated as required.

## 4.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

- 4.1 That the PDG reviews the performance indicators and risks for 2020-21 that are outlined in this report and feeds back any areas of concern to the Cabinet.
- 4.2 The PDG is invited to review the targets suggested for 2021/22 against the Corporate Plan Performance framework and recommend their approval to Cabinet.

**Contact for more Information:** Catherine Yandle, Operations Manager for Performance, Governance and Health & Safety ext 4975

**Circulation of the Report:** Leadership Team and Cabinet Member

## Corporate Plan PI Report Economy

**Monthly report for 2020-2021**  
**Arranged by Aims**  
**Filtered by Aim: Priorities Economy**  
**For MDDC - Services**

**Key to Performance Status:**

Performance Indicators:

No Data	Well below target	Below target	On target	Above target	Well above target
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\* indicates that an entity is linked to the Aim by its parent Service

### Corporate Plan PI Report Economy

#### Priorities: Economy

#### Aims: Incubator and start-up space

#### Performance Indicators

Title	Prev Year (Period)	Annual Target	Apr Act	May Act	Jun Act	Jul Act	Aug Act	Sep Act	Oct Act	Nov Act	Dec Act	Jan Act	Feb Act	Mar Act	Group Manager	Officer Notes
<u>Incubator and Start-up space</u>	n/a	Target not yet set as initial work required													Jenny Clifford	(February) Scoping exercise to understand requirements has been affected by staff redeployment into COVID-19 response work and will not now take place until later in 2021. (JC)
<u>Sites for Commercial Development</u>	n/a	2						0	0	0	0				Andrew Busby	(October) New target no movement to report yet (CY)

#### Aims: Improve and regenerate our town centres

## Corporate Plan PI Report Economy

### Priorities: Economy

### Aims: Improve and regenerate our town centres

### Performance Indicators

Title	Prev Year (Period)	Annual Target	Apr Act	May Act	Jun Act	Jul Act	Aug Act	Sep Act	Oct Act	Nov Act	Dec Act	Jan Act	Feb Act	Mar Act	Group Manager	Officer Notes
<b>Number of business rate accounts</b>	3,205 (9/12)	3,250						3,339	3,340	3,349	3,347				Dean Emery	
<b>Business Rates RV</b>	n/a							£45,519,079	£45,519,379	£45,564,477	£45,584,367				Dean Emery	
<b>Empty Business Properties</b>	n/a							267	258	304			250		Dean Emery	
<b>Tiverton Town Centre Masterplan</b>	n/a		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a		Jenny Clifford, Adrian Welsh	(2020 - 2021) Engagement meetings over draft masterplan are currently being held. Draft masterplan likely to be considered at April 21 Cabinet to allow for these meetings to take place and subsequent feedback. Further phase of public consultation to follow shortly

## Corporate Plan PI Report Economy

### Priorities: Economy

### Aims: Improve and regenerate our town centres

### Performance Indicators

Title	Prev Year (Period)	Annual Target	Apr Act	May Act	Jun Act	Jul Act	Aug Act	Sep Act	Oct Act	Nov Act	Dec Act	Jan Act	Feb Act	Mar Act	Group Manager	Officer Notes
																thereafter. (JC)
<b><u>Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan</u></b>	n/a		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a		Jenny Clifford, Adrian Welsh	(2020 - 2021) February Cabinet date to consider the draft of the masterplan is now scheduled for April 2021 in order to allow the meeting to also consider the Cullompton Conservation Area Management Plan on a comprehensive basis (JC)
<b><u>Pannier Market Regular Traders</u></b>	n/a	Varies from 75 to 80% depending on the day							77.7%		77.0%				Adrian Welsh	(December) Social distancing limitations and pandemic had an impact on the number of traders over this period. (AW)

## Corporate Plan PI Report Economy

### Priorities: Economy

#### Aims: Improve and regenerate our town centres

#### Performance Indicators

Title	Prev Year (Period)	Annual Target	Apr Act	May Act	Jun Act	Jul Act	Aug Act	Sep Act	Oct Act	Nov Act	Dec Act	Jan Act	Feb Act	Mar Act	Group Manager	Officer Notes
<u>West Exe North and South</u>	n/a		n/a	n/a	13	n/a	n/a	13	n/a	n/a	13	n/a	n/a		Andrew Busby	(Quarter 3) 92% 1 vacant unit (CY)
<u>Fore St Tiverton</u>	n/a		n/a	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	n/a		Andrew Busby	(Quarter 3) 80% 1 vacant unit, some interest (CY)
<u>Market Walk Tiverton</u>	n/a		n/a	n/a	13	n/a	n/a	13	n/a	n/a	14	n/a	n/a		Andrew Busby	(Quarter 3) 93% 1 vacant unit, Sustainable Tiverton may occupy this S-T (CY)

Page 34

### Aims: Community Land Trusts

#### Performance Indicators

Title	Prev Year (Period)	Annual Target	Apr Act	May Act	Jun Act	Jul Act	Aug Act	Sep Act	Oct Act	Nov Act	Dec Act	Jan Act	Feb Act	Mar Act	Group Manager	Officer Notes
<u>Community Land Trusts Assisted</u>	n/a	2	n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a	1	n/a	n/a	2	n/a	n/a		Jenny Clifford	(Quarter 3) Initial advice provided to Wessex Group for the Sampford Peverell Community Land Trust (TP)

### Aims: Digital Connectivity



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## Economy PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

Report for 2020-2021

For Economy - Cllr Richard Chesterton Portfolio  
Filtered by Flag: Include: \* Corporate Risk Register  
For MDDC - Services

Filtered by Performance Status: Exclude Risk Status: Low

Not Including Risk Child Projects records, Including Mitigating Action records

### Key to Performance Status:

Mitigating Action:	<b>Milestone Missed</b>	<b>Behind schedule</b>	<b>In progress</b>	<b>Completed and evaluated</b>	<b>No Data available</b>
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Risks:	<b>No Data (0+)</b>	<b>High (15+)</b>	<b>Medium (6+)</b>	<b>Low (1+)</b>
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## Economy PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

**Risk: Commercial Land supply** Insufficient diversity in commercial land provided to meet changing business needs

Service: Planning

Mitigating Action records

Mitigation Status	Mitigating Action	Info	Responsible Person	Date Identified	Last Review Date	Current Effectiveness of Actions
In progress	Business and landowner engagement	Continued brokering of sites and identification of creative opportunities to meet business demands can be very effective in addressing this risk	Adrian Welsh	10/06/2019	10/12/2020	In progress (2)
In progress	Incubator/Flexible workspace project	This project should help identify opportunities to help the delivery of new flexible workspace	Adrian Welsh	10/06/2019	10/12/2020	In progress (2)
In progress	Plan for recovery	Develop a recovery plan/ strategy in conjunction with partners	Jenny Clifford	12/05/2020	10/12/2020	In progress (2)

**Current Status: Medium (10)**

**Current Risk Severity: 5 - Very High**

**Current Risk Likelihood: 2 - Low**

Printed by: Catherine Yandle

SPAR.net

Print Date: 16 February 2021  
17:37

## Economy PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

**Service Manager: Jenny Clifford**

**Review Note:** Position has not changed since last review. Local Plan adoption provides allocated employment sites

### Risk: Culm Garden Village Possible discontinuance of Government funding support

**Service: Planning**

#### Mitigating Action records

Mitigation Status	Mitigating Action	Info	Responsible Person	Date Identified	Last Review Date	Current Effectiveness of Actions
In progress	Funding opportunities	Lobby for the creation of further funding opportunities and for further rounds of the garden communities capacity funding	Jenny Clifford	03/02/2021	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	Further bids for capacity funding	To continue to secure external funding to support the project	Jenny Clifford	29/03/2019	03/02/2021	In progress (2)

**Current Status: Medium (12)**

**Current Risk Severity: 4 - High**

**Current Risk Likelihood: 3 - Medium**

**Service Manager: Jenny Clifford, Adrian Welsh**

**Review Note:** Further round of capacity funding (20/21) announced by Government. Bid submitted and currently still awaiting outcome.

## Economy PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

**Risk: Economic Development Service** The macro economic position might necessitate a reactive response, impacting on the Council's resourcing and reducing its ability to deploy resources as planned.

**Service: Growth, Economy and Development**

### Mitigating Action records

Mitigation Status	Mitigating Action	Info	Responsible Person	Date Identified	Last Review Date	Current Effectiveness of Actions
In progress	Distribution and processing of Gov business support funding.	To assist businesses during the Covid19 pandemic and to help sustain them during this time of national restrictions.	Adrian Welsh	12/05/2020	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	Hardship funding	To support individuals/households but also crucial for self employed and furloughed staff as a result of the pandemic.	Adrian Welsh	12/05/2020	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	Recovery plans	Work underway in partnership with other Devon and regional partners to develop economic recovery plans to assist positive outcomes on local economy.	Adrian Welsh	12/05/2020	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
<b>Current Status: High (25)</b>		<b>Current Risk Severity: 5 - Very High</b>		<b>Current Risk Likelihood: 5 - Very High</b>		

**Service Manager: Adrian Welsh**

**Review Note:** The latest national lockdown has had a critical impact on the local, national and global economy. Officer resource has been prioritised to issuing business grant support. Whilst recovery planning work takes place with our partners, our ability to contribute is less than we would want as a result of the grant work prioritisation.

## Economy PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

**Risk: Economic Strategy** Failure to deliver projects/outcomes in Economic Strategy

**Service: Growth, Economy and Development**

### Mitigating Action records

Mitigation Status	Mitigating Action	Info	Responsible Person	Date Identified	Last Review Date	Current Effectiveness of Actions
In progress	Continue to seek out existing and new funding opportunities	To assist in ensuring adequate funding for delivery of COVID19 economic recovery work.	Adrian Welsh	10/06/2019	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	partnership working	Continue to work closely with delivery partners to gain advance warning of difficulties so as to seek to mitigate and also to develop joint responses to COVID economic recovery	Adrian Welsh	10/06/2019	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	Project Management	Continue rigorous project management, monitoring and reporting of economic development projects	Adrian Welsh	10/06/2019	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	Recovery Plans	Recovery Plans will be put in place to aid recovery.	Adrian Welsh	12/05/2020	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	Review and reprotisation	Part of review of projects for Year 2 actions and a review of the likely impacts on the economy of the pandemic. This will consider maximising investment through external funding and prioritising officer time.	Adrian Welsh	31/01/2020	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
<b>Current Status: High (20)</b>		<b>Current Risk Severity: 4 - High</b>		<b>Current Risk Likelihood: 5 - Very High</b>		

## Economy PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

**Service Manager: Adrian Welsh**

**Review Note:** Although a review of the strategy was programmed for Q1 2021, this has had to be moved back following the further period of national lockdown and resultant business support requirements. The review will be informed by emerging 'Team Devon recovery work'. This work will also be informed by national economic predictions and forecasts once a better idea of the implications to the economy of the emerging vaccination programme are known. Recovery strategy approach to be considered at May Economy PDG.

**Risk: Funding** Insufficient resources (including funding) to deliver growth aspirations of Corporate Plan.

**Service: Growth, Economy and Development**

### Mitigating Action records

Mitigation Status	Mitigating Action	Info	Responsible Person	Date Identified	Last Review Date	Current Effectiveness of Actions
In progress	Actively pursue funding opportunities through Levelling Up Agenda/Shared Prosperity Fund	Work currently being undertaken to be in a state of readiness as opportunities become available	Adrian Welsh	03/02/2021	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	Lobbying	Officers will continue to review funding opportunities and seek opportunities to work closely with local partners and the HotSWLEP to seek additional funding support for key infrastructure.	Adrian Welsh	12/05/2020	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	Officers have reprioritised work programmes to explore new funding opportunities	End of European funding sources	Adrian Welsh	10/06/2019	03/02/2021	In progress (2)

**Current Status: High (16)**

**Current Risk Severity: 4 - High**

**Current Risk Likelihood: 4 - High**

**Service Manager: Adrian Welsh**

**Review Note:** Given ongoing constraints on resource particularly during this latest lockdown and the scale of the challenges to the GED team at this time there has been need to carefully prioritise project delivery.

## Economy PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

**Risk: Infrastructure delivery** Inability to deliver, or delay in delivering, key transport infrastructure to unlock planned growth

**Service: Growth, Economy and Development**

### Mitigating Action records

Mitigation Status	Mitigating Action	Info	Responsible Person	Date Identified	Last Review Date	Current Effectiveness of Actions
In progress	Close working with Devon Country Council (delivery partner) over the HIF schemes	DCC is the delivery partner for the Council's HIF highway infrastructure project. Close working is taking place in order to ensure risks of project delay or cost escalation are reduced. DCC is undertaking robust project management of the projects. These actions seek to ensure the projects remain on track and any problems are raised at an early stage allowing for corrective action.	Jenny Clifford	13/01/2021	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	Close working with Homes England over the HIF schemes	Grant fund agreements over the HIF funding to deliver 2 highway infrastructure schemes. These include a range of requirements and project milestones. Close liaison with Homes England is taking place via monthly project update meetings and quarterly monitoring returns. This ensures Homes England is updated on both projects, is aware of issues as they arise and any corrective actions	Jenny Clifford	13/01/2021	03/02/2021	In progress (2)

<b>Economy PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2</b>						
<b>Mitigating Action records</b>						
<b>Mitigation Status</b>	<b>Mitigating Action</b>	<b>Info</b>	<b>Responsible Person</b>	<b>Date Identified</b>	<b>Last Review Date</b>	<b>Current Effectiveness of Actions</b>
		can be taken- for example seeking the revision of project milestones to reflect the latest project programme.				
In progress	Partnership working	Close working with delivery partners to attempt to mitigate risks.	Adrian Welsh	12/05/2020	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	Partnership working with infrastructure providers and statutory bodies	Reduce risk of delays and communication.	Adrian Welsh	10/06/2019	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	target funding opportunities	To seek to bring forward delivery	Adrian Welsh	10/06/2019	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
<b>Current Status: High (16)</b>		<b>Current Risk Severity: 4 - High</b>		<b>Current Risk Likelihood: 4 - High</b>		
<b>Service Manager: Adrian Welsh</b>						
<b>Review Note:</b> We are working closely with Homes England on both HIF scheme and looking to mitigate project risks as and when they occur. The Cullompton Relief Road has now been granted planning permission. The SOBC for Cullompton Railway Station has been submitted to the DfT.						

## Economy PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

**Risk: S106 Agreement** Inability of the legacy systems to provide a full overview of the 'trigger points' for all of the s106 agreements

**Service: Planning**

### Mitigating Action records

Mitigation Status	Mitigating Action	Info	Responsible Person	Date Identified	Last Review Date	Current Effectiveness of Actions
In progress	S106 improvement project	A S106 improvement project is taking place to build a new system that will be able to effectively manage the process and provide better visibility over the information on S106 agreements and monies held/spent/expected.	Jenny Clifford	04/10/2019	10/12/2020	In progress (2)

**Current Status: High (15)**

**Current Risk Severity: 5 - Very High**

**Current Risk Likelihood: 3 - Medium**

**Service Manager: Jenny Clifford, Eileen Paterson**

**Review Note:** Review of processes around S106 agreements continues to advance, but slower than initially intended due to resource availability and impact of COVID-19. Governance arrangements have been agreed.

The enquiries part of project management system is now live, monies reconciled against the financial system and data migration has been taking place in batches. By the end of December 20 reporting on funds by Parish and catchment for public open space and air quality funds will be available. Further stages of the project will be completed through to late 2021

The Infrastructure Funding Statement to be published by the end of December 20 will report on S106 monies collected and spent for 19/20 and will be updated annually for the previous financial year. It will also identify and prioritise the infrastructure the Council intends to fund through S106 agreement/ Community Infrastructure Levy (report to Cabinet 3rd December 2020).

## Economy PDG Risk Management Report - Appendix 2

**Risk: Tiverton Pannier Market** Failure to maximise the economic potential of Tiverton Pannier Market

**Service: Growth, Economy and Development**

### Mitigating Action records

Mitigation Status	Mitigating Action	Info	Responsible Person	Date Identified	Last Review Date	Current Effectiveness of Actions
In progress	Continue to retain and prioritise market budget	To ensure most efficient use of resources	Adrian Welsh	10/06/2019	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	continue to work with traders on promotion	To increase footfall.	Adrian Welsh	10/06/2019	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	Implement and review market strategy	Implementation of strategy will increase market's financial success and help fulfill its function as a key driver for the town.	Adrian Welsh	10/06/2019	03/02/2021	In progress (2)
In progress	Masterplan Implementation	To realise benefits from the Masterplan to increase visibility of market and increase footfall.	Adrian Welsh	10/06/2019	03/02/2021	In progress (2)

**Current Status: High (16)**

**Current Risk Severity: 4 - High**

**Current Risk Likelihood: 4 - High**

**Service Manager: Adrian Welsh**

**Review Note:** At time of current risk review yet another further period of national covid restrictions are in place inhibiting the market from being able to function normally. Plans to maximise economic potential of the pannier market are being reviewed to reflect the current challenges and future opportunities arising from changing retail habits as a result of the pandemic.

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# Risk Matrix Economy Appendix 3

Report  
For Economy - Cllr Richard Chesterton Portfolio  
For MDDC - Services  
Current settings

<b>Risk Likelihood</b>	<b>5 - Very High</b>	<b>No Risks</b>	<b>No Risks</b>	<b>No Risks</b>	<b>1 Risk</b>	<b>2 Risks</b>
	<b>4 - High</b>	<b>No Risks</b>	<b>No Risks</b>	<b>No Risks</b>	<b>4 Risks</b>	<b>No Risks</b>
	<b>3 - Medium</b>	<b>No Risks</b>	<b>No Risks</b>	<b>1 Risk</b>	<b>2 Risks</b>	<b>1 Risk</b>
	<b>2 - Low</b>	<b>No Risks</b>	<b>No Risks</b>	<b>2 Risks</b>	<b>1 Risk</b>	<b>1 Risk</b>
	<b>1 - Very Low</b>	<b>No Risks</b>	<b>No Risks</b>	<b>No Risks</b>	<b>No Risks</b>	<b>1 Risk</b>
		<b>1 - Very Low</b>	<b>2 - Low</b>	<b>3 - Medium</b>	<b>4 - High</b>	<b>5 - Very High</b>
		<b>Risk Severity</b>				

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<b>KPI</b>	<b>Agreed 2020/21 target</b>	<b>Proposed 2021/2020 target</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Tiverton Town Centre Masterplan	Yes/No	Y/N	Not achieved in 20/21 so carried forward to 21/22
Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan	Yes/No	Y/N	Not achieved in 20/21 so carried forward to 21/22
Incubator/Start-up Space planning applications	see note	see note	6 months for preliminary work if target needed
Sites for Commercial Development	2 acres	2 acres	Not achieved in 20/21 so carried forward to 21/22
Business Rates Accounts	3,250	3,350	Post Covid business failures likely
Rateable Value NNDR	None	None	Actual value reported
Empty Properties (EPR)	None	None	Actual number reported
Pannier Market Regular traders	None	None	% actual occupancy reported
Community Land Trusts assisted	1	1	There are a low number of CLTs in existence to assist.
Corporate Retail Units Occupancy rates	None	None	% actual occupancy reported

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**Mid Devon District Council**  
**Financial Monitoring Verbal Update**  
**2020/21 Jan / Month 10**

## 1. General Fund

This will be the final reporting period prior to presentation of the 2020/21 Outturn Report to Cabinet in June. It has been an extraordinary year due to the impact of Covid 19. Financially the Council has suffered significant service disruption with resultant income losses. The response from Government has evolved as the crisis necessitated, with little warning, including the provision of various levels of Covid grant funding. The unpredictability has frustrated our forecasting; and this will continue, not least with the interpretation/calculation risk we have previously discussed particularly with respect to the Income Compensation Scheme.

Month 9 – Dec 20 £k	Month 10 – Dec 21 £k	Movement £k
89	46	(43)

The Month 10 reporting indicates a forecast improvement of £43k and now indicates a deficit of £46k.

The third lockdown persists as expected so income losses were already largely forecast although there have been some small adjustments. The Council continues to participate in the Job Protection Scheme with a further £74k claimed for January (YTD = £471k). The January claim largely relates to officers working in the leisure centres which remain closed. Despite the speculation, it is not certain when this lockdown may start to be relaxed but it is clear that the leisure centres will not reopen this (financial) year.

To recap MDDC has received £1,197k in non-ring fenced Covid funding (including £39k late last year); is awaiting £775k being the second submission under the Income Compensation Scheme prior to the final reconciliation for the year in May (forecast - £1.650m); and will benefit under the Collection Fund Compensation Scheme with the NDR element yet to be finalised.

The table below shows how the monthly movement breaks down between budget lines. To be concise, the table only includes service areas where the forecast has moved between December and January. For these service lines, it extracts the variance value which is funded from ear marked reserves as this will not contribute to the overall (surplus)/deficit movement.

General Fund Summary £K	Full Year Variance				M10
	M9	EMR	Bridge Other	Total	
<b>Cllr Bob Deed</b>					
Corporate Management	8		38	38	46
<b>Cllr Colin Slade</b>					
Grounds Maintenance	(78)		(3)	(3)	(81)
Waste Services	63		7	7	70
<b>Cllr Dennis Knowles</b>					
Environmental Services incl. Licensing	(60)		(4)	(4)	(63)
IT Services	42	(5)	(22)	(27)	14
Recreation And Sport	1,485		(2)	(2)	1,483
<b>Cllr Andrew Moore</b>					
Revenues And Benefits	(201)		(34)	(34)	(234)
Car Parks	535		(17)	(17)	518
<b>Cllr Bob Evans</b>					
General Fund Housing	38	(155)	5	(150)	(112)
<b>Cllr Richard Chesterton</b>					
Planning And Regeneration	246		(34)	(34)	212
<b>Cllr Mrs Nikki Woollatt</b>					
Legal & Democratic Services	(17)		(2)	(2)	(19)
<b>All General Fund Services</b>		<b>(160)</b>	<b>(68)</b>	<b>(227)</b>	
Interest Payable on Other Activities	(340)		(4)	(4)	(344)
Interest Receivable on Investments	(177)		(16)	(16)	(193)
Transfers into/(from) Earmarked Reserves	1,169	160	(0)	160	1,329
<b>Total Budgeted Expenditure</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>(88)</b>	<b>(88)</b>	
Covid19 Income Compensation Scheme	(1,700)		50	50	(1,650)
<b>Total Budgeted Funding</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	
<b>Forecast in year (Surplus) /</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(38)</b>	<b>(38)</b>	<b>51</b>

**Deficit**

General Fund Reserve 31/03/20	(2,251)	(2,251)
<b>Forecast General Fund Balance 31/03/2021</b>	<b>(2,162)</b>	<b>(2,200)</b>

Therefore those items not funded by EMRs and which contribute to the month on month deficit movement are as follows:

- Corporate Management - £38k:
  - Officer TUPE costs - £38k
  - 3RDL professional fees - £7k
  - Other small cost savings – (£7k)
- Grounds Maintenance – Staff costs - (£3k)
- Waste Services - £7k:
  - Garden waste permit sales reduced over performance - £6k
  - Recycling income reduced under performance – (£22k)
  - Street Cleansing income re Grand Western Canal part year – £5k
  - Staff costs including agency - £28k
  - Additional Covid 19 costs (vehicle hire & PPE) – (£14k)
  - Fuel savings – £4k
- Environmental Services – licencing income reduced under performance due to Covid – (£4k)
- IT – (£22k):
  - Reduced additional maintenance costs due to delays implementing voice over Skype – (£3k)
  - Software costs - £8k
  - Salary savings – (£7k)
  - Retained consultancy to cover vacancies re technical support for R&B – (£20k)
- Recreation & Sport – (£2k):
  - Further cost centre savings due to closures – (£5k)
  - Covid 19 income losses adjustment - (£7k)
  - Salary costs – £10k
- Revenues & Benefits – (£34k):
  - Reduced agency requirement to manage Covid 19 grant administration – (£39k)
  - Other staff costs - £5k
- Car Parks – (£17k)
  - Adjustment to P&D income losses arising from Covid 19 – (£13k)
  - Adjustment to off street parking fines arising from Covid 19 – (£4k)

- General Fund Housing – Homelessness debt review and write off - £5k
- Planning and Regeneration – (£34k)
  - Development management income reduced under performance due to Covid – (£36k)
  - Development management vacancy management savings - £2k
- Legal & Democratic – Sale of electoral register – (£3k)
- Interest payable – Reduced cost of borrowing as no new loans required in 2020/21 – (£4k)
- Interest Receivable on Investments – (£16k)
  - Interest on 3RDL loan drawdowns – (£5k)
  - CCLA dividend exceeding expectations – (£11k)
- Income Compensation Scheme – adjustment to reflect reduced income loss expectations - £50k

## 2. HRA

	Month 9 – Dec 20 £k	Month 10 – Jan 21 £k	Movement £k
Forecast (Surplus) / Deficit	230	37	(193)

Month 10 reporting shows a forecast reduction in the deficit by £193k to £37k.

The reasons for this movement is as follows:

- Rental income reduction due to void levels increasing during the pandemic amendment – £5k
- Staff costs reduced savings (DLO & Development Team) - £35k
- Increased non staff savings in planned maintenance – (£83k)
- Reduced non staff savings in responsive and voids - £12k
- Fuel usage savings reduction - £22k
- DLO recharge (revenue and capital) under recovery improvement – (£100k)
- DFG under recovery improvement – (£20k)
- Tenancy services additional staff savings including sewage maintenance, communal roads and warden services – (£64k)

## Economy PDG 11<sup>th</sup> March 2021

### **Briefing Paper – White Paper: Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth**

The Department for Education's (DfE) White Paper on Further Education, "Skills for Jobs: Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth" was published on the 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021 and sets out the Department's vision for further (post 16) education over the next few years as the economy re-positions itself following the pandemic and Brexit. Its overall aim is to make post-16 technical education a more prestigious choice for students and better aligned to employers' needs.

The White Paper aims to:

- Make higher (post-18) technical education a high-quality alternative to a degree that delivers greater employment outcomes by providing the training and education that employers want.
- Put employers at the heart of post 16 education, giving them a greater say in how training needs are identified and courses developed.
- Bringing together employers, colleges, other providers and local stakeholders to create 'Local Skills Improvement Plans' which will identify local skills needs and shape how courses are run.
- Increase accessibility to technical courses by extending the 'student loan provision' currently only available for academic qualification, to students undertaking technical courses through the new 'Lifelong Loan Entitlement' scheme.
- Give colleges and other providers greater clarity and predictability of funding with more autonomy as to how that funding is used while making them more accountable through a greater focus on outcomes.
- Support the provision of training for those in need of lower-level skills to help them progress, including the most vulnerable and those with special educational needs and disabilities (meeting the levelling-up agenda).

The White Paper includes more than 30 proposals, many of which repeat or build on previous announcements and current reforms. However, there are a number of significantly new proposals, including:

#### **1: Create 'Local Skills Improvement Plans' and college business centres**

To ensure technical skills provision is "responsive to local labour market needs", the Department for Education will pilot "new Local Skills Improvement Plans" created by employers, colleges and training providers in trailblazer local areas in early 2021.

They will be led by accredited Chambers of Commerce and will see employers setting out a "credibly articulated and evidence-based assessment of skills needs to which providers will be empowered to respond". It is the DfE's "intention" to legislate to put the employer leadership of Local Skills Improvement Plans on a "statutory footing".

A £65 million Strategic Development Fund will be launched in 2021/22 to aid the plans and support providers to "reshape their provision to address local priorities that have been agreed with local employers".

Proposals will be invited through the Strategic Development Fund to establish “College Business Centres” within FE colleges, which will offer capital and revenue funding to help colleges “respond to locally agreed priorities”.

## **2: New intervention ‘powers’**

The DfE says it will introduce new powers for the Education Secretary, so the government can “intervene quickly and decisively in cases where there are persistent problems that cannot otherwise be addressed, either with colleges not delivering effectively or where local providers are unable to deliver the skills priorities for that area”.

Through legislation, this strengthened power would enable the Education Secretary to “intervene locally to close or set up college corporations, bring about changes to membership or composition of governing bodies or review leadership”.

Use of these powers is “envisaged only as a last resort, where agreement has not been possible through other means and there are no alternative options for resolution”.

## **3: Strengthened governance**

The DfE plans to set out clearer expectations, requirements and support for governors to “empower weaker colleges” to address problems earlier.

This will include refreshing existing guidance on appointments to communicate a clear government position on what constitutes good leadership, and make it clear that an “independent person” should be included on college leader interview panels to ensure “objectivity and due diligence”.

There will also be new requirements for annual board self-assessment and regular external governance reviews, as well as consideration of the possibilities for enabling board chairs to be paid in “specific circumstances” within the confines of charity law.

## **4: Potential switch to outcomes-based funding**

The government plans to reform the funding and accountability systems to “better support” providers by simplifying funding streams and giving providers more autonomy, such as by relaxing ringfences and reporting.

But the DfE will move to hold providers to account for the “outcomes that colleges are delivering to improve progression and respond to employer demand”.

The DfE will consult on how they can “best assess” the performance of providers, building on the “new progression performance metrics being introduced and considering effectiveness of employer engagement, quality of provision and the outcomes achieved, such as how well provision supports individuals to progress in their learning and secure good labour market outcomes”.

By taking an outcome-focused approach, the department says providers will be “incentivised to review their provision to ensure it leads to meaningful employment for their learners, scaling back where there is an oversupply of provision and expanding other areas in line with agreed Local Skills Improvement Plans priorities”.

## **5: Multi-year funding to be considered**

The DfE says it wants to “give more certainty to providers” over their funding, including considering how they could “move to a multi-year funding regime which is more forward-looking”.

The idea would be subject to the government’s spending review cycle, the White Paper says, and does not give a timeframe of when this could be introduced.

## **6: Implement the flexible lifelong loan entitlement from 2025**

As part of the previously announced lifetime skills guarantee, which is enshrined in the White Paper, the government plans to launch a lifelong loan entitlement.

The DfE describes this as “new transformative funding provision”, enabling people to access four years’ worth of student loan funding across further and higher education providers throughout their lifetime.

Details of this new policy will be consulted on in 2021, but it will not be rolled out until at least after the next general election.

## **7: Central role for employers to design technical courses**

The White Paper pledges to give employers a “central role” in designing “almost all” technical courses by 2030, to “ensure that the education and training people receive is directly linked to the skills needed for real jobs”.

This will include aligning the “substantial majority” of post-16 level 4 and 5 qualifications to employer-led standards set by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, as is the case for apprenticeships.

## **8: New national teacher recruitment campaign**

“Significant new investment” to improve the FE workforce will be provided in 2021/22.

This will include a “nationwide recruitment campaign to get more talented individuals to teach in further education and investing in high-quality professional development including a new Workforce Industry Exchange Programme”.

The campaign, expected to be launched this year, would “reach millions of prospective teaching staff, targeting those with experience and skills in industry, who can train the next generation of technical experts”.

The campaign would direct potential teachers to a new ‘Teach in Further Education’ platform, which, alongside a dedicated telephone helpline, will give potential applicants “all they need to take the next step into teaching, with information on how to access relevant training, for example the Taking Teaching Further programme, and financial incentives such as training bursaries”.

It will also signpost current vacancies and help existing teachers and lecturers find professional development opportunities.

## **Reception**

The White Paper has broadly been welcomed by the FE sector, who view positively the focus on improving the quality and prestige of technical qualifications, the capital investment in colleges, and the involvement of employers in course design. However, as always, there are critical voices:

- It is not certain that employers are going to be willing to engage in the way and to the extent envisaged by the White Paper. The level of employer involvement in skills and training has actually been diminishing in recent years and Chambers of Commerce are not necessarily the power-houses of innovation they once were and are not uniformly dynamic.
- The role of Local Authorities and Local Economic Partnerships in the skills agenda is largely overlooked.

- There is a failure to integrate action on skills and jobs across Whitehall departments, and there could have been greater emphasis on the co-ordination and collaboration across other relevant departments such as BEIS and DWP.
- Given the level of the current challenge to the economy, some see the White Paper as insufficiently transformational, despite the paper's rhetoric, and therefore a missed opportunity. Many commentators believe a complete overhaul of both Higher and Further Education is required for these ambitions to become a reality.
- Although the extra funding announced is very welcome, it may not be sufficient to realise the ambitions contained within the White Paper. With one of the major proposals not being implemented until 2025, and no commitment (as yet) to long-term multi-year funding, there are still big gaps in funding the proposals. In what is going to be a difficult spending review for Government departments, the success of the White Paper will be determined by how much the Treasury is able to direct to this agenda.

The White Paper will now be subject to a process of consultation. The full text of the White Paper is available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/957856/Skills\\_for\\_jobs\\_lifelong\\_learning\\_for\\_opportunity\\_and\\_growth\\_\\_web\\_version\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/957856/Skills_for_jobs_lifelong_learning_for_opportunity_and_growth__web_version_.pdf)

## **Economy Policy Development Group – 2020/2021** **Chairman’s Annual Report**

### Overview

Firstly, I would like to give my thanks and admiration for the work of Adrian Welsh and his Growth Economy & Delivery and Community Development Teams.

They have been at the front line of the Covid pandemic for nearly a year now, administering over £40million in Business Grants Assistance helping the most needy in our District and much more.

They along with all of our staff deserve our recognition, praise and gratitude.

This last year has been catastrophic with regards to the impact of the pandemic and the implications of lockdown restrictions on the economy. As Chair I felt that it was appropriate for the Policy Development Group to focus its attention on the emergency economic response to the COVID 19 pandemic. This has taken priority over activities; however during 2020 the Group also received updates on a range of other strategic initiatives which will contribute towards economic recovery. In summary during the course of the last year the Policy Development Group has considered a number of issues including:

- regular reports providing updates on the emergency response measures and the distribution of businesses and community grants
- regular updates on the ‘Team Devon’ economic recovery work
- updates on the Heart of the South West Industrial Strategy
- various updates on Brexit
- information regarding the National Non-Domestic Rates (Business Rates)
- 'Shaping the Future - Petroc 2020 - 2025' consultation
- an informative presentation from the ‘Crediton Heart Project’ trustees; and
- updates regarding the proposed hydroelectric scheme at Tiverton Town Weir including a presentation from Phil Mayer from Hydromatch

As referred to above the Policy Development Group has received regular updates throughout the year with regard to COVID 19 economic response and recovery work. Some key milestones and achievements relating to this work are summarised below:

### Business Grant Assistance

At the time of writing nearly £40 million of business assistance have been issued including small business rate relief. This work has been exceptionally well received by many Mid Devon Businesses and Government Ministers.

### Community Response Work

During the pandemic the Economic Development Team has facilitated the Mid Devon Shielding Hub for the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and has been managing the Covid Financial Hardship Fund. With support from staff from Leisure, Housing and Customer First the Community Support Hub has provided essential food supplies, practical support and advice to 585 vulnerable residents in need of help and delivered 236 food parcels. The Council has also been administering a financial hardship fund, in partnership with CHAT and Navigate charity, with funding from DCC and Government. The scheme continues to receive a large number of applications, with a total of 554 applications to the fund so far and has distributed over £48k in emergency relief, as well as providing signposting to other emergency support and money and debt advice.

### Team Devon Recovery Work

In response to the need for economic recovery following the impacts of the pandemic organisations have been working together under the umbrella of 'Team Devon' to plan for recovery and lobby for greater investment into the County. This public and private sector partnership has drawn in expertise from business, education, skills and public sector organisations. Mid Devon Officers have been active partners in the process.

In July 2020 the 'Team Devon' partnership launched its Devon COVID 19 Economy and Business Recovery Prospectus. This document set out Devon's shared vision for economic recovery over the next two years. The plan provides a single economic programme for the County to respond to the crisis and build the Devon economy back stronger and more resilient. Work has continued during the year in refining projects for recovery focusing upon four core areas: Our Businesses, Our Places, Our People and Our Opportunities.

### Exeter and the Heart of Devon Partnership

Officers from the District Council have continued to work with East Devon, Exeter and Teignbridge Councils. Much of this work is increasingly coming under the wider 'Team Devon' recovery work referred to above. Further updates will be given by Officers throughout the coming months.

### Reopening our High Streets Safely

Work has been undertaken during the last year to minimise and mitigate the risk of the spread of COVID 19 in our High Streets. This has involved putting in place measures to establish a safe trading environment for businesses and customers, particularly in high streets. Interventions have included development of an action plan, communications/public information, business facing awareness raising activities and temporary public realm changes to ensure that reopening of local economies can be managed successfully and safely. Liaison has taken place with the Town Councils, local businesses, schools, Devon County Council and other partners to review the risk assessments and modify proposals throughout the year. Business facing activities have included informal liaison, business survey work, webinars run in conjunction with Tiverton Town Council regarding the safe reopening

of the hospitality industry and provision of useful information on our website (e.g. risk assessment advice, posters etc). There have also been a number of press, social media and radio campaigns launched throughout the year promoting our towns and reminding visitors of important safety messages.

### 'Love Your Town Centre' Scheme

During the last year the District Council has launched two rounds of its pilot Love Your Town Centre initiative. This project is a funding initiative to support ideas from local businesses, town councils or organisations with projects that will help revive high streets and help them to flourish in the future. The first round was focussed on proposals generated by the Town Councils. The second was drawn from wider bids from the community. This scheme has been warmly received and it is hoped that, subject to the availability of funding, that a similar scheme will run next year.

### Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan

A six week Stage 1 public consultation took place during February – April 2020 to receive comments on the baseline analysis findings and the emerging vision and objectives for the masterplan. The draft Masterplan is scheduled to be considered by Cabinet at its April 2021 meeting to seek approval for Stage 2 public consultation.

### Tiverton Town Centre Masterplan

Over the last year the emerging masterplan work has been revisited to take account of the Covid-19 pandemic and to seek the opportunity to embed tackling climate change into town centre regeneration. This work is also being reviewed to consider national changes in planning policy and planning use classes. During the last few months key areas for intervention have been the subject of presentations and informal discussions with Cabinet, Ward Members, the Tiverton Town Council and the Tiverton Town Centre Partnership.

### Re-opening of Cullompton Railway Station

During the last year the project to re-open railway stations at Cullompton and Wellington has made substantial progress. Mid Devon District and Somerset West and Taunton Councils were successful in securing government funding through the 'Restoring Your Railways - Idea's Fund' for development of a Strategic Outline Business Case to reopen stations at Cullompton and Wellington. An important milestone was recently achieved as the Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) was submitted to the Department for Transport. This is a crucial step forward in the process of implementing improvements to the rail network. This milestone is underpinned by months of hard work, research and partnership building to develop the case for the proposed new train stations. Officers understand that our project is one of the furthest advanced of these 'ideas fund' schemes nationally and consider that the prospects of the schemes early delivery is looking increasingly likely, subject to the availability of future funding opportunities.

### Cullompton Relief Road

The Cullompton Town Centre Relief Road is an important element to the infrastructure package of measures to unlock growth and improve economic prosperity of the town; in addition to providing air quality and amenity benefits to the town centre. This year saw the scheme gain planning permission and move closer towards its implementation.

### Visit Mid Devon Website

When the Visit Mid Devon Website was launched a year ago we could not have envisaged that a year later the industry would be in the position it is in now. Despite these very difficult times and previously never experienced decline in the hospitality and visitor economy the website has proved a success and a platform for future economic recovery. It provides an excellent vehicle to promote the district and offers a great resource for local businesses to promote themselves. The Website was developed in partnership with Tiverton Museum, the Tourist Information Service, Petroc and Reach Plc. The initiative was one of the last projects in the County to receive European funding. The Website can be found via the following link:

<https://www.visitmiddevon.co.uk/>

### Cullompton High Street Heritage Action Zone

The Cullompton High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) Project Officer was appointed in September 2020. Since his appointment progress has been achieved in the following areas:

- Fore Street Grants Scheme is currently in the process of being launched.
- Higher Bullring Public Realm Enhancement scheme development work is progressing well in partnership with Devon County Council and Historic England.
- Establishment of a cultural consortium representing the current Cullompton cultural offer.
- Cultural programme bid submitted to Historic England in December 2020.
- Cullompton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (CAMP) and Shopfront Design Guide drafted.
- A dedicated webpage on the Mid Devon website has been set up, to act as the main repository for all information related to the HAZ project.  
<https://www.middevon.gov.uk/residents/planning/cullompton-high-street-heritage-action-zone/>
- A Community Engagement Plan has been prepared.

### The Tiverton Pannier Market

The Tiverton Pannier Market has remained open Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday; but at times of national restrictions has been limited to essential food items

only. The Pannier Market has played a significant part in reacting to the pandemic at a time when many markets outside of the district have not managed to stay open. Throughout the various lockdowns the market has provided a useful base for fruit and vegetable deliveries.

**Cllr John Downes**  
**Chairman of the Economy Policy Development Group**

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