

Public Document Pack

Mid Devon District Council

Economy Policy Development Group

Thursday, 16 November 2023 at 5.30 pm
Phoenix Chambers, Phoenix House, Tiverton

Next meeting
Thursday, 4 January 2024 at 5.30 pm

Please Note: This meeting will take place at Phoenix House and members of the Public and Press are able to attend via Teams. If you are intending to attend in person please contact the committee clerk in advance, in order that numbers of people can be appropriately managed in physical meeting rooms.

[To join the meeting online, click here](#)

Meeting ID: 363 493 498 921
Passcode: aDBHRZ

Membership

Cllr G Cochran
Cllr A Cuddy
Cllr J M Downes
Cllr M Farrell
Cllr B Fish
Cllr M Fletcher
Cllr N Letch
Cllr R Roberts
Cllr G Westcott

A G E N D A

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 **Public Question Time**
To receive any questions relating to items on the Agenda from members of the public and replies thereto.
- 3 **Declaration of Interests under the Code of Conduct**
To record any interests on agenda matters.

- 4 **Minutes** (*Pages 5 - 12*)
To consider whether to approve the minutes as a correct record of the meeting held on 5th October 2023.
- 5 **Chairman's Announcements**
To receive any announcements that the Chairman may wish to make.
- 6 **Business Support programme - guest speaker**
To receive a verbal update on the Business Support Programme from guest speaker, Rob Evans from Devon County Council.
- 7 **Car Parking Consultative Group Update Report** (*Pages 13 - 16*)
To receive a report from the Environment and Enforcement Manager. The Car Parking Consultation Group was founded in response to concerns regarding the decision making process in relation to car parking tariff increases proposed in 2023 as well as the lack of consultation with local business leaders and representatives. This decision to create the group was made in March 2023 by this PDG to better inform future proposals on parking changes in the years to come.
- 8 **Quarter 2 performance dashboard**
To receive a verbal update on the Performance Dashboard from the Corporate Performance and Improvement Manager.
- 9 **Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund progress Update** (*Pages 17 - 34*)
To receive a report from the Director of Place updating Members on the progress under the Shared Prosperity Investment Plan and the Rural England Prosperity Fund (Yes 2: 2023/24).
- 10 **Economic Development Team Update** (*Pages 35 - 44*)
To receive a report from the Director of Place updating Member's on activities undertaken by the Economic Development Team during the last two months.
- 11 **Access to Information - Exclusion of the Press and Public**
Discussion with regard to the next item, may require the Audit Committee to pass the following resolution to exclude the press and public having reflected on Article 12 12.02(d) (a presumption in favour of openness) of the Constitution. This decision may be required because consideration of this matter in public may disclose information falling within one of the descriptions of exempt information in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. The Audit Committee would need to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption, outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Recommended that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the next item of business on the

grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 respectively of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

12 **2024/2025 Fees and Charges** (Pages 45 - 54)

To receive a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting to Member's the proposed Fees and Charges for 2024/205 for discussion.

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:

- Budget update 2024/2025
- Economic Development Team Update Report
- Destination Management Plan for Mid Devon (tbc)
- Economic Strategy 2024 – 2029 (tbc)
- Field to Fork photography project update – external speaker (tbc)

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

Stephen Walford
Chief Executive

Wednesday, 8 November 2023

Meeting Information

From 7 May 2021, the law requires all councils to hold formal meetings in person. The Council will enable all people to continue to participate in meetings via Teams.

If you want to ask a question or speak, email your full name to 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. Notification in this way will ensure the meeting runs as smoothly as possible.

Residents, electors or business rate payers of the District may make a statement or shall be entitled to ask questions at a meeting which concerns the Council's powers / duties or which otherwise affects the District. If your question does not relate to an agenda item, the question must be submitted to the Democratic Services Manager two working days before the meeting to give time for a response to be prepared.

Please note that a reasonable amount of hardcopies at the meeting will be available, however this is a limited number. If you are attending the meeting and would like a hardcopy of the agenda we encourage that you notify Democratic Services in advance of the meeting to ensure that a hardcopy is available. Otherwise, copies of the agenda can be found on our website.

If you would like a copy of the Agenda in another format (for example in large print) please contact Sarah Lees on: slees@middevon.gov.uk

Public Wi-Fi is available in all meeting rooms.

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **ECONOMY POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP** held on 5 October 2023 at 5.30 pm

Present

Councillors

J M Downes (Chairman)
G Cochran, A Cuddy, M Farrell (Vice
Chairman), B Fish, M Fletcher and N Letch

Apology

Councillor

G Westcott

Also Present

Councillors

E Buczkowski, J Buczkowski, S J Clist, G Czapiewski,
G Duchesne, A Glover, C Harrower, S Keable, F W Letch,
J Lock, L Taylor, J Wright and D Wulff

Also Present

Officers

Richard Marsh (Director of Place), Matthew Page (Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste), Paul Deal (Corporate Manager for Finance, Property and Climate Change), Luke Howard (Environment and Enforcement Manager), Adrian Welsh (Strategic Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery), Zoë Lentell (Economic Development Team Leader), Angie Howell (Democratic Services Officer) and Sarah Lees (Democratic Services Officer)

24 **APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies were received from Cllr G Westcott.

Cllrs: E Buczkowski, J Buczkowski, S Clist, G Czapiewski, A Glover, F Letch MBE, J Lock, L Taylor and D Wulff attended the meeting via Teams.

25 **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no questions from members of the public.

26 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

No interests were declared under this item.

27 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 3 August 2023, were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman subject to an amendment to state that Cllr M Fletcher was present as a Group member at the meeting and not online as well.

28 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman stated that he would be taking, item 8, the Car Parking Working Group as the next item of business and that item 6, the Medium Term Financial Plan – General Fund, as the penultimate item of business on the agenda. This was to accommodate officers having other meeting commitments during the evening.

29 CAR PARKING WORKING GROUP UPDATE (00:05:00)

The Chairman of the Car Parking Working Group, Cllr Guy Cochran, provided the following update on what had taken place since the last meeting:

- The first meeting of the parking consultation group was held on 20 September 2023. Representatives of Tiverton and Crediton Town Councils, business groups and prominent business owners, Members and officers had been present.
- There had been an emphasis by officers surrounding the importance of coming up with credible and economically viable proposals that would encourage the Economy Policy Development Group to make recommendation to the Cabinet for potential implementation. The aim was to look at this from a longer term perspective, as the impact of the recent changes brought in at the end of June 2023 needed to be assessed in terms of their impact (likely to be a 6 to 9 month period). It was therefore likely that the working group would be looking at the 2024-2025 financial year for these proposals to be considered.
- It was also stressed that with inflation stubbornly high the cost of running parking including associated utilities like tarmacking, machine maintenance and patrolling public areas was considerable.
- During discussion, a review of the terms of reference was undertaken and discussion held within the group on how these could represent respective communities.
- Future agenda items were discussed and the group decided that the most pressing matters for them were:
 - To look at a 3 hour tariff option being brought in alongside the current 1 and 2 hour rates to encourage more visitors and residents to spend longer in the towns.
 - To look at how empty car spaces were utilised, for example, trial cheaper rates for certain spaces to see if they were used.
 - To look at ways to incentivise permits, for example, car sharing, monthly debits with a particular focus on business.
 - To get Christmas parking for the year ahead signed off and in the budget, for example, arrangements for Christmas parking 2024 to be agreed when the 24/25 budget was set and agreed by full Council.
 - To review Tiverton Disability Access – including Kerbside and Disabled Spaces.
 - To examine Market permits being issued to traders on special events, which then prevented shoppers from being able to park.

- The actions requiring sign off from the Cabinet Member for Finance were raised in relation to parking over the Christmas period. It was agreed that the 5 Saturdays before Christmas were requested for free parking in 2023, for example, 25 November then 2, 9, 16, 23 December. These would be applicable in the Multi-Storey Car Park, Tiverton, Station Road Cullompton and High Street/St Saviours Way, Crediton.
- Further meetings are planned to take place every 6-8 weeks.

Discussion took place with regard to:

- When the Group would see the written Terms of Reference from the Working Group including the proposed outcomes? It was confirmed that a paper would be brought to the next Policy Development Group meeting in November.
- The need for it to be very clear that the eventual recommendations to the Cabinet would be coming from this Policy Development Group.
- Whether a special permit could be provided to individuals enduring exceptional circumstances, for example, a terminally ill resident receiving ad-hoc palliative care. It was confirmed that if the individual approached Parking Services through their Ward Member then this ought to be possible.
- More attention needed to be paid to the location of coach parking within Tiverton.
- Whether it was possible to provide an incentive for market traders to park their vehicles in the Multi-Storey Car Park (MSCP) rather than take up spaces in the public car park. It was confirmed that this was being looked at.
- Whether it was possible to 'bulk buy' tickets for use in the MSCP?
- The possibility of creating a facility for camper vans to park overnight.

The Chairman stated that he was very encouraged by the amount of work that was taking place. The issue was extremely important and was now being given the correct amount of consideration and focus.

30 **JUNCTION 27 UPDATE (00:25:00)**

The Director of Place provided a verbal update on Junction 27 which included the following information:

- Members were reminded of the significant allocation in the Local Plan given to Junction 27 which had included a particular focus on Leisure and Tourism with J27 providing a gateway to Mid Devon and the rest of the county.
- The Local Plan had been delayed in order to ensure the incorporation of the site.
- Since that time, progress had been significantly less than might have been expected or hoped for. This was unsurprising in some ways given the impacts of covid and subsequent economic turbulence.
- Over the last 2 years, officers had sought to engage with various landowners, promoters and interested parties. The Eden Project were granted a significant amount of funding, via Government, to explore options around the development of a new tourist destination called Eden Grounds. That work was completed and determined that whilst a destination was attractive to Eden as

an operator, it was not viable for the business to support the level of capital investment required to deliver an attraction at junction 27 and that it would therefore require facilitation by landowners or other operators across the site. This was a disappointing conclusion to the work.

- Since that time, officers had continued to seek to engage the other landowners and developers associated with the site – with mixed success.
- Some owners were keen to progress proposals, but these were not yet at a stage where developers or owners were proactively engaging with the Council in terms of progressing planning applications or other aspects of development.
- The position in relation to the planning policy on the site remained as agreed at the stage of the adoption of the Local Plan and, as such, the Council would seek to secure development in compliance with it.
- The passage of time and current market conditions meant that it would be necessary to review the planning policy for the site in the context of the new Local Plan. Work was already underway in terms of the development of the new Local Plan and, in the meantime, officers would continue to seek to engage the landowners and prospective developers in proactive dialogue.
- Members would have multiple opportunities to engage with this process through the Planning Policy Advisory Group as well as the Economy Policy Development Group.

The Chairman stated how disappointing this was given the initial excitement about J27 being the 'jewel in the crown' of Mid Devon, not to mention how delayed the Local Plan had been as result of these initial proposals.

31 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM UPDATE (00:36:00)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Director of Place updating Members on activities undertaken by the Economic Development Team during the last two months.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- The overall funding position regarding the Shared Prosperity Fund and the Rural England Prosperity Fund which was summarised as follows:
 - In total, the team had secured just over £1.8M of funding under both SPF and REPF. However, the funding was annualised (meaning the Council would not anticipate receiving next year's funding until after returning it's end of current year monitoring report on 1 May and there were no guarantees that the underspend would be rolled over).
 - The SPF and REPF funding was awarded disproportionately over the duration of the programme. During the first year (2022-23), the Council received £12% (£129,146.00) of the total SPF funding at the end of January for project delivery by the end of March. For the current year, 2023-24, the Council received 24% (£258,291.00) of the total SPF in July and next year the Council were due to receive the remaining 64% (£676,722.00).

- Similarly for REPF, the Council received 25% of the funding this year (£204,168) and were due to receive the remaining 75% of funding (£612,504) in 2024-25.
- All funding must be spent by 31 March 2025.
- The team had commissioned 'Be Grant Ready' workshops delivered by Business West to support businesses, community groups and town and parish councils to help produce quality applications.
- Business Growth fit-out grants.
- The Prosper scheme providing general advice for starting and maintaining businesses.
- Agricultural innovation events.
- Local Growth Fund.
- A recent Jobs Fair with 220 attendees.
- Continuing work regarding visitor information boards in local towns.
- Continuing work in relation to Cullompton High Street and the Crediton Masterplan.
- The Group was informed of the Government's announcement for in principle funding for the Cullompton Railway Station. The final business case is due for submission at the end of the year and we should hear more from Government in the New Year once this submission has been formally considered.

Consideration was given to:

- What would happen if the funding was received later than predicted and the impact of this.
- Advertising had been undertaken including press releases, reminders, social media campaigns and direct contact.
- Perceived complexities of the application process, however, the team could always provide advice and support to help make the process simpler.
- The grant schemes were open to all organisations that were classed as a 'legal entity'.
- The procurement process and having to provide 3 quotes if the goods or services were over £2500 and 'best endeavours' if they were under this amount.
- The Council also worked with other groups such as the Petroc Innovation Centre.
- Feedback from businesses regarding the support workshops had been very positive.

Note: * Report previously circulated.

32 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN - GENERAL FUND (01:09:00)

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report * from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting the updated Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) which covered the period 2024/25 to 2028/29 for the General Fund (GF) and considered initial savings options.

The following was highlighted within the report:

- This was a 5 year plan with figures in relation to years 2 – 4 being best guesses.
- The previous budget gap for 2024/25 of £1.5m had now increased to over £2m partly as a result of stubborn inflation and the Government's indicative increase in planning fees not transpiring.
- Assumptions had been made in terms of not using any reserves and the need to revise the capital programme.

The Group considered the savings options outlined in Appendix 2 and discussion took place regarding:

- Town Councils potentially being able to seek more 'value' from any assets transferred to them than the District Council could.
- The Council was not intending to achieve savings by imposing compulsory redundancies but rather it would consider not replacing people automatically when they left and undertake a thorough review of the risks involved in each case.
- What the green, amber and red risk categories meant.
- Where the Group agreed with potential savings proposals this was undertaken as an 'in principle' support to the approach. It expected the Cabinet to consider the detail of each suggestion.
- How staff sickness could best be managed and what the Council was already doing regarding this.
- This Group had a very small budget area but could be influential in suggesting areas for income generation and this would continue to be a high priority ambition of the Group.
- Members could attend other Policy Development Group meetings to offer specific ideas for budget savings in the relevant areas.

RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet that:

- i. A review of leases, where appropriate in relation to commercial income be undertaken with a view to increasing income.
- ii. Discussions regarding the transfer of assets and / or increases in financial contributions be progressed with the Town Councils.
- iii. An increase in income from parking charges be considered, specifically in relation to cost centres CP520 / 530 / 540.
- iv. Support be provided to a Council wide approach to de-scoping or downsizing activity in certain areas having considered all the relevant risks and assuming turnover allows for natural wastage in identified areas.
- v. A reduction in agency spend be considered wherever appropriate.
- vi. A reduction in the cost of staff sickness be pursued.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

Reason for the decision

By undertaking an annual review of the MTFP the Council could ensure that its Corporate Plan priorities were affordable. The implications of the revised budget gap were set out within the paper. Many areas require greater clarity, particularly around national funding and the possibility of additional funding to offset the implications of the Cost of Living Crisis. Therefore a number of key assumptions underpinned the reported position, which would be refined as greater clarity was received through the budget setting process.

It was **NOTED** that there could be possible cost reductions in relation to Business Rates, energy costs and fuel costs during 2024/25.

Note: (i) * Report previously circulated.

(ii) Cllr N Letch requested that her abstention from voting in relation to recommendation number 'iv' be noted.

33 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (01:47:00)**

The following items were identified by the Group as needing to come forward to a future meeting:

- Using the 'Visit Mid Devon' platform to best effect.
- An update and further discussion on a number of anniversary events taking place during 2024 and how best to promote activities and maximise potential 'growth' for all those involved.
- An update on incubator space.

(The meeting ended at 7.25 pm)

CHAIRMAN

This page is intentionally left blank



Report for: Economy PDG

Date of Meeting:	16 November 2023
Subject:	Car Park Working Group Update Report
Cabinet Member:	Cllr James Buczkowski, Cabinet Member for Finance Cllr Guy Cochran (Chair of Working Group)
Responsible Officer:	Luke Howard, Environment and Enforcement Manager
Exempt:	None
Wards Affected:	All
Enclosures:	None

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

The Car Parking Consultation Group was founded in response to concerns regarding the decision making process in relation to car parking tariff increases proposed in 2023 as well as the lack of consultation with local business leaders and representatives. This decision to create the group was made in March 2023 by this PDG to better inform future proposals on parking changes in the years to come.

Recommendation(s):

Note only

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In March 2023 a higher set of Tariff and Permit charges for parking were decided upon and implemented in June 2023. During the decision making

process there were concerns raised by members and business groups regarding how the figures had been calculated and the input (or lack of) there had been from local representatives and business leaders.

- 1.2 As parking tariffs had not been increased for some years, an accumulative interest was added to the charges. This raised the question as to why charges had not increased year on year to prevent a sudden hike in cost.
- 1.3 To prevent similar issues occurring again and to explore how parking stock is best utilised, Economy PDG requested a consultation group be founded to engage with community groups, town councils and leading business representatives.
- 1.4 The Section 151 Officer was also delegated authority by members to increase future parking tariff and permit charges in line with inflation if this was required.
- 1.5 The newly formed group has representative members of the community and business leaders from Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton. It is chaired by an elected member of this PDG, supported by Officers.

2.0 Parking Consultation Group Terms of Reference

- 2.1 In order to determine the scope of the group and better understand what proposals could be explored, terms of reference were discussed and agreed by officers and representative members at its first meeting
- 2.2 The terms of reference agreed are
 - Sustainability of car parks including climate impacts
 - Visible presence of The Council to user groups
 - Development of current redundant/zero revenue parking areas
 - Future planning and community provision
 - Revenue streams
 - Tariff and permit options
 - Highway Authority traffic management plans

3.0 Group meeting September 2023

- 3.1 The group held its first meeting on 20 September 2023. The meeting was well represented and attended by Members, Officers, Community Groups, Town Councils and Business Leaders.
- 3.2 The group discussed the terms of reference and how these could be considered for each respective community. The Chair, supported by Officers, provided guidance on making credible and economically viable proposals that would enable this Economy PDG to make proposals to Cabinet. This included discussion surrounding current interest rates and the expectation for these to remain high for some time.

3.3 The group were asked to explore and decide upon an initial set of matters that were most pressing for their communities. The group settled on:

- Three hour tariffs being explored as an option in short stay car parks.
- Exploring opportunities to utilise empty parking stock, with reference to cheaper pricing strategy for such spaces.
- Incentivising permit use via car sharing with a focus on business use.
- Christmas parking decisions for both 2024 and future years to be decided upon during budget setting for that financial year.
- Review of disability access.
- Market trader permits currently preventing shoppers from parking in the market car park, Tiverton.

3.4 A decision recording by the Cabinet Member for Finance was announced in respect of Christmas parking for 2023. This decision agrees to allow free parking on five Saturdays in the lead up to Christmas. For clarity, these dates are 25 November and then the 3, 9, 16 and 23 December 2023. Users will be able to park free of charge on these days in the Multi-storey Car Park in Tiverton, Station Road/Forge Way in Cullompton and High Street/St Saviours Way in Crediton.

4.0 Future Meetings

4.1 The group will continue to meet on a regular basis with expectation for meetings every eight weeks, where possible. The next group meeting will be held in early December, with the aim of the group to explore in further depth the pressing matters identified in the September meeting.

4.2 Future meetings will also include reviewing the terms of reference and examining proposals from the group for the Economy PDG. It is hoped that via this consultation group any proposals in respect of parking will have a better rounded representation from communities.

Financial Implications

Parking generates substantial revenue and proposals from the group are expected to help the council balance income against community requests. The group also explores opportunities to increase revenue streams.

Legal Implications

Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 regulates how changes can be implemented. Any decisions need to have consideration for this act and requirements for amendments.

Risk Assessment

None required

Impact on Climate Change

The group will consider how decisions impact on the climate, with special consideration given to improving climate impacts of parking through the implementation of technology such as EV Charging.

Equalities Impact Assessment

All decisions will consider the needs of all user groups. Any amendments will follow legislative requirements for advertisements, consultation and engagement with community groups.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

The aim of the group is to explore ideas to advance the corporate plan of The Council.

Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Luke Howard, Environment and Enforcement Manager
Email: lhoward@middevon.gov.uk
Telephone: 01884 233033

Background papers:



Report for: Economy PDG

Date of Meeting:	16 November 2023
Subject:	Economic Development Team Update
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Steve Keable, Planning & Regeneration
Responsible Officer:	Richard Marsh, Director of Place
Exempt:	N/A
Wards Affected:	All wards
Enclosures:	N/A

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

Update Members on the progress under the Shared Prosperity Investment Plan and the Rural England Prosperity Fund (Year 2: 2023/24).

Recommendation(s):

That members note the contents of the report.

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF), the Government allocated £1,069,159 over a three-year period (2022-2025) to Mid Devon, to support economic development and community cohesion. The Government also allocated £816,672 of rural uplift over a two-year period (2023-2025) for Mid Devon to build on and complement the SPF under the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF).

- 1.2 The Investment Plans pulled together a series of projects identified through engagement meetings with business and community stakeholders (as well as Members) that address challenges facing our local economy. These include a number of direct delivery projects and projects to be delivered in partnership with external partners.
- 1.3 The funding for SPF and REPF is annualised and we received this year's funding on 10 July 2023. We are required to spend year two funding by 31 March 2024. This report outlines a summary of progress for delivery against the first six months of year two of the SPF Investment Plan. It also outlines forecasted delivery by the end of the financial year.

2.0 Progress Summary

- 2.1 In line with the Investment Plans, project delivery has focused on the following areas of intervention:

Direct Delivery Projects

- Love Your Town Centre
- Field to Fork
- Visitor Economy
- Work Hubs
- Business Innovation and Growth

External Delivery Projects

- Business Innovation Centre
- Business Innovation Outreach
- Business Support Programme

- 2.2 Some of the performance metrics are measured at point of completion rather than at point of support (eg improvements to commercial buildings). Therefore, we have included our forecast (tentative) achievement to date as well as actual to show the anticipated performance based on grants offered/awarded and project delivery so far.
- 2.3 Where outputs and interventions cross multiple projects, performance metrics are only recorded against them once.
- 2.4 Definitions of outputs and outcomes can be viewed online at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-outputs-and-outcomes-definitions-2>.
- 2.5 A full breakdown of delivery against the SPF Investment Plan is attached in Appendix A (showing breakdown of Impacts) and Appendix B (showing breakdown of spend). Detailed in the report below is a breakdown of progress against each of the specific projects.

3.0 Love Your Town Centre

3.1 'Love Your Town Centre' is a flexible funding mechanism offering small grants through a competitive bidding process with four strands aimed at improving the town centre and increasing the vibrancy and vitality of our three main markets towns: Crediton, Cullompton and Tiverton. This includes:

- a) Shopfront Enhancement Schemes: Grants of up to £2,500 to help improve shopfronts or signage
- b) Business Growth (Fit-Out) Scheme: Fit-out grants of up to £2,500 to SMEs / community groups to help bring new commercial, community and leisure opportunities into the town centre.
- c) Vibrant Town Centre Scheme: Grants of up to £5,000 for businesses working in partnership or £1,000 for individual businesses, to go towards town centre projects that drive new footfall through events, cultural or arts activities, and small scale public realm improvements.
- d) Digital High Streets Scheme: Grants of up to £1,500 to SMEs / community groups to help independent high street retailers, leisure and tourism businesses establish or upgrade e-commerce websites.

3.2 Cumulative delivery against performance impacts up to September 2023 is as follows:

Primary Areas of Intervention	Target	Achieved (cumulative)	
	All years	Actual to Date	Tentative to Date
E1 Funding for improvements to town centres and high streets			
Number of commercial buildings completed or improved	23	2	11
Number of vacant units filled	9	7	10
E6 Support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities			
Number of organisations receiving grants	22	7	7
Number of organisations receiving non-financial support	0	3	3
Number of local events or activities supported	22	46	46
Number of volunteering opportunities supported	0	10	11
Number of arts, cultural and heritage programmes	6	4	5
E16 Open markets and town centre retail and service sector			
Number of enterprises receiving grants	23	0	13
Number of potential entrepreneurs provided assistance	9	0	0
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	0	15	15
Number of enterprises created as a result of support	8	0	0

Additional (Bonus) Areas of Intervention

E2 Community & neighbourhood infrastructure projects			
Number of amenities/facilities created or improved		1	1

3.3 Since the start of the SPF Programme until the end of September 2023, we received the following interest in the Love Your Town Centre grant schemes:

Scheme	Enquiries	Applications		
		Awarded / Offered Grant	Pending	Declined / Withdrawn
Shopfront	41	9	5	2
Vibrant Town Centres	8	7	N/A	4
Digital High Street	1	0	0	1
Business Fit-Out	2	1	0	0

3.4 From the above,

- One pending shopfront application has since been approved (Q3) and another is with the Funding Panel for approval. The three remaining pending shopfront applications are with the applicant for revised quotes/specifications following advice from Conservation.
- One shopfront application was declined due to works starting before the application was submitted and one application was withdrawn.
- We have since received an application to the Cullompton shopfront scheme, which has been approved (Q3).
- Following recent promotions, we have received a further four enquiries for the Digital High Street scheme in Q3. The one declined application is because the application was not for digital equipment and the applicant successfully reapplied to the digital fit-out scheme instead.

3.5 The latest round of Vibrant Town Centres closed to applications on 31 October with funding decisions to be confirmed by the end of November.

3.6 We do not predict an underspend on SPF for Love Your Town Centre. Any unallocated shopfront money can be rolled over to 2024/25 as this is match-funded through ED budgets and S106 funding. With regards to the Shopfront Scheme, the following table shows spend to date (2023/24):

SHOPFRONT SCHEMES	BUDGET	SPEND	BALANCE
> Crediton	£ 15,000.00	£ 6,566.80	£ 8,433.20
> Cullompton	£ 14,500.00	£ 4,500.00	£ 10,000.00
> Tiverton	£ 31,824.53	£ 11,285.40	£ 20,539.13

4.0 Field to Fork

4.1 In response to the needs of the agricultural sector we have the Field to Fork Project. In this project we hope to work with farmers, local producers, retailers and hospitality businesses to strengthen the local food supply chain, by

- promoting direct supply through box schemes, farmers markets, farm shops, local packers / distributors, and local independent retailers
- linking local food producers and local food businesses (retailers and hospitality) through 'meet the buyer' events, and
- stimulating demand through 'Buy Local' campaigns, promoting local markets, and expanding and promoting food tourism.

4.2 This project focuses on supporting local producers in Mid Devon and encouraging business growth either through transition from producing, to supplying and retailing or expansion into food tourism (such as food tours and experiences or farm shops).

4.3 Cumulative delivery against performance impacts up to September 2023 is as follows:

Primary Areas of Intervention	Target	Achieved (cumulative)	
	All years	Actual to Date	Tentative to Date
E17 Development & promotion of visitor economy			
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	9	18	18
Number of people reached	1000	0	0
Number of local events or activities supported	15	3	3
Number of enterprises receiving grants	0	1	1
E23 Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems			
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	20	11	11
Number of potential entrepreneurs provided assistance	4	1	1
Jobs created as a result of support	10	0	0
Number of new enterprises created	0	0	0
Number of enterprises introducing new products	0	1	1
Number of enterprises engaged in new markets	0	14	14

Additional (Bonus) Areas of Intervention

E16 Open markets and town centre retail and service sector			
Number of local markets supported	0	2	2
E8 Campaigns to encourage visits and exploring of local area			
Number of organisations receiving grants	0	2	2

4.4 As a result of the Farmers’ Market Initiative, to date four businesses have engaged in new markets and one business has introduced a new product.

4.5 We supported Mid Devon Show with a grant to enable Mid Devon producers (who haven’t attended with the previous 3 years) to trade at this year’s and next year’s shows. This resulted in ten businesses and one organisation trading at Mid Devon Show in July 2023 for the first time. This scheme will be repeated at the 2024 event, with a ‘Taste Mid Devon’ tent for Mid Devon producers. We are in conversations with Devon County Show to investigate the potential for a similar support scheme at their next event.

4.6 A photography project is underway gathering a journal of imagery and videos to promote the field to fork journey of Mid Devon produce from its source to the plate. This project connects the producers, food retailers and hospitality providers in Mid Devon. Work continues on gathering the imagery into Q3 with promotional features planned for Q4 onwards, which will deliver the number of people reached output.

- 4.7 We are working with Devon County Council, Food and Drink Devon, and Devon Food Partnership on arranging meet the buyer events. Relevant sectoral guest speakers will be invited to highlight areas of best practice and exciting news and the events will help connect our producers with local hospitality businesses and independent retailers. It is anticipated that the first event will take place in March 2024. We are also in discussions with Food and Drink Devon about further networking support for our producers.
- 4.8 Although there is still a large part of the budget officially uncommitted at this stage, we have provisionally earmarked circa £12,000 towards the projects to be delivered in Q3. The remaining balance will be used towards supporting promotional campaigns in Q4. Therefore, we do not predict an underspend for Field-to-Fork.

5.0 Sustainable Visitor Economy

- 5.1 This project is the development and piloting of a Mid Devon Walking Festival and trails to encourage more people to explore the local area and increase visitor numbers, particularly at the close of the main holiday season. It is complemented by wider promotional activities to raise awareness of Mid Devon as a visitor destination, increase footfall and support our tourism businesses.
- 5.2 Cumulative delivery against performance impacts up to September 2023 is as follows:

Primary Areas of Intervention	Target	Achieved (cumulative)	
	All years	Actual to Date	Tentative to Date
E8 Campaigns to encourage visits and exploring of local area			
Number of organisations receiving grants	0	0	0
Number of organisations receiving non-financial support	0	3	3
Number of people reached	200	26,224	26,224
Increased number of web searches for a place	8605	TBC	TBC
E17 Development & promotion of visitor economy			
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	9	37	37
Number of people reached	1000	99	99
Number of local events or activities supported	15	6	6
Number of enterprises receiving grants	0	0	0
Number of potential entrepreneurs provided assistance	0	1	1

- 5.3 Two of the metrics (increased visitor numbers and web searches) are being reported to us by a third party organisation and we will have this data for the end-of-year report.
- 5.4 Quarters one and two have focused on event organisation for both the Walking Festival and Sculpture Trail project elements under the Visitor Economy theme.

- 5.5 The Walking Festival is scheduled to take place between 14 and 29 September 2024. This event will celebrate our nature, heritage and community spirit in our glorious countryside by promoting:
- Scenic trails to explore across Mid Devon featured on the Visit Mid Devon website.
 - Guided tours leading informative walks sharing knowledge on a specific topic covering our local flora, fauna and history.
 - Mid Devon experiences, promoting our local events and attractions for visitors to engage with during their stay.
 - Mid Devon as a holiday destination for walking and promoting our accommodation providers.
- 5.6 The Visit Mid Devon website now has a dedicated section for the Walking Festival which will be updated with the programme in due course:
<https://www.visitmiddevon.co.uk/walking-festival/>.
- 5.7 The Tiverton Swan Trail will run between Easter 2024 and October Half Term 2024. It will feature a series of 12 swan sculptures located from the Grand Western Canal Basin and throughout the town centre with the intention of linking the Canal with the town’s retail quarters. A thirteenth swan – ‘Swanning Around’ – will appear in different places around the town as a pop-up for visitors to locate and to main interest in the trail throughout its duration. Businesses will have the opportunity to host the roving swan. The launch event ties in with the Tiverton Canal Company’s 50th anniversary.
- 5.8 Several of the event organisation and promotional expenses planned under Visitor Economy will be committed in Qs3 and 4. We do not predict an underspend under this theme.

6.0 Work Hubs

- 6.1 The Work Hub Development Scheme offers grants of up to £20,000 to local businesses to support incubator space and work hub development to create small flexible office and workshop space for start-up and growing micro-businesses.
- 6.2 Cumulative delivery against performance impacts up to September 2023 is as follows:

Primary Areas of Intervention	Target	Achieved (cumulative)	
	All years	Actual to Date	Tentative to Date
E2 Community & neighbourhood infrastructure projects			
Number of organisations receiving grants	3	2	2
Number of amenities/facilities created or improved	3	2	3
Increased users of facilities/amenities	10	51	51
Number of organisations receiving non-financial support	0	1	1

E22 Enterprise infrastructure & employment / innovation sites			
Number of enterprises receiving grants	5	1	2
Number of commercial buildings completed or improved	6	2	4
M2 of commercial buildings completed or improved	470	516.78	TBC
Increased amount of investment (£)	60,200	0	TBC
Number of premises with improved digital connectivity	1	0	

Additional (Bonus) Areas of Intervention

E23 Strengthening the local entrepreneurial ecosystems			
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	0	3	3
Number of events programmes	0	1	1

6.3 We received two grant applications in Year One and a further application in Year Two, which has been offered a grant award. The fourth grant is the award for the Business Innovation Hub project. The outputs for premises improved is recorded upon completion of the funded activities.

6.4 The Work Hub Development Grant Scheme is being run in parallel with the Prosperity Grants Programme. We are aware of other businesses interested in applying for a grant under this theme. The closing date for Round 2 is 7 November, with a further round in January. We do not anticipate an underspend for this theme.

6.5 In addition to the SPF project, we have commissioned a study to identify the work hub growth potential across the District and areas of need (and type of need). The results of this study could be used to direct funding allocations in Year 3.

7.0 Business Innovation & Growth

7.1 The Business Innovation Hub and Outreach Programme is being delivered in partnership with Petroc College and sees the creation of a Business Innovation Hub in the district as a focus for indigenous innovation and product development. The Hub will provide local start-ups and micro-businesses with access to a wide range of advanced technology-based facilities, all designed to nurture business growth and develop product ideas and concepts. This will include spaces for design, development, 3D scanning and printing, and clean room manufacturing, as well as spaces for conferencing and hot desk working.

7.2 The physical hub will be complemented by a programme of outreach and knowledge transfer activities, promoting innovation and entrepreneurship across the District's Work Hub network to raise awareness of innovation possibilities and to encourage an entrepreneurial spirit across the area.

7.3 Cumulative delivery against performance impacts up to September 2023 is as follows:

Primary Areas of Intervention	Target	Achieved (cumulative)	
	All years	Actual to Date	Tentative to Date
E21 Development of innovation infrastructure at a local level			
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	100	9	9
Number of potential entrepreneurs assisted	30	0	0
Number of new to market products	10	0	0
Jobs created as a result of support	4	0	0
Jobs safeguarded as a result of support	4	0	0
Number of new enterprises created	0	0	0
E23 Strengthening the local entrepreneurial ecosystems			
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	0	5	5
Number of new enterprises created	6	0	0
Number of enterprises adopting new technologies/processes	9	0	0
Number of enterprises with improved productivity	25	0	0
Number of enterprises engaged in new markets	6	0	0
Number of events programmes	6	2	2
Number of people reached	150	12	12
Number of enterprises adopting new or improved products	15	0	0
E24 Funding for new and improvements to existing training hubs			
Number of people attending training sessions	120	0	0
Number of early stage enterprises which increase revenue	15	0	0
Number of organisations engaged in Knowledge Transfer	15	0	0
Number of R&D active enterprises	15	0	0

Additional (Bonus) Areas of Intervention

E22 Enterprise infrastructure & employment / innovation sites			
Amount of commercial space created or improved	478.2m ²	TBC	TBC
Number of commercial buildings created or improved	1	TBC	TBC

7.4 Work started on creating the new physical hub in quarter 4 of 2022/23. The first phase completed and hosted a consultation business breakfast event on 9 June. This event gave businesses the opportunity to learn about the new Hub, try out different technology (such as virtual reality headsets) and feedback on their needs regarding innovation workshop space. The Economic Development Team attended the event and presented on the opportunities through the SPF, followed by direct engagement with several of the businesses in attendance.

7.5 Looking ahead, Petroc are developing their programme of outreach activities including VR training workshops with businesses such as interview skills, and coaching and mentoring.

8.0 Business Support Programme

8.1 Working in partnership with Devon County Council, we commissioned a package of business support services, which consists of a range of options depending on the needs of the business. The support project titled 'Prosper' offers:

- Generic business support, delivered through one-to-one support and workshop modules;
- New employer support, with specific advice and workshop modules focused on helping businesses become employers;
- Green business support, which will complement the existing Low Carbon Devon initiative with further workshops on decarbonisation; and
- Start-up support, with more specific advice and workshop modules focused on the needs of new businesses.

8.2 Through Devon County, we have also funded a series of agri-tech support and events, which will facilitate knowledge exchange/transfer and collaborations between farmers, horticultural, aquacultural and forestry businesses and Agri-Tech developers, academic institutions, sector experts and stakeholders.

8.3 Cumulative delivery against performance impacts up to September 2023 is as follows:

Primary Areas of Intervention	Target	Achieved (cumulative)	
	All years	Actual to Date	Tentative to Date
E23 Strengthening the local entrepreneurial ecosystems			
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	225	22	22
Number of potential entrepreneurs assisted	38	1	1
Jobs created as a result of support	49	0	0
Number of new enterprises created	3	0	0
Number of enterprises adopting new technologies/processes	18	0	0
Number of enterprises engaged in new markets	0	0	0

Additional (Bonus) Areas of Intervention

E2 Community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects			
Number of organisations receiving non-financial support	0	5	5

8.4 The Prosper support programme commenced in October 2023. It is anticipated that Prosper and the Agri-tech support will deliver the majority of the performance metrics for business support. Alongside this project, Mid Devon are delivering a series of smaller direct support initiatives including the Be Grant Ready workshops, digital training workshops, business support surgeries and attendance at networking events promoting the Prosperity Programme. We are scheduling another support surgery to take place in December or January.

9.0 General Comments

- 9.1 With regards to the REPF programme, the funding panel for Round 1 of the Prosperity Programme took place at the end of September so the majority of this year's outputs will be delivered in quarters 3 and 4. From the first round, three businesses were offered grants (one under Growth and Innovation, one under Work Hub Development and one under Visitor Economy).
- 9.2 Year Two is on the whole progressing on track against spend and delivery of impacts. The majority of outcomes will be delivered in the final year of the programme. As the business support and business innovation hub projects progress, we will see a number of outputs and outcomes achieved against Intervention E23. There are some particularly challenging outputs especially around jobs created and new enterprises created, that we are actively engaging with Petroc and Devon County to deploy targeted outreach events and support towards reaching these. However, our projects are only able to influence these outputs and are vulnerable to impacts of the macro-economic environment. Therefore, these outputs will require monitoring and potential decisions around project adjustments or variations later on.
- 9.3 Projects under the People and Skills Investment Priority are due to commence in Year Three and updates will be provided in the next SPF Update report.

10.0 Administration and Management

- 10.1 We are allowed to use 4% of the total SPF allocated funding towards administration and management costs associated with delivering the funding programme. Out of the total £1,064,159 SPF over the three-years, the permitted admin budget amounts to £42,536.36. We have committed £42,500 towards the grants administration and monitoring for the Prosperity Programme. Due to the invoicing periods, the breakdown of spend will show as an overspend in 2023/24 but an underspend in 2024/25 and balance out over the course of the funding period. There is no additional admin allowance for delivering the REPF scheme as this is a purely capital fund.

11.0 Change Management

- 11.1 Within the scope of the SPF, we are permitted to make non-material changes to our funding profile against the Investment Plan where this is approved by the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration and the Director of Place.
- 11.2 An example of a material change could be reprofiling the funding within an Investment Priority (eg Supporting Local Business) where it is between interventions (eg E16 and E17) and where the total change does not exceed 30% (across the three-year programme).
- 11.3 Since our Investment Plan was approved, we have made a total of 6.7% minor variations as follows:

Communities and Place		
Amount	Variance	Reason
£15,154.00	From E2 to E1	To support the Public Realm Enhancement Project (Cullompton)

Supporting Local Business		
From	To	
£52,511.43	From E16 to E22	To support the Work Hub Development Scheme
£3,879.60	From E17 to E18	Use of Y1 Underspend to support a revenue Prosperity Grant application where allocated revenue budget is in Y3.

Financial Implications

Second year funding for SPF (2023/24) and first year funding for REPF (2023/24) have been received. Identified match-funding towards these projects is allocated from within the service's existing budget and private sector.

Legal Implications

The Council is the accountable body for delivery of the schemes within our allocated funding. As such we have Grant Funding Agreements in place signed by the delivery partners and grant recipients. All partners/recipients funded through this scheme are required to complete a Subsidy Declaration in line with the Subsidy Control Act 2022.

Risk Assessment

Due to the annualised nature of the grant schemes and the wider economic uncertainty and budgetary challenges facing the UK, there is a risk that the Government may modify their commitment to this funding either in whole or in part. This risk is increased in likelihood if we fail to spend the funding in line with the agreed Investment Plan and timescales, although this rule was relaxed for first year spend. The Project Team have funding agreements in place to commit the funding each year with delivery partners and the Delivery Plan (with regular project review meetings) will monitor progress against targets to minimise and mitigate these risks.

Impact on Climate Change

Climate change and the necessity for businesses to transition to a Low Carbon Economy is a recurring theme within the SPF Investment Plan. All grant schemes ask applicants how their proposed activities support business decarbonisation.

Equalities Impact Assessment

Individual projects will have their own equality impact assessed as part of the detailed planning for delivery. Grant schemes developed offer an open application process with equality safeguards to ensure equal and equitable access to the funding. Communication plans have been devised to identify 'touch points' for

engaging with hard-to-reach business groups to ensure they are aware of the opportunities available through these schemes.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

The SPF Investment Plan and Rural Uplift directly address a number of objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2020-24, as set out in the report below.

- Bringing new businesses into the District
- Business development and growth
- Improving and regenerating our town centres
- Growing the tourism sector
- Incubation space, grow-on space and places to expand
- Promote low carbon communities - decarbonisation
- Promote a local economy - People living, working, eating, shopping and spending locally
- Greater digital connectivity in rural areas
- Support for clean growth industries
- A thriving agricultural sector that showcases farm-to-fork practices and low food miles to market

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 7 November 2023

Statutory Officer: Maria DeLeiburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 7 November 2023

Chief Officer: Richard Marsh

Agreed by Corporate Director

Date: 7 November 2023

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 07/11/2023

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Zoë Lentell, Economic Development Team Leader

Email: zlentell@middevon.gov.uk

Telephone: 01884 234298

Background papers:

This page is intentionally left blank

INTERVENTIONS, OUTPUTS AND TARGETS

COMMUNITIES AND PLACE

E1: Improvements to town centres & high streets (Communities and Place)

Deliverable	Original Target	Varied Target	Achieved to Date	Tentative To Date	
Number of commercial buildings completed or improved	23		23	2	11
Number of vacant units filled	9		9	7	10
Amount of public realm created or improved (m2)	0	1,100m2		0	1100

E2: Community & neighbourhood infrastructure projects (Communities and Place)

Deliverable	Target	Varied Target	Achieved to Date	Tentative To Date	
Number of organisations receiving grants	3		3	2	2
Number of amenities/facilities created or improved	3		0	3	3
Increased users of facilities/amenities	10		10	51	51
Number of organisations receiving non-financial support	0		0	6	6

This Output was discontinued by DLUHC

E6: Local arts, cultural, heritage & creative activities (Communities and Place)

Deliverable	Target	Varied Target	Achieved to Date	Tentative To Date	
Number of organisations receiving grants	22		22	7	7
Number of local events or activities supported	22		22	46	46
Number of community-led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes as a result of support	6		6	4	5
Number of volunteering opportunities supported	0		0	10	11
Number of organisations receiving non-financial support	0		0	3	3

E8: Campaigns to encourage visits and exploring of local area (Communities and Place)

Deliverable	Target	Varied Target	Achieved to Date	Tentative To Date	
Number of people reached	200		200	26,424	26,224
Increased number of web searches for a place	8605		8605	23600 TBC	
Number of organisations receiving grants	0		0	2	2
Number of organisations receiving non-financial support	0		0	3	3

Current measurement is based on Q4 2022/23

SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS

E16: Open markets and town centre retail and service sector (Supporting Local Business)

Deliverable	Target	Varied Target	Achieved to Date	Tentative To Date	
Number of enterprises receiving grants	23		23	0	13
Number of potential entrepreneurs provided assistance to be business ready (numerical value)	9		0	0	0
Number of new enterprises created as a result of support	8		0	0	0
Improved perception of markets	0		6	0	0
Markets supported	0		1	2	2
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	0		0	15	15

Intervention E17: Development & promotion of visitor economy (Supporting Local Business)

Deliverable	Target	Varied Target	Achieved to Date	Tentative To Date	
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	18		18	55	55
Number of people reached	2000		2000	99	99
Number of local events or activities supported	18		18	9	9
Increased visitor numbers	11200		11200 TBC	TBC	
Number of enterprises receiving grants	0		0	1	1
Number of potential entrepreneurs provided assistance	0		0	1	1

E18: Supporting Made Smarter Adoption (Supporting Local Business)

Deliverable	Target	Varied Target	Achieved to Date	Tentative To Date	
Number of people attending training sessions (numerical value)	120		120	0	1
Number of enterprises adopting new to the firm technologies or processes	3		3	0	1
Number of enterprises adopting new or improved products / services	0		0	0	1
Number of enterprises receiving grants	0		0	0	1

E20: R&D grants supporting innovative product & service development (Supporting Local Business)

Deliverable	Target	Varied Target	Achieved to Date	Tentative To Date	
Number of enterprises receiving grants	6		6	0	0
Number of enterprises adopting new to the firm technologies or processes	3		3	0	0

E21: Development of innovation infrastructure at a local level (Supporting Local Business)

Deliverable	Target	Varied Target	Achieved to Date	Tentative To Date	
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	100		100	9	9
Number of potential entrepreneurs provided assistance to be enterprise ready	30		30	0	0
Jobs created as a result of support	14		14	0	0
Jobs safeguarded as a result of support	4		4	0	0
Number of new enterprises created as a result of support	9		9	0	0
Number of new to market products	12		12	0	0
Number of enterprises with improved productivity	25		25	0	0
Number of enterprises introducing new products	21		0	0	0
Number of enterprises adopting new to the firm technologies or processes	13		13	0	0

This outcome was discontinued by DLUHC

E22: Enterprise infrastructure & employment / innovation sites (Supporting Local Business)

Deliverable	Target	Varied Target	Achieved to Date	Tentative To Date	
Number of enterprises receiving grants	5		5	1	2
Number of commercial buildings completed or improved	6		6	2	4
M2 of commercial buildings created or improved	470		470	516.78 TBC	
Increased amount of investment (£)	£60,200		£60,200 TBC	TBC	
Number of premises with improved digital connectivity	1		1	0	0

E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems (Supporting Local Business)

Deliverable	Target	Varied Target	Achieved to Date	Tentative To Date	
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support	100		145	41	41
Number of potential entrepreneurs provided assistance to be enterprise ready	20		20	1	2
Jobs created as a result of support	100		55	0	0
Number of enterprises engaged in new markets	2		2	14	13
Number of new enterprises created	10		10	0	0
Number of enterprises introducing new products	3		0	1	1
Number of enterprises adopting new to the firm technologies or processes	0		27	1	0
Number of events / programmes	0		6	3	3
Number of people reached	0		150	12	12
Number of enterprises with improved productivity	0		15	0	0
Number of new to market products	0		25	0	0

This outcome was discontinued by DLUHC

This target is additional to the programme and could replace E18's target

This target is additional to the programme

This target is additional to the programme

E24: Funding for new and improvements to existing training hubs

Deliverable	Target	Varied Target	Achieved to Date	Tentative To Date	
Number of people attending training sessions	0		120	0	0
Number of early stage enterprises which increase their revenue following support	0		15	0	0
Number of organisations engaged in knowledge transfer activity following support	0		15	0	0
Number of R&D active enterprises	0		15	0	0

This target is additional to the programme and could replace E18's target

This target is additional to the programme

This target is additional to the programme

This target is additional to the programme

Communities & Place Impacts achieved so far (cumulative)

Output	Intervention				Total C&P Outputs	Forecast C&P Outputs (i.e., total expected Outputs across the life of the fund)	Tentative to Date
	E1: Improvements to town centres & high streets	E2: Community & neighbourhood infrastructure projects	E6: Local arts, cultural, heritage & creative activities	E8: Campaigns to encourage visits and exploring of local area			
Number of commercial space completed or improved	2				2	23	11
Amount of public realm created or improved (M2)	0				0	1100	1100
Number of organisations receiving grants (Number of organisations)	0	2	7	2	11	25	11
Number of organisations receiving non-financial support (Number of organisations)	0	6	3	3	12	0	12
Number of amenities/facilities supported/created or improved (Number of amenities or facilities)	0	3	0	0	3	0	3
Number of local events or activities supported (Number of events / activities)	0	0	46	0	46	22	46
Number of people reached (Number of people)	0	0	0	26424	26424	200	26424

Outcome	Intervention				Total C&P Outcomes	Forecast C&P Outcomes (i.e., total expected Outcomes across the life of the fund)	Tentative to Date
	E1: Improvements to town centres & high streets	E2: Community & neighbourhood infrastructure projects	E6: Local arts, cultural, heritage & creative activities	E8: Campaigns to encourage visits and exploring of local area			
Number of vacant units filled	7	0	0	0	7	9	10
Increased users of facilities/amenities (Number of users)	0	51	0	0	51	10	51
Number of community-led arts, cultural, heritage and creative programmes as a result of support (Number of programmes)	0	0	4	0	4	6	5
Increased number of web searches for a place (Number of web searches)	0	0	0	23600	23600	8605	TBC
Number of volunteering opportunities created as a result of support (Number of volunteering roles created)	0	0	10	0	10	0	11

Supporting Local Business Impacts achieved so far (cumulative)

Output	E16: Open markets & town centre retail & service sector	E17: Development & promotion of visitor economy	E18: Supporting Made Smarter Adoption	E20: R&D grants supporting innovative product & service development	E21: Development of innovation infrastructure at the local level	E22: Enterprise infrastructure & employment / innovation sites	E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems	E24: Training hubs, business support offers, incubators	Total LB Outputs	Forecast LB Outputs (i.e., total expected Outputs across the life of the fund)	Tentative to Date
Number of enterprises receiving non-financial support (Number of enterprises)	15	55	0	0	9	0	41	0	120	263	120
Number of enterprises receiving grants (Number of enterprises)	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	34	17
Number of potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready (Number of entrepreneurs)	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	59	3
Number of commercial buildings completed or improved (Number of buildings)	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	4	6	4
Amount of commercial space completed or improved (M2)	0	0	0	0	0	517	0	0	1034	470	TBC
Number of people reached (Number of people)	0	99	0	0	0	0	12	0	111	2150	111
Number of local events or activities supported (Number of events/activities)	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	18	9
Number of people attending training sessions (Number of people)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	120	1
Number of events/participatory programmes (Number of events/participatory programmes)	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	6	3
Number of enterprises engaged in new markets (Number of enterprises)	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	0	14	2	14

Outcome	E16: Open markets & town centre retail & service sector	E17: Development & promotion of visitor economy	E18: Supporting Made Smarter Adoption	E20: R&D grants supporting innovative product & service development	E21: Development of innovation infrastructure at the local level	E22: Enterprise infrastructure & employment / innovation sites	E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems	E24: Training hubs, business support offers, incubators	Total LB Outcomes	Forecast LB Outcomes (i.e., total expected Outcomes across the life of the fund)	Tentative to Date
Jobs safeguarded as a result of support (Number of Full time equivalent (FTE))	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
Number of new enterprises created as a result of support (Number of enterprises)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19	0
Increased footfall (Number of people)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	TBC
Increased visitor numbers (Number of people)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11200	TBC
Improved perception of markets (Number of people reporting)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0
Increased amount of investment (£)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	60200	0
Number of organisations engaged in knowledge transfer activity following support (Number of organisations)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Premises with improved digital connectivity as a result of support (Number of premises)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Number of enterprises adopting new to the firm technologies or processes (Number of enterprises)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	19	2
Number of new to market products (Number of products)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0
Number of enterprises with improved productivity (Number of enterprises)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	0
Number of R&D (Research & Development) active enterprises (Number of enterprises)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of enterprises adopting new or improved products or services (Number of enterprises)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Number of enterprises engaged in new markets (Number of enterprises)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0

		YEAR TWO											
		Budget Profile			2023-24		Spend Profile						
REPF	SPF	Capital	Capital (Y1 Underspend)	Revenue	Revenue (Y1 Underspend)	TOTAL	REPF	Capital	Revenue	Total Spend	BALANCE REMAINING		
SPF Allocation	Capital	Capital	Capital (Y1 Underspend)	Revenue	Revenue (Y1 Underspend)	TOTAL	TOTAL SPEND	TOTAL SPEND	TOTAL SPEND				
Communities and Place													
E1	Love Your Town Centre	£ 3,023.00	£ 1,394.00			£ 4,417.00		£ 2,500.00		£ 2,500.00	£ 1,917.00		
E1	HAZ	£ 15,154.00	£ -			£ 15,154.00		£ 15,154.00		£ 15,154.00	£ -		
E2	Work Hubs	£ -	£ -			£ -		£ -		£ -	£ -		
E6	Love Your Town Centre			£ 5,682.00	£ 390.00	£ 6,072.00			£ 6,000.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 72.00		
E8	Strengthening the Visitor Economy			£ 9,229.00	£ 2,119.79	£ 11,348.79			£ 7,525.00	£ 7,525.00	£ 3,823.79		
E11	Social Economy					£ -				£ -	£ -		
E15	Social Economy					£ -				£ -	£ -		
		£ -	£ 18,177.00	£ 1,394.00	£ 14,911.00	£ 2,509.79	£ 36,991.79	£ -	£ 17,654.00	£ 13,525.00	£ 31,179.00	£ 5,812.79	
Supporting Local Business													
E16	HAZ	£ 19,954.57				£ 19,954.57		£ 19,954.57		£ 19,954.57	£ -		
E16	Love Your Town Centre					£ -		£ -		£ -	£ -		
E17	Strengthening the Visitor Economy	£ 50,000.00		£ 9,229.00	£ 265.00	£ 59,494.00	£ -		£ 7,475.00	£ 7,475.00	£ 52,019.00		
E17	Farm to Fork initiatives			£ 9,454.00	£ 85.40	£ 9,539.40			£ 4,900.00	£ 4,900.00	£ 4,639.40		
E18	Innovation and Technology Grants					£ 3,879.60			£ 3,879.60	£ 3,879.60	£ -		
E20	Innovation and Technology Grants					£ -				£ -	£ -		
E21	Business Innovation Centre	£ 20,800.00	£ 1,200.00			£ 22,000.00		£ 22,000.00		£ 22,000.00	£ -		
E22	Work Hubs	£ 16,587.43	£ 1,916.57	£ 11,868.00	£ 9,628.00	£ 40,000.00		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 40,000.00		
E23	Farm to Fork initiatives			£ 8,977.00	£ 426.00	£ 9,403.00					£ 9,403.00		
E23	Business Support			£ 75,000.00	£ -	£ 75,000.00			£ 74,842.44	£ 74,842.44	£ 157.56		
E23	Business Innovation Outreach			£ 43,000.00	£ -	£ 43,000.00			£ 43,000.00	£ 43,000.00	£ -		
E26	Work Hubs					£ -	£ -			£ -	£ -		
E26	Business Innovation Centre	£ 50,000.00				£ 50,000.00	£ 50,000.00			£ 50,000.00	£ -		
R1.1	Innovation and Technology Grants	£ 54,168.00				£ 54,168.00				£ -	£ 54,168.00		
R1.1	Farm to Fork initiatives	£ 50,000.00				£ 50,000.00				£ -	£ 50,000.00		
R1.1	Market Area Enhancements					£ -	£ -			£ -	£ -		
		£ 204,168.00	£ 57,342.00	£ 3,116.57	£ 157,528.00	£ 14,284.00	£ 436,438.57	£ 50,000.00	£ 41,954.57	£ 134,097.04	£ 226,051.61	£ 210,386.96	
People & Skills													
E33	Youth Skills					£ -				£ -	£ -		
E33	Ability not Disability					£ -				£ -	£ -		
E34	Youth Skills					£ -				£ -	£ -		
E34	Ability not Disability					£ -				£ -	£ -		
E39	Green Skills Development					£ -				£ -	£ -		
E40	Green Skills Development					£ -				£ -	£ -		
		£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -			£ -	£ -	£ -		
TOTAL		£ 204,168.00	£ 75,519.00	£ 4,510.57	£ 172,439.00	£ 16,793.79	£ 473,430.36	£ 50,000.00	£ 257,230.61	£ 147,622.04	£ 257,230.61	£ 216,199.75	
ADMIN	ADMIN & MANAGEMENT					£ 10,333.00	£ 5,167.00	£ 15,500.00	To raise (quotes)	To raise (quotes)	£ 19,600.00	£ 19,600.00	£ 4,100.00
TOTAL		£ 204,168.00	£ 75,519.00	£ 4,510.57	£ 182,772.00	£ 21,960.79	£ 488,930.36	£ 50,000.00	£ 59,608.57	£ 167,222.04	£ 276,830.61	£ 212,099.75	

This page is intentionally left blank



Report for: Economy PDG

Date of Meeting:	16 November 2023
Subject:	Economic Development Team Update
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Steve Keable, Planning & Regeneration
Responsible Officer:	Richard Marsh, Director of Place
Exempt:	N/A
Wards Affected:	All wards
Enclosures:	N/A

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

To update members on activities undertaken by the Economic Development Team during the last two months.

Recommendation(s):
That members note the contents of the report.

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report provides an update on activities carried out by the Economic Development Team over the last two months, since the last committee meeting.

2.0 Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF)

2.1 A separate report outlines progress up to 30 September 2023 against the SPF Investment Plans

2.2 Activities to highlight over the last month include:

- We have commissioned an extra Be Grant Ready Workshop to take place on 29 November. The first workshop held in October had 14 businesses/organisations attend. We have another 14 booked to attend the November workshop and another 4 booked for January.

- The deadline for expressions of interest for round 2 of the Prosperity Grants was extended and closes on 7 November. As of 30 October, 12 EOIs had been submitted. An update on EOIs received will be provided at the PDG meeting. From the first round, we issued three grant offers, one each against the Growth and Innovation theme, Visitor Economy theme and Work Hub Development theme.
- Applications for the second round of Vibrant Town Centres closed on 31 October. We received one application this round (for Cullompton); the Funding Panel meet on 15 November. The team are exploring options for using unallocated funding this year to support tie-in events with the walking festival to hit outputs for events and activities supported and increased footfall.
- The team has commissioned Work Box CIC to undertake a study looking at opportunities for workhub provision across the District and the potential use of the former Market Centre site as a social work hub. The study will identify gaps in our current provision, how different work hub offers could complement each other and operating models should we pursue a potential facility in Tiverton. This exercise will take 12 weeks, following which an update will be presented to PDG.
- The team is in conversations with Food and Drink Devon, Devon Food Partnership and Devon County Show over potential support packages under the Field to Fork theme. We are planning a meet the buyer event to take place in March 2024, with more updates to be provided at the January PDG.
- Following promotional activities in October, we've received a further nine enquiries for shopfront, digital high street and fit-out grants under the Love Your Town Centre scheme and six enquiries for Prosperity Grants.
- Work continues on the Walking Festival and Sculpture Trail elements. The Visit Mid Devon website now has a dedicated section for the Walking Festival which will be updated with the programme in due course: <https://www.visitmiddevon.co.uk/walking-festival/>.

3.0 Local Growth Fund

3.1 We have received confirmation from the LEP that they have approved our bid for £24,245 Local Growth Funding (LGF) as a top-up to SPF/REPF towards a small-scale grant scheme to support business decarbonisation:

- We intend to launch this scheme with Round 3 of the Prosperity Programme with funding awards in the 2024/25 financial year. The application and decision-making process will align with our existing SPF/REPF processes.
- Businesses are able to access green business advice through the Prosper business support programme. We will use the LGF to extend

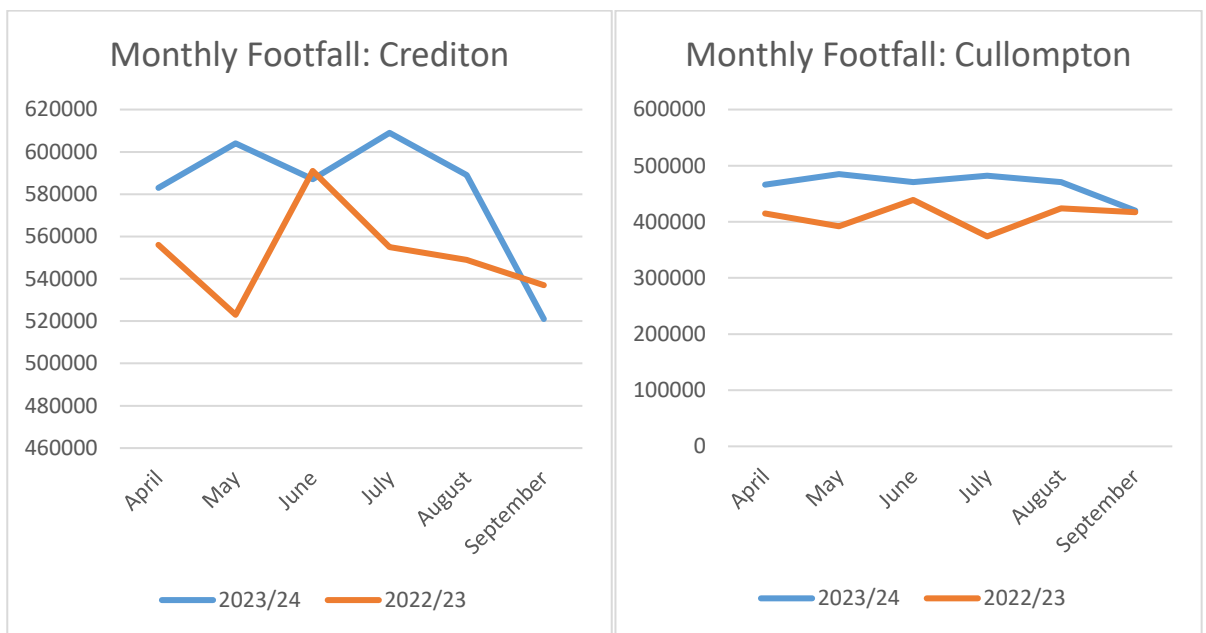
the green business support through the provision of capital grants to help businesses implement actions that reduce their carbon emissions. The introduction of the grant scheme will enable businesses to apply the knowledge gained from the support workshops, generating additional impact from those support interventions.

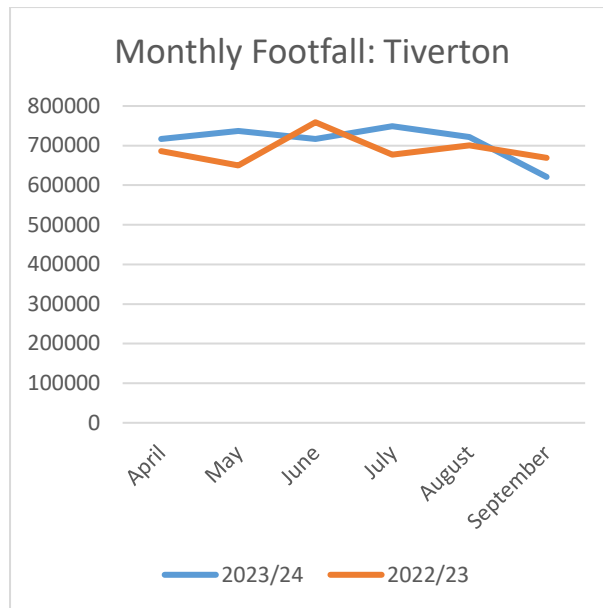
- The Green Business Grant will offer up to 50% of the cost of any works, to the maximum value of £5,000.
- Target impacts:
Enterprises receiving grant support: 5
Kg CO2 emissions avoided: 1,000

4.0 Town Centre Health

4.1 Town Centre Footfall

4.1.1 Footfall data for the past three months shows that in all three towns footfall was higher in 2023/24 than the previous year for July and August but lower than the previous year in September. Footfall usually grows in October with the half-term activities, which we will expect to see reflected in the next quarterly report:





4.2 Shopfront Surveys

4.2.1 In order to consistently monitor occupancy data across the three towns, we have standardised the baseline data (for instance, the Town Hall had been included in Cullompton's data but not Tiverton's yet both are shown within their respective town centre boundaries as per the 2020 Local Policy Maps). This has resulted in some variations to previously reported statistics. Therefore, for this quarter's report, we have included updated statistics for all three quarters this year to date. Not-actively-trading properties (NAT) are those that are occupied but not open to the public. The national vacancy rate for high streets in quarter 3 was 13.8%.

Crediton

		Apr-23	Jul-23	Oct-23
Ea	Retail	49.6%	50.4%	49.6%
Eb	Restaurants & Cafés	9.4%	10.3%	11.1%
Ec	Financial & Professional Services	12.0%	12.0%	11.1%
Ee	Health & Medical Services	2.6%	1.7%	2.6%
Ef	Indoor Sport, Recreation & Fitness	1.7%	1.7%	1.7%
Eg	Other uses	2.6%	3.4%	2.6%
SG	Sui Generis, including pubs and takeaways	11.1%	11.1%	10.3%
C1	Accommodation	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%
F1	Learning and Non-Residential Inst.	4.3%	4.3%	3.4%
F2	Local Community	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Vacant	5.1%	3.4%	6.0%
NAT	Not Actively Trading	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%

4.2.2 Crediton is showing an increase of three vacant units from quarter 2, which includes a travel agents, charity shop and the Wetherspoons Pub. The NAT property is the new wine bar opening in the former Natwest bank. The repair works have completed and the unit is due to open soon.

Cullompton

		Apr-23	Jul-23	Oct-23
Ea	Retail	37.9%	42.5%	41.4%
Eb	Restaurants & Cafés	6.9%	6.9%	8.0%
Ec	Financial & Professional Services	9.2%	8.0%	8.0%
Ee	Health & Medical Services	4.6%	4.6%	4.6%
Ef	Indoor Sport, Recreation & Fitness	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Eg	Other uses	4.6%	4.6%	4.6%
SG	Sui Generis, including pubs and takeaways	14.9%	13.8%	13.8%
C1	Accommodation	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
F1	Learning and Non-Residential Inst.	2.3%	2.3%	2.3%
F2	Local Community	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%
	Vacant	17.2%	14.9%	13.8%
NAT	Not Actively Trading	1.1%	1.1%	2.1%

4.2.2 Cullompton is showing a decrease of one vacant unit from quarter 2, with the opening of a nail bar. Two properties are now showing as NAT with one temporarily closed (reopening soon) and one property has a new tenant preparing to open. We are aware that since the survey, another vacant unit in Cullompton has a new tenant preparing to open soon.

Tiverton

		Apr-23	Jul-23	Oct-23
Ea	Retail	52.5%	52.1%	52.5%
Eb	Restaurants & Cafés	7.6%	7.6%	7.6%
Ec	Financial & Professional Services	6.7%	6.3%	5.9%
Ee	Health & Medical Services	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%
Ef	Indoor Sport, Recreation & Fitness	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Eg	Other uses	1.7%	1.3%	1.3%
SG	Sui Generis, including pubs and takeaways	15.1%	14.7%	15.1%
C1	Accommodation	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%
F1	Learning and Non-Residential Inst.	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%
F2	Local Community	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%
	Vacant	8.0%	8.8%	8.4%
NAT	Not Actively Trading	1.3%	2.1%	2.1%

4.2.3 Tiverton is showing an overall decrease of one vacant unit from quarter 2, with the opening of two new businesses (a takeaway and pottery shop) balanced with the closure of the Natwest bank. Five properties are showing as NAT, no change from quarter 2.

4.3 Cullompton Heritage Action Zone

4.3.1 The aim of the project is to make the town centre a more desirable place for businesses, visitors, investors and residents.

4.3.2 Works to enhance the public realm are well advanced and are due for completion next month. The work has been phased to minimise disruption to residents and businesses, but unavoidably there will be some disruption. The appointed contractors have been liaising with adjacent properties to update them on the programme, with positive feedback received. The initial stage of works has now been completed including provision of the new bus shelter. Work on the next phase is now well underway with the third and final phase (the area from the far side of the memorial to St Andrews Road) due to commence later this month. The contractor will ensure the area around the war memorial is acceptable for Armistice Day/Remembrance Sunday. It may not be fully paved and complete but it will be safe for pedestrians to congregate and power will be available. The contractor has managed the works to date without the need for 3 way traffic lights; however this may be required towards the end of the programme when the road is resurfaced and road marking installed. Opportunities are being sought to minimise disruption through night working.

4.3.3 The grants for property owners, focused around Fore Street, to improve their properties are progressing with several properties now complete and several now in the pipeline.

4.3.4 The Cultural programme continues to undertake tremendous work in the town. Members may recall that the Roman festival was a big success and that the public art project is progressing with the Selfie and Home artworks referred to at the last meeting now installed in the High Street and Hayridge library garden and the ceramics Wool Wall artwork due to be installed on the side of the Baptist Church very soon with a wool version to be displayed on the inside of the Church.

4.3.5 The latest public art is the new mural designed by Cullompton Community College and local artist Owen Williams. 'People Portal' is a colourful work which explores Cullompton's people and past in the form of a time tunnel. The artist has started the mural which is adding interest, colour and discussions about Cullompton's history to the Hayridge Garden.

4.3.6 A further Haiku arts project took place in October with an adults writing workshop in Haiku Poems which was then represented in clay. These clay depictions will be installed in the Hayridge Library Garden later in the year.

4.3.7 To celebrate the installation of these new artworks a short event was held in the library garden on Saturday 4th November 2023, which included a free drop in mask making, badge making and drumming workshops.

4.3.8 The Cullompton Autumnfest was held on Sat 14th October and was a success with lots of new people and regulars visiting the different areas of the festival. The Creative Cullompton element helped to fund some activities, performers and music. The circus skills was extremely popular with children learning new skills such as plate spinning, uni-cycling, ariel hoop and tightrope walking. There was also Bubble princess Elsa, a colour wall and a willow bouncing fish activity. Lots of parents and grandparents expressed how grateful they were for the free activities.

4.3.9 The new Cullompton History Group is now set up and there is a programme of talks arranged up to April 2024. Content for the Historic Cullompton website continues to be added.

5.0 General Updates

5.1 Jobs Fairs

5.1.1 Working with the DWP, the Pannier Market has hosted a number of jobs fairs over the past year. At these events, it was identified that there were many under 25s attending who were struggling to engage with the employers due to confidence issues. As a result, the DWP is hosting a smaller, private event specifically for under 25s on 30 November at Seetec in Tiverton. The event called 'Youth 360' will have a range of course providers, employers and mental health / social anxiety advisors.

Financial Implications

The report is an information report and does not of itself have any financial implications and require any decisions. The report is however providing members with information which is pertinent to the utilisation of SPF and REPF grant monies as well as other grant funding – including the Cullompton HAZ project.

It is hoped that the report demonstrates that the Economy and Growth team is achieving in line with expectations in terms of the successful utilisation of grant monies and other financial resources.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications arising from this information report.

Risk Assessment

There are no further risks associated with the updates in this report that have not already been reported.

Impact on Climate Change

The impact of individual projects on climate change has been included in the individual reports that will have already been presented to committee.

Equalities Impact Assessment

It is acknowledged that there is a relationship between economy and equality whereby disadvantaged groups of people can have greater or lesser opportunities for economic advantage depending on the climate and growth potential. Economically disadvantaged individuals are socially disadvantaged individuals whose ability to compete in the free enterprise system has been impaired due to diminished capital or credit opportunities as compared to others in the same or similar line of business who are not socially disadvantaged. There are unfortunate intersections between socioeconomic status and those with protected characteristics or from marginalised or minority communities putting them at greater risk of social and therefore economic disadvantage. Social and digital isolation issues across a rural district has the potential to exacerbate these risks.

Mid Devon's Prosperity Programme and the Economic Strategy outline key projects to tackle these risks and grow the economy. They are supported by equality assessments and communication plans.

Key strands of the work of the Economy and Growth team continue to seek to address and tackle causes of inequality and deprivation.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

The work of the Growth, Economy and Delivery team supports the corporate objectives for the economy:

- Bringing new businesses into the District
- Business development and growth
- Improving and regenerating our town centres
- Growing the tourism sector

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 7 November 2023

Statutory Officer: Maria DeLeburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 7 November 2023

Chief Officer: Richard Marsh

Agreed by Corporate Director

Date: 7 November 2023

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 06 November 2023

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Zoë Lentell, Economic Development Team Leader
Email: zlentell@middevon.gov.uk
Telephone: 01884 234298

Background papers:

This page is intentionally left blank



Report for: Economy Policy Development Group

Date of Meeting: 16 November 2023

Subject: 2024/25 Fees and Charges

Cabinet Member: James Buczkowski – Cabinet Member for Finance

Responsible Officer: Andrew Jarrett – Deputy Chief Executive (S151)

Exempt: Yes – Appendix 1

which are Exempt from publication under paragraph 3, Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Wards Affected: All

Enclosures: Appendix 1 – Economy PDG Fees and Charges (Part 2)

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendation(s)

To present to Members the proposed Fees and Charges for 2024/25 for discussion.

Recommendation(s):

That the Policy Development Group recommends to Cabinet the proposed Fees and Charges for 2024/25:

Section 2 – Report

1.0 Introduction

1.1 For the 2023/24 budget a full review and refresh of all fees and charges was undertaken by the service managers, using techniques such as benchmarking

and other in-depth reviews. The majority of charges increased, and in many cases by more than annual inflation due to fees previously being frozen during the period of the pandemic. As part of the approval, delegated power was given to increase fees annually in line with inflation, or where the market will bear it, potentially above annual inflation following a review by the relevant Policy Development Group. The additional income will help balance the annual budget.

2.0 2024/25 Review

- 2.1 During the summer the level of fees and charges have been reviewed. This is slightly earlier than in previous years to ensure that they can be built into service estimates and avoid making unnecessary cuts. This covering report summarises the main points, with the details being provided in Annex 1.
- 2.2 September's Consumer Price Index (CPI) stood at 6.7%. This is the proposed uplift value applied to the majority of fees and charges for 2024/25. Where any proposal exceeds this, the justification will be presented to the relevant PDG.
- 2.3 PDG Members are asked to consider these increases and either recommend them to Cabinet for approval in December or propose alternative rates where they do not support an inflationary uplift. If there are changes to those recommended that result in reduced income, then this will create a shortfall in the budget that will need to be funded from another source. Members are asked to recommend how that resultant shortfall could be mitigated.

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 If the PDG accepts the proposed uplifts, it should recommend approval by Cabinet, and the additional income generated by these proposals be reflected in the 2024/25 budget.

Financial Implications

The current budget for the General Fund shows a potential deficit of £765k, with an increasing funding deficit projected in future years. Were Members to decide to reject any of the proposals, then additional savings of the same value would be required to deliver a balanced budget.

Legal Implications

The Localism Act 2011 provides local authorities with a general power of competence that confers on them the power to charge for services unless there is a statutory duty to provide the service or if there is a specific power to charge for it or if there is a prohibition on charging.

Risk Assessment

The proposed fee uplifts are mainly inflationary. Therefore it is assumed that this will not have a material impact on the usage of that service. Any proposed uplift above inflation has been assessed by the service manager to again not materially alter the usage of the service.

Impact on Climate Change

The proposed uplifts are not deemed to negatively affect climate change.

Equalities Impact Assessment

Mid Devon District Council has statutory public sector equality duties concerned with eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations on the basis of protected characteristics such as gender, race, disability or age. These duties do not prevent the Council reducing services or charging where necessary – provided that decisions are taken in accordance with the Act. The proposed uplifts are considered to be a proportionate approach and therefore do not impact on those with protected characteristics.

Relationship to Corporate Plan

The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) sets out the financial resources available to deliver the Council's ongoing Corporate Plan priorities.

Section 3 – Statutory Officer sign-off/mandatory checks

Statutory Officer: Andrew Jarrett

Agreed by or on behalf of the Section 151

Date: 24 October 2023

Statutory Officer: Maria De Leburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

Date: 24 October 2023

Chief Officer: Stephen Walford

Agreed by or on behalf of the Chief Executive/Corporate Director

Date: 24 October 2023

Performance and risk: Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

Date: 24 October 2023

Cabinet member notified: Yes

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Andrew Jarrett – Deputy Chief Executive (S151)
Email: ajarrett@middevon.gov.uk
Telephone: 01884 234242

Contact: Paul Deal – Corporate Manager for Finance, Property and Climate Change
Email: pdeal@middevon.gov.uk
Telephone: 01884 234254

Background papers:

- 2024/25 – 2028/29 Medium Term Financial Plan update (September Cabinet)

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank