

## Economy Policy Development Group

Thursday, 4 January 2024 at 5.30 pm  
Phoenix Chambers, Phoenix House, Tiverton

Next meeting  
Thursday, 7 March 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.

**The meeting will be hybrid and an audio recording made and published on the website after the meeting.**

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

### Membership

Cllr G Cochran  
Cllr A Cuddy  
Cllr J M Downes (Chairman)  
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 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 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023.
- 5     **Chairman's Announcements**  
To receive any announcements that the Chairman may wish to make.
- 6     **Medium Term Financial Plan - draft budget update for 2024 / 2025**  
To receive a verbal update on the draft budget position for 2024/2025 (based upon the MTFP budget update report presented to Cabinet on 12 December 2023).
- 7     **Economic Development Team Update** (*Pages 13 - 18*)  
To receive a report from the Director of Place updating Members on activities undertaken by the Economic Development Team during the last two months.
- 8     **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:
- Field to Fork – project update
  - Economic Team Update
  - Visitor Economy Events update
  - Flexible workspace provision – summary findings of a study
  - J27 update
  - Performance Dashboard for Quarter 3
  - Chairman’s Annual Report for 2023/2024

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

**Stephen Walford**  
Chief Executive  
Friday 15 December 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](mailto:Committee@middevon.gov.uk) by no later than 4pm on the day before the meeting. This will ensure that your name is on the list to speak and will help us ensure that you are not missed. 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](mailto:slees@middevon.gov.uk)

Public Wi-Fi is available in all meeting rooms.

This page is intentionally left blank

**MINUTES** of a **MEETING** of the **ECONOMY POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP** held on 16 November 2023 at 5.30 pm

**Present**

**Councillors**

J M Downes (Chairman)  
G Cochran, A Cuddy, B Fish, M Fletcher,  
L Knight, N Letch, R Roberts and  
G Westcott

**Apology**

**Councillor**

M Farrell

**Also Present**

**Councillors**

D Broom and J Buczkowski

**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), Dean Emery (Corporate Manager for Revenues, Benefits and Recovery), Dr Stephen Carr (Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager), Luke Howard (Environment and Enforcement Manager), Adrian Welsh (Strategic Manager for Growth, Economy and Delivery), Zoë Lentell (Economic Development Team Leader), Laura Woon (Democratic Services Manager), David Parker (Democratic Services & Policy Research Officer) and Sarah Lees (Democratic Services Officer)

**Councillors**

**Online**

E Buczkowski, A Glover, S Keable, J Wright and D Wulff

**34 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies were received from Cllr M Farrell who was substituted by Cllr L Knight.

**35 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

**Mrs Kate Clayton-White**

After attending Full Council meetings and Economy PDG meetings earlier this year we managed to persuade you to reconsider your outrageous proposed increases for

our allocated parking spaces. We were delighted to hear you set up a working group involving town traders and other interested parties who have already produced a report update for this meeting which recommends that the Council supports traders by offering some free parking before Xmas however allocated spaces charges aren't actually mentioned at all.

One of our main concerns had been the fact that previously, the decision making process including discussion of fees which resulted in a 115% increase for our allocated space, was concealed in part 2 minutes, i.e. in secret. On 22<sup>nd</sup> February this year at the full Council meeting I asked what was so commercially sensitive about raising car parking charges that the decision making process had to take place in secret. The answer I received was 'The majority of the council's fees and charges were considered together by Cabinet and therefore the decision was taken to consider all fees in part 2 session. Future review of car parking fees will take place in normal part 1 session'.

Note, my question – why was it necessary to discuss these matters in secret – wasn't actually answered – nor was it when I asked again on 4<sup>th</sup> April.

The agenda for today's meeting suggests that discussion of fees and charges for 2024/25 will take part in part 2 session. If this includes the proposed car parking increase then this would directly contradict what was promised, in writing, in your answer to my question in February and make a mockery of this new administration's vow to be more transparent than the last.

So my questions are:

1. Are car parking fee increases going to be discussed, as originally promised, in normal part 1 sessions? If not, why not?
2. Why were such discussions previously deemed to be commercially sensitive and hidden in part 2?
3. Where in the Parking Consultation Terms of Reference and pressing matters (Car Park Working Group update report 3.3) will the needs of allocated space fee payers be considered?

#### Answer

The Corporate Manager for People, Governance and Waste stated that the Terms of Reference for the Working Group could be added to at any time as they were still being developed. They were not set in stone. The Group were very keen to talk to business leaders and community groups to further inform their discussions and this would be taking place. The Chairman further informed those present that no recommendations were being made this evening based on the work of the Working Group, the report included with the agenda was just providing an update. The main focus of the proposals regarding fees and charges for this evenings meeting were based on inflation based rises.

It was recognised that the car parking issues had not been handled in a way which current Members were happy with last year and that things would be managed very differently going forwards. He reiterated the fact that inflationary increases had now been delegated to the S151 Officer and all other matters would be discussed openly.

The Chairman of the Working Group stated that they had only met once and had not yet prioritised the Terms of Reference. The main objective was to ensure that, having consulted with the community, there were practical recommendations regarding fees going forwards.

## **Paul Elstone**

(Answers were provided by the Cabinet Member for Finance in each case)

### Question 1

This item is being discussed in secret, but the report has been published and Paragraph 2.2 says it is proposed to increase Fees and Charges by the September Consumer Price Index inflation rate of 6.7%.

Everybody knows that inflation is coming down. It was on the news headlines yesterday that the rate had dropped to 4.6% and for this Council to set an increase at 6.7% is excessive by any reasonable measure.

Fees and Charges should only go up by any increase in the cost of the service and only last month the Council was being told that costs are being cut.

In the secret papers, have the Officers provided costs of the services that charge these Fees and Charges to prove that an increase of 6.7% is necessary for each item?

### Answer

The appendices only include the recommended fees and charges and the additional income generated.

I would highlight again that as part of the fee setting during the last review of fees and charges, delegated authority was given to the Deputy Chief Executive to increase fees and charges by at least inflation.

In regards to the inflation point being used, it is important to recognise that it has been higher than this earlier in the year. The September figure represents the mid-point for the year and is also the latest CPI available at the time of drafting the proposal, and is the Central Governments measure used when calculating national schemes such as pensions and business rates.

### Question 2

Expert institutional financial forecasting and including the UK Governments own anticipates that CPI inflation will drop to around 3% by the middle of next year and down to the Government's 2% target by the middle of 2025. Therefore, further the challenging the justification for the excessive 6.7% price rise that this Committee is asked to approve.

Will this Committee fully factor this into its decision making and during the secret debate ?

### Answer

I've addressed the question around the inflation rate as part of my previous answer,

You are asking the PDG to consider your comments in their deliberations, I can't speak on their behalf, but I am sure they will do.

### Question 3

In the secret papers, have the Officers provided costs of implementing this increase across all the Fees and Charges ?

### Answer

The appendices only include the recommended fees and charges and the additional income generated. The cost of implementing any change to the fees and charges are relatively minimal, largely the cost of advertising and printing new tariffs.

### Question 4

When this Committee votes on the recommendation to take back to Cabinet will this vote be conducted in public?

### Answer

Yes, there will be a vote in public session,

### Question 5

What Fees / Charges are being considered?

### Answer

Car Parking and the Panier Market.

## 36 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

There were no interests declared under this item.

## 37 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 5 October 2023, were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

## 38 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman had no announcements to make:

## 39 **BUSINESS SUPPORT PROGRAMME - GUEST SPEAKER (00:20:00)**

Mr Rob Evans, from Devon County Council had been invited to attend the meeting to provide an update on the Business Support Programme.

The presentation included the following information:

- What the Business Support Programme was and how businesses could sign up to it.
- It provided, general business support, green business support, start up support, job creation and job safeguarding support.
- Support would be delivered through 1-2-1's, workshops, events, enterprise clubs and through a new self-learning platform.



- There had been 32 Mid Devon referrals to date, against a target of 89. The focus would now be ensuring businesses were targeted that would achieve the specific programme outcomes.
- Shared Prosperity Fund Agri-Events project.

Consideration was given to:

- The proactive attempts to reach out to business via such means as providing work hubs, contact with libraries, sending out flyers, working with local authorities etc.
- Success being measured in terms of outcomes.

It was requested than an update be provided to the Group in 6 months time and that top level information (including relevant links) be sent to all Members so that they could share it with their networks.

#### 40 **CAR PARKING CONSULTATIVE GROUP UPDATE REPORT (00:30:00)**

The Group had before it a report \* from the car Parking Working Group. This Group had been 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 charges in the years to come.

The Chairman of the Working Group, Cllr Guy Cochran, outlined the contents of the report and provided the following summary:

- The Working Group was open to any suggestion in terms of underused locations that could be used as possible car parking areas or for other uses that could generate some income.
- The need to look ahead, mindful that cycling was on the increase for example.
- The Working Group were meeting again on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023.
- A further update would be provided in due course.

The Chairman of the Policy Development Group stated the need for interested parties to contact either this Group or the Working Group so that their views could be heard and they could get involved. He was keen to stress that in the past the Finance Officers had presented options the Group as part of the budget process with little other opportunity for Member or public involvement. This new approach would provide ample opportunity for involvement and he welcomed this.

Note: \* Report previously circulated.

#### 41 **QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD (00:37:00)**

The Group were presented with a performance dashboard slide showing performance against targets in the Economic Development area in the financial year to date.

Discussion took place regarding:

- The need to present the financial data in a slightly different way so as to be easier to understand and a more accurate reflection of the 'economic' health of the Council. It was explained that this slide was a work in progress and that it could be tailored so as to be more helpful to the PDG Members. At the moment it was not very helpful to see 'zero' as a target.
- The Group requested to see the net impact figures going forwards.
- It was still important to see the slippage on capital projects, the biggest one being the Cullompton Relief Road.
- The risks in relation to 3 Rivers should be removed from this area.
- The entire Corporate Risk area would be reported to the Audit Committee.
- The Chairman requested that 'RAG' be amended to say 'RISK'.
- The risk scoring system was explained to those who had not come across it before.
- The difference between the risk scores of the Cullompton Garden Village and the Cullompton Relief Road was explained, one was dependent on the other but the risk on the Garden Village had increased owing to a lack of clarity on Government grant funding to support the Council in its work.
- It was confirmed that 6.25% of commercial premises were currently voids.

#### 42 **SHARED PROSPERITY FUND AND RURAL ENGLAND PROSPERITY FUND PROGRESS UPDATE (00:52:00)**

The Group had before it, and **NOTED**, a report \* from the Director of Place updating Members on the progress under the Shared Prosperity Investment Plan and the Rural England Prosperity Fund (Year 2: 2023/2024).

The contents of the report were outlined with particular reference to the following:

- Project delivery had focussed on, 'Love your Town Centre', 'Field to Fork', 'Visitor Economy', 'Work Hubs', and 'Business Innovation and Growth'.
- The report provided summary information in relation to each project as well as achievements to date against the targets set.
- Updates would be brought to the March 2024 PDG meeting regarding several promotional campaigns such as the 'Swan Sculpture Trail' and the 'Walking Festival', the webpage for the latter having now gone live.

Consideration was given to:

- It took approximately one month from application to grant offer for Shopfront Scheme applicants should they be successful. It was confirmed that grants were paid on completion of the works.
- Applications Under all grant schemes needed to be of high quality and comply with certain criteria. The team were able to provide guidance and support in advance of applications being submitted if needed. The team also needed to hear from individuals and businesses if there were issues preventing them from filling in the necessary forms correctly.
- Lots of different types of business support was available.
- The team worked very closely with Planning regarding reviews of the Local Plan.

- The chief priority was to get all the available funding out to businesses wherever possible.
- Applicants submitting planning applications were contacted and made aware of any relevant schemes in order to support business growth.

Note: \* Report previously circulated.

#### 43 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TEAM UPDATE (01:15:00)**

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:

- Businesses are able to access green business advice through the Prosper business support programme. The Team 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.
- Town Centre Health – footfall was lower in September 23 compared to the previous year. The reasons were not clear but it was hoped these would pick up during the festive period.
- The team also continued to support job fares.
- The Building Grants Scheme was progressing well as was the cultural programme.

Note: \* Report previously circulated.

#### 44 **ACCESS TO INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC (01:20:00)**

The Chairman indicated that discussion with regard to the next item of business, required the PDG 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 PDG would need to decide whether, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption interest in disclosing the information, outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

**RESOLVED:** That, in accordance with Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the item 13, for the reason set out below:

Information under paragraph 3 (contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person including the authority holding that information).

(Proposed by the Chairman).

#### 45 **2024/2025 FEES AND CHARGES (01:23:00)**

The Group had before it a report \* from the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) presenting to Members the proposed Fees and Charges for 2024 / 2025.

The contents of the report were outlined and a summary provided of the proposed Fees and Charges for the following financial year. Following discussion and having returned to open session, the Economy Policy Development:

**RECOMMENDED** to the Cabinet that the delegated inflationary increase of 6.7% on Fees and Charges for 2024 / 2025 be approved.

(Proposed by the Chairman)

#### Reason for the decision

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.

Note: \* Report previously circulated.

#### 46 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING (01:44:00)**

The following items were identified by the Group for discussion at future meetings:

- J27 update, particularly in relation to the Destination Management Plan
- Opportunities to increase income through advertising on MDDC property

(The meeting ended at 7.24 pm)

**CHAIRMAN**

**Report for: Economy PDG**

---

Date of Meeting: 4 January 2024

**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 Prosperity Programme Grants

- 2.1.1 We received 13 expressions of interest under round 2 of the Prosperity Programme. Of these, nine have been invited to Full Application, two have been referred back to the application for more information and two were declined (one with the option to reapply to a later round and one did not meet the scheme criteria). In addition, we are expecting a further six applications carried forward from round 1 (where the applicant deferred to round 2).
- 2.1.2 Expressions of Interest fall within each of the Prosperity Programme themes but the Visitor Economy theme has the highest requests (both number and grant value).
- 2.1.3 The Funding Panel meet on 17 January to determine grant awards. All applications are scored and priority given to those that score the highest where remaining grant budgets permit. However, where budgets do not allow all potentially successful applications to be supported, the Panel can make tentative grant awards from 2024/25 subject to receipt of funding from Government.
- 2.1.4 The next round of applications closes on 31 January with funding decisions by end of February. A summary of grant decisions from both upcoming Funding Panels will be shared with the PDG at the next meeting.

## 2.2 Field to Fork

- 2.2.1 We have offered grant funding to Food Drink Devon towards a networking scheme to support Mid Devon producers. The grant will provide free or subsidised membership to Mid Devon Food and drink businesses who will be new to the network. Food Drink Devon are an established network of food and drink businesses and membership includes mentoring, network events and publicity opportunities. This project will operate for two years and provide between 8 and 24 free new memberships in each year.
- 2.2.2 In addition to the membership support, we are also working with Food Drink Devon along with Devon Food Partnership and Heart of the South West Growth Hub to host a food and drink networking event in Mid Devon. This will provide network opportunities for new Mid Devon Food Drink Devon members, showcasing opportunities and a number of information sharing / training elements, this is likely to take place in late spring.
- 2.2.3 We are currently finalising details with Devon County Show to be able to support a number of 'new small producer' stands at the Devon County Show. This will allow up to eight Mid Devon food and drink producers to experience a much larger, three day trading opportunity in May 2024. A similar scheme supporting Mid Devon producers to attend Mid Devon Show at their 2023 event worked well, allowing 10 producers to attend and reach new markets. The offer with

Mid Devon Show will be repeated in 2024 with the addition of a 'Taste Mid Devon' marquee to promote the producers collectively.

## 2.3 Visitor Economy

2.3.1 Project work continues on both the Walking Festival and Tiverton Swan Trail. The programme for the Walking Festival is being collated, with the initial content to be featured in a promotional campaign in January to encourage holiday bookings in Mid Devon.

2.3.2 Eight local artists have engaged with the project to decorate one or two of the swans each. The Facebook page for the Trail (<https://www.facebook.com/TheFlockThatRock>) is now live and will feature regular video clips and photographs of the artwork in progress. The swans are with the artists until the end of January, when they will return to us for an anti-graffiti lacquer coating before being ready for installation by the end of March. Landowner engagement has completed and the Planning Application for the Swan Trail will go to Planning Committee in February (reference 23/01875/FULL).

## 2.4 People and Skills

2.4.1 Under the Shared Prosperity Fund, we receive funding in 2024/25 for a third pillar of project support: People and Skills. Under this pillar, we outlined delivery of three skills programmes:

- Green Skills
- Supported Employment (formerly known as 'Ability not Disability')
- Youth Skills (helping young people access employment)

2.4.2 Supporting Green Skills, the team has awarded a grant to Apricot Centre, towards a Regenerative Agriculture Training, Skills and Employment Project. This project will train new entrant farmers and growers, and partner them with established farm businesses, to grow their regenerative business or help them transition to regenerative systems; increase carbon sequestration and biodiversity through these methodologies (Level 2, Level 3 and 4 training courses). The project will also support existing farm businesses to retrain in Regenerative Agriculture methodologies. Apricot are working with Barton Farm in Tiverton to support training in Mid Devon, as well as from their base in South Hams. Due to the delivery timescales, this project will start in January 2024.

2.4.3 The team is in discussions with Devon County Council over the potential to support an Employment and Skills Hub project to deliver the remaining project outputs under People and Skills. Led by County's Economy Enterprise and Skills team, the Hub is based on an agile, responsive, place-based approach to supporting communities, not currently engaged with the current offers, to access employment, education, and training. It will be staffed by advisers who

work alongside individuals in an informal environment to support the journey into employment and further education.

## 2.5 General

2.5.1 The next Be Grant Ready workshop will be held on 24 January 2024. Six places are currently booked, with 14 still available.

2.5.2 The next round of Vibrant Town Centres opens for applications on 1 March 2024 with a closing deadline of 31 March 2024. For the next two rounds, the scheme will be expanded to allow applications from Bampton as well as the three main market towns (Crediton, Cullompton and Tiverton). As with previous rounds, this project supports delivery of the Shared Prosperity Intervention E6: *Local arts, cultural, heritage & creative activities*. In particular, it looks to support arts and cultural events and programmes. As we have achieved our target outputs for E6, promotional material for the next rounds will specifically encourage activities and events that tie-in with the walking festival programme to also support E8: *Campaigns to encourage visits and exploring of local area*.

## 3.0 Town Centre Health

3.1 Quarter 4 shopfront surveys are due to take place in January, with data reported to the following PDG in March.

## 4.0 General Updates

### 4.1 Local Visitor Economy Partnership

4.1.1 The Heart of the South West LEP has commissioned Tomorrow's Tourism to develop a business plan for two Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs), one in Devon and one in Somerset.

4.1.2 Surveys with tourism businesses and stakeholders across Devon identified that there was support for the development of a county-based LVEP and recognition for the ambition and activity relating to the visitor economy being undertaken by existing DMOs (Destination Management Organisations) and Local Authorities.

4.1.3 In October, representatives from the County's Destination Management Organisations, Local Authorities and other key sectoral stakeholders attended a workshop to look at the role of a potential LVEP for Devon. Workshop attendees concluded that the following would be appropriate lead priorities for the LVEP:

- Advocacy and leadership activity
- Better data to inform economic impact, direction and performance



- New product development
- Position and profile
- Skills and workforce
- Sustainable tourism

4.1.4 A further workshop in December, looked at potential partnership and governance frameworks and proposals for an outline plan (for the purposes of applying to Visit England for LVEP status). We await the collated results from this workshop and will share this with Members upon receipt.

### **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.

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:** 12 Dec 2023

**Statutory Officer:** Maria DeLeiburne

Agreed on behalf of the Monitoring Officer

**Date:** 12 Dec 2023

**Chief Officer:** Richard Marsh

Agreed by Corporate Director

**Date:** 12 Dec 2023

**Performance and risk:** Steve Carr

Agreed on behalf of the Corporate Performance & Improvement Manager

**Date:** 14/12/2023

**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:**