

Public Document Pack

Mid Devon District Council

Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 18 July 2016 at 2.15 pm
Exe Room, Phoenix House

Next ordinary meeting
Friday, 19 August 2016 at 4.00 pm

Those attending are advised that this meeting will be recorded

Membership

Cllr F J Rosamond
Cllr Mrs H Bainbridge
Cllr Mrs C P Daw
Cllr Mrs S Griggs
Cllr T G Hughes
Cllr Mrs J Roach
Cllr T W Snow
Cllr N A Way
Cllr Mrs G Doe
Cllr Mrs A R Berry
Cllr R Evans
Cllr J L Smith

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 notices of appointment of substitute Members (if any).

2 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

To receive any questions relating to items on the Agenda from members of the public and replies thereto.

Note: A maximum of 30 minutes is allowed for this item.

3 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (Pages 5 - 14)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the last meeting of this

Committee (attached).

The Committee is reminded that only those members of the Committee present at the previous meeting should vote and, in doing so, should be influenced only by seeking to ensure that the minutes are an accurate record.

4 **MEMBER FORUM**

An opportunity for non-Cabinet Members to raise issues.

5 **DECISIONS OF THE CABINET**

To consider any decisions made by the Cabinet at its last meeting that have been called-in.

6 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

To receive any announcements that the Chairman of Scrutiny Committee may wish to make.

7 **LEADERS ANNUAL REPORT** (*Pages 15 - 24*)

To receive an update from the Leader of the Council, in respect to the state of the district, Cabinet priorities for the coming year and its performance in the previous year.

8 **TIVERTON PANNIER MARKET AND TOWN CENTRE**

At the request of the Committee the Town Centre Manager and Pannier Market Manager will be in attendance to provide an update regarding plans and progress for the Tiverton Pannier Market and Tiverton Town Centre.

9 **REVIEWING THE EFFECTS OF INCREASES TO LEISURE CENTRE CHARGING** (*Pages 25 - 32*)

Following a report from the Cost of Efficiencies Working Group and a recommendation that the Scrutiny Committee undertake a review of Leisure Service price increases, based on appendix 1 of the report.

10 **DEVOLUTION** (*Pages 33 - 72*)

To receive a report of the Chief Executive which was presented to Cabinet on 7 July seeking agreement on the principle of a Combined Authority for the Heart of the South West, as set out in the Prospectus for Productivity, as the basis for negotiation with Government towards a Devolution Deal for the area.

11 **CORPORATE STRAP LINE**

Vision for Corporate Plan – following concerns from Members regarding the Council's vision in the Corporate Plan, alternatives have been sought from officers. A proposed alternative to the original vision "Making the Most of Mid Devon" is "Your Council, Your Future"

12 **SAFEGUARDING**

To receive a 6 monthly verbal update from the Head of Communities and Governance.

13 **ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT - EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

During discussion of the following item it may be necessary 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 Cabinet will 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.

To consider passing the following resolution so that financial information may be discussed.

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 1 respectively of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, namely information relating to any individual.

14 **SAFEGUARDING - REVIEW**

At the request of the Committee to receive a report (to be tabled at the meeting) from the Head of Communities and Governance following a review of a recent case in Tiverton.

15 **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:

Digitalisation for Members
Whistleblowing Update
RIPA 6 monthly update

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

Stephen Walford
Chief Executive
Friday, 8 July 2016

Anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings may do so unless the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting or there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chairman. Any filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible from a single fixed position without the use of any additional lighting; focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard also to the wishes of any member of the public present who may not wish to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chairman or the Member Services Officer in attendance so that all those present may be made aware that is happening.

Members of the public may also use other forms of social media to report on proceedings at this meeting.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to discussion. Lift access the first floor of the building is available from the main ground floor entrance. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are also available. There is time set aside at the beginning of the meeting to allow the public to ask questions.

An induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter. If you require any further information, or

If you would like a copy of the Agenda in another format (for example in large print) please contact Julia Stuckey on:

Tel: 01884 234209

E-Mail: jstuckey@middevon.gov.uk

Public Wi-Fi is available in all meeting rooms.

MID DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a **MEETING** of the **SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held on 23 May 2016 at 2.00 pm

Present

Councillors

F J Rosamond (Chairman)
Mrs H Bainbridge, Mrs A R Berry,
Mrs G Doe, R Evans, Mrs S Griggs,
T G Hughes, Mrs J Roach, J L Smith,
T W Snow and R Wright

Apologies

Councillor(s)

Mrs C P Daw and N A Way

Also Present

Councillor(s)

R L Stanley, C J Eginton and Mrs M E Squires

Also Present

Officer(s):

Stephen Walford (Chief Executive), Amy Tregellas (Head of Communities and Governance and Monitoring Officer), Jenny Clifford (Head of Planning and Regeneration) and Julia Stuckey (Member Services Officer)

1 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Cllr T G Hughes be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the municipal year 2016/17.

2 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies were received from Cllr Mrs C P Daw and from Cllr N A Way who was substituted by Cllr R Wright.

3 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

Mr Pocock, referring to item 9 on the agenda, said we welcome the report which we feel starts the process of answering some of the concerns about planning and enforcement decisions but we have the following questions;

Why is there nothing on the audit of the consistency of decisions both with respect to other planning departments and the need for similar internal audit within your own department which could possibly reduce the risk of legal challenges and judicial review? The audits in the report are mainly tick box number exercises which say nothing about the robustness of decisions.

With respect para 4.9, if a planning restriction is regarded as trivial why include it in the conditions of planning acceptance?

Why is there nothing in the report of the importance of enforcement decisions being in line with planning regulations and where breaches are apparent it should be mandatory that enforcement is applied? If it is not considered appropriate then the risks of litigation or judicial review should be assessed. However the fear of an appeal should not be a reason to approve an application.

Why is there nothing about an agreed and specific timescale for responses to queries about planning matters including decisions and enforcement?

We hope these questions will help you alleviate many of the concerns from both the public and councillors and potentially reduce your long term risks.

The Head of Planning and Regeneration replied that arrangements had already been put in place for an internal audit to take place during 2016/17 though the Chair of the Audit Committee pointed out that an audit would review process, systems and method rather than individual cases.

Regarding triviality of breaches the Head of Planning and Regeneration informed the Committee that she was working with officers to ensure that only necessary conditions were added to planning consents. With regard to the risk of Judicial Review she stated that it would be remiss of officers not to inform Members of the risk but that this should not fetter decision making.

4 **MEMBER FORUM**

Cllr Mrs J Roach asked for reassurance that a report regarding Safeguarding would be on the agenda for the next meeting of the Committee.

The Head of Communities and Governance confirmed that the report would be on the agenda for the meeting on 18th July 2016.

5 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

Subject to changing the wording "high level verbal summary" at Minute 155 to read 'verbal update' the minutes of the last meeting were approved as a correct record and **SIGNED** by the Chairman.

6 **DECISIONS OF THE CABINET**

The Committee **NOTED** that none of the decisions made by the Cabinet at their last meeting had been called in.

7 **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman welcomed Members to a new year of Scrutiny and said that he looked forward to their contributions.

The Chairman informed the Committee that the agenda for the next scheduled meeting of the Committee was light and Member Service's staff would be busy assisting with the EU Referendum and he therefore asked for the Committees approval to cancel the meeting. This was **AGREED** and therefore the next meeting of the Committee would be on 18th July 2016.

The Chairman welcomed members of the PORTAS Executive, Cllr S Griggs, Mr P Young, Mr M Freeman and Mrs B Lester, to the meeting and explained that it was within the role of the Scrutiny Committee to look at organisations in receipt of public money in order to give them an opportunity to be accountable.

Cllr Mrs Griggs outlined the vision of PORTAS which was to regenerate the town centre and bring vitality to the town. Tiverton had been awarded funding in the second tranche of awards with the aim of turning around an unloved and underused high street. Cllr Griggs stated that she believed that this had happened and that that town had received an uplift in the last 5 years with more events taking place. This was not just due to PORTAS but she considered that the apathy that was previously in the town had now gone and that the work undertaken had proved that the town could shine.

Cllr Griggs informed the Committee that the Group had achieved over 50 areas of improvement to help improve footfall in the town. Original plans were to improve car parking, set up a coach park, an attractions pass, a shoppers loyalty scheme, new town signage and an internet shopping pick up location for the town.

Group members had tried to set up an attractions pass but this had not proved to be successful and the shoppers loyalty scheme had not taken off. Internet shopping pick up locations were now in place, as was the coach parking bay. Cllr Griggs did not consider that the recent changes to parking fees would help. New welcoming signs had been placed at the major entrances to the town. Ongoing work included the implementation of a hand map, a town centre colouring book and the CreaTIV hub shop continued to prove to be popular. A Cooperative shop for local artists that PORTAS set up in the town had proved successful in showcasing local talent and had resulted in several artists going on to open their own shops and exhibitions.

The group were asked who their members were and how they were selected. Cllr Griggs explained that initially they were a group of 4 volunteers who wanted to see Tiverton prosper. There was now a team of 5 with other volunteers that could be called on for specific events. Cllr Griggs added that the group would work with anyone, were continually asking people to join and were open to this. She explained that the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had approved their method of working with a small team when other areas with larger teams had failed.

When asked about the relationships between the group with Tiverton Town Council, with Mid Devon District Council and with the Town Centre Manager Mr Young stated that they were in regular contact with Town Centre Manager and that three of their members were also Town Councillors so communication with them was good. Mr Young said that they would like to work more with these groups and asked if there was a Business Improvement District (BID) available. The Head of Communities and Governance explained that a number of local businesses had joined to form a group and had set up a Town Centre Partnership. She explained that there was a need for buy-in from local business to move forward with the BID and the local businesses concerned did not feel that they wanted to pursue this at the current time. Mr Young stated that PORTAS would be pleased to meet with all of these groups. The Head of

Communities confirmed that the Town Centre Manager was working hard to bring these groups together. She also informed the Committee that herself and the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration were in regular contact with these groups.

Discussion took place regarding car parking charges and the Chairman of the Audit Committee informed the Committee that since April vends had seen an increase of over 2500 on last year in Tiverton car parks and that income had increased by £11k. Dwell time was discussed.

Cllr Griggs stated that concessionary parking had been agreed for the Food Market events arranged for Saturday evenings in the summer but had not been made available for PORTAS events. The Leader of the Council pointed out that concessionary parking was provided in the lead up to Christmas.

Cllr Griggs confirmed that there was £39,820 remaining in the PORTAS funds and that spend was planned for the Feast of St James and the literary festival. A community radio station was an ongoing project, there were plans in place for a Christmas event/winter festival, signage for Westex, a hand map and an art trail which was being discussed in liaison with the Mid Devon Museum.

The Chairman thanked the group for the good work they had undertaken.

9 PLANNING AND ENFORCEMENT IMPROVEMENT 00.50.20

The Committee had before it a report * from the Chief Executive regarding the Planning and Enforcement Service.

At a previous meeting of the Committee the Chief Executive had been asked to investigate the efficacy and effectiveness of the Planning Service, with particular reference to the way enforcement was carried out and how members were engaged with the work of the council in this service area.

The Chief Executive outlined the contents of the report which gave context to the current situation, flagged the importance of keeping Members informed and provided recommendations to enable future improvements.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Income generation and whether it could be possible provide a service to others;
- Breaches that required investigation;
- Whether or not all breaches were real or perceived and public expectation;
- Triage of breaches;
- Whether Planning Officers should undertake enforcement duties or whether it was best served as a separate role;
- Whether Planning Enforcement Officers should work in geographic areas or on a unitary basis;

- The extra work that would be generated to provide regular updates to Members and how it was hoped that this could be an automatic report from the IT systems;
- An additional post in the Legal Team was currently being advertised and it was intended that a Planning Solicitor be appointed;
- The Audit Team had added an internal audit to their programme;
- Methods of updating the public and town and parish councils;

It was **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet that the following be noted:

- a) The Head of Planning & Regeneration bring forward the Local Enforcement Plan for Cabinet to consider as a matter of priority to set the framework for enforcement activity at MDDC.
- b) The Head of Planning & Regeneration ensures that staff within the enforcement service are invested in through additional training to help provide them with the necessary confidence about sharing information with members (with reference to Data Protection Act constraints).
- c) The Head of Planning & Regeneration take steps to appoint additional resource specifically into the enforcement team to clear any real or perceived backlog, and that consideration be given to the merits of operating this service as a discrete entity to share knowledge, expertise and resource (as opposed to the current area-based model).
- d) The Head of Planning & Regeneration ensures that 'Part II' reports were only ever brought as an exception in order to maintain transparency as far as Data Protection rules allow.
- e) The Chief Executive, in conjunction with the Head of Planning & Regeneration and the Head of Communities & Governance, consider setting a target for the processing and completion of S106 agreements.
- f) The Head of Communities & Governance considers reviewing (in conjunction with the Head of Planning & Regeneration) whether the current legal expertise available in-house was appropriate to process planning matters swiftly, and to take steps to re-provision this as opportunity permits.
- g) The Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration considers a report investigating the introduction of S106 Monitoring Fees in order to adequately resource the level of required activity.
- h) The Chief Executive considers the value of instructing Internal Audit to look at this area before the end of 2016/17 in order to explore further opportunities for service improvement and efficiency.
- i) That local performance indicators for the enforcement service were set and were reported quarterly to the Planning Committee.

- j) That Members were provided with a suite of reports on planning enforcement cases on a monthly basis, and were reported to Planning Committee quarterly.
- k) That the Planning Committee considers the level of delegation that exists in relation to enforcement activity.
- l) Officers investigate the possibility of finding a way of updating residents and town/parish councils in relation to complaints regarding enforcement and report back to this Committee within 4 months.

(Proposed by Cllr Mrs J Roach and seconded by Cllr F J Rosamond)

Note: - Report previously circulated and attached to Minutes.

10 **REVIEW OF PLANNING COMMITTEE PROCEDURES 1.30.35**

The Committee had before it a report * from the Head of Planning and Regeneration regarding Planning Committee Procedures, which had been considered by the Planning Committee on 9th March 2016.

The report had been undertaken to review Planning Committee procedures in light of issues that had arisen and following visits to other Local Planning Authorities undertaken in 2012/13. The Planning Committee had considered the report and made a number of recommendations to the Standards Committee.

Cllr Mrs Roach had requested that the report be reviewed by the Scrutiny Committee after a number of concerns had been raised and put forward for inclusion in the procedures. She considered that these issues had not been addressed in the report.

The Head of Planning and Regeneration explained that these matters had been discussed at the Planning Committee but that the Committee had resolved not to include them.

Cllr Mrs Roach raised the following:

- The validation of information provided by applicants in the application process, in particular business cases;
- Photographs of application sites being seen for the first time at Committee and not being made publically available in advance of the meeting for supporters or objectors to view;
- A recommendation that Ward Members be restricted to 5 minutes speaking at Committee meetings.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Applications for agricultural worker dwellings needed to demonstrate that the business was financially sound and be able to demonstrate the need for someone to live on site;

- The potential to request the submission of annual accounts;
- Members should request further information if they had concerns;
- The Planning Committee needed to feel able to challenge;
- The possibility of a guidance note to identify what information could be requested;
- The need for an even handed approach.

It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Planning Committee give further consideration to:

- a) The length of time that a Ward Member was allowed to speak to an application;
- b) That photographs be posted on the website, Public Access, in advance of the meeting;
- c) The process for examining business cases for applications be reviewed to give reassurance of the validity of the information with the possibility of sending for external examination.

(Proposed by Cllr Mrs J Roach and seconded by Cllr F J Rosamond)

Note: - Report previously circulated and attached to Minutes.

11 **5 YEAR LAND SUPPLY 2.08.14**

The Committee had before it and **NOTED** a report * from the Head of Planning and Regeneration in response the Committee's request for a report on the Council's 5 year housing land supply.

The Officer explained that the report showed that the authority had failed to achieve its 5 year land supply, despite taking action to bring forward new sites earmarked in the yet to be published in the Local Plan. The intention was to find out why this had happened and what remedial action could be taken as soon as possible to stop aggressive development until the Local Plan was published.

The Officer explained that it was the responsibility of the authority to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide five years' worth of housing against their housing requirements with an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land. Where there had been a record of persistent under delivery of housing, local planning authorities should increase the buffer to 20% to provide a realistic prospect of achieving the planned supply and to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.

She further explained that the Cabinet had considered a report on five year housing land supply at the meeting of 7th August 2015. This report assessed deliverable housing land supply requirements at that time as being met, but recommended emerging local plan allocations and one contingency site at Pedlars Pool, Crediton

be brought forward for development from later in the plan period in order to add to the supply by accounting for 151 dwelling completions over the next 5 years.

On 11th April 2016, an appeal was allowed for outline planning permission for 60 houses on approximately 3.5 hectares of agricultural land outside the defined settlement boundary of the Uffculme which was not allocated for development. The main issue in determination of the appeal was whether, having regard to the development plan, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the housing land supply of the Council and the scale and location of the development, the appeal scheme would constitute a sustainable form of development.

The Inspector had summarised that Mid Devon had a deliverable housing land supply of approximately 4 - 4.5 years as compared with a requirement for 5 years, average annual housing completion rates (356) had under-delivered against targets, there had been a persistent under delivery of housing and a buffer of 20% should be applied.

This authority had only within the last year or so started to receive serious challenge by developers and site promoters over 5 year housing land supply. This was thought to be unique within the majority of Devon and in part due to the speed with which the Council had adopted local plans, including that currently adopted and had therefore been able to demonstrate a robust supply of deliverable housing sites that met requirements.

The Officer explained that one of the ways that a local planning authority could seek to maintain a supply of deliverable sites was through granting planning permission. The number of planning permissions in the District was currently standing at its highest figure since 2002/03 and there were 1427 dwellings with planning permission. Whilst strategic sites had been slower to come forward than expected, this had been offset by the higher number of planning permissions granted overall. Despite this, the average annual housing completion rate of 356 did not meet targets. This lower rate of housing completion was to a large extent a result of factors outside the control of the Council such as the economy, the local housing market, the availability of mortgage funding and the commercial decisions by particularly national housebuilders over permission implementation and build out rates.

The officer concluded that until the Council could demonstrate a 5 year land supply (with 20% buffer) there would be vulnerability to housing applications coming forward on sites that had not been planned for development.

Ways to mitigate this could be advancing the Local Plan Review to adoption, to bring forward further sites for housing development, to bring forward contingency sites, to continue efforts to deliver allocated sites, to enter into pre-application discussions on land not planned for housing to date and to update the 5 year supply figures by completing the 2015/16 monitoring year assessment as soon as possible.

The Head of Planning and Regeneration informed the Committee that the Planning Service could take a proactive approach and look to work with developers and site promoters or take a reflective approach and sit back and see what sites came forward. She asked for Members views on this. It was **AGREED** that the Planning Service should be proactive in their approach.

Discussion took place regarding:

- Concerns that speculative development could take place;
- The number of properties planned for Pedlarspool;
- The need for Gypsy and Traveller sites;
- The need to adopt the revised Local Plan.

Note: - Report previously circulated and attached to Minutes.

12 **PERFORMANCE AND RISK 2.32.50**

The Committee had before it and **NOTED** a report * from the Head of Communities and Governance providing Members with an update on performance against the Corporate Plan and local service targets for 2015-16 as well as providing an update on the key business risks.

The Head of Communities and Governance provided a correction to the report regarding sickness. Work days lost to sickness should have read 3329 which was split into 2041 long term sickness and 1288 short term sickness. Long term sickness was anything over 15 days.

Discussion took place regarding the cost effectiveness of food waste collections and the Chief Executive confirmed that collection methods would be kept under review.

Note: - Report previously circulated and attached to Minutes.

13 **REVIEWING THE COSTS OF EFFICIENCIES 2.37.39**

The Committee had before it a report * from the Reviewing the Cost of Efficiencies Working Group containing recommendations.

It was **RECOMMENDED** to Cabinet that:

- a) Areas of land for sale should be promoted by Members at Parish Council Meetings.
- b) A pricing structure for services that could be sold, for example to town and parish councils, local charities and small businesses be put together and actively promoted.
- c) Assets such as the Town Halls (Tiverton and Crediton) to be used to maximise income, either by sale, rent or by joint development as they are assets that could generate income.
- d) Conditions of service to be reviewed to consider amending terms and conditions regarding sickness benefits for new employees.
- e) Management information to show long and short term sickness figures.

- f) That staff be incentivised to put forward business ideas and suggestions that could be taken forward to generate income and that some form of reward scheme be put in place.
- g) That the authority becomes less risk adverse and encourage new ventures.
- h) That the Scrutiny Committee undertake a review on the effect of price rises on the Leisure Service, based on appendix 1 of the report.

(Proposed by Cllr Mrs J Roach and seconded by Cllr F J Rosamond)

Note: - Report previously circulated and attached to Minutes.

14 **START TIME OF MEETINGS**

It was **AGREED** to hold Scrutiny Committee meetings at 2.15pm for the remainder of the municipal year.

15 **IDENTIFICATION OF ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

Devolution
Safeguarding

(The meeting ended at 4.50 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Scrutiny Committee
18 July 2016

Agenda item

Leader's annual report to Scrutiny 2016

Key points across the Council's service areas for the last 12 months are highlighted below.

Audit and Governance

- Clean bill of health from the external auditors on the internal control environment – which includes the completion of the annual internal audit work programme and the Annual Governance Statement.
- New Corporate Plan adopted – involving working with officers and members and public consultation.

Benefits

- Performance maintained despite introduction of various Welfare Reforms including Universal Credit.
- Benefit processing times, HB subsidy expenditure recovery rate and recovery of overpayments in top percentile nationally.
- Reallocation of duties successfully managed following loss of 3 experienced staff.
- Third year of partnership with 'WiserMoney' to deliver MDDC Local Welfare Assistance Scheme. Over 1600 requests for help and assistance to March 2016; £775K of debt managed or reviewed and total financial gain £278k .
- Universal Credit Delivery partnership commenced with Jobcentre Plus to assist customers who require support with online applications and budgeting.
- Consultation and on proposed changes to Council Tax reduction scheme for 2017/18 commenced.

Customer Services and Revenues

- Helped customers with enquiries and purchases relating to changes in recycling and the implementation of the new chargeable garden waste scheme. We sold 6,540 in 2015-16.
- Increased council tax collection rate by 0.3% to 98.1% (97.6% last year) and collected £1.6m more in council tax over last year.

- Business Rates collection also increased by 0.01% to 99.1%, (99% last year).
- Improved the content and navigation of our website, working closely with ICT and resulting in moving from 1star to 3star SOCITM rating.
- Increased the number of items of post that were outsourced helping to reduce our post and printing costs.
- Reviewed Freedom of Information (FOI) administration, moving this to the customer service team.
- Increased communication using social media.
- Supported customers through changes in front line service delivery in Crediton resulting in minimal disruption to customers.

Economic and Community Development

- Working in partnership with Exeter, East Devon and Teignbridge on economic development projects including development of a joint Economic Development and Inward Investment Strategy and procurement of a joint business support service (BIP).
- Successful joint application with other Devon Districts to the Growth Hub Programme amounting to £1.8 million for business support services in the county.
- Helping small businesses access LEADER funding – with £55,000 being drawn down to support small businesses in the district.
- Supporting successful community events in our three market towns and improving the local offer – Cullompton Spring & Autumn Festivals, Crediton Festival 2015, Crediton St. Boniface Feast Day Celebration, Crediton Food Festival.
- Supporting the re-establishment of Crediton Chamber of Commerce.
- Organising a job fair to support Broadoak employees, following its unexpected closure.
- Organising monthly Electric Nights Streetfood events throughout the summer months and winning the NABMA award for Best Small Food Market.
- Facilitating a Blundell's School Activity Day with MDDC (looking at branding the Town Centre, street cleaning – particularly graffiti – and running a Teenage Market).
- Completion of Tiverton Coach Park.

- Tiverton Shopfront Facelift Scheme has enabled improvements to 6 shopfronts.
- Worked with various parties in Tiverton Town Centre on projects such as new “This is Tiverton” branding, strong focus on shoplifting and building police relationships and facilitating the creation of Tiverton Business Forum
- High Street Innovation Projects amounting to £43,308 – Crediton Flag Project, Crediton Food Festival – purchase pop up market stalls, Crediton Town Square Canopy Design Competition and consultation project, Town entrance signage design project, Bampton Business Directory, Cullompton Festival development and Tivvy Bumper Town Trail project. Provided support to groups delivering projects.
- Supporting successful applications for community projects: Bampton Library and Resource Centre project - £150,000 Power to Change grant award; & assistance with a variety of successful small grant awards < £10,000 (i.e. Journey Counselling, Beauty Unseen, Tiverton Adventure Play, Upstream Healthy Living Centre).
- Co-ordinating Mid Devon Teams for Devon Youth Games; Mid Devon came 4th overall with 2nd place for Fair Play.

Finance

- Last year the general Fund was overspent by £169k and our General Fund reserve fell to £2.2m maintaining our General Fund reserve at 25% of our net General Fund balance.
- Pressure to reduce our base budget remains and having made substantial cuts for a number of years we are expecting to have to cut at least another £1m in the next 3 years.
- Income from New Homes Bonus is being used to support our capital programme and some non-recurring projects rather than using it to prop up the revenue account (as some councils are now resorting to).
- Our financial statements were prepared by 31 May for the first time and a clean audit report is expected at a special meeting of the Audit Committee on 15 July, also the earliest ever for Mid Devon.
- The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) secured an underspend of £916k with the balance transferred to reserves for future capital works on our council houses.
- The HRA remains under pressure by the 1% rent cut last year and for the future four years, which will gradually impact on our reserves and threatens the future viability of the service were it to remain in place after four years.

- 100% of our Council housing stock has retained the Decent Homes standard.
- The Authority has continued with its council house building programme attempting to negate the loss of continuing right to buy sales which amounted to 19 last year.
- In a measure designed to improve our investment returns, an additional £1.5m was invested in the CCLA commercial property fund increasing our investment to £4m.

Housing and Property Services

- Performance across all areas of the service continues to match the best in the country in many areas, e.g. rent arrears, void turnaround times, gas safety and servicing
- 100% compliance with the Government's Decent Home standard for the Councils housing stock
- Completed a review of Band E applicants on the Devon Home Choice which successfully reduced the numbers on our housing waiting list.
- Completed building 14 new council homes at St Andrews Street, Tiverton and started work on 30 houses at Palmerston Park and Birchen Lane, Tiverton; other schemes are being planned. The 6 new homes previously provided at Fir Close, Willand came runner-up in the Devon's Best Rural Development Competition.
- No rise in arrears following the change in the way housing benefit is paid.
- We continue to negotiate for more affordable housing where this is viable.
- An active Tenants Together Group has scrutinised various aspects of the Housing service and made recommendations for improvements which have been adopted by the service.
- There are numerous financial challenges ahead for the Housing Service following the implementation of the 1% rent reduction scheme which will see a cumulative reduction of rental income of £4-5 million over the next 4 years. Additional pressure on the service will come from the roll out of Universal Credit, Pay to Stay and disposal of High Value Voids.
- The pressure to reduce our expenditure on General Fund activities remains and we have carried out consultation with Parishes and Town Councils on Grass Cutting, Public Conveniences and Play Areas to take over or provide financial assistance of the provision.

- We continue to make best use of our assets, including negotiations with Premier Inn and the Town Hall, Tiverton, reduction in revenue costs and increase in capital receipts.

Human Resources and Learning & Development

- New L&D manager in post after resignation of both members of the team in L&D.
- Review of appraisal system – ongoing.
- Successful recruitment of new Chief Executive.
- Roll out of a Management Development Programme for all “people” managers in the Council.
- Continued success with recruitment of apprentices – current total across the Council is 16.
- A much more robust Health and Safety service.
- Key reorganisations in areas such as Leisure and consultation in respect of Waste and Recycling.
- Continued success in coaching and mentoring.

ICT

- Improved our SOCITM web rating from 1* to 3* and are in the top quartile for accessibility within Devon.
- Hosted parish websites made available for those parishes that wanted them.
- Implementing new DMS system for Building Control, Public Health and Planning – access to associated documents for Planning should be improved via Public Access facility.
- Automating download on electronic planning applications from the Planning Portal.
- Continuing development of online forms and back-office integration to remove manual intervention.
- New Green Waste ICT system (approx. 8000 permits process so far) and currently writing annual renewal facilities with customer reminders, online renewal forms and auto-renew option.

- Work has commenced on the Building Control Partnership system provision – scheduled for go-live with full mobile facilities for officers April 2017.
- Successful implementation with Land Charges on new Con29 legislation and procedures.

Leisure

- Working with external partners, funding secured to encourage more health related projects, eg Walking Football now actively run at Lords Meadow Leisure Centre and Culm Valley Sports Centre. Also staff GP referral qualified to improve this service.
- Working with Public Health to ensure opportunities for sport and recreation for members of the public who are less likely to take up sport.
- Actively involved in the successful Devon Rotary Youth Games with several staff managing/training teams. This will lead to enhanced junior sports development across all three sites.
- Reorganisation of the senior team and new duty officer team for all three sites. Business based structure now in place to focus development of all areas.
- Streamlined the pricing structure, making it more competitive and adjusted shift patterns, with emphasis on going forward and growing the business – this is towards the 2020 target of running at no cost to the public.
- Commenced business case for the viability of an extension to Exe Valley's fitness facilities including study of current usage, utilisation of equipment, design for building and car park, increased membership.
- Improved marketing of Leisure, including more use of email and text to Zest members to retain membership.
- Continuation of arrangements with café tenants at EVLC and LMLC.

Member Services and Monitoring Officer

- Supported Members with the move to using iPads.
- Successful completion of new Members induction programme following the election and continuing training and development of Councillors.
- Training for Town and Parish Councils on Standards Regime.
- New Constitution.

Planning

- Local Plan prepared and been out to consultation. Further evidence has been commissioned (junction 28 Cullompton) to inform the plan.
- Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension: Design guide adopted. First stage of traffic calming and environmental enhancement of Blundell's Road due to start shortly. Area B feasibility study undertaken to inform the masterplanning of this area. Appointment of an externally funded project officer.
- North West Cullompton Urban Extension: Masterplan supplementary planning document adopted to guide development. The first planning applications are expected later this year.
- Agreement to enter into a memorandum of understanding with other 'Greater Exeter' councils (East Devon, Teignbridge and Exeter City) to explore opportunities for joint working. Cabinet has since considered the joint preparation of a strategic plan between these councils and is recommending this to Council together with the establishment of a joint budget for this work. Detail on the scope, timescale, terms of reference, governance and staffing of this joint plan is still to be established.
- Agreed to form a joint committee with North Devon Council over the Building Control function to enable joint working.
- Funding gained together with other 'Greater Exeter' councils to develop of brownfield land register.
- Starter homes bid made to the Homes and Communities Agency.
- National performance targets for planning met.
- Supplementary planning documents adopted: landscape implications of solar PV proposals, refuse storage for new residential properties.
- 5 conservation area appraisals and management plans adopted (Thorverton, Morchard Bishop, Newton St Cyres, Cheriton Fitzpaine, Silverton).

Public Health

- New Public Health Officer role in place and working closely with stakeholders and the CWB PDG to develop a district-wide Public Health Strategy.

- Partnership working with Leisure services to attract new customers in key vulnerable groups to targeted physical activities with social inclusion spin-offs- example project is the Walking Football for the over-50's project successfully launched at CVLC and LMLC and due to be rolled out at EVLC later in 2016.
- Leading two Devon-wide air quality initiatives - ECO-Stars (aimed at polluting commercial vehicles) and Personal Exposure Monitoring (of school children)
- Arranged for health checks and advice from Devon Doctors for our front-line manual workforce in Street Scene and Grounds Maintenance.
- Wide number of digital transformation projects under-way across the service supported by dedicated Systems Administration role.

Public Health – Environmental Health

- Significant improvement in food inspection performance metrics/new food-specialist EHO appointed.
- Continued high performance for Mid Devon premises that have a food hygiene 'Score on Door' – grown to 511 premises in the scheme with 488 (95%) rated 'good' or 'very good'.
- Major illegal meat prosecution secured at Crown Court – convictions for 16 offences of Food Hygiene Regulations secured (with on-going formal proceeds of crime proceedings).
- Leading on joint-working with Planning and Environment Agency regarding community-wide nuisance issues arising from anaerobic digestion activities.

Public Health – Private Sector Housing

- New, highly experienced Lead Officer in place and early work underway reviewing Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) processes and renewal policy/actions.
- Reformed partnership working with Exeter City Council to buy-in part-time dedicated Empty Homes Officer/support delivery of Corporate Plan objectives in this area.
- Review of the Wessex Home Improvement Loans scheme underway including assessment of proposed changes being trialled by another Consortium member.

Public Health – Licensing

- External audit review completed and actions implemented including targeted work around enforcement/new risk based enforcement plan.
- Strong working relationship with the Police service embedded and strengthened during the year.

- Successful joint-agency working with Trading Standards targeting under-age alcohol sales at higher risk premises.
- Strong performance metrics for statutory targets for managing both Temporary Event Notices and Full Premises applications.

Waste and Recycling

- Significant increase in recycling since the introduction of the new scheme, which in turn has seen 23% reduction in the amount of waste going to landfill.
- 8000 households have now taken up the charged-for garden waste collection service. This is currently on target to meet overall target of 10,000 households by the end of the first year of operation.
- Move to new waste and recycling facility at Hitchcock's Business Park has gone well (from 13 June) and very little disruption to service has occurred.
- Thanks to the team who have worked hard to bring in all these changes.
- Procedures for collecting clinical waste have been formalised.
- Enforcement policy introduced to give officers more powers to insist that householders recycle rather than send recyclable waste to landfill.
- Increased charges in the Council's car parks has seen increased income but some fall in usage based on limited first data. Discussions with town and parish councils in relation to amenity car parks, for which the council receives no income, continue.

Clive Eginton, Leader of the Council
July 2016

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SCRUTINY

23 May 2016

REPORT OF THE REVIEWING THE COSTS OF ECONOMY WORKING GROUP

Responsible Officer **Liz Reeves, Head of Customer Services**

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- **Areas of land for sale should be promoted by Members at Parish Council Meetings.**
- **A pricing structure for services that could be sold, for example to town and parish councils, local charities and small businesses be put together and actively promoted.**
- **Assets such as the Town Halls (Tiverton and Crediton) to be used to maximise income, either by sale, rent or by joint development as they are assets that could generate income.**
- **Conditions of service to be reviewed to consider amending terms and conditions regarding sickness benefits for new employees.**
- **Management information to show long and short term sickness figures.**
- **That staff be incentivised to put forward business ideas and suggestions that could be taken forward to generate income and that some form of reward scheme be put in place.**
- **That the authority becomes less risk adverse and encourage new ventures.**
- **That Scrutiny undertake a review on the effect of price rises on the Leisure Service, based on appendix 1.**

1 Introduction

At a meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held on 13 July 2015 it was agreed that a Working Group be set up following discussion regarding performance indicators, sickness levels, areas of work that had not been completed despite being agreed by Councillors and the impact of redundancies. Members considered that these pressures could put the Council at risk. It was agreed that the group needed to look at the past, present, future of cuts and their impact.

2 The problem

At a meeting of the Group the Head of Finance gave an overview of the situation since austerity measures began. He explained that during that period the formula grant had dropped from £6.2m to £3.7m, a reduction of 40%. Despite this the authority was still providing 'business as usual'. If inflation was added to this the savings were even greater.

Large savings had been made from a range of measures including the Enesco Project off-setting utility spend, solar panels on the roofs of housing had generated profit, cuts had been made to grants, reduced management team, savings in grounds maintenance and restructures in Finance and Legal Services.

3 The Issues

At the first meeting of the Group the following areas were identified as being of concern:

Asset Management

Staff sickness

Partnership Working

Income Generation and Innovation

3.1 Asset Management

The Property Services Manager was asked to report to the Group and he outlined the assets of the authority, explaining that it was responsible for £14m of assets.

He presented the draft asset plan which set out how the authority would manage land and properties. This was reviewed by CSAG (Capital Strategy Asset Group) which was a group of Members and Officers.

He stressed the importance of property assets meeting the needs of the Corporate Plan and that it was essential to ensure that adequate business facilities were provided.

As an example of work being carried out the officer gave information regarding the public conveniences at Lowman Green. These were in the process of being converted into a restaurant and would be leased for 10 years. Another example was a commercial building in Birchen Lane where planning consent had been obtained for conversion into affordable flats. Other assets were being looked at with regard to providing an income.

The importance of maintaining and improving properties as an asset was discussed, for example the leisure centres which needed to be well maintained and up to date in order to generate income.

The Enesco Project had generated an income stream and Property Services continue to keep up with cost saving innovations such as LED lighting.

The officer listed the variety of properties owned by the authority such as housing, Market Walk, parks and open spaces, depots and car parks. He explained that information regarding all assets was stored on a database which was maintained by Local Land Charges and Estates.

Plans were also needed for any assets that were or could become a liability – The officer explained that in the short term the depots for waste and recycling were functional and practical but in the longer term efficiencies could be found if the depots were combined on one site. Grounds Maintenance and Housing Services could share a site if a large enough one was found but their current depots did not have a large value and the efficiencies saved would not be significant.

Odd bits of land – the group discussed various plots of land around the District which have no use to the authority and could be sold on to neighbouring householders. It was agreed

that Members should actively promote this at Parish Council Meetings to encourage people to approach the council with regard to purchase.

It was **AGREED** that areas of land for sale should be promoted by Members at Parish Council Meetings and that assets such as the Town Hall (Tiverton and Crediton) needed to be used to generate money, if there was a value should be sold or jointly developed as they were assets that could generate income. This needed to be fair across the district.

3.2 Staff Sickness

The Head of Human Resources was asked to update the Scrutiny Committee regarding staff sickness. This was an agenda item for the Committee on 22 February 2016.

It was **AGREED** that sickness reporting within the authority did not provide enough detail. Short term and long term sickness needed to be separated. Current terms and conditions provided sick pay from day one. It was proposed that terms and conditions should not be changed for existing staff but that contracts could be changed for new staff.

3.3 Partnership Working

Cllr Rosamond had investigated a funding stream through the LGA where expertise could be drawn in to look at income generation. Funding for 2015/16 had already been used as part of the project for sharing IT with North Devon. Further funding had become available and the CE was making an application regarding Planning.

3.4 Income Generation and Innovation

Cllr Binks had visited the leisure centres as a Zest member. She suggested that the car parks were an under-utilised facility that could generate an income. It was **RECOMMENDED** that the Scrutiny Committee investigate the potential charging for car parking at leisure Centres. At a Scrutiny Meeting on 21 March the CE confirmed that officers would take this into consideration.

Leisure Services

Cllr Binks made several comments regarding income generation for the Leisure Service which are at appendix 1.

3.5 Business Forum

Cllr R Evans had, at the request of the Group, attended a meeting of the Tiverton Business Forum. Cllr Evans had given the message that the Council was looking to work in partnership with other companies and that it had a wealth of knowledge to share in areas such as Health and Safety and Human Resources as well as an established Property Maintenance team and Grounds Maintenance Unit. Nothing was forthcoming from this meeting but Cllr Evans agreed to discuss it with the cabinet Member for Planning and Regeneration to see if there was a way forward.

3.6 Officer Suggestions

The Head of Customer Services informed the Group that she had mentioned this at Management Team and that it had been agreed that this matter would be discussed at Senior Officers Forum. It was generally agreed that it would be beneficial to reward staff for

ideas that they put forward and that officers should be encouraged to think in a 'can do' manner rather than 'can't'.

Suggested questions to staff were:

- Are we working as efficiently as we can?
- Can we increase income?
- What services can we reduce?

It was **AGREED** that a recommendation to the Scrutiny Committee be that staff be incentivised to put forward ideas and suggestions for business ideas that could be taken forward to generate income, that the authority become less risk adverse and that some form of reward scheme be put in place.

3.7 Staff Working from Home

Economies that could be made if staff worked from home were discussed. Officers responded that this could free up office space, could be more productive and save on travel time but the costs of providing equipment, if a feature of their job could impact on house insurance. Discussion took place regarding potential problems with home working including communication, staff feeling left out and a reduction shared knowledge.

4 The View of the Customer

Members agreed that there was a need to benchmark services to find out how they were being received. The Membership of the Council were asked to survey their local Parish Councils to find out if any changes had been noted. The following questions were asked?

Since austerity began the formula grant paid to this Authority from Central Government has reduced by 40%. The authority has endeavoured to continue with 'business as usual' wherever possible but inevitably cuts have had to be made.

Could you please let us know;

- How you feel about the current level of services provided by Mid Devon District Council:
- If you have noticed a reduction in the services provided in recent years; and if so, please provide details and the impact this has had. Please give an example:
- What services you consider to be poor;
- What services provided are good.

The survey flagged the following as areas of concern:

- Electronic Planning (paperless)
- Planning Enforcement
- Communication.

There was general praise for the waste and recycling service.

An email was sent to all parishes, thanking those that had responded to the survey and informing them that the results showed concerns in the above areas. Parishes were informed that the Working Group would be raising these concerns with the appropriate services.

5 Conclusion

As a result of these meetings and presentations from officers the recommendations on page 1 have been put forward.

The Working Group would like to thank the officers who helped with this for their time and 'open' comments.

APPENDIX 1

Cllr Binks made the following comments:

- When members of Community Well Being PDG voted recently for a 30% reduction in discount to Zest 60+ in 2016, were they aware this would mean an immediate increase from £200 -£240 pa to £302pa for Zest membership which offers access only between 9am-5pm?
- This 50% increase was made with little advance warning to users and without consulting the Lords Meadow Leisure Centre Users' Panel. Why?
- The increase in State pensions during this time has been £4 PW maximum and many users need to budget expenditure on a weekly basis and cannot afford to pay in advance.
- Most customers on MTB (Means Tested Benefits) use the Pay as you go (PAYG) charges for the gym and these prices have risen from £2.50 per session to £4.80 per session - nearly twice as much - resulting in some users having to cut back from two weekly visits to one single visit.
- The impact of this increased charge could have been softened by extending the time frame to 8am-6pm for use of the Centre.
- Are members aware that present membership charges include unwanted activities that many users do not use, such as dry side activities, court use and sauna, yet they do not have option to choose just gym and swimming or yoga and swimming?
- We need a simpler membership structure that does not include unwanted activities which are 'junked in' to boost its offering.
- The opportunity to renew at current prices was not offered to all existing Zest members, which is partial and unfair.
- Are members aware of the financial benefits to the Centre of annual payments made up front or by 12 monthly direct debit instalments, even though average annual usage is about eleven months? Do we have figures monitoring the actual attendance over 12 month period?
- Are members aware of the public health benefits of the Leisure Centre in helping an ageing population maintain fitness levels through active lives and social relationships? Many of them meet up socially in the coffee shop after class and spend money which keeps this facility going throughout the day for all users.
- Are they aware that between 9am - 4pm the centre is used mainly by less affluent groups such as parents with small children under 5, shift workers, unemployed, GP referrals and retirees of 60+ who keep it ticking over?
- Are members aware that no discount is given during the 2 week Christmas/New Year closure period and during the Easter break?
- Are members aware that all users of Monday classes are affected adversely because they are cancelled on 3 Bank Holiday Mondays pa without compensation to Zest 60+ users (early May, spring and summer)?
- Are members aware that inadequate staff cover for sickness and planned holidays or courses means that lessons are cancelled from time to time, without compensation being offered - often without enough notice to save a wasted journey? (Examples can be given.)

Recommendations

- Monitor Trends and usage by Groups: We need careful monitoring of trends in visits to gym, classes and pool by all age groups, including young people, so as to identify gaps to fill and target groups through regular emailing of special offers and events.
- Value for Money: We need to improve our service offering to give better value, if charges are to be increased.
- Simplify Structure: We need to simplify the structure of membership so people only pay for classes they want to use.
- User Panels: We need to respond to User Panels through regular meetings with their representatives.
- Better Collaboration: We need to increase our offering of flat rate and subsidised activities and classes by increased collaboration with groups like Active Devon, Drink Wisely, Age

Well et al, who are keen to support certain target groups like young parents, 60+ and health referrals.

- Public Health: We need to work with local GP practices and Health Centres to facilitate the use of 'on prescription' classes to Customers on MTB with health issues.
- Better Customer Experience: We need to offer better customer service through cleaner changing rooms, toilets and showers: answering telephone calls: responding to online enquiries: being able to cancel classes online as well as booking them: better information about special offers, events such as Active Devon support.
- Monitor use by Means Tested Benefits users: We need to re-examine the prices of PAYG activities to everyone on Means Tested Benefits. A price increase rise from £2.50 to £4.80 per gym session to customers on discretionary MTB rates is not fair and will discourage use and lead to lower fitness levels in this group.
- Auto Renewal: For everyone who can afford to pay up front or pay by direct debit, we need to eliminate income lost by 'void' months through agreed automatic renewal of membership. Failing that, to automatically generate reminders to customers to renew membership by email, letter or personal contact - even offering a free swim or gym pass for a friend as an incentive. I have never been contacted to renew my membership in the last 15 years and so I often leave it for a couple of months - as a result, the centre loses an income stream and a customer for a short while. It all adds up to a need for better customer care and customer engagement.

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CABINET

DATE 18TH JULY 2016

Heart of the South West Formal Devolution Bid

Cabinet Member: Cllr Clive Eginton, Leader
Responsible Officer: Stephen Walford, Chief Executive

REASON FOR REPORT:

To seek agreement on the principle of a Combined Authority for the Heart of the South West, as set out in the Prospectus for Productivity, as the basis for negotiation with Government towards a Devolution Deal for the area.

RECOMMENDATION TO CABINET:

- 1. That the Cabinet endorse the current approach to devolution and agree to sign up to the principle of creating a Combined Authority for the Heart of the South West, as set out in the Prospectus for Productivity, as the basis for negotiation with Government towards a Devolution Deal for the area;**
- 2. That the Cabinet note that giving this endorsement does not commit the Council to entering into a Devolution Deal or becoming a member of a Heart of the South West Combined Authority. This would be subject to future debate and agreement by the Council and subject to negotiations with Government.**

Relationship to Corporate Plan: Devolution of powers, responsibility and funding will allow future decisions to be taken closer to the people of Mid Devon and with greater reference to Mid Devon's needs, priorities and aspirations.

Financial Implications: None at this stage (a future report will be prepared once the outcome of negotiations with government is known).

Legal Implications: None at this stage (a future report will be prepared once the outcome of negotiations with government is known).

Risk Assessment: Low; a future report will be prepared once the outcome of negotiations with government is known.

1. Summary

Devolution for the Heart of the South West (HotSW) is being led by the Leaders of Somerset and Devon County Councils, all Somerset and Devon Districts, Torbay Council, Plymouth City Council, Dartmoor and Exmoor National Parks, the Local Enterprise Partnership and the three Clinical Commissioning Groups. The group has become an informal partnership working towards a Devolution Deal with Government to secure greater powers, and control and to have a stronger voice with Government.

Our shared Devolution Statement of Intent was submitted to Government on 4 September 2015, in response to announcements in the July Budget and the deadline set by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Since September 2015, the partnership has strengthened and evolved, and jointly developed the HotSW Prospectus for Prosperity (Appendix 1). The Prospectus builds on the three basic ambitions: - to raise productivity levels; improve health, care and wellbeing; and improve connectivity and resilience. A number of thematic groups were established to develop the detail for the proposition.

- Health, social care and wellbeing
- Skills and employment
- Business support
- Infrastructure, resilience and connectivity
- Housing and planning
- Governance

Our Prospectus for Prosperity was submitted to Government at the end of February 2016. Since then the Partnership has pressed the Secretary of State to enter into discussion with its negotiation team to secure a Devolution Deal for the Heart of the South West area. Following an invitation from the Secretary of State, on the 25th May 2016, leaders from the upper tier authorities met with Greg Clarke, the Secretary of State for the Department of Communities and Local Government, to seek his views on our next steps forward.

Following that meeting, he invited us to come forward with a proposal and the following points were clarified:

- **Geography** – the Devon and Somerset area is agreed as the appropriate scale. Our proposal will need clearly demonstrate why this is the right geography for the Devolution agreement and all councils and MPs must support the proposal.
- **Combined Authority** – the Partnership will move forward into the negotiation process based on a Combined Authority model. The Mayoral issue may be considered at a later stage, within the timeline agreed by our Partnership. A Mayor will not be imposed or be a pre-condition of any initial deal.
- **Extent of the Deal** – areas that have agreed to have a Mayor will get more powers than a non-Mayoral Combined Authority. However, the negotiation process will be an opportunity to push the limits of this initial Deal, and the process should be viewed as being incremental
- **Timeline** – we will still work towards an Autumn Statement timeline for the announcement of an initial Deal
- **Growth Deal 3** – the LEP will not be penalised in Growth Deal 3 negotiations just because the area has decided to pursue a Devolution Deal based on a Combined Authority without a Mayor. The decision for allocation will be based purely on the quality of the Growth Deal bid.

The Secretary of State went on to advise that if the Partnership, backed by each Council and MPs, would sign up to the principle of creating a Combined Authority by the end of July 2016, he would arrange for HM Treasury to open up negotiations towards a Devolution Deal.

This report seeks approval to sign up '*in principle*' to the pursuit of a Devolution Deal and the creation of a Combined Authority for the Heart of the South West sub-region to administer the powers and funding devolved through the Deal. An '*in principle*' agreement from all of the local authorities, partners and MPs involved in the Heart of the South West devolution process will open up negotiations with HM Treasury to work towards a Deal.

Any final Devolution Deal with Government will be subject to further approval / ratification by all partners individually. A Heads of Terms document will be used as a negotiating tool to draw down additional powers and funding to provide a significant boost to the Heart of the South West economy by creating new jobs, accelerating the delivery of new homes, and raising skills levels.

It should be noted that there is no intention for a new Combined Authority to take existing powers or funding from local authorities, or existing City Deal governance structures, without the explicit agreement of those constituent local authorities. Further detailed work will be undertaken to identify the decision making powers and the constitution of the Combined Authority, and all partners will be fully involved and consulted on these arrangements as they develop over the coming months.

2. Reasons for Recommendations

The Council has an opportunity to benefit from devolution across a wide range of topics and services. At its core, the prospect of devolving decision-making from central government to local areas means that there is the opportunity to tailor decisions to the needs of that local area and move away from the one-size-fits-all approach that is the inevitable result of centralised decisions and commissioning.

Devolution has clear links to the council's corporate plan in terms of working in partnership with other bodies including neighbouring LAs and the Local Enterprise Partnership to deliver economic growth, infrastructure and housing. There is also a clear synergy between our priority to enable community delivery, and the ability to ensure decision-making is taking place at a scale that is close to the community – which is where devolution has the potential to genuinely ensure decision-making reflects local ambition, aspiration and need.

With skills and employment being one of the key themes of the HotSW productivity programme, this also reflects the concerns that many members, through the scrutiny committee and beyond, have expressed recently around the gap between education and employment.

These recommendations seek to gain authority to pursue solutions that help the Council maximise the opportunities of devolution. They do not commit the Council to a formal Devolution Deal, only to the principle of a Combined Authority in order to open up negotiations with Government.

At this stage of the process the Council is not required to take decisions on the detail of future service provision but rather to be actively aware and involved in discussions.

3. Alternative options considered and rejected

1. To decline the Secretary of State's offer and continue at our own pace.
Reason for rejection: As far as we are aware we may be the first two tier area to be given the opportunity to enter into negotiation with Government for a Devolution Deal

without committing to a directly elected Mayor (except for Cornwall which has a different arrangement). This is a prime opportunity to test Government and push as far as we can for powers to be devolved to the HotSW. The offer is likely to be time-limited due to Government schedules and announcements.

2. To make separate approaches to Government, rather than as a Heart of the South West partnership.

Reason for rejection: Since the submission of the Statement of Intent in September 2015, the 17 local authorities, 2 National Parks, the HotSW Local Enterprise Partnership and the 3 Clinical Commissioning Groups have worked very effectively together to create a strong and credible Prospectus that has been acknowledged by the Secretary of State. We should remain united moving forward into negotiations to have a stronger voice, and secure a better Deal.

4. Links to Priorities and Impact on Service Plans

Devolution potentially covers a wide range of services and plans. The detail of these will develop as formal proposals are developed locally and through negotiation with Government, and when the final Devolution Deal is put into place.

5. Communication

A briefing session for all members is being arranged in coordination between MDDC Member Services and the Devolution Programme Management Office (PMO). This will be run in a similar way at all LAs across the HotSW area to ensure that all members have the opportunity to ask questions as well as hear more from the PMO team and the local Leader and Chief Executive.

The PMO is developing a video piece for Members, explaining its work and next steps and has also developed a Member Development Training Programme that will be delivered in the autumn.

In addition, a briefing note on Combined Authorities has been produced to explain more about what a CA is (and isn't) and what sort of powers the CA could have (see Appendix 3).

Based on advice from other Devolution areas, the Heart of the South West partnership will undertake more widespread public consultation when negotiations are at a more developed stage.

Members are asked to note that

Any final Devolution Deal with Government will be subject to:

- Further approval / ratification by all partners
- Consultation, as appropriate, before delivery of parts of the Deal

6. Financial Implications

Each of the partner Councils' S151 officers will be involved in the development of the draft Deal and the investment framework that would support a Combined Authority. This will allow each partner Council and the Partnership as a whole to understand the financial implications of a Combined Authority and any Devolution Deal.

7. Legal Implications

Each of the Councils' legal teams will be involved in the development of the draft Deal and the structure of a Combined Authority for the Heart of the South West. This will allow each

Council and the Partnership as a whole to understand the legal implications of any Devolution Deal and new Combined Authority body.

8. HR Implications

None at this stage. Implications will be addressed as the Devolution Deal is further developed.

9. Risk Implications

The involvement of technical specialists such as S151 officers and legal advisers in the development of any draft deal and combined authority model will help to understand the risk implications for the Council and the wider partnership. A risk register will be developed to sit alongside the development of the draft deal and the combined authority.

10. Other Implications (including due regard implications)

None at this stage however the whole population of our authority could be affected by a devolution deal. Any final devolution deal with government will be subject to further approval / ratification by all partners, and will require other implications and impacts to be considered at that stage.

11. Next steps

If HM Treasury agree to open up negotiations towards a Devolution Deal for the Heart of the South West, further work will be required as detailed below. The timescales to deliver this work will be extremely tight if the Partnership is to achieve its target of establishing a Combined Authority in May 2018. The Programme Management Office oversees the delivery of the work plan and maintains communications between each partner. Consideration will need to be given to whether the capacity of the PMO will need to be increased to meet these potentially tight timescales.

11.1 Productivity Plan

The HotSW partnership has already committed to develop a Productivity Plan which will guide the powers and resources received in our devolution agreement, together with local contributions. This plan represents a refresh of the LEP's current Strategic Economic Plan (SEP).

Regardless of whether the Government agrees to open up negotiations for a Deal, the development of a Productivity Plan for the Heart of the South West sub-region will be an imperative to describe the long term future growth of the area, in order to provide a better quality of life for our residents. Therefore, work will continue on the development of a sub-regional Productivity Plan irrespective of whether there is an announcement in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement.

The Productivity Plan will focus on each of the six 'golden opportunities' that have been identified in the prospectus - Marine, Nuclear, Aerospace and Advanced Engineering, Data Analytics, Rural Productivity and Health. Sitting beneath each of the 'golden opportunities' will be detailed plans setting out our ambitions for the region and what plans we need to have in place to achieve those ambitions.

11.2 Governance Review

A Governance Review is already underway. This is examining existing structures and developing options for the best governance structure for the Heart of the South West

sub-region. As part of this review, the following key issues will be considered and all partners will be involved in this process:

- The extent of the decision making powers to be vested in the Combined Authority
- What decision making structures or advisory committees (including place-based arrangements) will be required under the Combined Authority—including any joint committee arrangements
- Proposed voting arrangements

12. Engagement with Members and partners

Council Members will be kept informed as work continues, including through:

- Newsletters from the Heart of the South West devolution partnership
- A Member Development Programme to be run across the whole area and
- Member briefing events at each LA

It is possible that one or more partners may choose not to proceed with a formal bid. This would be unfortunate as there is strength in all partners coming on board; however it is possible for a Devolution Deal to go ahead even if one or more local authorities choose to opt out. There is significant discussion underway between partners to produce proposals that are acceptable to all, and this will be fully explored as the bid develops.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Prospectus for Prosperity

Appendix 2: What Devolution will mean for my local authority area

Appendix 3: Briefing Note - What is a Combined Authority?

Background Papers:

Heart of the South West Formal Devolution Bid – Full Council 24th Feb 2016

<https://democracy.middevon.gov.uk/documents/s5013/Dev%20Report.pdf>



Devolution

for the Heart of the South West

A Prospectus for Productivity

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The Heart of the South West



Executive Summary

In September 2015 the Heart of the South West (HotSW) submitted its devolution Statement of Intent to Government. After considerable further work during autumn 2015, the partners - 17 local authorities, two National Parks, the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the three Clinical Commissioning Groups - are now in a position to commence detailed negotiations with Government on a devolution deal.

Government has challenged local leadership teams to treat productivity as 'the challenge of our time'. They have asked us to do that by 'fixing the foundations' of infrastructure, skills, and science through a devolution revolution delivering long-term public and private investment.

Heart of the South West productivity continues to lag behind national productivity and is currently under 80% of the UK average. To redress this we need more, better jobs, a healthier, higher skilled labour market and new homes for our growing population.

With Government support for our proposition, by 2030 the Heart of the South West can accelerate delivery of 163,000 new jobs, 179,000 new homes and an economy of over £53bn GVA. To put this in context, this is more growth over the next fifteen years than Bristol, Birmingham and Nottingham (the three non-'Powerhouse' core cities) have delivered in the last fifteen.

To do this we will exploit and deliver our Golden Opportunities around investment in nuclear energy at Hinkley, across the peninsula in marine, aerospace, advanced manufacturing and environmental futures. We will connect our rural communities to these transformers and address the challenges of ageing and health-related worklessness with unprecedented

health and care integration.

We will take responsibility for fixing our foundations. We seek Government's support to do this through negotiation and delivery of a far reaching devolution deal for the Heart of the South West.

Our approach to delivering this transformation focuses on a comprehensive Productivity Plan:

- **For people:** we will build on Government's own national reconfiguration of the skills system to supply business with the skills it needs and a labour market able to deliver productivity per job and per hour at 'Greater South East' levels (outside Inner London). Our plans for health and care integration will support a significant proportion of our non-working population into work.
- **For business:** our Growth Hub will enable business growth and internationalisation following closure of the national Business Growth Service. We will augment this with specific policies and initiatives to realise national priorities implicit in our Golden Opportunities.
- **For place:** we will provide the infrastructure and housing required and make the Heart of the South West investment ready. We also recognise that much of our growth will occur in specific sub-regional economic geographies. We will plan and manage change in these sub-regions to ensure their connectivity with each other, with the rest of the country and globally. We will make sure that rural areas access and leverage these opportunities and build on Government's 10 point plan for rural productivity geographies.¹

¹ The Heart of the South West's economic transformational opportunities were identified and agreed in our Strategic Economic Plan, March 2014.

Cohesive, coherent leadership and governance of this transformation is crucial. We propose to establish a Combined Authority to provide leadership, supported by sub-regional delivery mechanisms so powers and resources are deployed on the scale at which our economy functions. These arrangements will develop new ways of working to address priority issues.

Our proposals build upon successful and strong business leadership through our Local Enterprise Partnership: we cannot deliver effective economic interventions without a strong business voice.

If we do not act, the Heart of the South West will not be able to contribute to the Government's ambition to meet the national productivity challenge as set out in Fixing the Foundations.

This document outlines our position and objectives. An early agreement on heads of terms for a devolution deal will trigger the start of our governance review and formulation of our Productivity Plan.



New housing development, Beechfield View, Torquay



Somerset Energy Innovation Centre

Our Vision and Goals

Government recognises that fixing the foundations and devolution are the projects of a generation. Our key challenges are:

- An insufficiently skilled workforce and limited pool of available labour: many young people move away to live and work, rather than stay or move into our area.
- A need for more infrastructure to support our existing businesses and workers and to attract new ones. We need better and more resilient infrastructure: roads, railways, broadband and housing.
- Enabling a more effective, far-reaching support environment for businesses to sustain those we already have and make the area more attractive to inward investment and home-grown entrepreneurs.
- Managing the significant and increasing cost of health and social care, which combined with our ageing population threatens the viability of public services unless radical reforms are completed.

Productivity-led growth in the Heart of the South West will have three dimensions:

- **People:** who are healthy, with the skills they need to access higher value jobs and grow their careers.
- **Business:** more businesses creating new jobs and increasing productivity.

- **Place:** sustainable growth across the geography, supported by modern infrastructure and accelerated housing delivery.

We signalled our intention to meet these challenges with our Statement of Intent. The submission of this more detailed proposition shows how serious our intent is. We believe the proposals we have committed to developing will realise our local ambitions and make decisive, important contributions to Government's national priorities.

With Government support for our proposals we will redress our productivity gap and help us manage demographic challenges more effectively. Key outcomes we will achieve by 2030 include:

- £4bn additional in GVA for the UK economy.
- 163,000 new jobs.
- Infrastructure that supports our ambitious plans.
- 179,000 more homes, and accelerated delivery in major growth points.
- Wage levels higher than the national average.
- Additional tax revenue for the Treasury of £113million per year.
- Apprenticeship starts increased by 400%.
- Every young person in education, employment or training.
- £1bn per year welfare benefits savings as more people enter employment.
- 60% of our workforce qualified to NVQ level 4 or above.
- Faster more reliable rail services with greater capacity.
- Faster and more reliable journey times on our road network, with less congestion.
- 100% superfast broadband coverage.

The Heart of the South West has a strong track record of delivering in partnership for residents and businesses:

- Securing and supporting major national and international investment in the future of the nuclear industry at Hinkley Point.
- Plymouth and South West Peninsula City Deal.
- A total of £195.5m secured through Growth Deals – including the highest Growth Deal 2 settlement of any LEP area in the country – to deliver a comprehensive programme of projects in pursuit of growth.
- Exeter University, Science Park, Innovation Centre and Innovation Zone.
- Connecting Devon and Somerset superfast broadband.
- Three Enterprise Zones: South Yard in Plymouth to support innovation and growth in marine industries, Huntspill Energy Park near Bridgwater to support the growth of a new nuclear cluster catalysed by investment in Hinkley and east of Exeter sites aligned to opportunities in environmental sciences and big data.
- Delivery of Plymouth Science Park by Plymouth City Council and Plymouth University, now entering phase 5, creating the largest science park in the south of England.
- Better, more reliable roads, including major improvements to A303, A358, A30 corridor, M5 Junctions and A361 North Devon Link.
- The Peninsula Rail Task Force.
- Connecting communities in rural areas.
- Exeter and East Devon Growth Point.
- A high quality and thriving Further Education Sector.
- Health and social care initiatives including Somerset Together Vanguard project, Exeter 'ICE', Torbay's Integrated Care Organisation and 'One System One Budget' in Plymouth.

We can scale up and build on these experiences. However, without the comprehensive framework that our governance proposals will deliver, the Heart of the South West and national Government will miss out on the solutions, linkages, and effectiveness that collective leadership can achieve.

A Heart of the South West devolution agreement with robust governance structures, accelerated delivery, and more focused use of scarce resources is the optimal way for Government to assure itself that the national Fixing the Foundations plan is being proactively and consistently led and delivered across the Heart of the South West.

In this prospectus we set out our goals for 2016-2030 and how we will deliver the long-term and evolutionary work required to achieve our devolution revolution.



FlyBe Academy

National Context

Government set out its long-term ambitions for the UK economy in 'Fixing the Foundations', its productivity plan for 2015-2020. This framework outlined how long-term investment and a dynamic economy could raise productivity and lift living standards. Government's invitation to areas to propose ways that devolution could contribute to this agenda led to our Statement of Intent being submitted on 4th September 2015.

With policy developments in the autumn, and the Spending Review, Government has firmed up the financial intentions behind the productivity plan. In terms of local contributions leadership teams need to deliver an extensive portfolio of reforms:

- In skills and employment, 2016-20 will see major reforms of the post-16 and adult skills systems (both of colleges and providers on the supply side, and of loans for learners on the demand side). Post-16 Area Reviews and introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy offer opportunities to transform the delivery of local labour market skills, however the demands of transition may be acute.
- Physical investment will need to be managed in the context of higher performance expectations for planning regimes, new approaches to housing supply (especially starter home ownership) and proactive asset management at a public estate as well as local authority level. Local leadership teams will also need to play into the revision of the National Infrastructure Plan with new commitments to flagship schemes like HS2 and nuclear energy.

- As the national Business Growth Service closes by March 2016, new pressures will be placed on emerging local Growth Hubs. For innovation, local and regional Science and Innovation Audits will seek to shape national priorities as Research Councils and Innovate UK come together in Research UK with a range of new products.
- These agendas, and others, need to be delivered without diverting attention from existing commitments. These include City Deals, local Growth Deals, the European Structural and Investment Fund programmes, and other legacy programmes, such as the Regional Growth Fund, Growing Places Fund, existing and newly announced Enterprise Zones.

These agendas sit alongside, and will be enabled by, devolution and fiscal reforms and managed in the context of continued public sector expenditure constraint.

The challenge for the Heart of the South West is to shape these national priorities to our unique circumstances. We have drawn on our Strategic Economic Plan to describe the causes of our productivity challenge, identify our key Golden Opportunities and understand how to build on our track record of success.



Hinkley Point C, Somerset

Local Context

The Heart of the South West covers most of the south west peninsula. Its 1.7 million residents live in a mixture of rural and urban settings served by a stunning natural environment and rich cultural heritage.

Most of our businesses are small and medium sized enterprises (SME) employing fewer than five people, providing excellent potential for growth and innovation. We are also home to cutting edge engineering and manufacturing industries including companies of global significance:

- Aerospace and advanced engineering industries employ more than 23,000 people and contribute over £1billion to the economy. Businesses in the area also have specialisms in advanced electronics/photonics, medical science and wireless and microwave technologies.
- Analysis of the comparative advantages of our local assets has identified that the Exeter City Region can make a unique contribution by becoming a globally recognised centre of excellence in weather and environment-related data analytics. Exeter is home to the Met Office, the city leads Europe in combined environmental science, data and computational infrastructure, hosting 400 researchers in environmental and sustainability science. From 2017, it will also host the most powerful supercomputer in Europe.

- The first of the UK's new generation of nuclear reactors being constructed at Hinkley Point will deliver substantial economic benefits across the south west. It is part of our growing low carbon and energy sector and offers £50billion worth of business opportunity in the nuclear sector within a 75-mile radius of Hinkley Point.

- We are a global centre of excellence for marine science and technology, including Plymouth University's Marine Institute and the Plymouth Marine Laboratory.

- There are 30 working fishing ports across the Heart of the South West, ranging from England's two largest fishery landings at Brixham and Plymouth to smaller traditional operations at locations such as Ilfracombe and Clovelly.

- The South West Marine Energy Park, the country's first, serves the wider south west peninsula, and offers direct access to superb physical assets and resources including the north Devon and north Somerset marine energy coasts for opportunities in wind, tidal and nuclear energy.

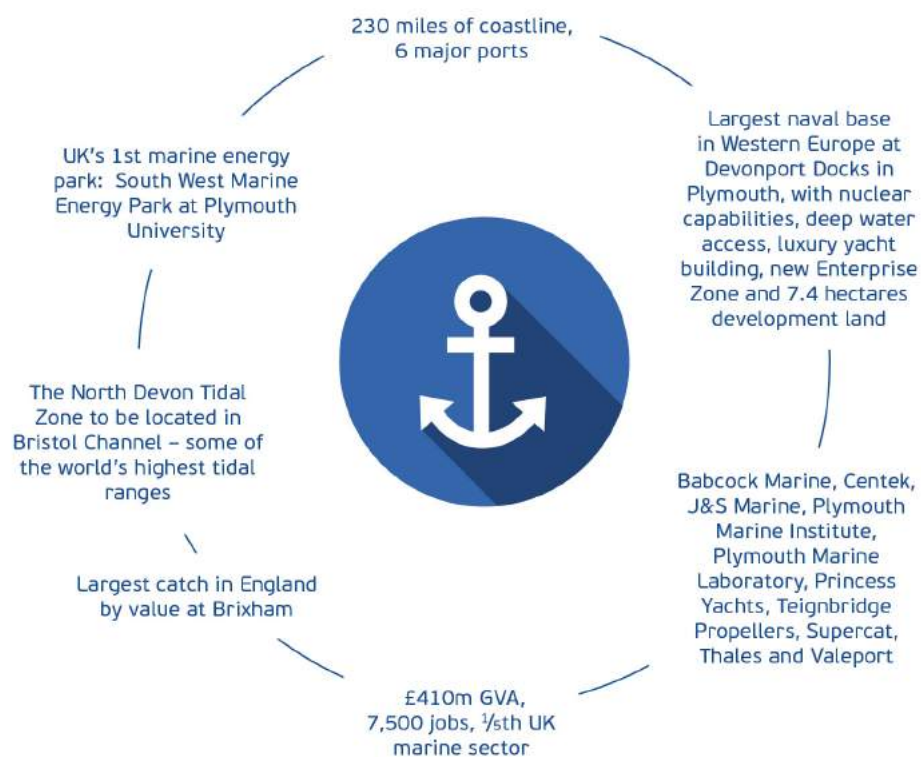
Our mixed economy also serves our traditional strengths. Our tourist and visitor economy attracts millions of visitors per year and our food and drink sector has a significant impact on national GVA (4.2% in 2011).

Whilst our largest employment sectors remain public administration, health and education, our Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan recognises our area as having 'New World' potential if opportunities can be capitalised upon and the right conditions for growth created.

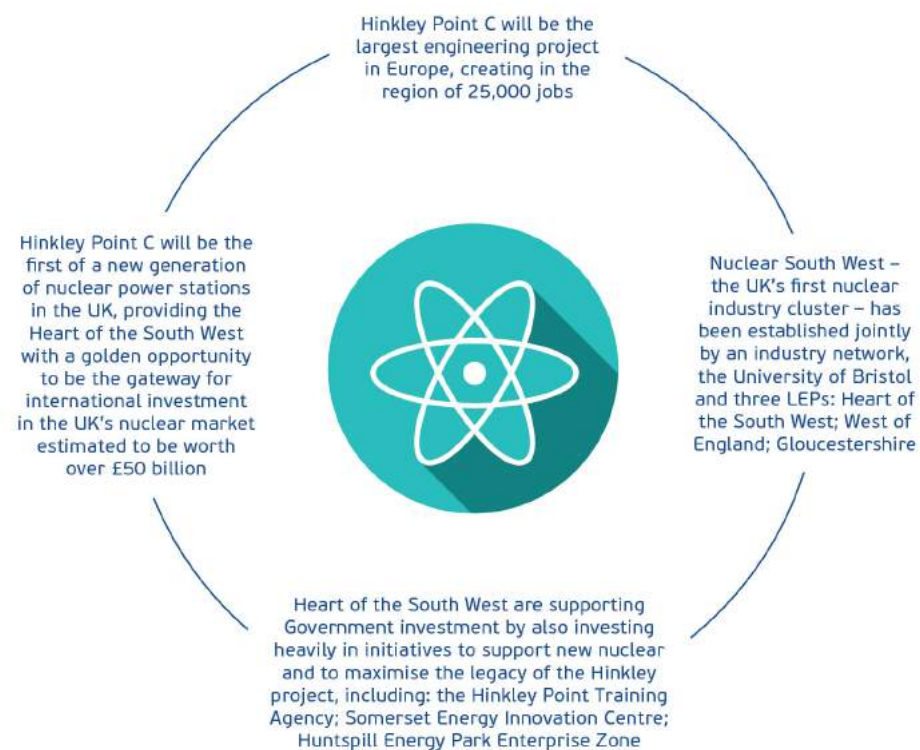
Golden Opportunities

We have identified six Golden Opportunities that we will use to drive productivity and economic growth whilst continuing to support our diverse economy and taking advantage of new opportunities as they emerge.

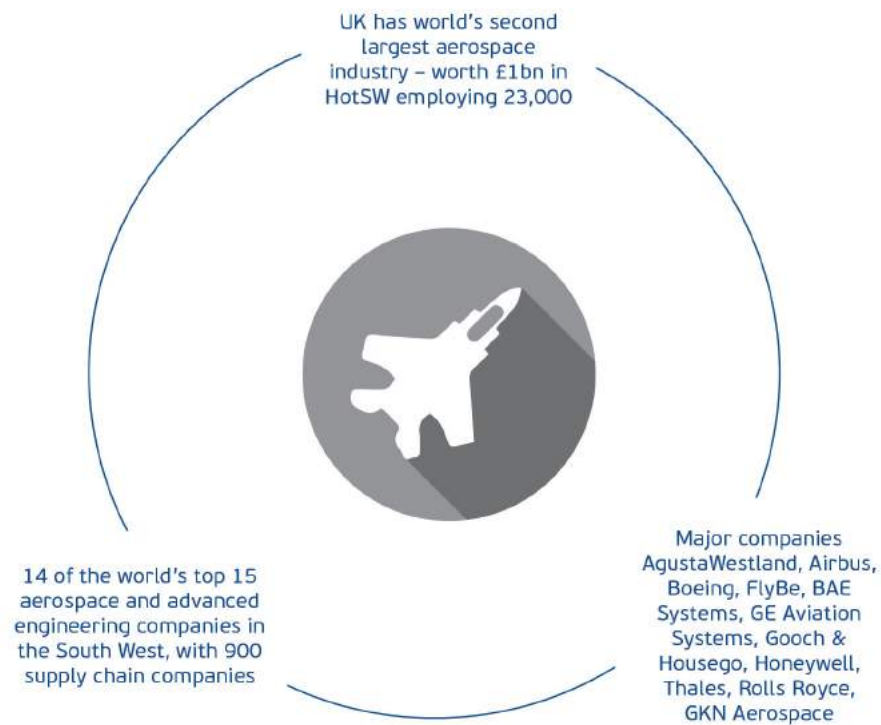
Marine



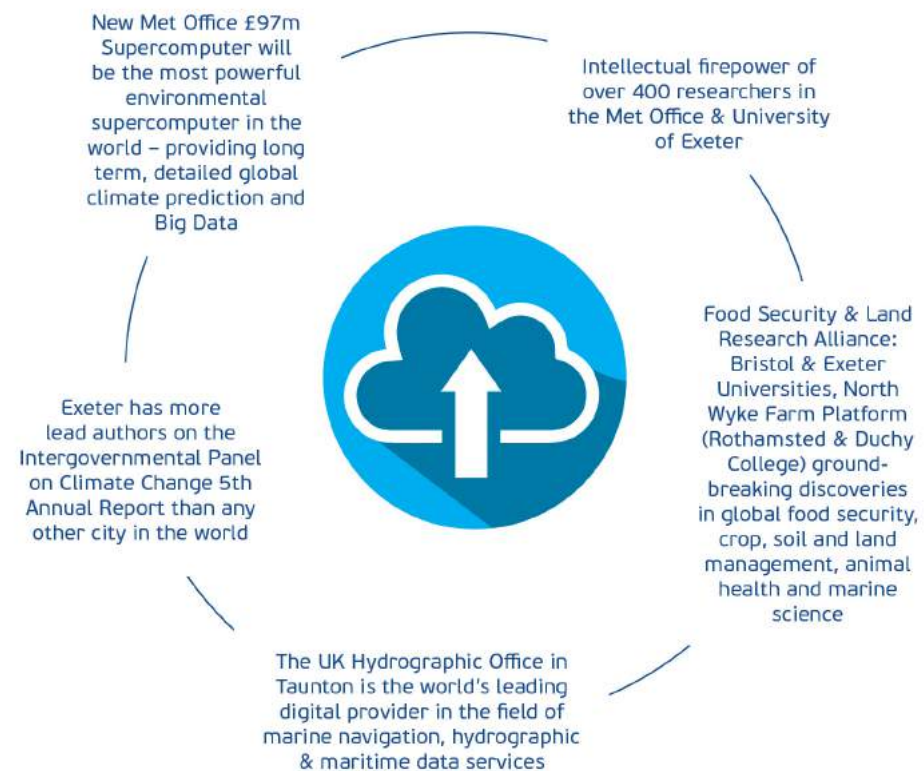
Nuclear



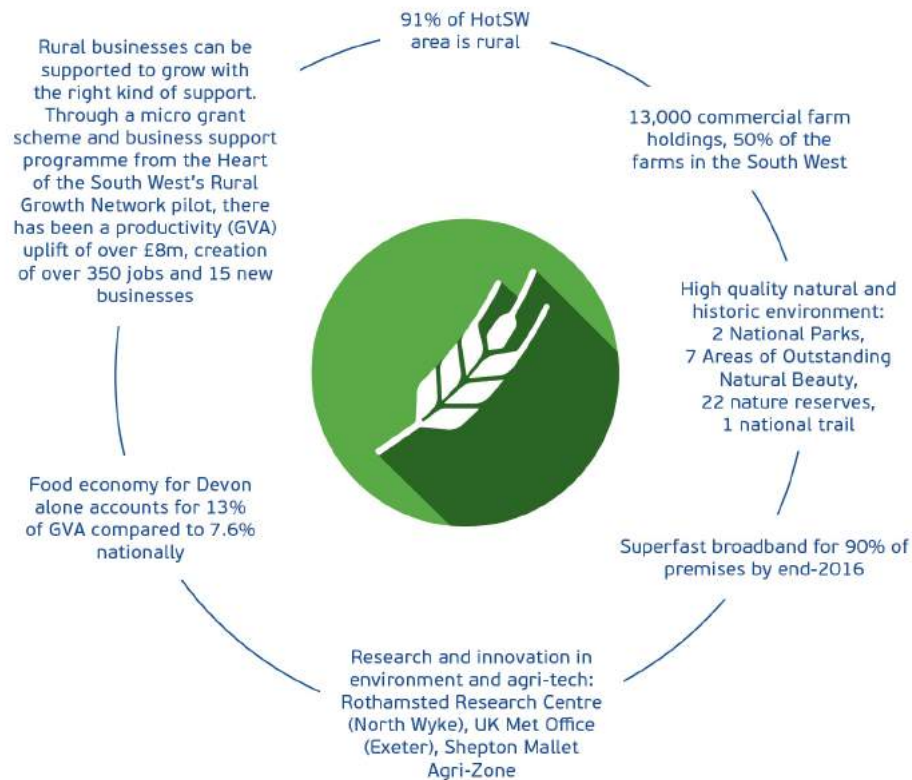
Aerospace and Advanced Engineering



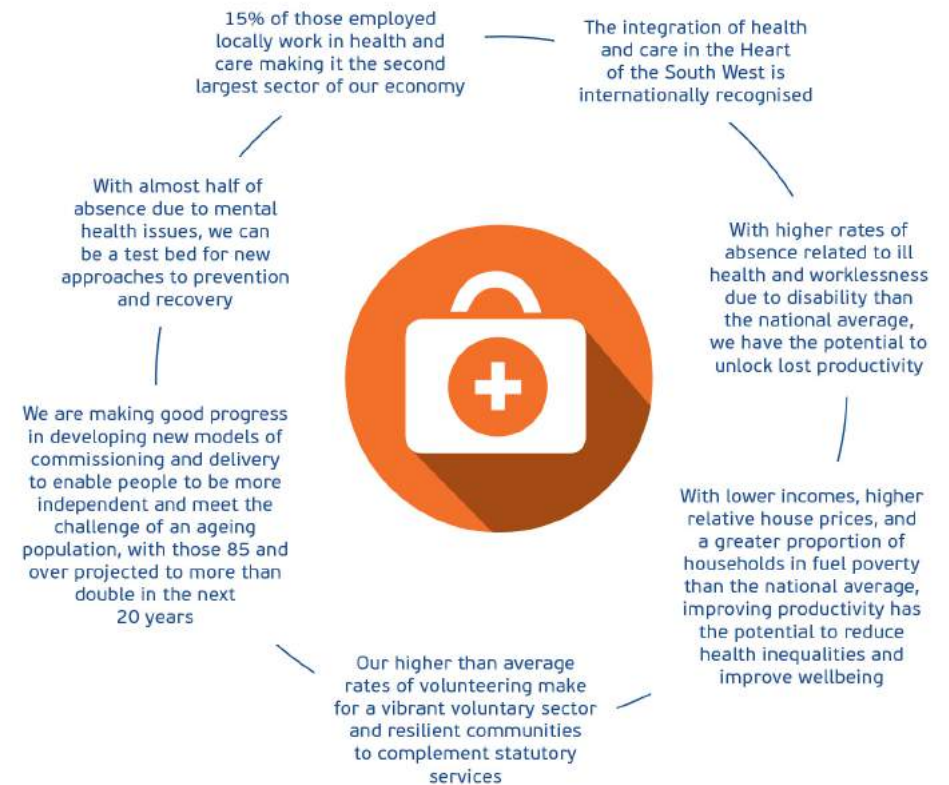
Data Analytics



Rural Productivity



Health and Care



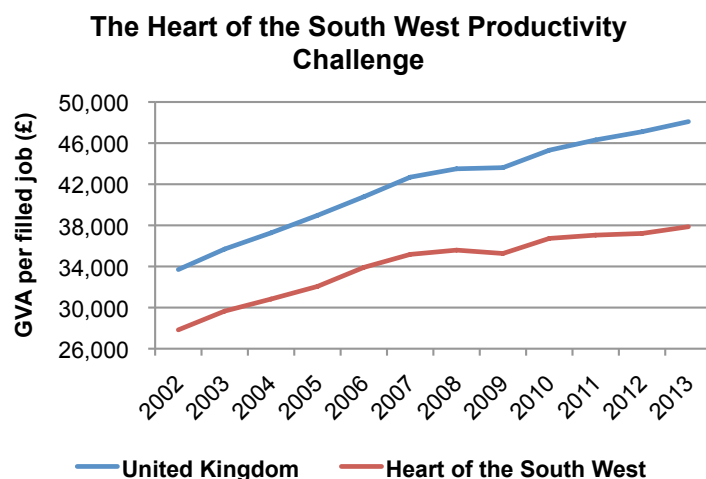
From six Golden Opportunities to six Key Challenges

Realising our vision, goals and targets requires us to address and solve six major, interrelated economic and societal challenges:

1. Our productivity is too low and growing too slowly

Whilst not uniform across the area, in 2013 our productivity per job filled was below 80% of UK averages, a fall of around 3% over the last decade. Our forecasts suggest that unless we unlock our emerging transformational opportunities our productivity will continue to lag behind the rest of the UK.

This performance is a manifestation of poor comparative skills levels, labour market shortages, insufficient infrastructure, and poor connectivity, the human and financial cost of ill-health, a lack of joined-up support for business and need for higher value industrial densities.



2. Our labour market is limited in size and skills levels

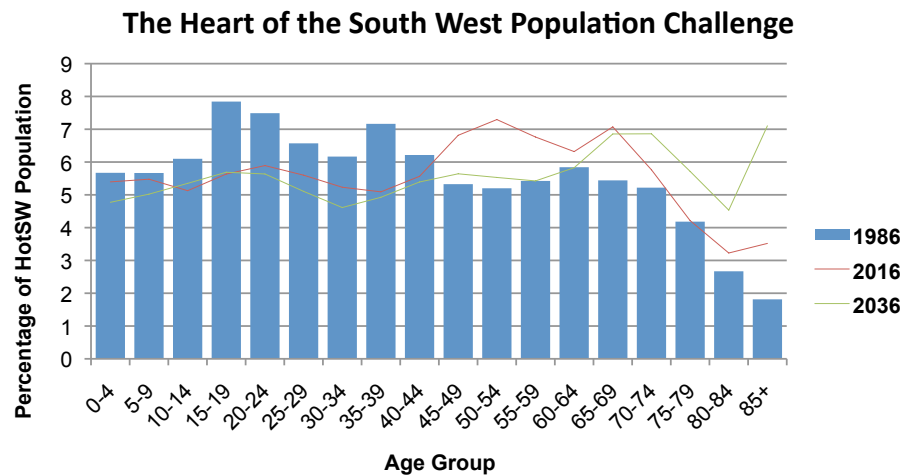
A key factor in our low productivity is a shortage of workers and a shortage of skills. Low unemployment means businesses have a limited labour pool from which to draw recruits. Higher level skills attainment is below national averages and out-migration of our talent to London and other metropolitan centres means that employers regularly report labour shortages and recruitment difficulties.

3. Our enterprise and innovation performance is inconsistent and needs to improve

Evidence shows that businesses that take up support do better than those who don't. However, the business support landscape is complex and confusing and short-term Government funding for programmes creates uncertainty. The Heart of the South West ranks 38th out of 39 LEP areas on many measures of innovation including patent registrations and Innovate UK funding. We cannot resolve these science and innovation issues without more highly skilled workers and a stronger innovation environment, particularly around our Golden Opportunities.

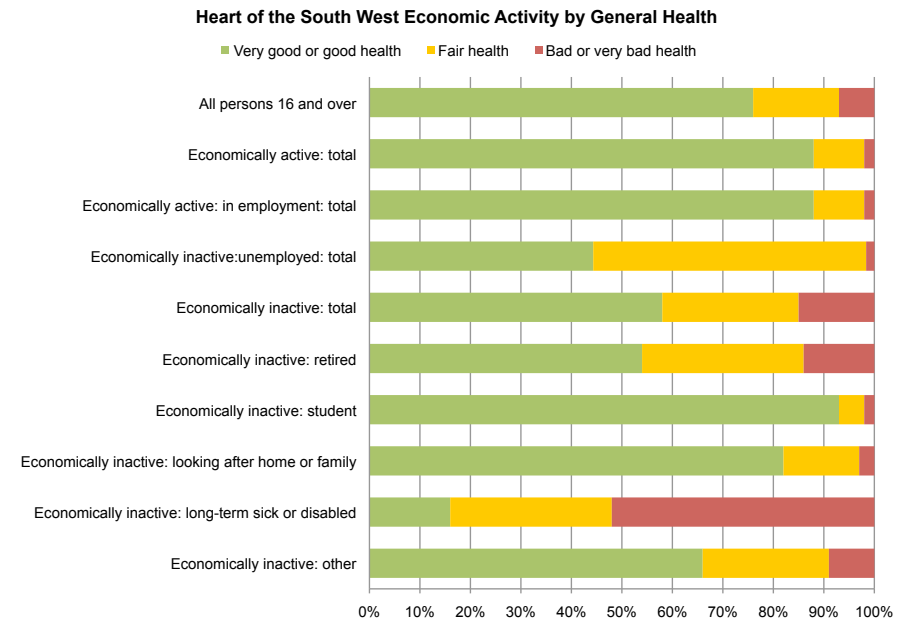
4. We are a leader in facing the challenges of an ageing population

Our population profile shows a significant increase in the proportion of our residents aged 65 or over and a corresponding decrease in the proportion of working age people under 45. By 2036, 17% of our population – more than 327,000 people – will be over 75 years of age.



5. We are a leader in facing the challenges of health and care integration

Particularly related to our demography, our health and care system needs to be reshaped to meet social, economic and financial pressures. Our area performs poorly for mental health outcomes when compared to national figures, making this a key priority.



A healthier population means lower public sector costs and increased economic activity. To fill 163,000 more jobs we must engage the non-working population in the labour market which will require a significant health and care contribution.

Employment of people with physical disabilities, learning disabilities, mental health issues and other long-term conditions is strongly correlated with their achieving better outcomes and being less dependent on publicly funded health and care services. This represents considerable productive potential.

6. Our infrastructure and connectivity needs to be modernised and more resilient

More infrastructure especially housing, transport links, broadband, mobile connectivity and energy grid improvements are required to make our area more attractive to investors and viable for the future. Improving these conditions are key to giving businesses in our area the tools they need to compete in global markets, attract future entrepreneurs and secure investment. We must overcome these barriers if we are to capitalise on our transformational opportunities.

Fixing the Heart of the South West and our contribution to fixing the national foundations

The current landscape of funding and decision-making has only taken us so far. Despite our achievements to date we need freedom to act more decisively. A devolution agreement means we can take responsibility for our unique challenges and capitalise on our Golden Opportunities.

The dividend for the National Productivity Plan is considerable. Besides the specific metrics identified in our goals, the UK will benefit from global and national energy investments and security, environmental futures and big data capabilities, an at-scale set of solutions to health and care integration and public service reforms.

This negotiating prospectus lays out the heads of terms of an agreement to create the foundations for a transformational jump in productivity. It will deliver quick wins this decade whilst planning for the medium and long-term.

Fingle Bridge, Devon



Improvements by Rail



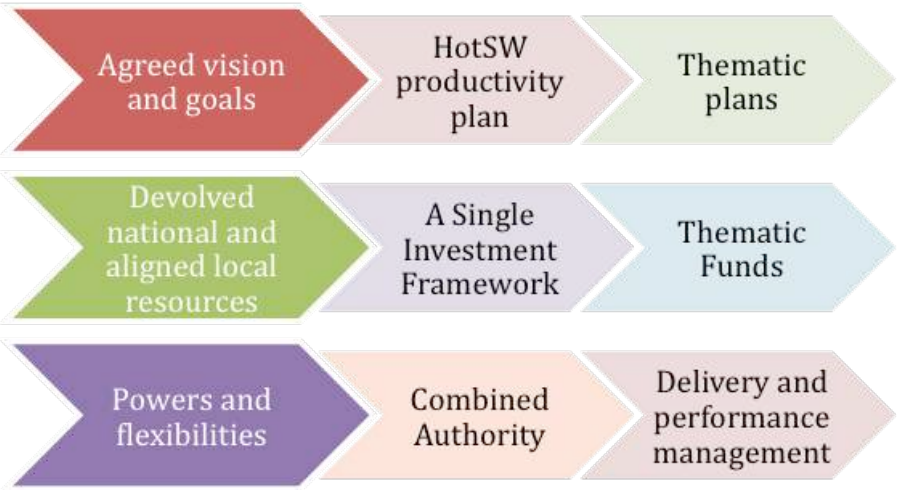
Met Office, Exeter

Our negotiating prospectus

We wish to agree with Government a shared commitment to building three pillars of a devolution deal for the Heart of the South West.

Foundation 1: The Productivity Plan

The Productivity Plan will be our instrument for fixing our foundations. It will incorporate the refresh of our Strategic Economic Plan and scale up local growth agendas for 2016-20 incorporating Spending Review and public service reform priorities. It will include proposals for our Strategic Labour Market Plan and Strategic Infrastructure Plan. It will also reflect our ambitions for integration of health and social care where they link to our devolution deal.



Foundation 2: The Single Investment Framework

The Single Investment Framework will set the financial parameters of our agreement and encompass devolved funds and locally aligned resources. It is likely to include:

1. A single infrastructure fund to provide the physical investment for backbone, nationally-significant infrastructure.
2. A housing delivery instrument to accelerate housing delivery by unlocking key sites and stimulating market activity.
3. Skills and employment allocations to enable remodelling of the skills and employment landscape.
4. Devolved health and care budgets delivering agreed business cases with NHS England and other partners.

We believe agreement to formulate these two foundations will enable early delivery of accelerated housing development, skills reform, and improved business support, with health and social care reform and infrastructure development taking place in parallel.

These two foundations will be overseen and assured by a Combined Authority arrangement. This will, once established, provide the Heart of the South West counterpart to Government for planning and management of our devolution deal. It will take responsibility for the powers, resources and deliverables outlined below.

People

A highly skilled, high productivity labour market meeting businesses' employment priorities

We are clear that without proactive leadership and intervention our skills profile will remain a chronic block to fixing our foundations and delivering our vision.

We intend to use national reforms, led and shaped locally, to deliver a labour market capable of achieving productivity at Greater South East levels (excluding the distorting effect of Inner London).

Government's expectations of local leadership teams for 2016-20 as laid out in existing devolution agreements, the 2015 Spending Review and other policies include:

- Planning and management of phased devolution of post-19 public sector adult skills budgets, leading to full commissioning and funding of providers from 2018-19.
- Chairing and facilitation of successful Area Reviews of post-16 education and training, implementation of review recommendations including reshaping provision where required.
- Co-design of apprenticeship reforms including introduction of the levy and deployment of Apprenticeship Grant for Employers.

- Co-design of future employment support programmes with DWP and performance management regimes.

The Combined Authority will take responsibility for delivering these agendas, augmented by specific asks around:

- Specification and delivery management of Careers, Education Information, Advice and Guidance in schools and colleges.
- Support from Government to deliver a wider Higher Education offer for Somerset, including a new university.

Our Offer	Our ask of Government
Responsibility for reshaping the skills and employment system. Delivered through formulation, agreement, resourcing and delivery management of a business-led Strategic Labour Market Plan .	Full devolution of powers to the Combined Authority, phased over a number of years, with relevant skills, education and employment budgets into the Single Investment Framework. Government departments and agencies to co-design and co-deliver the Strategic Labour Market Plan.

Why is this important?

Our analysis has shown:

- Young people are not getting the independent, quality careers and education advice and guidance to help them make informed decisions on their education and training.
- Employer productivity improvements are held back by shortages and lack of skills in local labour markets.
- The national provider system is poor at anticipating and securing future skills needs.
- Support for the workless is ineffective for those furthest from the labour market. Our evidence shows a distinct lack of progress for those in receipt of Employment Support Allowance despite significant investment and reform.

Key outcomes

With the powers and funding outlined above we believe a devolution deal will allow us to deliver the skilled workforce our productivity ambition requires. We will work with Government to design system reforms that deliver:

- 40,000 people helped to move from benefits into paid work.

- Benefit bill savings to Government of £1bn per year.
- Additional money earnings locally per year of £800m.
- Additional tax income for Government of £113m per year.
- All young people in employment, education or training.
- Apprenticeship starts increased by 400% and aligned to our six Golden Opportunities.
- Parity of esteem between vocational and academic pathways.
- Maximised links between Golden Opportunities and skills development to encourage young people into our area's high tech industries.
- A university for Somerset.



Babcock Training

A national demonstrator of effective health and care integration for improved wellbeing

The Heart of the South West already has well established and innovative local approaches to health and care integration, however our system continues to be under demographic pressure. We now have an opportunity to bring together resources across the public sector to deliver the systemic reform needed by the health and care system and through strong local leadership can engage communities and voluntary sector in that enterprise. We want to create a system where prevention and early intervention are an integral part and which rethinks its approach to mental health and wellbeing. In summary:

Our Key Offer	Our ask of government
Building on the NHS 5-Year Forward View, we will deliver a 'whole system' approach to health and care based on the existing footprints for integration activity.	Devolution of 5 year place based budgets for health to the level of our existing health and care economies.
This will include:	
Devolved commissioning of primary and associated specialist care services including mental health.	
Flexibility in regulation and budgeting, including freedom for partners to pool resources.	
Greater emphasis on public health and the link between health and housing.	
Capitation-based payments.	
Support to address skills shortages.	

Why is this important?

We want people to lead longer, healthier, more productive and fulfilling lives while ensuring the sustainability of our health and care services.

Health outcomes are generally good and life expectancy is high, but too many people develop avoidable long-term multiple conditions which affect both the quality of their lives and their ability to work. People with mental health conditions are in too many cases poorly served by a fragmented system in which there is no effective link between preventive, primary care and acute services.

Health and care is the second largest sector in our economy but productivity lags behind other areas and there are workforce and skills shortages which affect both the quality and cost of provision. These issues can only be tackled through whole-system reform and a closer matching of strategy and resources to local need.

Our ageing population demography is ahead of many other areas meaning we have an opportunity to lead the way in tackling the associated health, care and economic challenges.

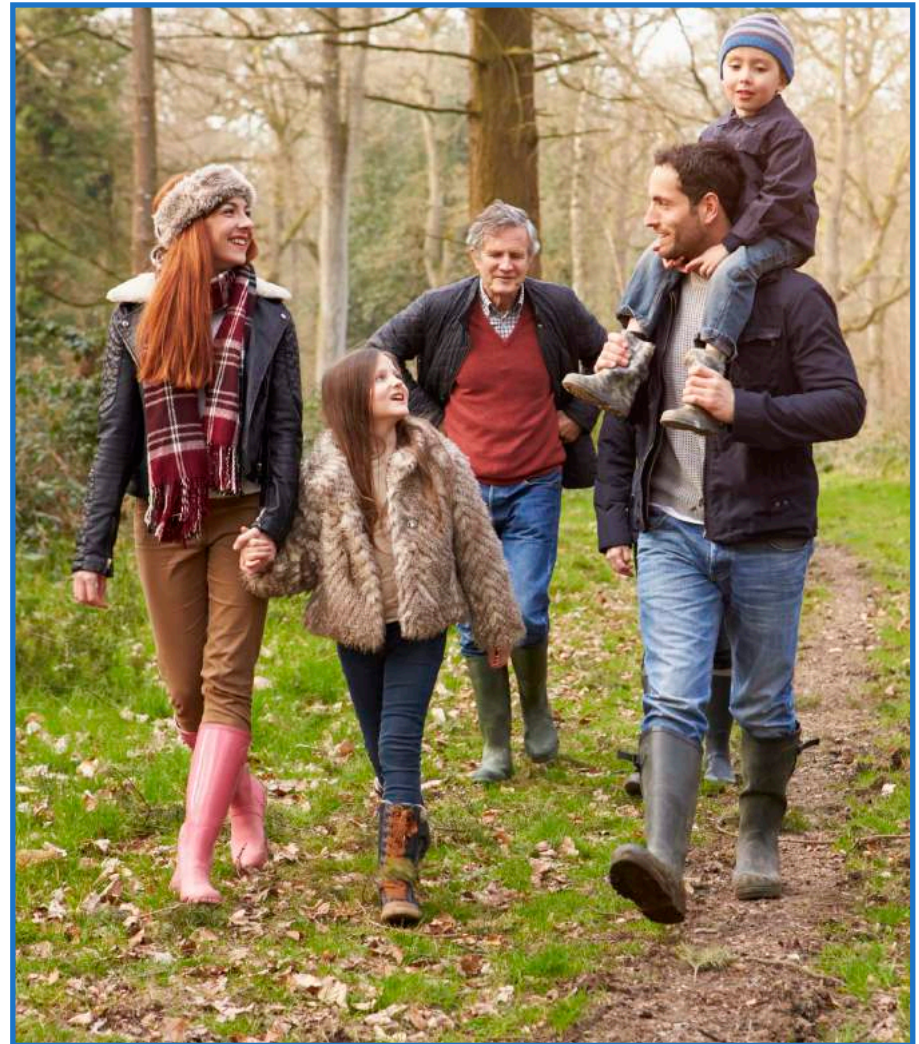
Key outcomes

Devolution will help us create a health and care system that supports a healthier population, greater personal independence and wellbeing, and improved workforce productivity:

- Better physical and mental health outcomes.
- A system that is integrated and financially sustainable, offering a whole system approach, and is a test-bed for Government innovation.
- People of all ages encouraged and supported to make healthy lifestyle choices and manage their own care, therefore diverting or delaying dependency.

Devolution offers the potential for us to go further, faster, and bring reform initiatives together at a scale and with a scope that can provide a demonstrator (given our advanced demographic profiles) to health and care reforms in other parts of the country:

- The NHS 5-year Forward View and the requirement on areas to develop transformation plans for local areas.
- The financial settlement for local government, including the requirement to submit integration plans by 2017.
- Changing Better Care Fund guidance and the option to work across local authority areas to plan and deliver it.
- The Success Regime applying to NEW Devon Clinical Commissioning Group, other local integration projects, their impact on and learning for other health and care economies.



Improved health care and wellbeing.

Business growth and innovation

Government expectations of local leadership teams for 2016-20 includes sustaining and developing support for business growth after closure of the Business Growth Service, as well as enabling distinctive contributions to national research and innovation-led growth priorities. For us this means scaling up the reach and impact of our Growth Hub and realising the full potential of our Golden Opportunities.

To deliver this Heart of the South West partners already have primary responsibilities for:

- Operation and performance management of the Growth Hub and shaping of national agency (eg UKTI) access and support to Heart of the South West business.
- Strengthening the coherence and effectiveness of local innovation eco-systems around our Golden Opportunities - notably the marine cluster anchored by Plymouth, the environmental futures cluster anchored by Met Office investments in Exeter, the UK Hydrographic Office's long-term commitment to Taunton, the nuclear cluster catalysed by Hinkley Point C, and the broader South West aerospace cluster with its major growth node in South Somerset.

Our skills and infrastructure proposals provide a number of interventions to address these challenges. These will feed into and through the Growth Hub so our business growth and innovation strand, in summary, will:

Our Key Offer	Our ask of Government
<p>Scale up and assure a Growth Hub providing a seamless approach to business growth support.</p> <p>Strengthen a network and cluster of 'innovation eco-systems' anchored by each of our Golden Opportunities</p>	<p>An increased devolved revenue pot for at least 5 years which can draw if required on the Single Investment Framework.</p> <p>Co-commissioning of all remaining national business growth and internationalisation services.</p> <p>Commitment to bespoke agreements with national agencies to realise the UK and local growth dividends of each of the Golden Opportunities - underpinned by an early Science and Innovation Audit undertaken by a consortium of south west LEPs and universities.</p>
<p>This strand will include: Collaboration with neighbouring LEPs on a cluster approach to inward investment.</p>	

Why is this important?

Discharge of these primary responsibilities is impeded by national pressures which manifest themselves locally. Analysis shows:

- SMEs and early stage entrepreneurs find national and local systems fragmented, opaque and bureaucratic. This leads to low rates of business growth support take-up and entrepreneurial/start-up activity.
- Inward investment, internationalisation and trade, and our visitor economy are held back because the South West is perceived to be a distant periphery. Offers are poorly joined-up and we have a low national profile, and are a low priority for UKTI, VisitEngland and other agencies.
- National science and innovation products and services are not accessed consistently by existing business. Furthermore our national offer is not investment-ready so cannot easily take advantage of the potential of our Golden Opportunities.

We need more certainty of investment and freedom from national funding cycles so we can operate our proposed Single Investment Framework and ensure the right interventions are made at the right time to support our economic opportunities.

Key outcomes

Our Golden Opportunities and distinctive assets have the potential to

release major productivity gains for us and for the national economy. Business support devolution will drive productivity through:

- More businesses taking up the support they need.
 - 20% of business stock informed about business support
 - 3,000 businesses supported
 - 750 business accounts managed
 - 10 Operational Level Agreements signed between business support delivery partners
 - 360 businesses receiving intensive support
 - 36 events to co-ordinate network businesses support delivering with the aim to simplify business support customer journey
- Significantly increased levels of inward investment.
- Heart of the South West businesses competing strongly in the global economy.
- Better engagement with business and an entrepreneurial culture.
- Double the number of international tourists to the Heart of the South West and more national tourists.
- Greater levels of science and innovation in our economy: double the uptake of Innovate UK support, and increased research and development.

Place

Government expectations of local leadership teams over 2016-20 include:

- Adoption and implementation of Local Plans with demonstrable collaboration across functional economic areas to drive physical investment.
- A performance regime that accelerates housing and employment growth.
- Devolved local transport budgets and plans including both development and regulatory functions, to improve system performance locally and add value to national infrastructure investments and programmes.
- Contributions to specific national and pan-regional infrastructure priorities, including Hinkley energy agreements and recommendations of the Peninsula Rail Task Group.
- Proactive delivery management of Starter Homes, housing investment pots and local authority contributions to new housing.
- Completion of backbone superfast broadband infrastructure and increasing take-up to support the digital economy and wellbeing.
- Local authority and other public sector land disposal, development and rationalisation strategies.

Our proposals will enable us to take responsibility for delivering these agendas, including, in summary:

Our Key Offer	Our ask of Government
Establishment of an Infrastructure Commission to formulate a new Strategic Infrastructure Plan with implementation overseen by the Combined Authority.	Support to develop, fund and deliver the Strategic Infrastructure Plan. A commitment to create a flexible funding model to support accelerated housing delivery, targeting locally identified growth areas.
This will include Government commitments to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing and new infrastructure development, including the A361 North Devon Link, A303/A358/A30 improvements and Peninsula Rail Task Force 20-year plan. • Match funding and co-production to deliver 100% superfast broadband coverage • Use the two National Parks as test beds for integrated land management and rural productivity. • Inclusion of Plymouth on the Strategic National Corridor network. 	

This will include Government commitments to:

- Devolved Air Passenger Duty from Exeter Airport.
- Support to develop and sustain new energy initiatives including wind, sub-sea and grid improvements.
- A National Policy Statement for renewable energy generation in the Bristol Channel and Severn Estuary.

Why is this important?

Long-term investment in our infrastructure is critical to unlocking growth and delivering our productivity targets. Our Strategic Infrastructure Plan will set out where and when investment is required. We need to accelerate housing and employment land allocations, electronic communications for our businesses, more housing for our workers, and improved transport links to allow faster movement of our workforce, goods and services. This infrastructure underpins growth and is the key to our future productivity.

Despite recent successes we are underfunded compared to other areas. Long-term investment is vital to provide confidence for developers and to drive productivity through faster, more reliable transport and digital connectivity. Investment in resilience is essential to minimise disruption and financial loss during a crisis. There is considerable untapped resource and market opportunity for the Heart of the South West to contribute more to the energy supply of the nation. We have the potential to become a leader in low carbon energy and renewables, however current grid infrastructure is limiting deployment.

Key outcomes

To support productivity growth, infrastructure devolution will deliver:

- 179,000 new homes, and a new Garden Town in Somerset.
- Accelerated housing and employment growth in the identified growth areas of Greater Exeter, Hinkley Growth Zone, Plymouth, Taunton, and Torbay.
- Faster rail connections to London, the South East, and Midlands.
- 100% superfast broadband availability and reliable mobile phone connectivity.
- Prioritised and sequenced infrastructure projects to maximise the value of investments.
- Innovation in energy development and supply to support the national energy strategy.
- Greater resilience of our infrastructure.
- Innovative approach to environmental management, increasing productivity, improving resilience, and growing our rural economy.

Foundation 3: Towards a Combined Authority

The partners to this proposal recognise that leadership and governance of delivery of our deal will require transparent, robust, and efficient structures and processes commanding the confidence and support of Government, local communities, and business.

We also recognise Government's preferred model of choice for this vehicle is the Combined Authority (CA), with Mayoral leadership in the case of Core City Regions.

We will create a Combined Authority with appropriate strong leadership and accountabilities. We will carry out a Governance Review to identify the most effective structure and processes for putting this commitment into effect, ideally with an inception date of either April 2017 or April 2018.

The Governance Review shall draw on the principles outlined in our Statement of Intent as a starting point. The review will proceed in tandem with both the enactment of the Cities and Local Government Bill, and the progress of our devolution agreement negotiations and requirements of its effective implementation.

The Governance Review will set out the powers, roles, functions, and operational arrangements for the Combined Authority - and propose its relationships with and to key delivery partners nationally, locally and with neighbours.

At a minimum, the Heart of the South West LEP, CCGs and others as appropriate will become full non-constituent members of the emerging

Combined Authority, playing leadership roles where appropriate in its sub-structures, for example to build on the LEP's business credentials.

In addition, we consider there will be a number of collaborative arrangements that we shall wish to progress with variable consortia of South West neighbours. These may include a 'Transport South West' proposition, the in-train Science and Innovation Audit consortium with neighbouring LEPs and national clusters in areas such as nuclear, renewables energy,

Similarly, our prospectus recognises that specific sub-regional geographies will accommodate significant shares of the growth to be delivered. Bespoke arrangements to plan and manage these changes will build on or adapt existing arrangements including The Greater Exeter Group, The Plymouth and South West Peninsula City Deal, the emergent Hinkley, Taunton and Bridgwater triangle. Options for strengthening and adapting these arrangements (or elaborating new place-based governance) may include Development Corporations, Special Economic Zones, Accelerated Development Zones, or other models.

Next Steps

Delivering devolution requires careful sequencing. A high level roadmap for developing and delivering our deal is outlined below.

A Heart of the South West partners group will launch shadow Combined Authority arrangements and a formal Programme Management Office (PMO) upon agreement from Government of serious intent to progress towards a devolution agreement. The PMO will be resourced to support devolution agreement workstreams with business case and financial management capacity, including assuring fiscal neutrality.

The shadow Combined Authority and PMO will work with Government to deliver six co-produced workstreams by early 2017:

1. The Governance Review will apply the processes required under legislation to specify, agree and launch the form of Combined Authority eventually determined. This work will include the role and voice of business and sub-regional geographical arrangements.
2. The Productivity Plan will elaborate the evidence base, strategies and performance management required to deliver the vision and goals of the devolution agreement.
3. We are seeking Government agreement to establish a Joint Skills Commission to oversee national policy requirements and the process of localising these under the terms of our devolution deal.
4. The local leadership team will work with our successful health integration exemplars, NHS England, and other local, regional and

national partners to identify wider opportunities to contribute to the Productivity Plan and national health and care integration priorities.

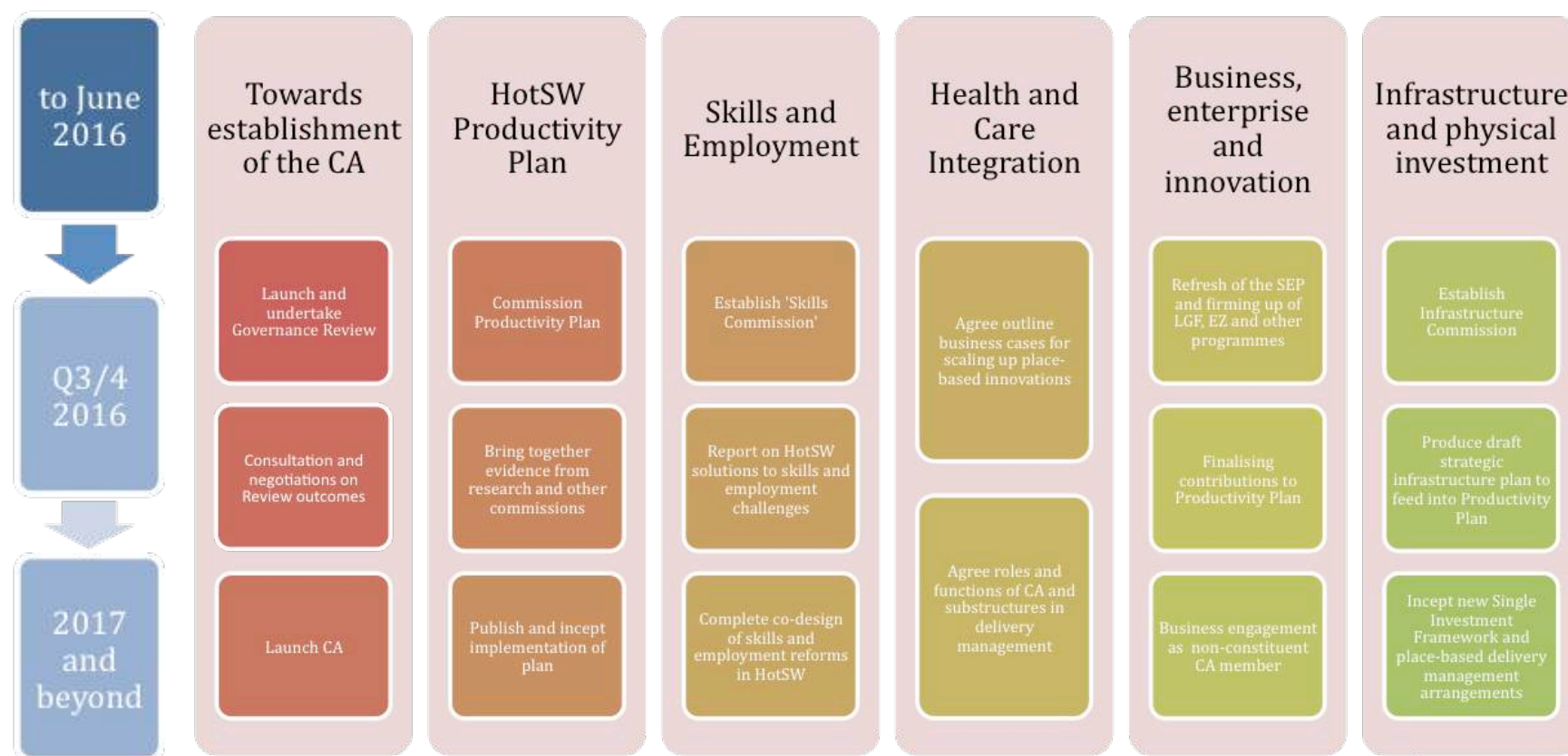
5. The LEP will ensure existing local growth commitments are delivered effectively, that the refresh of the Strategic Economic Plan feeds into the wider Productivity Plan and that business engagement in the establishment and operation of the Combined Authority and its priorities is strong.
6. We are seeking Government commitment to establish a Joint Infrastructure Commission to firm up the physical investment needs identified in national and Heart of the South West priorities and how the Single Investment Framework will resource these.

This process will allow early wins to be made, including accelerated housing development and initial skills and business support reform, whilst specifying and agreeing the structures needed to deliver the medium and long-term outcomes of our devolution agreement.

In anticipation of a positive outcome from negotiations on our deal we seek early agreement from Government on a match-funded budgetary contribution to co-deliver these workstreams.

We invite Government to begin formal negotiation with us on our proposals and the detail behind them with a view to signing a deal during the first half of 2016.

Outline Roadmap





Third Way Bridge, Taunton

June 2016

What does Devolution mean for the Heart of the South West - and for my own organisation and local authority area?

Since the submission of the Statement of Intent in September 2015, the Heart of the South West Partnership have been working together to try and draw down greater powers, funding and freedoms from Government by securing a Devolution Deal for the area.

There are a number of underlying reasons to pursue a Devolution Deal and Combined Authority as a Heart of the South West Partnership

The partnership has agreed the rationale and benefits for being involved in this process as follows:

- This is a unique opportunity to release powers and funding from Whitehall and enable us to have greater influence to deliver on the priorities we know are important to our sub-region
- It places our Partnership into an exclusive club with the 10 other deal areas and the advantages this can bring in terms of incremental shifts of power from the centre to local areas
- It is the start of an ongoing process that will allow us to build on our track record and credibility for delivery that makes a tangible difference to our communities

By working together as a Partnership we have a stronger voice with Government and greater clarity about our shared priorities. It puts decision-making closer to our communities so that we can plan, sequence and deliver what our areas need over the longer term. It will create a firm foundation for working together and for having conversations at a strategic level with neighbouring areas across the South West.

The benefits across the whole partnership of working together towards a Devolution Deal include access to new powers, for example around:

- **Transport** – for example around bus franchises, and determining local bus network routes
- **Learning and Skills** – for example, control of the Adult Education Budget to redesign further education
- **Business Support** – having the freedom to join up a range of Government agencies locally to provide a better, more coordinated offer to businesses
- **Employment Support** – the ability to influence commissioning of the new DWP Health and Work Programme
- **Land and Housing** – greater influence over the use or disposal of central Government land and assets, and working with Government on planning reforms

In Mid Devon?

For Mid Devon this could mean that we secure greater influence over infrastructure decisions that unlock growth. It could mean that we have a much stronger role in commissioning programmes that genuinely target our unemployed, or in brokering between further education and skills provisioning and the needs of our local businesses. While the exact nature of the gains in influence and decision-making will be determined by what we manage to secure from negotiations, ultimately this is about Mid Devon securing a greater role in determining or influencing the decisions that affect our communities.

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June 2016

What is a Combined Authority?

Summary

Combined authorities (CAs) were introduced under in the [Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009](#) ('2009 Act'), and subsequently amended by the [Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016](#). The Heart of the South West Partnership has developed this briefing note as a simple explanation of both a Mayoral and Non-Mayoral Combined Authority (CA). Following a meeting with the Secretary of State in late May, and in line with the briefing note circulated shortly afterwards, the Partnership is considering establishing a Non-Mayoral CA.

It should be noted that we are not seeking to establish a Mayoral CA at this stage, but we are keeping our options open to see what additional powers this could unlock in the future. It is important that we collectively agree to the principle of setting up a Non-Mayoral CA initially to allow us to enter into negotiations with Government at this time.

What is a Combined Authority (CA)?

England has one of the most centralised governance systems in the world. By creating a CA, the Heart of the South West partnership aims to draw down a range of new strategic powers and funding from central Government, through a Devolution Deal. This will mean that more decisions can be taken locally to better reflect local priorities. A CA can be set up by two or more local authorities. It is a formal structure with a recognised legal status. It usually has one representative from each of the constituent member local authorities, and operates on either a Leader and Cabinet, or Committee structure. A Mayoral CA also has a directly-elected Mayor who is the overall Leader or chair.

The 2016 Act removes previous limitations on the powers that a CA can exercise and permits the Secretary of State to transfer a wide range of statutory functions, including functions from public bodies. The only qualifications on this relate to the transfer of health service functions. The extent of the powers transferred depends on the Devolution Deal agreed with Government. The Secretary of State has been clear that the Mayoral CA model enables areas to draw down the most extensive range of powers. Examples of some pre-existing Combined Authorities that will become Mayoral CAs by May 2017:

- [Greater Manchester Combined Authority](#)
- [Sheffield City Region](#)
- [Liverpool City Region](#)

What it's not.....

A Combined Authority is **not**:

- part of a process to instigate local government reform, or bring about unitary status.
- a take-over by any authority, nor a merger of authorities to form a 'super council'.
- about ceding (transferring) powers to a single body without the express will of the constituent local authorities.
- a 'physical entity,' for example with teams of regeneration officers from the constituent authorities sitting in one building – **unless** the constituent local authorities wish it to be. (Except for a very small core support team that is required by law)

What is a Mayoral CA?

A Mayoral CA is a new variant introduced under the 2016 Act and is different to the elected mayors that a number of councils already have in place such as Torbay.

Up until recently, the Mayor of London had a unique position within English local government, with powers over strategic planning, transport, fire and emergency planning, policing and crime, and economic development over all of London, together with an elected 25-member London Assembly with scrutiny powers. The remaining local government functions in London are performed by the 32 borough councils.

Through Devolution Deals a number of areas have agreed to have a directly elected Mayor and a CA in return for a range of additional powers. An example of this is Greater Manchester Combined Authority. It will have a different model from London as they will operate a cabinet model CA, where all GMCA leaders have a clear portfolio of responsibilities that will act as a supporting and advisory function to their Mayor and CA in respective policy areas. Elections for the GMCA Mayor will take place in May 2017.

In this example the Mayor will need to consult the Cabinet on his/her strategies, which it may reject if two-thirds of the Members do not agree. Some functions such as the Statutory Spatial Framework will need to be approved by a unanimous vote of the Cabinet.

What is the process for setting up a CA?

There are a number of routes for establishing a CA.

- 2009 Act – requires the authorities to carry out a governance review and publish a scheme recommending the creation of a combined authority. This requires the consent of the authorities involved in the scheme and the Secretary of State will agree to make a Parliamentary Order under the Act to create the CA.
- 2016 Act – the Secretary of State can establish a Combined Authority if the councils in the area consent. The Secretary of State must hold a public consultation if this has not already been undertaken locally. The Secretary of State needs to be satisfied that the CA is likely to “*improve the exercise of statutory functions*” in the area. The typical timeframe for establishing a CA through this route is 6-9 months.

An existing CA can be changed into a Mayoral CA through a Statutory Order from the Secretary of State. Any authorities that do not consent must be removed from the CA when the elected Mayor is established.

The governance review stage is important in determining the best model of CA for an area and is part of the overall scheme. In a Non-Mayoral CA the constituent members need to decide if they want a Leader and Cabinet, or a Committee style model for the CA

Can the membership of a CA be changed?

It is possible for councils to leave, or for new councils to join a CA, however Government agreement is required to amend or dissolve the Combined Authority. If a local authority wishes to leave the Combined Authority, a new review of governance arrangements would have to take place, and a revised scheme would need to be published, before the Statutory Order could be amended.

What sort of powers could the HotSW Combined Authority expect to receive through its first Devolution Deal?

No other areas of the country have been given a Devolution Deal based on the establishment of a new Non-Mayoral Combined Authority, however the Deals struck with Cornwall and West Yorkshire provide a guide as to what we might expect to be in our Deal.

We believe we are in a strong position to push for as much as possible in our first Deal with Government.

Devolution Deals tend to be incremental and to evolve over time. Once areas are able to demonstrate that they have strong and accountable governance arrangements in place, and that they can successfully deliver on the new functions, Government is willing to transfer further powers by negotiating subsequent deals. In March 2016, Greater Manchester, the pioneers of Devolution, successfully secured their 4th Deal with Government which gave them greater powers over more public services, including the criminal justice system.

All Devolution Deals have a common set of themes; however, the greatest powers, funding control, and influence are reserved for areas with Mayoral Combined Authorities. We believe that the following examples would be available to us as a bare minimum:

- **Transport** – for example around bus franchises, and determining local bus network routes
- **Learning and Skills** – for example, control of the Adult Education Budget to redesign further education
- **Business Support** – having the freedom to join up a range of Government agencies locally to provide a better, more coordinated offer to businesses
- **Employment Support** – the ability to influence commissioning of the new DWP Health and Work Programme
- **Land and Housing** – greater influence over the use or disposal of central Government land and assets, and working with Government on planning reforms

We will be pushing hard for all the powers and influence reflected in the 'Asks' in our Prospectus. In particular, we will be making a strong case to secure a long term investment commitment for the infrastructure we need to unlock growth.

How would it impact on my Council?

The CA does not replace the existing member Councils, it operates alongside and allows those members to draw down and exercise a range of powers and control funding from Government they would not otherwise be able to access. It means that local politicians have greater control over decision making traditionally held in Westminster. The extent of the powers is determined by the Devolution Deal negotiated with Government.

It is not intended for any existing council functions across Devon and Somerset councils to transfer to the CA at the time of its establishment, but once established it would be possible, where there is a clear benefit, for councils to transfer functions into the CA, subject to agreement.

Further information

House of Commons Briefing Paper on Combined Authority – February 2016
<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06649/SN06649.pdf>

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