

# Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee

Tuesday 3 October 2017

10.00 am Luttrell Room - County Hall,  
Taunton



To: The Members of the Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee

Cllr T Lock (Chairman), Cllr M Lewis (Vice-Chairman), Cllr P Ham, Cllr T Napper, Cllr A Wedderkopp, Cllr B Filmer, Cllr John Hunt, Cllr D Ruddle and Cllr J Thorne

All Somerset County Council Members are invited to attend meetings of the Cabinet and Scrutiny Committees.

Issued By Julian Gale, Strategic Manager - Governance and Risk - 25 September 2017

For further information about the meeting, please contact Lindsey Tawse on 01823 355059 or [ltawse@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:ltawse@somerset.gov.uk)

Guidance about procedures at the meeting follows the printed agenda.

This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

This agenda and the attached reports and background papers are available on request prior to the meeting in large print, Braille, audio tape & disc and can be translated into different languages. They can also be accessed via the council's website on [www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers)



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# AGENDA

Item Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee - 10.00 am Tuesday 3 October 2017

**\*\*Public Guidance notes contained in agenda annexe\*\***

1 **Apologies for absence**

2 **Declarations of Interest**

Details of all Members' interests in District, Town and Parish Councils will be displayed in the meeting room. The Statutory Register of Member's Interests can be inspected via the Community Governance team.

3 **Minutes from the previous meeting held on 05 September 2017** (Pages 7 - 16)

The Committee is asked to confirm the minutes are accurate.

4 **Public Question Time**

The Chairman will allow members of the public to ask a question or make a statement about any matter on the agenda for this meeting. **These questions may be taken during the meeting, when the relevant agenda item is considered, at the Chairman's discretion.**

5 **Corporate Performance Monitoring Report Q1 (+1) 2017/18** (Pages 17 - 28)

To receive this report.

6 **2017/18 Revenue Budget Month 4** (Pages 29 - 42)

To receive this report.

7 **Flood & Water Management including the Bridgwater Tidal barrier**

Presentation to be tabled at the meeting.

8 **County Farms Task & Finish Group**

To receive a verbal update from the Chair of the County Farms Task & finish Group.

9 **Library Service Update and Proposed Strategy** (Pages 43 - 88)

To receive this report.

**Possible exclusion of the press and public**

**PLEASE NOTE:** Although the main report for this item is not confidential, the supporting appendix 1b (alternative delivery models) contains exempt information and is therefore marked confidential – not for publication. If at any point Members wish to discuss information within this appendix then the Committee will be asked to agree the following resolution to exclude the press and public:

Item Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee - 10.00 am Tuesday 3 October 2017

**Exclusion of the Press and Public**

To consider passing a resolution having been duly proposed and seconded under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting, on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, within the meaning of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972:

Reason: Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

10 **Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee Work Programme** (Pages 89 - 106)

To receive an update from the Governance Manager, Scrutiny and discuss any items for the work programme. To assist the discussion, attached are:

- The Committee's work programme
- The Cabinet's forward plan

11 **Any other urgent items of business**

The Chairman may raise any items of urgent business.

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# Agenda Annexe

## Guidance notes for the meeting

### 1. Inspection of Papers

Any person wishing to inspect Minutes, reports, or the background papers for any item on the Agenda should contact the Committee Administrator for the meeting – Lindsey Tawse on Tel: (01823) 355059 or 357628 or Email: [ltawse@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:ltawse@somerset.gov.uk) They can also be accessed via the council's website on [www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/agendasandpapers)

### 2. Members' Code of Conduct requirements

When considering the declaration of interests and their actions as a councillor, Members are reminded of the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct and the underpinning Principles of Public Life: Honesty; Integrity; Selflessness; Objectivity; Accountability; Openness; Leadership. The Code of Conduct can be viewed at: <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/organisation/key-documents/the-councils-constitution/>

### 3. Minutes of the Meeting

Details of the issues discussed and recommendations made at the meeting will be set out in the Minutes, which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting.

### 4. Public Question Time

**If you wish to speak, please tell Lindsey Tawse the Committee's Administrator - by 12 noon the (working) day before the meeting.**

At the Chairman's invitation you may ask questions and/or make statements or comments about any matter on the Committee's agenda – providing you have given the required notice. You may also present a petition on any matter within the Committee's remit. The length of public question time will be no more than 30 minutes in total.

A slot for Public Question Time is set aside near the beginning of the meeting, after the minutes of the previous meeting have been signed. However, questions or statements about any matter on the Agenda for this meeting may be taken at the time when each matter is considered.

You must direct your questions and comments through the Chairman. You may not take direct part in the debate. The Chairman will decide when public participation is to finish.

If there are many people present at the meeting for one particular item, the Chairman may adjourn the meeting to allow views to be expressed more freely. If an item on the Agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

An issue will not be deferred just because you cannot be present for the meeting. Remember that the amount of time you speak will be restricted, normally to two minutes only.

## **5. Exclusion of Press & Public**

If when considering an item on the Agenda, the Committee may consider it appropriate to pass a resolution under Section 100A (4) Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, as defined under the terms of the Act.

## **6. Committee Rooms & Council Chamber and hearing aid users**

To assist hearing aid users the following Committee meeting rooms have infra-red audio transmission systems (Luttrell room, Wyndham room, Hobhouse room). To use this facility we need to provide a small personal receiver that will work with a hearing aid set to the T position. Please request a personal receiver from the Committee's Administrator and return it at the end of the meeting.

## **7. Recording of meetings**

The Council supports the principles of openness and transparency. It allows filming, recording and taking photographs at its meetings that are open to the public - providing this is done in a non-disruptive manner. Members of the public may use Facebook and Twitter or other forms of social media to report on proceedings and a designated area will be provided for anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings. No filming or recording may take place when the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting. As a matter of courtesy to the public, anyone wishing to film or record proceedings is asked to provide reasonable notice to the Committee Administrator so that the relevant Chairman can inform those present at the start of the meeting.

We would ask that, as far as possible, members of the public aren't filmed unless they are playing an active role such as speaking within a meeting and there may be occasions when speaking members of the public request not to be filmed.

The Council will be undertaking audio recording of some of its meetings in County Hall as part of its investigation into a business case for the recording and potential webcasting of meetings in the future.

A copy of the Council's Recording of Meetings Protocol should be on display at the meeting for inspection, alternatively contact the Committee Administrator for the meeting in advance.

## SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES AND PLACE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee held in the Luttrell Room - County Hall, Taunton, on Tuesday 5 September 2017 at 9.30 am

**Present:** Cllr T Lock (Chairman), Cllr M Lewis (Vice-Chairman), Cllr P Ham, Cllr T Napper, Cllr A Wedderkopp, Cllr B Filmer, Cllr John Hunt, Cllr J Thorne and Cllr L Vijeh

**Other Members present:** Cllr H Davies, Cllr D Fothergill, Cllr D Hall, Cllr J Lock, Cllr T Munt, Cllr F Purbrick, Cllr L Redman, Cllr J Woodman.

**Apologies for absence:** Cllr D Ruddle

### 21 **Declarations of Interest** - Agenda Item 2

Councillor Vijeh declared an interest in Item 5 as a number of the county farms are within her division.

### 22 **Minutes from the previous meeting held on 04 July 2017** - Agenda Item 3

The minutes of the meeting held on 04 July 2017 were accepted as being accurate by the Committee.

### 23 **Public Question Time** - Agenda Item 4

Mrs Sue Osborne asked a public question in relation to Item 5. Mrs Osborne declared that she was the wife of a county farm tenant. She welcomed the proposal of a county farms Task & Finish Group especially as it would be Member-led but she questioned how this would fit with the refreshed approach towards asset rationalisation. The forward programme indicates a county farm decision to be taken on 25 September 2017 but Mrs Osborne questioned whether key disposal decisions should be deferred until the review is completed. Mrs Osborne stated that one of the planned sales would result in the fragmentation of a farm. The refreshed approach appears to transfer power of disposal to a central core but how will this affect and influence the Task & finish Group outcomes?

Mrs Osborne questioned if cabinet members, officers and service users will have any say in disposals and how tenants' interests will be assessed. It is critical that every tenant is given the chance to have a say, in confidence if necessary.

Finally, Mrs Osborne asked what confidence can tenants and others have that the Task & Finish group will have full access to all documents, records and information that they need, on request?

The Director, Commercial and Business services responded to Mrs Osborne to say that the majority of her questions would be addressed during Item 5. If it is agreed to establish a Task & Finish Group today, they will look at tenants' interests when they set their terms of reference. Tenants' interests are

specifically included in the recommendations made in 2.2 of the report. The Task & Finish group will have full and unprecedented access to documents, as they are entitled to and will have cross party membership.

**24 Asset Rationalisation: A Refreshed Approach and County Farms Task & Finish Group - Agenda Item 5**

The Committee received a presentation from the Director, Commercial and Business Services and the Head of Corporate Property. The presentation detailed the background to asset disposal and explained the need for a new approach to asset rationalisation.

The Committee heard that the sale of assets had achieved in excess of £33m in capital receipts during the last five financial years. The bulk of this has been used to support the capital programme, although it can also be used to support transformation.

As part of the refreshed approach, all property assets would be reviewed to determine the business case for disposal, commercial use or strategic retention on a case by case basis through existing decision making structures.

The Head of Corporate Property outlined the principles and benefits of asset rationalisation and shared the short, medium and long-term strategy including a 30 month target of achieving £20m in capital receipts. The new approach would mean that the Council would be able to be more creative and proactive about which assets to sell, rather than waiting for assets to be declared surplus.

In addition, it is proposed to set up a Task & Finish Group to review the sale of county farms. The Committee heard that the previous policy on county farms from 2010 identified a number of holdings retained for future sale because of future development potential. It is the right time to consider this list alongside all other holdings when assessing the options for disposal or retention.

During the debate, it was confirmed that the £33m raised in capital receipts related solely to the sale of property and land.

A Member sought assurance that individual services will be involved with the review and that revenue will also be considered.

Concern was expressed over transparency as there seemed to be a lack of consistency in how the policy has been applied previously, for example, when advantageous rental rates have been granted. It was clarified that the new approach sought to improve accounting transparency by bringing all payments and receipts through a central point, improving visibility and cost control and that reference to transparency within the report did not relate to transparency in terms of freedom of information.

A Member stated that farming is a core industry in this county and needed to be a key consideration of the Council. Concern was raised over selling assets too cheaply in a rush to achieve capital receipt targets. Members were reassured that if it is in the financial interests of the Council to hold assets it will do so.



The Committee debated at length whether the sale of any county farms should be deferred whilst the Task & Finish Group carried out its review. One Member stated that in some cases it would be in the interests of the county to proceed with planned sales. It was confirmed that the council would continue to follow the existing policy using the usual decision-making process until such time as a new policy was agreed.

Following confirmation that the recommendations contained in 2.1 of the report did not relate to county farm land, the Committee agreed to all four recommendations.

The Committee agreed to the recommendations contained in 2.2 of the report with the addition to 2.2.1 that the Task & finish Group should include a review of the rationale and purpose of retaining county farms.

A Member proposed a recommendation that 'all further discussions and sales of county farm lands are suspended until the Task & Finish Group have made their recommendations except by exception and after either the Task & Finish Group or the Scrutiny Committee have been consulted'. The proposal was seconded and carried following a vote.

The following Members volunteered to form the county farm Task & Finish Group: Cllr Ham, Cllr Napper, Cllr Filmer, Cllr John Hunt and Cllr Wedderkopp. The Chairman stated that the Task & Finish Group review would need to be a short, sharp, in-depth process carried out in a timely manner to prevent unnecessary delay.

The Committee noted the report and asked for a verbal update from the Task & Finish Group at the next committee meeting.

## 25 **Strategic Roads Update** - Agenda Item 6

The Committee received this report from the Strategic Commissioning Manager, Highways and Transport which updated Members on strategic roads investment in the county.

Members were informed that funding for strategic roads improvements comes from a number of sources and a number of new funds have emerged since the last update. The sources were identified as follows:

- Department for Transport Roads Investment Strategy (RIS)
- Highways England Designated Funds.
- Department for Transport 'Pre-Growth Deal' Major Scheme funding.
- Local Enterprise Partnership Local Growth Fund and Growth Deal Process
- Department for Transport Large Local Major Schemes.
- (New) Department for Transport National Productivity Investment Fund
- (New) Housing Infrastructure Fund
- (New) Emerging policy on a new Major Road Network (MRN) for England.
- Developer Funds.

The report highlighted that following a consultation on the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester, the preferred route is expected to be announced later this year. There will also be a further supplementary consultation on a section of the A303 following representations made to Highways England including by Somerset County Council.

The Strategic Manager highlighted the Department for Transport proposals for a Major Road Network and explained that this would be good news for the county. A further update will be provided when more detail is available.

The Committee heard that the Council received £3.859m from the National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) following the application of a funding formula. The indicative funding allocations for this fund were outline din the report. A further tranche of NPIF funding has been announced for 2018/19 and 2019/20 to be allocated by competitive funding bids.

A member questioned whether there was any further update on the A358 scheme as the local community are very keen to receive an announcement. It was confirmed that more detail should be available following a meeting with Highways England next week.

A Member questioned whether cheaper land value in Wales would pose a problem. Land value is a huge issue for the Council and can be challenging.

It was clarified that improvement schemes have to be linked to the criteria for funding which in turn dictates the major schemes funding.

A Member queried whether there was any indication of which funds would be oversubscribed and it was confirmed that The Housing Infrastructure Fund is likely to be very competitive and marginal funding bids may well be more successful.

The Committee noted the report.

## 26 **Parking Services Update** - Agenda Item 7

The Committee received a report from the Parking Services Manager which included progress made within parking services and introduced the revised policy for the introduction of resident parking.

Members were made aware that since June 2012, the County Council has been responsible for on street parking enforcement across the entire county (apart from the M5, the A303 and private roads). The County Council also works in partnership with Mendip District Council, Sedgemoor District Council, Taunton Deane Borough Council and West Somerset District Council.

South Somerset District Council has remained outside of the partnership and they undertake their own enforcement and related services. Discussions have recently taken place with South Somerset District Council about joining the partnership. It is not anticipated there will be any change for the time being whilst South Somerset District Council complete their current transformation programme.

The Committee were updated about the changes to service delivery since June 2012 and heard that the service has been able to benefit from increased efficiency and greater accountability.

The Committee heard that the service is now using the customer contact centre and print to post facility successfully. Back office and permit processing has been brought back in-house. The service has increased the number of officers based in County Hall carrying out back office processing and providing operational and strategic guidance to the contractor. These changes to back office processing have been generally well-received by residents. The service has also increased its on-line services. Parking permits can now be managed on-line bringing it in-line with the DVLA and ensuring that permits are immediately up to date.

The Committee then heard that the new residents parking policy is due to be considered by Cabinet in October. The revised policy aims to streamline the process and ensure residents who may be affected by any scheme are fully aware of the features and benefits of a resident parking scheme. It will help to identify and prioritise schemes requested by residents to ensure they are supported and viable.

The initial request for a resident parking scheme must demonstrate that 60% of the residents support the change. A Member queried whether it was in fact 60% of residents that respond which could result in a scheme going ahead with as little as around 30% of residents in favour. It was clarified that if a resident makes no response to a proposal it is seen as consenting as long as the proposal has been sufficiently advertised. It was also clarified that the 60% relates to households with one vote per house. A Member commented that some communities are put off by the 60% rate and are reluctant to canvass residents to gain support. Whilst this is understood by the service, it is important that there is some level of consensus achieved to avoid community disputes.

Members commented that more enforcement is needed out of hours, particularly in the evenings and that the mobility of enforcement officers needed to be addressed. It was explained that enforcement officers do have access to vehicles and that where necessary enforcement will take place in the evening.

It was confirmed that currently there is no residential parking in Frome and there were no Blue Badge matters to report from that area.

It was confirmed that Area Traffic Engineers should be contacted to discuss making changes to parking time limits.

Members questioned whether the service is cost neutral. It was confirmed that the service currently has a surplus which is used towards other traffic management services. Members questioned how the use of surplus is scrutinised and were informed that any surplus is ring-fenced within operational services. An update on the use of surplus could be provided at a future meeting.

It was confirmed that when the on-line reporting process is used this is passed to the relevant traffic manager or to the enforcement team depending on the nature of the report.

The Committee noted the report and asked for an update in six months time to include data on the use of surplus.

## 27 **Highways Terms Maintenance Contract - Agenda Item 8**

The Committee received a presentation from the Interim Director, Economic & Community Infrastructure Operations and was joined by the Business Director, Skanska regarding the new Highways Terms Maintenance Contract.

The Committee heard that the letting of the new contract is due to be considered by Cabinet on 18<sup>th</sup> October. The presentation updated members as to the reasons for letting a new contract and the financial and non-financial benefits of doing so. The total cost of the new contract is estimated to be lower than extending the previous contract and re-procuring in 2020. The contract will provide for increased integration and collaborative working.

The new contract includes 23 key Performance Indicators and 28 Quality Undertakings which aim to ensure good performance, added value and reduced costs and these are all contractually binding. The development of a Community Engagement & Social Value Plan is embedded within the contract. This has been submitted by the contractor and is currently being considered by the Council.

The integration of the Asset Design Team and the surface dressing programme were highlighted as particular successes of the Highways Maintenance contract.

The Committee heard that in 2011/12 the Council developed its Small Improvement Schemes (SIS) process to try to address highway issues which are a priority for local communities, with County Councillors acting on behalf of their respective communities and submitting scheme requests. Five SIS schemes have been issued to Skanska so far this year amounting to nearly £100,000. An annual budget in the region of £2m is allocated for the delivery of the SIS programme (although projects tend to span financial years).

Members questioned whether revisits are made to inspect surfaces that have been disturbed by utility companies. It was confirmed that the Council inspects both the contractor and utilities work and if the standard or notices about work are not up to standard then action is taken. Members were encouraged to report any incidences if they were made aware of them.

Members commented that more work could be done to work with Parish Councils and volunteers. The difficulty in applying for speed indicators and finger posts was raised as an example of this. Concerns were also raised about signs becoming covered by overgrowth. It was clarified that the Council is working with the contractor to use their expertise to improve these issues. After an initial challenge, the finger posts are working well. The contract contains a commitment to work with local communities and improve this.

Members were asked to report any verge cutting issues and informed that it can be possible for local communities to either purchase additional services or to take on services themselves. Members commented that it is important to keep Parish Councils informed and a Member suggested that it would be useful to provide a report to Parish council to suggest things that they could consider and signpost them to the relevant contact. It was confirmed that a Community and Member briefing sheet was currently being written and would be sent shortly.

It was clarified that more collaboration with Devon County Council could be possible as both authorities are using the same contractor. Collaboration will increase as the contract is embedded and a possible area to look at in the future may be the Winter Salting Programme.

It was clarified that the Council is statutory bound to present diversion routes which are suitable for all vehicles. This may result in routes which are longer. Multiple diversions are sometimes required when significant works are taking place in one area but this is planned for as best as possible.

Members were encouraged to report if roadwork signage is not removed or if road lines need to be re-painted and were reassured that the choice of asphalt recipe is well considered to ensure both cost effectiveness and cohesion with neighbouring counties.

The Committee noted the report and asked for an update in March or April after the winter period.

## 28 **Somerset Road Safety Strategy** - Agenda Item 9

The Committee received a report and presentation from the Service Manager, Transport Data & Road Safety which detailed the new approach to the Somerset Road Safety Strategy.

The Committee heard that the current Road Safety Strategy was launched in 2013 and it is now appropriate to review it and develop a new approach. Previous road safety work has been successful in reducing the numbers of people killed and injured on the roads of Somerset, however nationally and locally there is evidence that the impact of current road safety initiatives on road casualties is starting to plateau and the pace of reduction is slowing down.

In April 2013, under the Health and Social Care Act 2012, statutory duties for public health were conferred on local authorities; they were made responsible for improving the health of their local population and for public health services. The Public Health Outcomes Framework has several indicators relevant to road safety.

At a stakeholder strategy review meeting in March it was agreed that it was an appropriate time for Somerset to develop a new road safety strategy that adopts a wider-agency approach while continuing to promote evidence based approaches to road safety, health and wellbeing.

The Road Safety, Highways and Transport Commissioning and Public Health Teams are working together with other parts of the County Council, and appropriate external bodies, to explore how this vision could be applied and achieved in Somerset through the development of a cross-directorate road safety strategy.

The strategy is being developed in consultation with internal and external stakeholders. A Somerset County Council strategy steering group was formed with area specific sub-groups to develop the detail of the strategy action plan, and delivery through an Action/Delivery Plan and a Transition document. The strategy embraces work with many partners such as Avon and Somerset Constabulary, Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Service, South-west Ambulance Service Trust, Advanced Motoring Groups, and Highways England in seeking to have a maximum impact on reducing the numbers of people killed and seriously injured on Somerset's road network.

It is anticipated that the draft Strategy will be finalised and consulted on in November 2017.

Members were informed that the service runs a number of exhibitions to raise awareness of road safety. It is planned to showcase these to Members in the future and Members are encouraged to contact the service if they aware of a local event that the service could attend.

The Committee commented that it is clear that this is a strategy which cannot be delivered in isolation. It noted the report and asked to be kept updated as the Strategy develops.

29 **Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee Work Programme - Agenda Item 10**

The Committee considered and noted the Council's Forward Plan of proposed key decisions.

Following debate, the Committee requested the following additions to the work programme:

- A verbal update from the county farms Task & Finish Group (03 Oct)
- An update on the County Plan (31 Oct)
- An update on Parking Services – to include data on the use of surplus (March/April 2018)
- An update on the Highways Terms Maintenance Contract (March/April 2018)

30 **Any other urgent items of business - Agenda Item 11**

There was a brief discussion about a proposal from Devon County Council to form a Joint Task & Finish Group to monitor and scrutinise the Connecting Devon and Somerset Broadband programme.

Cllr Thorne expressed an interest and the proposal will be considered in more detail at the next Committee meeting on 03 October 2017.

**(The meeting ended at 1.10 pm)**

**CHAIRMAN**

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## Corporate Performance Report – End of July (Q1+1) 2017/18

Lead Officer: Emma Plummer / Strategic Manager - Performance

Author: Emma Plummer / Strategic Manager - Performance

Contact Details: (01823) 359251

Cabinet Members: Cllr D Fothergill, Leader of the Council & Cllr David Hall

Division and Local Member: All

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. This performance monitoring report provides an overview of the Council's performance across the organisation.
- 1.2. The report is based on the content of the County Plan.

### 2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the information contained within this report specifically those areas identified as a potential concern under section 4 of this report and the "issues for consideration" section of Appendix A.
- 2.2. Members are also asked to review and comment on actions undertaken at Cabinet, to ensure that appropriate consideration has been given to the work being undertaken to address performance concerns.

### 3. Background

- 3.1. This report provides members and senior officers with the information they need to lead and manage the performance of the organisation and increase levels of public accountability.
- 3.2. The report has been updated to reflect the County Plan that was adopted by full Council in February 2016 and a review of the priorities and the performance information that contributes to them has been carried out. Appendix A – the Performance Wheel now has seven segments which reflect the "People's Priorities" which are widely consulted upon through the Listening Learning, Changing Roadshows. There are four "Council" segments which seek to measure how well the council manages its relationships with partners, staff and the public and how good its 'internal management' processes are. There is one segment that seeks to reflect the performance of the Vision Projects being undertaken by the Vision Volunteers.
- 3.3. Work to align the reporting of the Vision Volunteer projects with the Corporate Performance report is underway. Progress is being reported monthly to Core Council Board and presentations have recently been considered by Cabinet and Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee.
- 3.4. This report provides the latest information available in the period up until 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017. As such some of the data may be a little historical in nature; discussions regarding "performance issues" will take account of any additional information that may be available following production of this report

- 3.5. This report has been presented to Cabinet on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017.
- 3.6. This report is being presented to Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2017.
- 3.7. This report is being presented to Scrutiny for Policies, Adults & Health on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2017.

#### 4. Our Performance

- 4.1.
- Sections that are preceded by 'P' are of particular interest to Scrutiny Policies and Place.
  - Sections that are preceded by 'A&H' are of particular interest to Scrutiny Policies, Adults & Health.
  - Sections that are preceded by 'C&F' are of particular interest to Scrutiny Policies, Children & Families.
- 4.2. This quarter there are three red segments:
- **(A&H, C&F) P1 Help vulnerable and elderly people** – The Performance Improvement process continues to embed within adult services. Improved use of data to support performance improvement is now being regularised across all teams in conjunction to a focused improved use of technology. Progress is being made to reach these targets particularly with regard to improving recording of data to ensure reporting accurately reflects work done. Management actions are in place for all performance targets and are being monitored closely.
  - **(C&F) P3 Safer Children and Better Care** - Progress for the first year of the Children and Young People's Plan has been reported to the Children's Trust Executive and was reported to Cabinet on 14th June. The Children's Trust Executive are pleased with the progress against the 7 Improvement Programmes, but recognise there is still much work to be done. Action plans for 2017/18 have been drawn up with a focus on a stepped improvement over this second year to ensure year 3 achieves the outcomes of the CYPP in 2019. Ofsted quarterly monitoring visits have concluded adequate progress is being made and DfE intervention has confirmed a "significant improvement" in Somerset's Children's Services, including more manageable case-loads, a more stable workforce and better partnership working as reported by the Minister in December 2016. Despite this, until a re-inspection, services are judged inadequate and there is a corporate risk for Safeguarding Children that has a very high risk rating. Change is evident but universal improvement remains is a challenge.
  - **(P) C4 Managing our Business** - The Authority's forecast shows a projected overspend of £10.054m. This represents 3.22% of base budget. The majority of the overspend lies in the Children's Services budgets. The implication of this early forecast is that Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team will need to take some immediate actions to address the overspend projections. Given last year's position, there are already 5 high priority projects under way (all but one of which are affecting children's services budgets) to identify ways of reducing spend and managing demand. These are having some success in reducing

overspend and delivering MTFP savings but are projects that in some cases span last year, this year and next before coming to fruition.

4.3. This quarter there is one segment which has declining performance:

**P2 - Healthy Residents and reducing inequalities**

- A number of metrics and targets have been refined for the new financial year, these have been made more challenging. In addition, Public Health nursing has moved to a digital recording mechanism, the data transfer is not yet complete which has influenced figures for the breastfeeding and Health Visitor developmental reviews.

**4.4. Performance Summary**

The latest performance information is set out in Appendix A and summarised in the table below:

Directions of Travel have been assessed based on whether current performance is improving or deteriorating as opposed to comparing performance with the previous report.

Metric Segment	Number of objectives			Direction of Travel		
	Green	Amber	Red	Up	Stable	Down
The People's Priorities	3	2	2	3	3	1
The Council	2	1	1	1	3	0
Vision Volunteers	1	0	0	0	1	0
Totals	6	3	3	4	7	1
As Percentage	50%	25%	25%	33%	58%	8%

4.5. As requested by Scrutiny the table below compares performance between quarters at the objective level and a link is also available to the previous quarterly reports in the Background Papers section at the end of this report.

Wheel Segment		RAG Status 2017/18			
		Apr - Jul	Q2	Q3	Q4
The People's Priorities	P1	R			
	P2	A			
	P3	R			
	P4	A			
	P5	G			
	P6	G			
	P7	G			
The Council	C1	G			
	C2	G			
	C3	A			
	C4	R			
Vision Volunteers	V1	G			

It is important when managing performance that consideration be given to the overarching vision statements set out in the County Plan

## 5. Core Council Programme

- 5.1.
- Sections that are preceded by 'P' are of particular interest to Scrutiny Policies and Place.
  - Sections that are preceded by 'A&H' are of particular interest to Scrutiny Policies, Adults & Health.
  - Sections that are preceded by 'C&F' are of particular interest to Scrutiny Policies, Children & Families.

- 5.2. The current status of the Core Council Programme is set out in Appendix B (attached), which details key achievements, issues and next steps.

Overall progress has been steady and there have been some significant advances this quarter in several programmes as detailed in the themes below. Specifically, the deployment of smartphones and the rollout of Skype for Business through the Technology and People Programme has started to change the way the Council does business by enabling more efficient ways of working through increasing productivity.

The Core Council Programme continues to target delivery of £28.65m of financial benefits (including cost avoidance) in addition to the £23.34m already achieved. However, a full review of the benefits tracking system is underway so the updated figures will be included in the next quarter's report.

An update on progress is detailed by theme below.

### 5.3. Economic Growth

**(P) Economic Prosperity** - Since the contracts for Hinkley Point C were signed between the UK Government, EDF Energy and China General Nuclear Power in September 2016, the key focus for SCC continues to be detailed planning with EDF Energy regarding its programme for delivery of the associated development works, including the remaining highway schemes. This includes liaison with EDF to gain an understanding of the construction programme more generally to ensure that the opportunity to create a positive legacy from Hinkley Point C is realised. A Cabinet decision has been taken to appoint a supplier for the Travel Demand Behaviour Programme.

Highways England has confirmed their contribution of £4m for the M5 Junction 25 scheme which means that the scheme is fully funded. The planning application has been submitted and determination is due in Autumn 2017.

Highways England has announced a supplementary consultation exercise with more options for the proposed A358 route close to Taunton.

Airband achieved its Homes Connected delivery target for the first phase of National Parks broadband deployment.

90% of the space in Phase 1 of the Somerset Energy Innovation Centre (SEIC) is now committed with significant anchor tenants in place. The Department for Communities and Local Government has confirmed funding, subject to some pre-contract conditions, for 400m<sup>2</sup> of flexible office and light industrial workshop space as part of phase 2 of the development of the SEIC. Completion of this phase of the centre is expected in Spring 2018.

We have received confirmation that the iAero expression of interest for Growth Deal 3 funding was successful. SCC legal team are working with Leonardo's legal team to agree and sign Heads of terms to be included in the full

application for ERDF funding.

**(P) County Plan Vision** - The County Plan vision projects were launched in February 2016 as volunteer-led project teams operating across formal team structures. Almost 200 staff and managers volunteered to form self-organising project teams made up of a mix of skills, experience and seniority with guidance and support from senior managers and technical experts with corporate support provided by Organisational Development and Business Change. As of March 2017 all four vision projects have moved to services to deliver as part of core business.

**(P) University in Somerset:** Somerset County Council have committed to supporting Bridgwater & Taunton College in their ambitions to develop their university offer.

**(P) Garden Town:** Taunton was announced as a Garden Town in January 2017 and the county council's planning & policy team are working closely with Taunton Deane Borough council to progress the creation of 17,000 new homes between now and 2028.

**(P) Business Parks:** The County Council's Economic Development team are working with private sector partners to deliver a number of significant business parks, including the Somerset Energy Innovation Centre in Bridgwater and the iAero facility in Yeovil. The county council is also pursuing public-sector owned land through the One Public Estate initiative.

**(P) Energy Initiatives:** The county council's Energy Bureau team are developing business cases for a wide range of green energy initiatives, from promoting energy saving investments through to the development of renewable energy generation on publicly owned land.

#### **5.4. 2020 Vision Theme**

**(P) One Public Estate (OPE)** - Despite delays with some of the projects, the OPE programme is continuing to engage with partners to ensure buy in to future timescales and milestones.

Somerset County Council and West Somerset District Council have jointly decided not to pursue the relocation of Williton Library from its current building to West Somerset House. However to improve standards of customer service a new self-service kiosk will be installed at the existing Williton Library.

The Shepton Mallet project is still on hold to allow Mendip District Council to align with the wider development of a Blue Light Emergency Centre.

Progress continues to be made on Taunton with three discrete phases: Deane House hub, County Hall Back Office Hub and a potential Community Hub. SCC resources have been prioritised into developing an Outline Business Case for the County Hall proposal for sign off in September 2017.

Solutions for Yeovil and Chard are being developed and aligned with strategic intentions of key partners.

**(P) Technology and People-led Programme (TAP)** - The TAP Programme continues to work towards contributing to savings by improving organisational productivity and process efficiency with the potential of reducing headcount and

infrastructure costs, using technology as the key enabler. Through embedding new technology into the organisation and empowering people to work in a different way, this results in better interaction with our partners and customers.

In this reporting period, the deployment of smartphones has enabled over 40% of the organisation to now have access to mail and calendar via their phone regardless of their location. Also, a quarter of the Council's workforce have used Skype meetings as an alternative to face to face meetings which should contribute towards the corporate initiative to reduce travel costs.

There is some delay in deploying other technologies such as Windows 10, SharePoint and e-recruitment but all are in pilot phases in key service areas. Issues are being actively managed to ensure a smooth rollout later in the year. Staff engagement has been very positive, building on the initial launch of the Technology Champions, with continued good levels of attendance at regular lunch and learn sessions. The systems review work with Adults' Services is also progressing and highlighting improvement opportunities in the service that can be enabled by changing the way people work.

In the next reporting period, the TAP Programme will undergo a review to validate the original assumptions outlined in the business case and evaluate the target benefits realisation position.

#### **5.5. (A&H) Modernising Adults' Social Care**

Business Change is continuing to actively support Adults Social Care in their transformation journey to fully embed practice that promotes independence. Positive progress has been seen with this approach from people seeking support from the community with an increased number of people finding the help they need within their community networks and without need for formal support. A new approach to support people to leave hospital in a timely way with a support plan that returns them to independence in their own home is now being piloted jointly with health partners. Work that begins to change the approach experienced by people with longer term care needs has now also started.

Following the closure of the formal programme at the end of March 2017, a review of financial and other benefits from the programme of work has been completed. The programme has enabled a fundamental change to the way we respond to people when they make contact, employing an asset based approach and conversation. An increased proportion of people are now getting the outcomes they need without and onward referral (typically 50%, with an expectation that this will increase to more than 75% over time). The resultant need for fewer and reduced packages of care has already avoided some costs and is projected to increase over the next 3 years (£4m over 3 years). Responsibility for realising and monitoring these benefits has now been handed over to the service.

A comprehensive review of strategic lessons learned has also been undertaken and will feed into future design and mobilisation of complex transformation programmes.

#### **5.6. (C&F) Improving Children's Services**

Arrangements with Essex County Council as Improvement Partner continue. Additional Quality and Performance Review Meetings (QPRM) successfully

took place in May and July and these continue on a quarterly basis with the next full QPRM in September. In addition, regular Ofsted monitoring visits are taking place with the most recent visit on 22nd and 23rd August.

Embedding of the 'Tools to do the Job' work stream concludes at the end of August having delivered:

- Very positive deployment of the Early Help Case Management system within getset services which has replaced the use of spreadsheets and has created increased capacity for casework.
- Improved multi-agency collaboration and sharing of information through the use of Professional Choices, with ever increasing numbers of users and positive impacts on practice, particularly around panel administration and preparedness of professionals to participate.
- The first whole academic year of the Team Around the School initiative which has had good engagement and is now a more consistent model of Early Help in Somerset. An outline business case for this way of working has been approved with commitment to ongoing support into the next academic year.

Focus has now turned to improving our Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) service. A peer review with Gloucestershire County Council took place on 10th and 11th May and found some good practice but with overall conclusions that this was inconsistent and there was a lack of universal understanding of SEND services. A multi-agency response to deliver against 9 Strategic Priorities (as outlined below) has been mobilised with a view to making rapid improvement from June-December 2017. This has gained good traction from a range of partners including the Parent Carer Forum and young people.

Nine Priorities:

- 1: Joint Commissioning
- 2: Health Engagement
- 3: Transitions
- 4: Participation
- 5: Early Help for SEND
- 6: Statutory Assessment
- 7: Complex Cases
- 8: School Improvement
- 9: Ofsted Preparation.

## **6. Consultations undertaken**

- 6.1.** The key messages within this monitoring report have been provided by Management Teams and reviewed by relevant Lead Cabinet Members.

## **7. Implications**

- 7.1.** If addressing performance issues requires changes in the way services are delivered through formal decisions, these must be supported by an appropriate impact assessment which will need to be duly considered by decision makers in line with our statutory responsibilities before any changes are implemented.

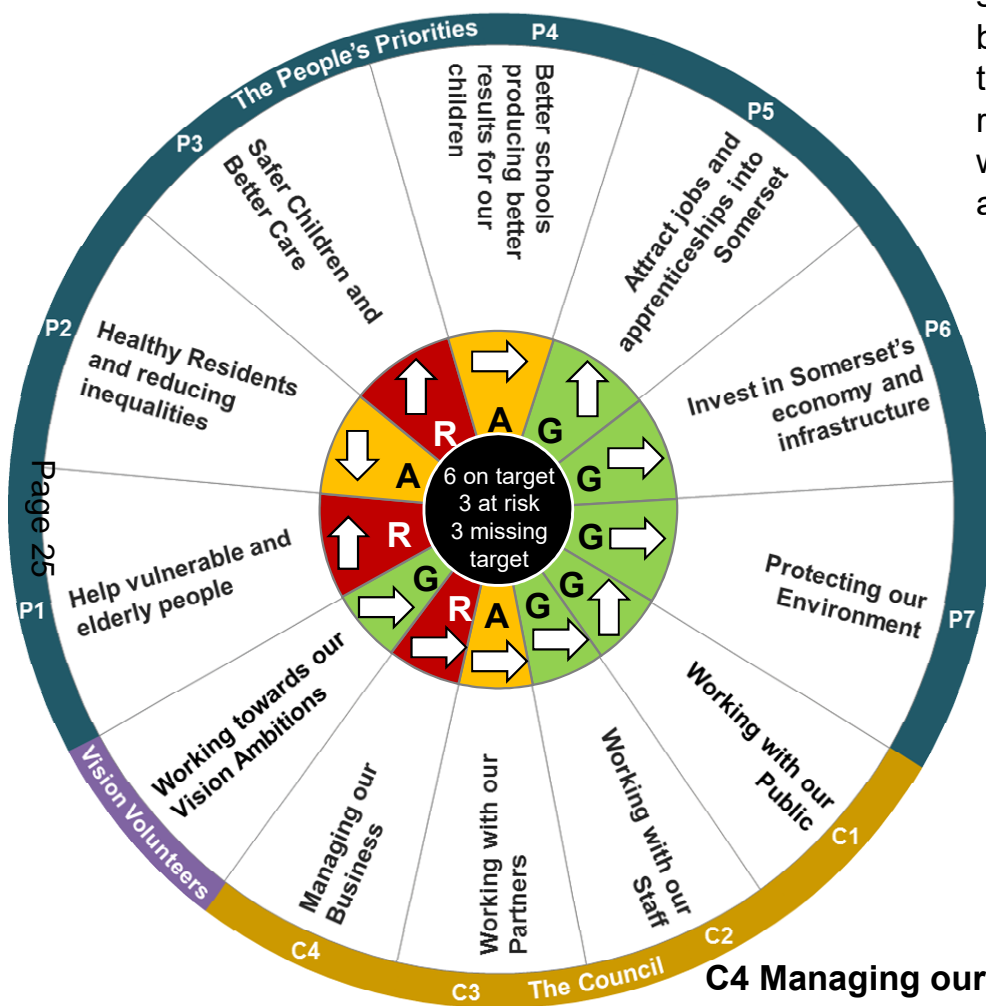
## **8. Background papers**

**8.1.** County Plan <http://somersexcountyplan.org.uk/>

**Note:** For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author.



## Issues for consideration



### P1 Help vulnerable and elderly people

- The Performance Improvement process continues to embed within adult services. Improved use of data to support performance improvement is now being regularised across all teams in conjunction to a focused improved use of technology. Progress is being made to reach these targets particularly with regard to improving recording of data to ensure reporting accurately reflects work done. Management actions are in place for all performance targets and are being monitored closely.

### P3 Safer Children and Better Care

- Progress for the first year of the Children and Young People's Plan has been reported to the Children's Trust Executive and was reported to Cabinet on 14th June. The Children's Trust Executive are pleased with the progress against the 7 Improvement Programmes, but recognise there is still much work to be done. Action plans for 2017/18 have been drawn up with a focus on a stepped improvement over this second year to ensure year 3 achieves the outcomes of the CYPP in 2019. Ofsted quarterly monitoring visits have concluded adequate progress is being made and DfE intervention has confirmed a "significant improvement" in Somerset's Children's Services, including more manageable case-loads, a more stable workforce and better partnership working as reported by the Minister in December 2016. Despite this, until a re-inspection, services are judged inadequate and there is a corporate risk for Safeguarding Children that has a very high risk rating. Change is evident but universal improvement remains is a challenge.

### C4 Managing our Business

- The Authority's forecast shows a projected overspend of £10.054m. This represents 3.22% of base budget. The majority of the overspend lies in the Children's Services budgets. The implication of this early forecast is that Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team will need to take some immediate actions to address the overspend projections. Given last year's position, there are already 5 high priority projects under way (all but one of which are affecting children's services budgets) to identify ways of reducing spend and managing demand. These are having some success in reducing overspend and delivering MTFP savings but are projects that in some cases span last year, this year and next before coming to fruition

↑	Performance Improving
↓	Performance Deteriorating
→	Performance Stable
G	On target
A	At risk of missing target
R	Missing target

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## Economic Growth

### Economic Prosperity

Promoting economic growth across Somerset by driving inward investment and job creation.

Senior Responsible Owner: Paula Hewitt		Previous status:	A	Current status:	A
Achievements	<p><b>Digital Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Airband achieved its optimal THP (Total Homes Connected delivery target for the first phase of National Parks broadband deployment. (May 2017)</li> <li>17 structures for Connecting Devon and Somerset phase 2 have been implemented ( July 2017)</li> </ul> <p><b>Business Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Successful iAero expression of interest for Growth Deal 3 funding (April 2017)</li> <li>Growth Deal 2 funding agreement for Highbridge Enterprise centre phase 2 has been finalised. Funding awarded subject to conditions. ( June 2017)</li> <li>Department for Communities and Local Government confirmed funding for office and industrial space as part of phase 2 of SEIC development (July 2017)</li> </ul> <p><b>Transport Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M5 J25: Highways England have confirmed their contribution to the scheme of £4m. Planning application due for decision in Autumn (July 2017).</li> <li>Decision by Cabinet to let Yeovil Western Corridor Contract (August 2017).</li> </ul> <p><b>Energy Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hinkley: Tender evaluation completed for the Travel Demand Behaviour Programme and Cabinet decision to</li> </ul>				
Issues	<p><b>Transport Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bridgwater Railway Station redesign: Concern that not enough Great Western Railway resource is being allocated to the project.</li> </ul>				
Next Steps	<p><b>Transport Infrastructure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New consultation on A303/A358 routes (Autumn/Winter 2017)</li> <li>SEIC mobilisation commences (August 2017)</li> <li>Develop full application for EDRF funding for iAero (Autumn 2017)</li> <li>Tender evaluation for Colley Lane (Autumn 2017)</li> <li>Decision on J25 Planning Application (Autumn 2017)</li> </ul>				

## 2020 Vision

### One Public Estate (OPE)

Delivering central government One Public Estate initiative which seeks to reduce the public sector building running costs, dispose of surplus public sector buildings and support regeneration which will produce new homes and new jobs across Somerset.

Senior Responsible Owner: Claire Lovett		Previous status:	A	Current status:	R
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work continues to develop a Business Case for each of 3 main emerging OPE solutions in Taunton (Deane House customer hub, County Hall back office and Taunton Library community hub).</li> </ul>				
Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delays with an agreed Customer Service Model for Shepton Mallet Library.</li> <li>Dependant partner transformation projects are having an impact on delivery across all OPE projects.</li> </ul>				
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of programme benefits to feed into September LGA return, which is part of funding bid for capital receipts, a statutory return (September 2017)</li> </ul>				

### Technology and People-led (TAP)

Innovation through technology to enhance the way we work by improving processes that increase productivity, nurture talent, and create a high performing organisation able to serve our customers more effectively.

Senior Responsible Owner: Richard Williams		Previous status:	A	Current status:	A
Achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Server back up to Azure completed. (April 2017)</li> <li>Delivered organisation wide roll of Skype for Business. (April 2017)</li> <li>Staff offered free Office 365 home use licence through the Microsoft partnership. (April 2017)</li> <li>Further lunch and learn sessions held for Technology Champions. (April 2017)</li> <li>Deployment commenced for the smartphone waitlist (May 2017)</li> <li>Windows 10 pilot commenced (July 2017).</li> <li>Sharepoint pilot commenced in two service areas (July 2017).</li> </ul>				
Issues	None				
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gateway Review of programme to validate assumptions in business case (September 2017)</li> <li>Commence SharePoint pilot with ICT teams (September 2017)</li> <li>Planning for upgrade of 1400 Smartphones to Windows 10 (September 2017)</li> </ul>				

The following Programmes are Adults & Children's Services

## Modernising Adult Social Care

### Adults' Transformation Programme

Re-designing the way Adult Social Care works to enable increasing demand to be met in different ways. Defining the next phase of transformation work in Adult's service including work with partners on jointly managing the health front door.

<b>Senior Responsible Owner:</b> Stephen Chandler		<b>Previous status:</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Current status:</b>	<b>N/A - being scoped</b>
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o First Contact new model in operation. (April 2017)</li> <li>o Programme Closure Report signed off, including lessons learnt and end of programme benefits position. (May 2017)</li> <li>o Following the closure of the Adult's Transformation Programme, Business Change have been working with the Adult Social Care service to scope the next phase of work. This has included establishing a new Adult's Transformation Board and drafting briefs for trail blazer projects. (August 2017)</li> </ul>				
<b>Issues</b>	None				
<b>Next Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Adults' Transformation Board to commission priority work</li> <li>o Quarterly Performance Improvement Meetings in September to include service performance framework</li> </ul>				

## Improving Children's Services

### Children's Improvement Programme

The Children's Improvement Programme has shifted in focus and emphasis will now be on the realisation of the associated benefits ( in particular use of new technology, team around the school and QPRM arrangements). In addition a rapid intervention for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) 0-25 has been mobilised.

<b>Senior Responsible Owner</b> Julian Wooster		<b>Previous status:</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>Current status:</b>	<b>A</b>
<b>Achievements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o 2017/2018 Improvement Plan action plans in place (April 2017)</li> <li>o Early Help Case Management system - system in place and being used. Positive feedback received and changes in practice being delivered (May 2017)</li> <li>o Ofsted monitoring visit for Children Looked After giving balanced but largely positive feedback. (May 2017)</li> <li>o Workforce actions for year 2 clearly defined (May 2017)</li> <li>o SEND Peer Review took place (May 2017)</li> <li>o QPRM with Essex County Council (SCC's improvement partner) was held with DFE in attendance (July 2017)</li> </ul>				
<b>Issues</b>	o There are gaps in our understanding of Ofsted readiness for SEND and an unsatisfactory SEND inspection could trigger a full inspection.				
<b>Next Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o An initial meeting is due to take place in August, regarding how we progress further and plan to get to an Ofsted 'good' rating. (August 2017)</li> <li>o Practitioner level multi agency events to ensure a good multi agency response to SEND objectives (October 2017)</li> </ul>				

#### RAG status definitions

**Green** – Programme/Project on target. Nothing that the Programme/Project Manager (PM) can forecast that will prevent the project/programme being completed to time, cost and quality.

**Amber** - Currently some issues. The project/programme is not progressing in line with the plan, resources, benefits, quality or stakeholder management expectations.. However, the PM/Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) agree that the actions in place will resolve things.

**Red** - Current issues that are having a significant impact on the plan, milestones, benefits or quality of the project/programme. If there are actions in place, the SRO/PM are not confident that those will bring resolution.

Somerset County Council  
Scrutiny for Polices and Place Committee  
– 03 October 2017

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## 2017/18 Revenue Budget Month 4

Lead Officer: Kevin Nacey – Director of Finance and Performance

Author: Lizzie Watkin – Service Manager, Chief Accountant

Contact Details: [ewatkin@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:ewatkin@somerset.gov.uk)

Cabinet Member: Cllr David Hall – Cabinet Member for Finance and Economic Development

Division and Local Member: All

### 1. Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to update members on the current Revenue Budget outturn position for the 2017/18 financial year based on the end of July (Month 4)
- 1.2. The report indicates how the Council's resources are forecast to be used to support the delivery of budgetary decisions. The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) sets the funding for the County Plan and the use of those funds is then monitored throughout the year to ensure delivery of Council objectives and actions.

### 2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the current Revenue budget outturn position.

### 3. Background

- 3.1. Last year, 2016/17, there was a year-end overspend of £7.049m, with the main areas of overspend in Adults and Children's services. The demands upon these services have not reduced in the early part of this financial year and are not likely to over the course of the year. The transformational work under way to improve demand management and simultaneously improve outcomes for vulnerable children and adults is well under way. The additional funding from government alongside the management action in adults is keeping this budget under control. There has been no additional funding for children services and management action is struggling to change patterns of expenditure.
- 3.2. SCC is therefore in a similar position to last year in trying to find mitigating actions across the whole Council as well as in those core care services to off-set the overspend while transformation takes place in line with our MTFP themes as trailed in budget papers throughout last financial year.

### 4. Summary Forecast 2017/18 – Revenue Budgets

- 4.1. The Authority's forecast shows a projected net overspend of £10.054m (see Appendix A) when compared to the Revenue Budget. This represents 3.22% of base budget. The majority of the overspend lies in the Children's Services budgets (section 3). For this reason this report goes into children's services budgets in some depth to explain the issues involved.

- 4.2. Most other areas of the Council are within reasonable tolerance although some corporate and support budgets are under pressure (as covered in section 9).
- 4.3. The implication of this early forecast is that Cabinet and the Senior Leadership Team will need to take some immediate actions to address the overspend projections. Given last year's position, there are already 5 high priority projects under way (all but one of which are affecting children's services budgets) to identify ways of reducing spending and managing demand. These are having some success in reducing overspend and delivering MTFP savings but are projects that in some cases span last year, this year and next before coming to fruition.

## 5. Children's Services

### 5.1. Children and Families Operations: (+) £12.838m: movement (+) £1.594m

- 5.1.1 The increase in the number of children and young people being helped by the service has increased by 34.6% during the past financial year, (from 1774 to 2388). This is placing increased pressure on salaries budgets both within Fieldwork and other areas, especially as this increase in most instances is covered by locum staff. As a result we are projecting salary pressures of £2.657m in Fieldwork, with a further £1.527m in Fostering, Adoption, Central Management and Disabilities.
- 5.1.2 Whilst the gate-keeping provided by the At Risk of Care and Permanence panels has enabled us to keep the actual number of Children Looked After reasonably stable, there remains a pressure of £4,534m in external residential and fostering placements. The saturation of the external market has seen our average placement costs increase by 4.1% with Independent Fostering Agencies and 18.2% with external residential providers. This is not necessarily the result of individual providers putting up their own costs but the availability of placements with those providers whose costs are less than the market average. This cost pressure is being reflected in other local authorities as well as Somerset. The use of the Assistance to Families budget to prevent children coming into care has added a further pressure of £0.129m.
- 5.1.3 There is a continuing dialogue with Health in regard to contributions for children with complex needs, where a contribution has been agreed at the multi-agency complex cases panel.
- 5.1.4 Whilst the service was very pro-active in setting up provision for the accommodation and welfare of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children moved to Somerset under the National Transfer Scheme it has become clear that the majority of those that are placed with us are seeking to live in larger urban areas such as Bristol or London. This has created a financial pressure for the service as we are funding accommodation provided by the YMCA which is not fully utilised. This is currently projecting a pressure of £0.154m, with translation costs adding a further £0.037m..
- 5.1.5 Transport costs, primarily associated with school and contact visits account for a further £0.208m of pressure.
- 5.1.6 Financial pressures of £2.125m are attributed to positive outcomes for the permanence of children and young people including increases in the number of

Special Guardianship Orders, Fostering, Adoption and Leaving Care allowances and accommodation. In addition, the increase in the number of families taking advantage of the Direct Payments scheme within the Disabilities service giving them more choice and control over how care and support is arranged, to help them live more independently and the allocation of Disability Grants has generated a pressure of £0.476m, resulting in a total pressure in Fees and Allowances of £2.601m.

**5.1.7** The Disability units are projecting a pressure of £0.062m, primarily the result of reduced Continuing Health Care (CHC) funding, and Disability Support for children has contributed a further pressure of £0.071m.

**5.1.8** Further investment in the Children and Young People's Plan has so far incurred additional costs of £0.200m. Business Support continues to project a £0.468m pressure which is subject to scrutiny through the Corporate and Business Services review.

**5.2. Children and Learning Central Commissioning: (+) £2.183m: movement (-) £0.053m**

**5.2.1** There is a pressure of £1.765m across transport budgets against a budget of £9.563m. Home to School transport is showing a pressure of £1.089m. Inflation pressures of £0.236m are impacting on the service, but these have been mainly offset via managed savings. There is a potential further pressure in this area due to the impact of Hinkley Point recruitment, causing contractual/wage issues in relation to driver turnover.

**5.2.2** The Special Educational Needs (SEN) transport pressure is forecast at £0.676m, against a budget of £3.453m, due to the on-going issue of an increased number of placements. Inflation pressures of £0.128m are being offset by reduced calendar days this Year (£0.154m). The full Year implication of additional route costs (£0.197m) following the opening of the new Mendip Free School, plus the delayed notification of placements to Transporting Somerset colleagues, although improving, is still resulting in additional transport requirements.

**5.2.3** There is a planned investment to increase Commissioning staff as part of an invest to save arrangement to reduce on-going operational costs and this is forecast to be £0.276m. It is envisaged this will pay back in 2018/19.

**5.2.4** The Somerset Education Partnership Board (SEPB) programme is forecasting a pressure of £0.620m. This includes £0.169m in relation to "Team around the School" posts, £0.269m for School Education Partners (SEPs) and £0.035m related to Thinking Leadership. Bids for match funded Raising Achievement Plans (RAPs) for the Secondary phase have been agreed at £0.138m, with no pressure expected for the Primary phase.

**5.2.5** A report on Children's services budgets was presented to Children's and Families Scrutiny meeting on Friday 15 September 2017 and provided more detail for the Committee to analyse.

**5.3. Schools Budget**

### **5.3.1 Children and Learning Central Commissioning: (+) £1.883m: movement (+) £1.100m**

The Out of County Independent and Non Maintained Special Schools budget is projecting a pressure of £1.920m due to continuing and extended high cost placements. There have been 32 new placements since January 2017 including 12 since April 2017 totalling £0.775m.

## **6. Adult Services including Learning Disabilities**

### **6.1. Adult Social Care Variation: (-) £0.534m underspend: movement (+) £3.199m**

**6.1.1** Since month two we have reviewed the allocation of the Improved Better Care Fund moving the allocation from Adult Social Care to Learning Disabilities where the greater pressure is experienced. This has the effect of reducing the Adult Social Care underspend and reducing the Learning Disabilities over spend.

Management actions have reduced spend compared to may in the following areas:

- Residential/Nursing Costs £1.142m
- Home Care £0.918m
- Staffing £0.112m

#### **6.1.2 Residential/Nursing**

Overall there has been a considerable reduction in the number of residential and nursing placements over the past two months; however there was a slight upturn during July. Overall there are 30 less clients in a placement than reported at month two, and the number of placements made at above the standard rate remains low which is key to controlling costs.

#### **6.1.3 Home Care**

Delivery of core home care and reablement services have been increasing over the past two months given the figures on residential and nursing care home placements above. However, this support is being delivered in a different way, with a mixture of paid and community support for core, and the higher paid and skilled reablement hours are being used for short, sharp, targeted interventions for those who would benefit from it rather than longer term. This has led to a reduction in overall spend across these services.

#### **6.1.4 Staffing**

Salaries projections have reduced as the service is holding vacancies whilst the restructure of operational and business support teams takes place.

In addition to the above reductions we have assumed the following in getting to the projected underspend of £0.534m:

- £8.084m of the £12.084m new monies allocated through the 'improved' Better Care Fund will be used to offset underlying pressures in social care budgets. £5.500m of this will be used against the in-year overspend within Learning Disabilities. This is a change from the month two report where it was assumed just £7.000m of this money would be used, and that it would offset Adult Social Care spend.



The £1.350m from the 'original' Better Care Fund will also be used to offset underlying pressures in social care budgets.

**6.2. Learning Disabilities: (+) £2.298m overspend: movement (-) £3.616m**

**6.2.1** The service has seen a reduction in variation reported given that £5.500m of the new Improved Better Care Fund from Government has been allocated to the inherent overspend in this area. This masks an increase in activity since month two with new and increased cost placements within Residential Supported Living across traditional third party providers and lower delivery across these areas in relation to the Discovery contract along with reduced income.

**6.2.2** The reported position also assumes achievement of £2.089m savings in year through the reviewing to improve lives project. This would leave a balance of £4.089m of the MTFP saving to achieve in future years. This is shown as a pressure for 2017/18.

**6.2.4** The reported position takes into account a transfer of £6.158m from an equalisation reserve and £1.086m transformation investment funded from capital receipts.

**6.3. Adults Commissioning: (-) £0.079m underspend: movement (-) £0.327m**

**6.3.1** The reduction from May is entirely as a result of changes to the Mental Health budget. Following discussions with Somerset Partnership there is now no expectation of funding from Somerset County Council for the Support, Time and Recovery Team. This creates a saving of £0.202m against the previous projection.

**6.3.2** There have also been a number of changes within Residential and Nursing placements, with clients leaving the service or moving to cheaper placements leading to a reduction in projection of £0.157m.

**7. Public Health: (-) £0.197m underspend:**

**7.1.** The Public Health budget is currently £0.234m underspent. This is a planned underspend as the service begins to make changes required to meet savings in 2018/19 and beyond. It will be requested that this underspend is moved to the Earmarked Reserve at year end to help with the savings that are required from the grant in future years.

**7.2.** Somerset Drugs and Alcohol Partnership (SDAP) is currently projected to overspend by £0.036m following a reduction in the SCC funding available of £0.150m. The service will work to reduce this variation throughout the year however any overspend will need to be drawn down from the SDAP earmarked reserve (currently £0.135m). This means the impact on the Public Health budget is nil.

**8. Economic and Community Infrastructure Services (ECI): (+) £0.015m overspend: movement (-) £0.121m**

**8.1.** The ECI range of services, in aggregate, is broadly on budget but have variability at an individual service level; with SCC's proportion of Somerset

Waste Partnership contributing significantly to this overall neutral position.

**8.2.** Somerset Waste Partnership has a significant underspend of £0.762m principally due to tonnages remaining lower when compared to the same period last year. The largest reduction can be seen at the recycling centres, which is likely the result of the effect of the permits introduced in October 2016. A one-off saving of £225k is included in the value above which relates to the New Waste Treatment contract with Viridor and therefore, the magnitude of saving at this level cannot be expected or sustained, assuming a similar level of activity.

**8.3.** There are currently forecast overspends in Highways and Transport Development Group. These overspends are being mitigated within the services by reviews of capitalisation options and staffing review as part of the on-going restructure across E&CI services.

**8.4.** It is currently anticipated that the 2017/18 MTFP savings will be delivered.

**9. Corporate and Support Services: (+) £2.812m overspend: movement (-) £0.133m**

**9.1.** There are some forecast overspends in ICT and Strategic Property totalling £1.4m. There are also at this stage of the year some projected procurement savings that may not be achievable and we will need to find replacement projects to identify the £1.3m savings required. The forecast funding requirement for the Core Council Programme is £1.268m which will be allocated from capital receipts under the new flexibilities regulations.

**9.2. Commercial and Business Services**

**9.2.1 Commercial Procurement and Contract Management: (+) £1.311m overspend; movement (-) £0.048m.**

The forecast overspend arises from Third Party MTFP savings identified as currently being unachievable (£1.068m Third Party savings and Third Party agency spend (£0.291m), whilst work continues through Strategic Opportunities Board to identify where savings will fall against this cross cutting target. It should be noted that this MTFP saving target is a place holder and for reporting purposes only as the budgets sit within services and does not form part of Commercial and Procurement budget - which overall is reporting an underspend through in-year staff savings of £0.046m relating to vacancies.

**9.2.2 Strategic Property: (+) £0.905m overspend; movement (+) £0.043m.**

Costs in 2017/18 relating to the BMIS R&M scheme are forecast to result in a £0.316m overspend. £0.216m of this arises from outstanding works from the previous BMIS scheme, which could not be accrued. An estimated £0.100m cost has resulted from the contractor's loss of earnings and profit, and the cost of redundancies due to the reduction in school properties within the corporate R&M contract.

The Corporate Repairs and Maintenance budget is projected to be overspent by £0.363m. This is partly due to an increase in a higher number of assets being recorded, and being included in the contract, resulting in an increase in costs.

An estimated £0.050m of this has resulted from the contractor's loss of earnings and profit, and the cost of redundancies due to the reduction in corporate properties within the corporate Repairs and Maintenance contract. As reported in previous years, the cost of the contract alone exceeds the current budget before taking account of any exempt works.

Facilities Management is forecast to overspend by £0.145m, as a result of One Public Estate savings that will not be realised fully in this financial year (£0.055m) and the allocation of £0.090m of Corporate and Support Services savings that are considered at present unachievable.

### **9.2.3 Strategic ICT: (+) £0.490m overspend; movement (-) £0.159m.**

Strategic ICT has an income budget for overhead costs that Support Services for Education (SSE) recover from their customers. These recovered amounts are then transferred to the Support Services; however there is a projected shortfall of £0.149m for the ICT overheads in 17/18.

Despite making savings of £0.750m of revenue savings there is currently a projected overspend on staff costs of £0.140m. Work is being undertaken to understand the true cost of ICT following the return of the service from SWO and it is expected that the overspend will be offset against capital allocation of projects work.

There is also a £0.162m pressure relating to unachievable savings targets that have been assigned to ICT.

### **9.2.4 Core Council Programme (Including Business Change) (+) £1.268m; movement (-) £0.191m**

The approved Core Council Programme (CCP) for 2017/18 will require funding of £1.268m from capital receipt flexibilities.

## **10. Non-Service Items: (-) £9.479m underspend: movement (+) £0.633m**

**10.1.** The underspend in this area is mainly due to uncommitted contingency budget and additional s31 grant received from DCLG for the Non-Domestic Rates schemes.

### **10.2. Central Redundancies (+) £0.251m overspend: movement (+) £0.251m.**

Current estimates for the costs of central redundancies that have been arranged in 2017/18 to date come to £1.419m. An extrapolation of costs based on the remainder of the financial year in previous years suggests a further £0.832m, which will push costs over the £2.000m budget by £0.251m.

## **11. Trading Units**

### **11.1. Support Services for Education (+) £0.002m overspend**

Any shortfalls across SSE will be reviewed and managed where possible in year but it is proposed that any deficit position resulting from budget pressures or additional investment required at the end of 2017/18 be carried forward in the traded reserve and managed as part of an agreed programme of delivery.

## 11.2. Dillington House (-) £0.131m (deficit)

Dillington House is currently forecasting an overspend of £131.2k which is due to a drop of income across all areas of the business. Dillington is working to increase income and review spend during the year to reduce the current forecasted overspend.

## 12. Aged Debt Analysis

12.1. As at the end of August 2017, the outstanding debts over 90 days old totalled £2.741m or 29.24% of gross debt outstanding. This is above the target set for reporting performance on the Performance Wheel of no more than 15% of total debt. By way of comparison, the percentage of debt over 90 days old in August 2016 was 28.11%. The aged debt profile is not at an acceptable level and we will need to purge this old debt quickly so that our usually excellent record on collecting over 99% of debt is maintained.

12.2. Services' total outstanding debt relating to external income on the Accounts Receivable system stood at £9.334m on 31 August 2017, (August 2016 £5.077m). Over 70.76% (£6.632m) of the total gross debt is less than 3 months old, with the remaining debt being split over the timeframes of '3-12 months old' and those 'over 12 months old', which can be seen in the table 10.3 below.

12.3.	Service	Not o/due	0-30 Days	1-3 Mths	3-12 Mths	12+ Mths	Total	Un-assigned Cash	Total (Net)
		£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
	Adults & Health Comm.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.122	0.004	<b>0.126</b>	0.000	<b>0.126</b>
	Adults & Health Ops	0.096	0.221	0.268	0.827	0.194	<b>1.606</b>	0.000	<b>1.606</b>
	Business Development	0.027	0.162	0.147	0.271	0.097	<b>0.704</b>	0.000	<b>0.704</b>
	Customers & Communities	0.000	0.063	0.000	0.000	0.000	<b>0.063</b>	0.000	<b>0.063</b>
	Children & Family Ops	0.002	0.004	0.140	0.394	0.010	<b>0.550</b>	0.005	<b>0.545</b>
	ECI Comm.	0.004	0.002	0.000	0.002	0.001	<b>0.009</b>	0.000	<b>0.009</b>
	ECI Ops	0.615	3.617	0.446	0.357	0.153	<b>5.187</b>	0.000	<b>5.187</b>
	Schools & Early Years	0.031	0.031	0.009	0.006	0.008	<b>0.085</b>	0.004	<b>0.081</b>
	Finance & Performance	0.017	0.015	0.010	0.020	0.000	<b>0.061</b>	0.000	<b>0.061</b>
	Children & Learning Comm.	0.231	0.070	0.054	0.171	0.010	<b>0.537</b>	0.017	<b>0.520</b>
	LD Ops	0.018	0.001	0.005	0.043	0.037	<b>0.103</b>	0.000	<b>0.103</b>
	Support Services for Education	0.051	0.102	0.046	0.015	0.000	<b>0.213</b>	0.012	<b>0.201</b>
	Public Health	0.000	0.106	0.023	0.000	0.000	<b>0.129</b>	0.000	<b>0.129</b>
	<b>Total £m</b>	<b>1.091</b>	<b>4.394</b>	<b>1.147</b>	<b>2.227</b>	<b>0.513</b>	<b>9.373</b>	<b>0.038</b>	<b>9.334</b>
	<b>Total %</b>	<b>11.65</b>	<b>46.88</b>	<b>12.23</b>	<b>23.76</b>	<b>5.48</b>	<b>100.00</b>		

### Total Debt Analysis

	Net Debt £m
August 2016	5.077
August 2017	9.334

## 12.4. Aged Debt – Service Commentary

### **Adults and Health: £1.835m**

There is currently £1.227m of outstanding debt over 90 days old across all Adults services. £640k of this debt is with NHS partners relating to CHC contributions and the joint finance agreement. Discussions are ongoing with the CCG to bring these disputes to a conclusion and we anticipate the majority of the debt being cleared.

Of the remainder, £534k is outstanding debts with clients of the service relating to their contribution to care. We are awaiting probate on a large part of this and would expect it to be cleared in due course. There will potentially be a need to write off some of the client debt but we are taking robust action to ensure this is kept to a minimum.

### **Children and Learning: £1.347m**

The majority of debt is under 30 days old and relates to invoices raised for home to school transport contributions from parents/carers for the Autumn and Winter terms.

Of the debt over 30 days, 84% relates to invoices owed by partner health authorities for agreed contributions to supporting children in specialist provision providing therapeutic and health related support. These contributions were agreed through the Complex Cases panel and further discussions are taking place regarding the settlement of these debts.

### **Support Services: £1.307m**

Aged debt over 90 days old totals £0.388m. Of this, £0.120m relates to carbon rebates owed to SCC from British Gas. Settlement is being held up because of disputes over amounts British Gas claim they are owed by SCC. This issue is being actively pursued and an update is expected soon. The majority of the balance is Property-related and is being actively pursued by the service.

### **Economic and Community Infrastructure: £5.196m**

Of the total debt outstanding £4.684m (or 90%) is less than 90 days old across all Economic and Community Infrastructure services. Of the £0.513m debt over 90 days old £0.154m is over 365 days old. Of the debt over 90 days old £0.173m is developer contributions, £0.097m is recovery of costs associated with damage to highways, £0.124m is highways defect inspection charges to utilities companies and there are a handful of smaller sums including County Ticket debts. All debts are being actively pursued or have been referred to Legal.

### **Support Services for Education**

This relates predominantly to invoices recouping costs of students undertaking training courses and for services provided to schools and academies procured through SLA online. Debt recovery processes are in place to ensure that these debts are settled within reasonable timescales.

### **Public Health: £0.129m**

The debt for Public Health is less than 90 days old and not considered to be at risk of non-recovery.

## **13. Delivery Progress of 2017/18 MTFP Proposals**

- 13.1.** In February 2017, the Council approved £19.506m of savings proposals and £14.332m of pressures. Many of the proposals will require significant management action to insure implementation is successful.

This section of the report provides an update of the progress towards delivery of the proposals with a RAG status showing the level of risk around delivery (Appendix B).

### **13.2. Savings**

As all savings have been taken from service budgets at the commencement of the financial year, the real risk is that service areas will not be able to deliver the full saving and overspend.

Over 63% of the savings have been classified as having a green status, meaning service directors are confident that these savings will be delivered at the financial impact predicted in proposal documents.

A further 7% has been classified as an amber risk status, meaning that at this point in the year service directors cannot be sure they can deliver the same level of savings originally anticipated.

This leaves 30% of savings that are no longer deliverable in 2017/18. Therefore there is more work required to secure the full value of savings required.

### **13.3. Pressures**

During the MTFP process services worked hard to limit the level of additional resources requested. Therefore the £14.332m approved should be viewed as mitigating unmanageable pressures.

## **14. Consultations undertaken**

- 14.1.** The individual service content within this report has been considered by Service Management Teams prior to submission together with on-going briefings of Cabinet Lead Members.

## **15. Implications**

- 15.1.** Financial implications are dealt with in the body of this report, and where decisions are required. There are no other direct implications arising from this paper.

## **16. Background papers**

- 16.1.**
- County Council – 15 Feb 2017 – 2017/18 Revenue Budget and MTFP
  - County Council – 15 Feb 2017 – S151 Robustness and Adequacy report

**Note:** For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author



**Appendix A – Revenue Budget Monitoring – Headline Summary Table**

Service	Original Base Budget	Budget Movements	Total Budget Approvals	17/18 Projection	Gross Variance Under (-) / Overspend		Transfers (to) and from Grant / Earmarked Reserves	SCC Variance Under (-) / Overspend		Planned Use of Capital Receipts Flexibility	Forecast Under (-) / Overspend	Movement from Previous Report
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	%	£m	£m	%	£m	£m	£m
Adults and Health - Operations	72.683	(1.539)	71.144	70.610	(0.534)	(0.75)	0.000	(0.534)	(0.75)		(0.534)	3.199
Children and Families - Operations	48.749	(1.712)	47.037	59.875	12.838	27.29	0.000	12.838	27.29		12.838	1.594
Learning Disabilities	48.183	2.488	50.671	59.127	8.456	16.69	(6.158)	2.298	4.54		2.298	(3.616)
Adults and Health - Commissioner	14.756	0.205	14.961	14.915	(0.046)	(0.31)	(0.033)	(0.079)	(0.53)		(0.079)	(0.327)
Children and Learning - Commissioning Central	18.013	3.171	21.184	25.462	4.278	20.19	(2.095)	2.183	10.3		2.183	(0.053)
Public Health	1.070	0.000	1.070	0.873	(0.197)	(18.41)	0.197	0.000	0.00		0.000	0.000
ECI Services	61.655	0.469	62.124	65.878	3.755	6.04	(3.739)	0.015	0.02		0.015	(0.121)
<b>Key Services Spending</b>	<b>265.109</b>	<b>3.082</b>	<b>268.191</b>	<b>296.740</b>	<b>28.549</b>	<b>10.65</b>	<b>(11.828)</b>	<b>16.721</b>	<b>6.23</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>16.721</b>	<b>0.676</b>
Corporate and Support Services	25.449	(1.486)	23.963	27.098	3.134	13.08	0.947	4.081	17.03	(1.269)	2.812	(0.053)
Non-Service Items (Inc Debt Charges)	21.214	(21.124)	0.090	(9.389)	(9.479)	(10.497)	0.000	(9.479)	(10.497)		(9.479)	0.633
Trading Units	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.133	0.133	0.00	(0.133)	0.000	0.00		0.000	0.000
<b>Support Services and Corporate Spending</b>	<b>46.663</b>	<b>(22.609)</b>	<b>24.054</b>	<b>17.842</b>	<b>(6.212)</b>	<b>(25.83)</b>	<b>0.814</b>	<b>(5.398)</b>	<b>(22.44)</b>	<b>(1.269)</b>	<b>(6.667)</b>	<b>0.500</b>
Individual Schools Budget (ISB) and Early Years Providers	0.000	19.528	19.528	0.000	(19.528)	(100.00)	19.528	0.000	0.00		0.000	0.000
<b>SCC Total Spending</b>	<b>311.772</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>311.772</b>	<b>314.582</b>	<b>2.810</b>	<b>0.90</b>	<b>8.513</b>	<b>11.323</b>	<b>3.63</b>	<b>(1.269)</b>	<b>10.054</b>	<b>1.362</b>

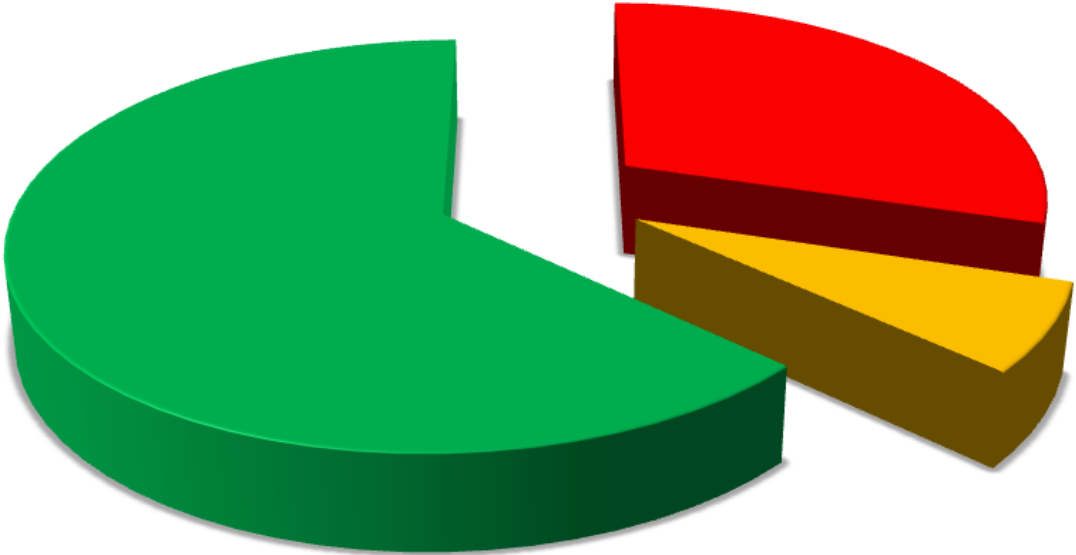


**Appendix B: Savings Month 4 2017/18**

	Value of Approved Saving	Red	Amber	Green
Adults and Health - Operations	0.765	0.615	0.050	0.100
Learning Disabilities - Operations	4.734	2.317	-	2.417
Adults and Health - Commissioner	0.727	0.125	-	0.602
Public Health	0.169	-	-	0.169
<b>Adults and Health</b>	<b>6.394</b>	<b>3.057</b>	<b>0.050</b>	<b>3.287</b>
Children and Families - Operations	0.018	0.018	-	-
Children and Learning - Commissioning Central	3.098	1.307	0.668	1.123
<b>Children's</b>	<b>3.116</b>	<b>1.325</b>	<b>0.668</b>	<b>1.123</b>
Somerset Waste Partnership	0.760	-	-	0.760
Highways	0.800	-	0.470	0.330
ECI Other Services	2.587	0.065	0.180	2.342
<b>Economic and Community Infrastructure</b>	<b>4.147</b>	<b>0.065</b>	<b>0.650</b>	<b>3.432</b>
<b>Key Services Spending</b>	<b>13.657</b>	<b>4.447</b>	<b>1.368</b>	<b>7.842</b>
Commercial and Business Services	5.678	1.359	-	4.318
Finance and Performance	0.174	-	-	0.174
Customers and Communities	-	-	-	-
<b>Support Services</b>	<b>5.851</b>	<b>1.359</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4.492</b>
<b>Total Services</b>	<b>19.508</b>	<b>5.806</b>	<b>1.368</b>	<b>12.334</b>
<b>Percentage</b>		<b>29.76%</b>	<b>7.01%</b>	<b>63.23%</b>

# 2017/18 MTFP Savings Performance

■ 29.76% ■ 7.01% ■ 63.23%



## **Library Service update and Proposed Strategy**

Lead Officer: Michele Cusack, Director for Economic and Community Infrastructure Commissioning

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Cabinet Member: Cllr David Hall

Division and Local Member: All

### **1. Summary**

#### **1.1.** This report is submitted to update the Scrutiny Committee on:

1. The progress and performance of the Library Service since the last report to Scrutiny Committee.
2. A proposed strategic direction of travel for the Library Service for the next three years.

In addition, Scrutiny Committee will receive a verbal update on the community engagement exercise recently commenced by the Library Service.

#### **1.2.** The way people use libraries is changing, and Somerset's Library Service is undergoing a journey of change and modernisation. Over the last few years, the service has re-focused service delivery to meet a new, wider range of objectives, supporting the Council's priority outcomes:

- Children and Young People are supported through early years reading activities, skills development (Code Clubs, technology activities, volunteering opportunities) and study space with free Wifi.
- We provide books on prescription and other health and wellbeing information resources, a wide range of health and wellbeing activities, and combat social isolation by bringing people together.
- Through business events, access to digital making equipment and our specialist business resources collections, we support businesses to develop and thrive.

In parallel, the Library Service has delivered over £1m of savings during this period.

The service is currently performing well and has delivered a number of successful, innovative projects and initiatives which have gained national recognition. The Library Service is guided by its vision statement:

*Somerset Libraries are a dynamic, evolving and integral part of the community that open up a world of opportunities for reading, understanding and discovery.*

#### **1.3.** In order to continue to support the County Council's wider priorities, and put the Library Service on a sustainable financial footing, a long term strategy is required. This report sets out the recommended strategy for continuing to modernise and develop the service, delivering a wider set of outcomes to support the wider council, within a financial envelope which is likely to become more challenging over the period considered.

- 1.4. The report also considers whether an alternative, externalised delivery model should be pursued at this point. Other Library Services (including 'Libraries Unlimited' in Devon) have moved out of local authority control, and the Library Service commissioning team has considered whether this approach would be right for Somerset at this time. At the Scrutiny meeting of December 2015 Committee Members asked officers to investigate the merits of the utilisation of Alternative Delivery Models (ADMs) for the Somerset Library Service, giving specific regard to the situation in Devon.

## **2. Issues for Consideration / Recommendations**

- 2.1. Members are asked to consider and comment on the recent performance and progress of the Library Service, as summarised in section 3 below.

- 2.2. Members are also asked to consider and comment on two key strategic proposals, which will be decided through a Key Decision by the Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development, having considered the comments of Scrutiny Committee:

- To consider the conclusions of the pre-options appraisal work detailed in section 4 below, with supporting analysis included as Appendices 1a and 1b (commercially confidential), and the recommendation to retain an in-house service delivery model for the 3 year period considered in this report. The costs, potential benefits and dis-benefits of alternative delivery models have been analysed by the Library Service commissioning team, with assistance from an external consultant funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.
- To consider the strategy for re-designing the service set out in section 5 below, in order to continue to modernise and develop the service whilst putting it on a sustainable financial footing, in line with the County Council's forecast level of overall resources over the medium term. The service re-design strategy will enable the Library Service to continue to support wider council priorities, guided by a proposed outcomes framework set out in Appendix 2.

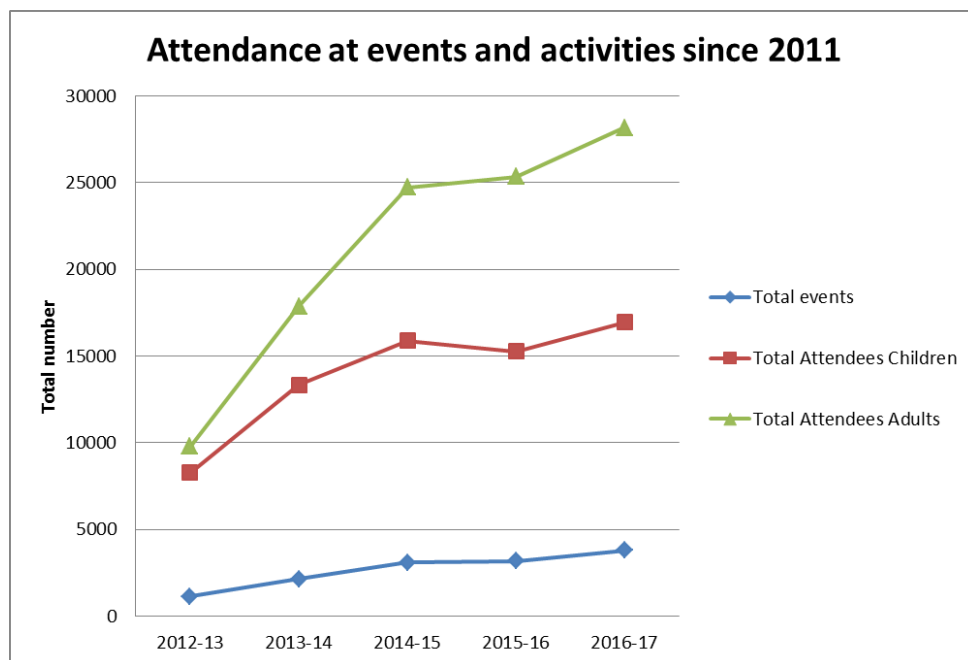
- 2.3. In the course of scrutinising these strategic proposals, members must give due regard to the potential impacts of the proposed re-design programme, with particular reference to equalities. Impacts identifiable at this initial, high-level stage have been considered in an initial Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA), attached as Appendix 3 to this report; this initial EIA will be reviewed and updated as the programme progresses.

## **3. Background: performance and progress to date**

- 3.1. Since 2011 the Library Service has delivered a series of key milestones on its modernisation journey: the development of an outcomes framework and a vision to guide service development, the introduction of free wi-fi and a new online portal and app, the development of a community library at Porlock and

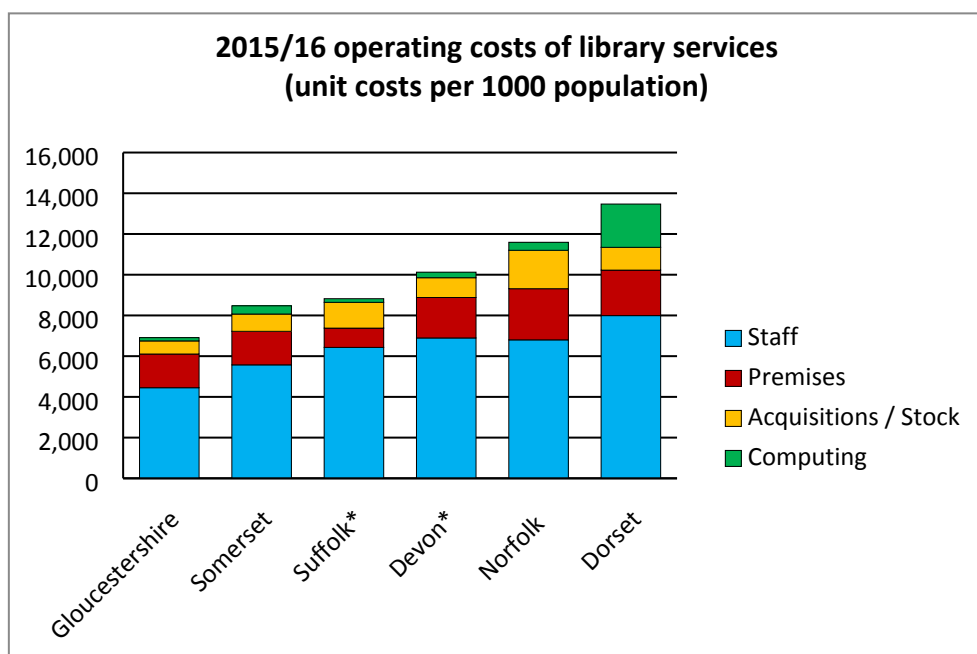
the re-orientation of service delivery beyond traditional lending services through a thriving and dynamic portfolio of activities. Figure 1 below illustrates the growth in activities and events across the Somerset Library network – a key feature of our modernisation journey to date. In parallel, over £1m of savings (over 20% of the service budget) through a range of measures, including delivering efficiencies through a revised management structure, expansion of the Libraries West consortium and procurement of a new libraries ICT system and the restructure of the delivery and logistics back-office function. As well as these efficiency measures, changes have been made to opening hours and the mobile library network.

*Fig. 1: Participation in Somerset Libraries events and activities*



The latest available cost benchmarking data shows that the Library Service is delivering good value for money compared to similar authorities (see fig. 2 overleaf).

*Fig. 2: Unit cost benchmarking (nearest neighbour peer group)*



*\*Suffolk and Devon County Councils have externalised their library services.*

**3.2.** Nationally, Somerset is a leading authority in the implementation of the modernising vision for Public Library Services that has been developed by the sector under the auspices of the national Libraries Taskforce. Recent key achievements include:

- The launch of the Glass Box at Taunton Library and associated outreach activities across Somerset. The Glass Box supports digital and economic development activities through an innovative programme of business events and digital making activities, as well as a collection of technology resources that can be used to support individual entrepreneurs, businesses and technology enthusiasts. The Glass Box was nominated in the 'digital innovator' category at the 2017 Taunton Deane business awards, and has been cited as an example of best practice by the Libraries Taskforce. We were one of two Library Services invited to speak at the 'Innovation Zone' at this year's LGA conference.
- The development of specialist collections and wellbeing zones, in conjunction with Public Health, to support health and wellbeing. We maintain collections to help people and their carers cope with mental health problems, autism, dementia and a wide range of other conditions. Many customers refer to the accredited Somerset Library 'books on prescription' service to help them to manage particular conditions. Somerset's autism collection was cited as an example of best practice by the Libraries Taskforce.
- Somerset Library Service supports a range of government departments and local council services by enabling digital access to essential services for customers who cannot easily access digital services from their home. The delivery of the Glastonbury Library Hub, through the council's Customer Access and Shared Assets programme, was a key

milestone in the further development of this customer access role – libraries staff provide a signposting and meet and greet function for five other services delivered at the hub. Other recent developments include a meet and greet / booking service for registration customers, and the provision of drop-in advice for adult social care customers at Taunton library.

- We have a growing online presence – in addition to the new Libraries West portal and app to deliver transactional services online, the service has developed an online events calendar, and we have an active social media presence across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

**3.3.** The Library Service is embedded within a network of community groups, volunteers and partner organisations:

- Our 18 library friends groups take an active role in supporting and developing many of our libraries – they make a rich contribution to developing and providing our range of activities, as well as raising money and providing donations ‘in kind’ to improve library facilities.
- We could not carry out key activities – particularly the annual Summer Reading Challenge for primary school children and the Home Library Service for housebound customers – without significant support from our volunteer network. Over 18,000 volunteer hours were used by the service in 2016/17.
- We have regular meetings with the umbrella Friends of Somerset Libraries group who have acted as a valuable ‘critical friend’ through the many changes we have made to the service in recent years.
- A huge range of partners deliver services in partnership with Somerset Library Service – from music lessons for disadvantaged young people to digital marketing advice for businesses; blue chip organisations like the NHS and Google through to local community groups and individuals organising events and activities.

**3.4.** Performance of the service is currently measured against the outcomes framework agreed in December 2015. Results for 2016/17 are set out below (green shading indicates that a target was achieved or exceeded, amber shading indicates that a target was narrowly missed. No targets were significantly missed).

<b>1. More people enjoy a vibrant and dynamic reading experience</b>	
Total number of children attending reading activities	13,960
Total number of adults attending reading activities	14,971
Number of items borrowed	2,184,250
<b>2. More people are enabled and inspired to make the most of the digital world</b>	
Take up of People's Network sessions	33%
Number of UK Online learners	539
Number of digital event attendees	1408
Number of Wi-Fi sessions	87,806
<b>3. Library Services strengthen and enable communities</b>	
Number of volunteer hours	18,851
Number of active friends groups	18
Number of library visits	1,801,769
<b>4. People, in particular the most vulnerable, are enabled to make informed choices for their health and wellbeing</b>	
Number of attendees at Health activities in libraries	1,243
Number of attendees at Wellbeing activities in libraries	9,859
Number of Books on Prescription issues	7980
Number of Home Library Service customers	532
<b>5. Libraries contribute to economic growth</b>	
Participation in Glass Box activities	91 events, 449 adults, 430 children
Number of searches on online business resources	1442
Number of business providers or businesses using the Glass Box or libraries to deliver services	12
Number of Glass Box visits	15,411

*\*Data only available for part year*

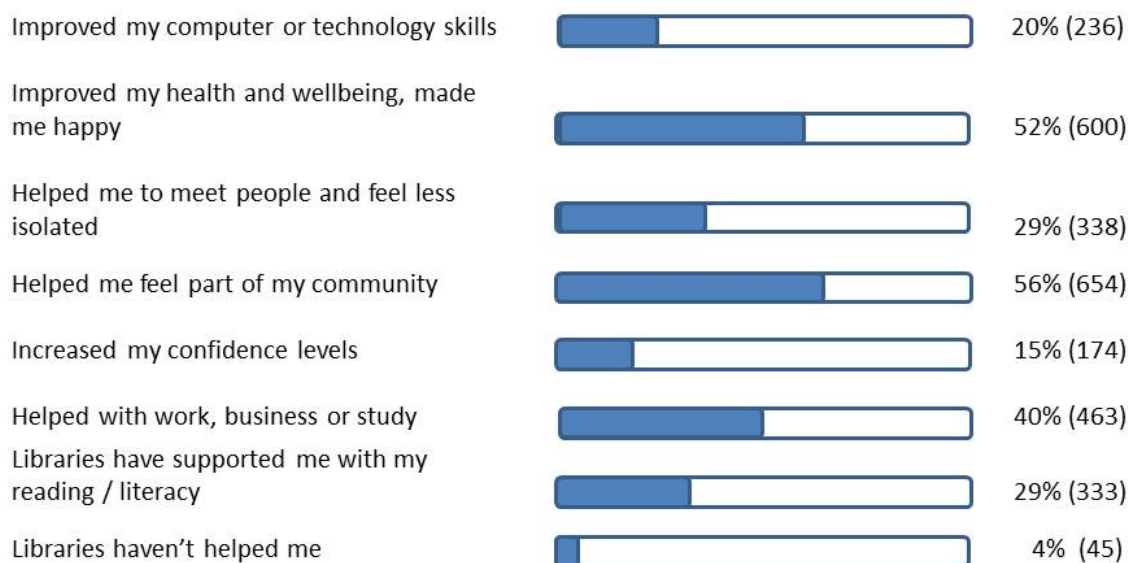
- 3.5.** A customer satisfaction survey was undertaken in June / July 2017, with over 1200 responses received. Results indicate that customers value the service and are overwhelmingly positive about their experience:
- 99% of respondents rated the quality of staff support as Very Helpful or Helpful (87% Very Helpful).
  - 98% of respondents said the library was Important or Very Important to them and their family (81% Very Important).
  - 90% of respondents rated the service overall as 'Excellent' or 'Very Good' (51% 'Excellent'). 9% of the remaining participants rated the service as 'Good'; only 1% of respondents rated the service as 'Poor'.

The responses to the question 'How have library services helped you?' illustrate how Somerset's Library Service has a positive impact across the range of outcomes, and how customers value this broad range of services:



### How have libraries helped you?

(please tick all that apply)



The main themes emerging from the question 'how might libraries be improved?' were improving the range and selection of book stock, improving technology, and increasing opening hours. However, 112 respondents (the second largest theme) answered this question positively, e.g. by saying that they were satisfied with the service as it was, or complimenting the way the service was run at present.

**3.6.** Overall the development of the service in recent years has been a very positive story – in 2017, the service is far more efficient than it was five years ago and our reputation as a forward-thinking, dynamic service has grown both nationally and locally. However, as the service approaches its centenary year, there are some pressing issues which need to be addressed if we are to sustain the improvement and modernisation journey:

- The physical network of library service delivery points has not been reviewed for many years (at least 40); it is therefore not well-aligned to current need and demand for the service and delivers poor value for money in some areas. Some of our smaller libraries are much loved but are not well-used.
- The asset base of the service is in need of investment in some areas. The condition of many of our technology assets and furniture is constraining our ability to deliver across the outcomes framework, and some library buildings are in a poor condition.
- The libraries workforce is very capable and highly valued, and many staff within the service consistently deliver well above and beyond expectations. However, reductions to staffing budgets and successive expenditure freezes have reduced resilience and morale within the frontline workforce. Staff are frequently overstretched and a gap is starting to emerge between the capacity and structure of the libraries

workforce and the resources required to deliver the wider range of services and community engagement we aspire to.

#### **4. Potential delivery models for the Library Service**

- 4.1.** During the Scrutiny meeting of December 2015 Committee Members asked officers to investigate the merits of utilising alternative delivery models for the Somerset Library Service, giving specific regard to the situation in Devon where the County Council has externalised their service in the form of a Public Sector Mutual ('Libraries Unlimited'). The subsequent Cabinet decision in December 2015 set out the direction of travel for the Library Service. The investigation of alternative delivery models formed part of the Cabinet report and is one of the ECI commissioning team's stated Commissioning Intentions for 2016/17 – 2019/20. Furthermore, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DDCMS) is currently actively promoting the use of alternative delivery models for local authorities' Library Services.
- 4.2.** To date, only four Local Authorities have externalised their services to an alternative delivery model, all within the last six years. Evidence is limited as to the overall success of these changes to library service delivery models due to the infancy of the entities. A pre-options appraisal has been undertaken by SCC commissioners, with the support of DDCMS-funded consultants, to decide whether it was worthwhile undertaking a full options appraisal into alternative delivery models for the Library Service, or whether the risks currently outweigh the potential benefits. This appraisal is set out in Appendices 1a and 1b to this report (Appendix 1b contains commercially confidential information).
- 4.3.** Although there are a number of potential benefits of alternative delivery models, Appendix 1 concludes by stating that there are considerable doubts over the viability, feasibility and desirability of the externalising the Library Service to an alternative delivery model at this point. It recommends that that no further consideration is given to the development of a 'whole service' outsourcing or externalisation option until 2020/21. The main reasons for this recommendation are as follows:
- There is insufficient evidence currently available to show that externalising is the right thing to do in Somerset. In particular, there is no evidence to suggest that externalised library services are any more able to secure new income streams or deliver savings than internal library services, beyond a marginal potential reduction in business rates. Unlike other, previously externalised SCC services, the Library Service is likely to be dependent on council tax backed funding for many years to come. We need to put the service on a sustainable footing before externalisation can be considered as a realistic option.
  - The Library Service is highly integrated with a wide range of SCC departments and external partners, and this is an area of rapid, ongoing development. The growth in joint work between the Library Service and other SCC services is likely to be more productive and un-constrained whilst the service remains in-house.
  - Substantial one-off resources will be needed to fund specialist legal and

project support, and to address pension deficit and backlog maintenance issues. These costs materially impact on the business case for externalisation.

- 4.4.** This is not to say that externalisation or a shared service option with another Library Service is not the right solution for Somerset's Library Service in the longer term. The Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development will consider the pre-options appraisal in a decision scheduled for later in October. If the Cabinet Member supports the recommendations set out here, service commissioners will review the case for externalisation in 2020, by which time there is likely to be more evidence on the track record and potential benefits of alternative delivery models. In the meantime, if any specific shared service opportunities arise for the Library Service these will be considered on their own merits.

## **5. Library Service outcomes framework and 3 year strategy**

- 5.1.** In line with the national development of Public Library Services in recent years, the purpose of Somerset's Library Service has broadened. The County Council has a statutory duty to deliver a Public Library Service. Since 2015 we have used an agreed outcomes framework to provide a more detailed set of objectives, built around the statutory purpose in order to guide service delivery. Any consideration of the strategic development of the Library Service starts with a consideration of the outcomes framework.

We propose to retain the outcomes framework agreed in December 2015, slightly amended, with the addition of a further outcome specifically supporting Children and Young People aligned with Somerset's Children and Young People's Plan. The proposed outcomes framework is set out in full in Appendix 2. In summary:

- Outcomes 1 and 2 (reading and digital literacy) are commissioned by the Community Infrastructure commissioning team and are focused on delivering the modern expectations of a 'comprehensive and efficient' Library Service, as well as recognising the lead role the Library Service plays in digital inclusion, supporting the Council's digital strategy.
  - Outcome 3 (supporting communities) plays a core role in the Council's ambition to develop stronger, more resilient communities and to deliver services through different 'hub' models, as well as recognising the key role that libraries play in combating social isolation and bringing people together within localities or through communities of interest.
  - Outcomes 4 (health & wellbeing), 5 (economic development) and 6 (new - supporting children & families) support wider council objectives and are aligned to key commissioning intentions and service plans in Adults, Public Health, Economic Development and Children's Services. They draw on a number of the core Public Library 'offers' developed nationally.
- 5.2.** This is an ambitious approach given the operational challenges set out in paragraph 3.6 of this report, and the financial challenges to come. However,

we believe that to deliver value commensurate with significant ongoing revenue expenditure funding, and to remain relevant as we approach the centenary year of the service, Somerset Libraries should remain a dynamic service directly supporting wider County Council and partner objectives. Scrutiny Committee are invited to consider and comment on the proposed outcomes framework: are these the right things to be asking our Library Service to achieve over the next few years?

- 5.3.** The Government has significantly reduced the levels of funding for Local Authorities and the Council faces on-going challenges in developing a balanced budget for its Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). To ensure the Council has a sustainable future, all services (including the Library Service) need to consider efficiency and cost reduction options.
- 5.4.** Working with the finance service, officers have developed an estimated budget profile for the Library Service over the next three years, set out here as a forecast reduction in the net budget available to the service:

	2017/18 (£'000)	2018/19 (£'000)	2019/20 (£'000)	2020/21 (£'000)
<i>Estimated service budget for the year:</i>	3,890	3,690	3,560	3,570

After accounting for the absorption of inflation (likely to be unfunded in the 2018/19 budget, in line with corporate financial planning assumptions) the service is likely to have to deliver a real terms cost reduction of around £500,000 over the next three years. This cumulative level of reduction, whilst challenging, is at a lower level per annum than the service has delivered in recent years.

- 5.5.** The estimated budget reduction set out above is only an estimate at this stage. No decisions have been made on budget reductions; indeed, final decisions will only be taken after specific proposals have been developed and consulted on, and impacts have been assessed and considered. The budget reduction has been modelled as a first step in determining what sort of Library Service the County Council can afford; taking this into account will inform the development of a strategy, the evaluation of impact, and the development of proposals to meet assessed need whilst reducing cost. In due course, this iterative process will enable decision-makers to weigh up these various factors in order to form a judgment on the allocation of diminished resources.
- 5.6.** The level of financial challenge envisaged is significant. However, the likely budget available to the service at the end of the financial planning horizon will be sufficient to fund an ambitious level of service delivery. The service is therefore proposing to retain its existing vision statement:

*Somerset Libraries are a dynamic, evolving and integral part of the community that open up a world of opportunities for reading, understanding and discovery.*

5.7. In order to continue to deliver a thriving Library Service and a broad range of outcomes within a reducing affordability envelope, a long term, strategic approach to service re-design is required. We are proposing to maintain the current, modernising direction of travel. We will also aim to address the most critical investment needs whilst re-designing aspects of the service to make it more sustainable, putting Somerset Libraries on a more secure financial footing in the longer term. The proposed approach is summarised below:

1. **We propose to continue to offer and develop a broad spectrum of services focused on delivering a range of outcomes.** This is necessary to maximise the support the Library Service provides to a wide range of service users, including vulnerable people and certain groups with protected characteristics. To achieve this we will build on the existing delivery of economic development, health and wellbeing, reading and digital inclusion outcomes, as well as exploring new opportunities to support wider health outcomes. We will engage with the Sustainability and Transformation Programme team, and extend and develop our current offer to Children and Young People. This work will be resourced through the existing libraries development team and frontline workforce (working closely with partners, volunteers and communities), utilising external funding where appropriate and available.
2. **We propose to review and re-design the libraries network, seeking community solutions where possible to sustain library provision and maximise value for money and service effectiveness across the network.** This is necessary to improve value for money in some of our less well-used libraries, and to ensure the service is sustainable within a diminishing resource envelope. To achieve this we will work with stakeholders to develop the criteria we will use to analyse need, access and demand in each area. We will also consult with communities and stakeholder groups to re-determine the statutory 'comprehensive and efficient' library network and the funding provided beyond that network. We will work with other council programmes and communities to improve the utilisation of library buildings, co-locating and integrating with other services wherever possible and appropriate to share premises and staff costs. Where funding might be withdrawn or reduced to individual libraries, we will work with community groups to consider transferring assets to community management where appetite exists. In parallel, we will develop outreach service delivery models to improve the delivery of outcomes in areas where we are not addressing need through the current network – moving beyond the traditional focus on library buildings towards a more holistic and innovative model of library service delivery. This objective will be developed and informed by an extensive process of engaging with stakeholder groups and consulting with the public and communities. We will also assess and evaluate the impact of potential changes on staff and service users, including those with characteristics that are protected under the Equality Act.

3. **We propose to review the roles of our frontline library workforce, including reviewing the use of volunteers, which may lead to a workforce re-structure.** This is necessary to enable the service to reach its potential, to address current service resilience issues, and to recognise that the role of our frontline workforce is changing. Volunteers already play a significant role in our service delivery. Making better use of volunteers will ensure that the Library Service has a more vibrant and sustainable future – for example, by working with volunteers and communities, we aim to reverse the decline in library opening hours. Across the service, any use of volunteer resource will be supported by skilled staff who will focus on higher level tasks such as the co-ordination of volunteers, developing links with partners and the delivery of activity programmes – both within libraries and through outreach services. Most of our libraries are likely to retain a predominantly paid workforce, with volunteers providing ‘added value’ activities as they do now and enabling our paid workforce to make the most of their skills, delivering more to our customers. Again, we will assess and evaluate the impact of potential changes on staff and service users, including those with protected characteristics. We will work closely with our staff and unions in developing this objective, with full consultation at appropriate stages.

4. **Invest in and develop technology infrastructure in libraries.** This is necessary because some of our technology is reaching the end of its normal life. Improved technology will also improve the productivity of our workforce. Good quality digital access and self-serve RFID technologies are fundamental to our current operations, and are also core to our continuing role in delivering digital inclusion outcomes. We will also pilot technology solutions that could extend opening hours, and enable greater community use of library buildings. This objective represents a significant investment in the Library Service, much of which is funded through current capital investment budgets – where funding has not currently been allocated, we will develop business cases and bids for further investment. Where changes are made to existing technologies used in service delivery, we will consider the implications for service users and staff, including those with protected characteristics.

5.8. The proposed strategy set out above has been developed in the context of likely budget reductions, having due regard (in accordance with the County Council’s Public Sector Equality Duty) to any potential impact on staff, current users and potential users of the service. An initial, high level Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) is attached as Appendix 3 to this report; at this early stage, impacts set out within this assessment are based on a general consideration of changes to a library service. This is to make sure we understand what the impact of changes could be; the EIA appended to this report will be re-assessed and reviewed as the strategy develops and more specific proposals are considered.

- 5.9.** In considering and commenting on the proposed strategy, Scrutiny Committee is also asked to consider and comment on the potential impacts of this strategy on groups with protected characteristics, as set out in high-level terms in Appendix 3. The views of Committee will be presented to the Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development, who will be asked to take a Key Decision on the strategy later in October.
- 5.10.** If the Cabinet Member endorses the strategy set out above, the project will be taken forward as follows:
- Informal engagement with staff and stakeholders will continue through October and into November 2017.
  - Feedback will inform the development of a comprehensive needs assessment, as well as the further development of the Equalities Impact Assessment attached to this report. Staff and stakeholder views will also shape proposals for workforce re-design and potential volunteer roles.
  - The needs assessment and EIA will be used to develop specific proposals for each of our current libraries, as well as a proposed overarching plan for the delivery of Library Services in Somerset (which will include outreach services). In parallel, we will also develop detailed proposals for the restructure of the frontline workforce and potential volunteer roles. We envisage that these proposals will be finalised during November or December 2017.
  - We will consult thoroughly (with staff, customers, Somerset residents and stakeholder and community groups) on all of these proposals. Results of the consultation will be analysed, and proposals will be reviewed in the light of this analysis and changed where appropriate. The consultation results will also be used to further refine and develop our needs assessment and EIA.

Scrutiny Committee will receive a further update and opportunity to comment on specific proposals after the consultation phase, prior to a final decision (likely to be in February or March 2018).

## **6. Background papers**

**6.1.** The following background papers are attached to this report:

1. Appendix 1a – Appraisal of alternative delivery model options
2. Appendix 1b – Appraisal of alternative delivery model options (commercially confidential)
3. Appendix 2 – Proposed outcomes framework
4. Appendix 3 – Equalities Impact Assessment

**6.2.** Further background papers are available on the Somerset County Council website:

1. Reports to Scrutiny Committee (1<sup>st</sup> December 2015) and Cabinet (9<sup>th</sup> December 2015) on the future of hubs and libraries.
  2. Report to Scrutiny Committee on the future of hubs and libraries, 19<sup>th</sup> April 2016.
  3. Report to Cabinet (6<sup>th</sup> February 2017) and County Council (15<sup>th</sup> February 2017) on the Medium Term Financial Plan 2017-2020.
  4. Report to Cabinet on the Development of the 2018 – 2021 Medium Term Financial Plan, 10<sup>th</sup> July 2017.
- 6.3.** The December 2016 report “Libraries Deliver: Ambition for Public Libraries in England 2016 to 2021” by the national Libraries Taskforce (appointed by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to develop and progress Public Library Services in England) gives a good overview of the current national policy context for Public Library Services. It can be found at:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/libraries-deliver-ambition-for-public-libraries-in-england-2016-to-2021>

**Note:** For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author



## **APPENDIX 1a: ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY MODELS**

### **Introduction**

This Appendix sets out the background to 'Alternative Delivery Models' for Public Library services and presents recommendations on whether further consideration should be given to developing an alternative, whole-service delivery model for the Library Service in Somerset at this point. Alternative Delivery Models can take a number of forms including Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCos), Public Service Mutuals, Charities or Trusts, outsourced service delivery and Joint Ventures. Here, by 'Alternative Delivery Model', we mean externalisation of the whole service to a charity, mutual or trust model – externalisation through traditional outsourcing or a joint venture is not considered.

The analysis examines the potential benefits, dis-benefits, costs and viability of externalising library service delivery and considers whether an alternative model could be right for Somerset. The appraisal draws on extensive research carried out by the Community Infrastructure commissioning team on current examples of externalised library services, as well as knowledge and experience from previous Somerset County Council externalisation programmes and high-level cost modelling on pensions and property liabilities. The commissioning team have been assisted by an external consultant with previous experience of externalising Devon's Library Service (this support was externally funded by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport).

The Appendix forms two parts – part a, and part b containing commercially sensitive information.

### **Background and context**

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DDCMS) is currently actively promoting the use of Alternative Delivery Models for local authorities' library services. To date, only four Local Authorities have externalised their Library Service to a social enterprise model, although there are further examples of authorities that have contracted out their Library Service to an outsourcing provider. Evidence is limited as to the overall success of these four examples due to their relative infancy.

DDCMS, in conjunction with the Cabinet Office, consider that Alternative Delivery Models can achieve financial savings, reinvigorate library services and effectively target resources to meet need and achieve better outcomes. There is also a view that externalising Library Services can provide a greater potential for income generation and greater flexibility in decision making and processes; improving agility and better positioning library services to react to changing needs.

This Appendix considers whether externalising the Library Service is likely to be the best option to:

- Enable changes required to ensure the service continues to thrive within a reducing resource envelope;
- Most effectively meet the current and future needs of the local population;

- Meet the challenge of the expectations and changing perceptions of the purpose of the service and what it delivers.

## **Potential Benefits of Alternative Delivery Models**

### *Potential Financial Benefits:*

- One benefit that is often cited for externalising public services is their increased ability to access external funding. There is some anecdotal evidence that externalised library services have had more success in securing grants. However, this cannot be substantiated and the review team has not identified any specific external funding stream that is only available to non-Local Authority library services. In any event, external grant-funded sources of income should not necessarily be seen as additional funds to supplement core, local authority funding; such grants are generally for a specific funded activity, and income is likely to be offset by additional cost.
- Local authorities are liable for business rates, which are a significant cost for the Library Service. Other organisational models (for example, charities) receive significant rebates on business rate liability, and this is a potential financial benefit of Alternative Delivery Models.
- Finally, there is a view that Alternative Delivery Models can offer better value for money than in-house local authority models. The only like-for-like unit cost comparison with an externalised Library Service that we have available compares Somerset County Council's in-house Library Service unit cost data with that for Suffolk County Council's externalised service (using the latest available CIPFA benchmarking data). Suffolk's costs are significantly higher per 1000 population than Somerset's; though this is a very narrow evidence base from which to draw any firm conclusions. Suffolk's premises costs are, however, significantly lower than Somerset's – which could be due to differences in business rate liability as noted above.

The transfer of financial risk or liabilities to a potential new entity could be considered to be a financial benefit; however (as noted below) it is more likely that such liabilities would fall to Somerset County Council to fund one way or another.

### *Other Potential Benefits:*

- Flexibility of decision making, policy and process was identified as a potential benefit at a workshop held with the DDCMS-funded consultant. Externalised services are often smaller than the ceding public body, and most forms of alternative delivery model are not subject to the same rules and duties as a large County Council. This can promote less bureaucratic and more entrepreneurial, flexible ways of working; which could be a real advantage for Somerset County Council's Library Service in seeking to pursue its vision and objectives.

- Clarity of focus and purpose was also identified as a potential benefit at the workshop session. Local authorities have many different objectives, which often compete for scarce resources. All of the examples of externalised Library Services considered in this report have a narrower focus – two exclusively focus on Public Library Services. A single focus can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of organisations, as less time is spent reconciling and prioritising multiple objectives. However, the potential benefit has a converse dis-benefit for a Local Authority in that it may be less able to deliver its wider objectives through an arm’s length body that has more specific aims.
- There is some anecdotal evidence that staff can be more motivated working in a smaller, more focussed and more flexible organisation. However, this potential benefit should be considered alongside the potential anxieties that any outsourcing or externalisation exercise could create for the Library Service workforce.

### **Potential Dis-benefits of Alternative Delivery Models: the case for retaining an in-house model at the present time**

#### *Likely one-off costs:*

- If Somerset’s Library Service externalised to a stand-alone alternative delivery model, then the new entity would almost certainly have to have a positive or, at least, a neutral balance sheet, on the date of transfer (this is a requirement, for example, of Charity Commission and Companies Act rules). If the Library Service were to externalise through a merger or outsource to an existing entity (for example, Libraries Unlimited), then that existing entity would take steps to ensure that the transfer did not have a material negative impact on its balance sheet. Because of this, ‘ceding’ parent companies are often asked to ensure that any long-term liabilities are fully funded at the point of transfer – or at least, ensure that these are offset by transferring asset values.
- Pension liabilities are a common obstacle to outsourcing or externalising local authority services. Under TUPE regulations, transferring employees’ pension rights would transfer with them to a new entity or provider. The process of transferring inherited pension assets and liabilities is likely to lead to the ‘crystallisation’ of an attributable element of Somerset County Council’s pension deficit. The funding of this attributable deficit usually forms a key negotiating point in any business transfer discussion. At the time of writing, the pension deficit attributable to the Library Service workforce stands at £1.35m – a significant liability for any entity. Some or all of this deficit would most likely have to be funded by the County Council in the course of an externalisation exercise – likely to be unaffordable.
- A similar situation exists with the property-related liabilities that could transfer to a new entity. The Somerset Library Service property estate is significant and some of our library buildings require a degree of repair and maintenance expenditure over the next few years. Again, the funding of these potential costs would be a key negotiating point in any business transfer, and the

County Council would likely have to fund at least some of the cost of bringing buildings up to a reasonable condition. Across the whole estate this could amount to as much as £1.4m.

- Any business transfer exercise – whether to a new or existing entity – represents a complex and significant project. In addition to the ‘hidden’ cost of staff time, the County Council would also have to fund specialist external costs (for example, legal fees). In previous externalisation exercises, these costs have been significant. Resourcing previous externalisation exercises has been a significant challenge – not just for the services involved, but for the County Council’s specialist back-office services. The considerable organisation effort – and associated cost – involved should not be underestimated.

*Other potential Dis-benefits:*

- As set out in the covering report and in Appendix 2, Somerset’s Library Service is commissioned to deliver a broad range of outcomes supporting wider corporate objectives. The service has complex and inter-dependent relationships with a number of other County Council services as well as external partners, and this is an area of rapid, ongoing development. The growth in joint work between the Library Service and other SCC services is likely to be more productive and un-constrained whilst the service remains in-house - jointly commissioning a complex range of activity, and managing multiple interfaces, is likely to be more difficult through a contractual relationship where cost and resourcing impacts need to be managed more formally. Externalising the service may also impact on the strong internal networks that exist between the library development team and a wide range of commissioning departments, which could put current innovative and collaborative joint working at risk.
- The Library Service has played an integral part in the formation and delivery of the One Public Estate and predecessor programmes, which are working to rationalise property costs and maximise outcomes by co-locating complementary services and information into ‘hub’ sites. There is still a great deal of potential to be realised through the continuation of this work – both through the continuation of co-locating other services within libraries, and the development of Library Service outreach models utilising non-library buildings. The retention of the service in-house would maintain a level of corporate control over the Library Service, providing the flexibility required to continue this work most effectively.
- More generally, any contract with an externalised body would be governed through a contract, and no matter how streamlined and efficient the contract variation process, it is very unlikely to present the flexibility that comes with an in-house service.

## Viability and evidence of success

For all their encouragement to Library Authorities to consider Alternative Delivery Models, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DDCMS) acknowledge that there is limited evidence of longer-term success or otherwise of externalised Library Services. The DDCMS had promised to publish 'longitudinal studies' in April 2017 of the already externalised services to provide evidence and advice on the best structures, but to date these have not emerged. The commissioning team's research indicates that some of the recently externalised Library Services seem to be facing significant challenges. Further examination of some of the issues faced by these organisations can be found in confidential Appendix 1b, which contains potentially commercially sensitive information.

A lack of continued track record in delivering efficiencies and service improvements makes it difficult to assess the efficacy of the alternative library service delivery models currently being utilised and material questions remain over their durability. As such, it could be a risk to see these alternatives as a preferred way forward for the Somerset service at this point in time.

## Other Considerations

- *Management skills*: the current libraries management team have many skills, but do not have a strong commercial outlook. This is not necessarily an impediment to externalisation through a merger or outsourcing to an existing alternative entity, but it would be a significant risk to the viability of any 'stand-alone' externalised model.
- *Reliance on County Council funding*: unlike other, previously externalised SCC services, the Library Service is likely to be dependent on council tax-backed funding for many years to come.
- *Sustainability*: given the probable lack of any significant alternative income streams and the estimated affordability envelope for library services over the medium term, externalising the Library Service at this point is likely to leave it very vulnerable to likely reductions in funding. We need to put the service on a sustainable footing first.
- *Desirability*: many successful externalisations are driven by a strong political or service management vision; our research consistently identified a strong consensus across stakeholder groups in favour of alternative delivery models as a critical success factor. In discussions with staff, the libraries management team, cabinet and key external stakeholder groups, there is no evidence of a strong desire to externalise at this point.

## Conclusion

- There is insufficient evidence currently available to show that externalising is the right thing to do in Somerset. In particular, there is no evidence to

suggest that externalised library services are any more able to secure new income streams or deliver savings than internal library services, beyond a marginal potential reduction in business rates. Unlike other, previously externalised SCC services, the Library Service is likely to be dependent on council tax backed funding for many years to come. We need to put the service on a sustainable footing before externalisation can be considered as a realistic option.

- The Library Service is highly integrated with a wide range of SCC departments and external partners, and this is an area of rapid, ongoing development. The growth in joint work between the Library Service and other SCC services is likely to be more productive and un-constrained whilst the service remains in-house.
- Substantial one-off resources will be needed to fund specialist legal and project support, and to address pension deficit and backlog maintenance issues. These costs materially impact on the business case for externalisation.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that no further consideration is given to pursuing an alternative delivery model for Somerset's Library Service until 2020, when the position should be reviewed again. However, any opportunity for joint working that arises in that period should be considered on its own merits.

## APPENDIX 2: PROPOSED OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK

### Outcome 1: More people enjoy a vibrant and dynamic reading experience

#### *What this will result in:*

- More people – of all ages and from all backgrounds – will enjoy reading more on their own, through groups and social activities.
- People will be inspired by what we offer and how we offer it and engage with them.
- It will support improved literacy amongst the young and contribute to efforts to improve Somerset's educational outcomes.
- Vibrant libraries will be a key part of Somerset's cultural offer.

#### *Why does this matter?*

- Reading is pleasurable and enhances people's life chances.
- Enjoying reading improves literacy and through that, educational outcomes.
- It will improve people's health and wellbeing: for example reading can help improve mental health and delay the onset of dementia.
- Reading-related activities can bring people together from across generations and diverse sections of the community and combat social isolation, particularly amongst the elderly.
- Our statutory duty is to provide a comprehensive and efficient Library Service for all persons that want to make use of it, to promote the service, and to lend books and other printed material free of charge for those that who live, work or study in Somerset.

### Outcome 2: More people are enabled and inspired to make the most of the digital world

#### *What this will result in:*

- Libraries will work in partnership with others to support digital inclusion through addressing access, skills, motivation and trust.

- Libraries will lead by example through the digital services it offers its customers and the skills of our staff in helping people access digital information.
- Libraries will enable people to effectively benefit from digital information and services (both governmental and non-governmental).
- Libraries inspire people to make the most of the digital age, meet the rising expectations of a new generation, and open people's eyes to what is possible.

*Why does this matter?*

- We need to evolve what we do and how we do it to respond to the needs and demands of digital natives.
- It will benefit individuals and the public sector if we can raise the pace at which the number of people digitally included increases.
- We are uniquely placed to support people to become digitally included and to benefit from everything the digital world enables: this role for libraries is increasingly an expectation of a comprehensive service.
- Being digitally included can help people live independently in their own home for longer.
- Digital transactions and signposting to digital information is often more cost effective to provide: libraries have a crucial role in enabling savings across the public sector.
- Inspiring people by the possibilities the digital world updates the traditional role of public libraries and will raise aspirations.

Outcome 3: Library services strengthen and enable communities

*What this will result in:*

- Libraries making a meaningful contribution to the creation of thriving and resilient communities.
- Communities feeling that they have a real role in supporting and shaping how the Library Service works with them.
- Library services proportional to need and targeted to the areas, groups and individuals that need them most.
- Libraries being seen (within SCC and by our partners) as key places through which to connect with local communities.
- Communities will feel ownership of their library and feel that it enables them to make things happen within their community.
- Library services support communities of interest as well as local communities in towns and villages.



*Why does this matter?*

- The nature of what a library is, what it does, and how people interact with it is changing – but what is special about libraries isn't.
- People value their local library highly and see it as a key part of a thriving and resilient community.
- By working with local communities and partners we can make libraries more sustainable, and improve value for money.
- Many people identify more with their community of interest than their local community.
- Where and how we deliver Library Services will change over time, potentially including the development of community run or community supported Library Services.

Outcome 4: People, in particular the most vulnerable, are enabled to make informed choices for their health and wellbeing

*What this will result in:*

- People's health and wellbeing is advanced through what the Library Service offers and through what we enable through the partnerships (with associated funding) we develop.
- Libraries enable people to make informed choices to help themselves improve their health and wellbeing, but which provide particular support for those most in need (including the socially isolated and vulnerable).
- Libraries will be seen, by both customers and potential partners, as one of the key places to access trusted/assured information and government services through the way it works in partnership and as part of the Council's integrated information offer.
- Libraries will be increasingly commissioned to deliver targeted interventions to support prevention and health and wellbeing.

*Why does this matter?*

- Libraries are trusted, safe and creative spaces which are free to enter and open to all, providing crucial non-clinical infrastructure in the heart of many communities – for information, digital access, promotion, signposting, referrals and activities.
- By building strong strategic partnerships libraries can make a key contribution to improving health and wellbeing.
- There is an increasing demand for quality mental and physical health information.
- Libraries can make a key contribution to the preventative aspects of adult social care and health.

- Libraries have a statutory duty to provide information as may be required by persons using it.

#### Outcome 5: Libraries contribute to economic growth

##### *What this will result in:*

- Libraries will have a key part to play creating a more dynamic and growth focussed business population and through that encourage innovation, help raise the level of successful business start-ups and help existing businesses survive and grow.
- Libraries will provide access to business information and facilities as part of the Council's integrated approach to supporting growth.
- Libraries, working in partnership, will help people develop skills and access the labour market.
- Our Library Service will be part of an attractive inward investment offer through the way it enriches Somerset's cultural offer.

##### *Why does this matter?*

- Libraries have a key part to play in the Council's priority around economic growth through the facilities they offer within communities, the resources they provide, and the expertise of their staff in signposting people to assured information.
- Libraries provide safe and trusted space and facilities which, through working in partnership, can help people into employment.
- A strong cultural offer is a vital component of a prosperous economy – including through the indirect way in which this supports inward investment.
- Being in employment is a crucial element of people's health and well-being and supports social mobility.

#### Outcome 6 (new): Libraries support Children and Young People to be safe, healthy & happy; and inspire them to develop skills and be ambitious for their future.

##### *What this will result in:*

- The Library Service will promote innovation and creativity in the development of a rich offering of resources and activities for children and young people, in a safe and universal environment. Libraries will develop skills and enhance ambition in young people empowering them to be active voices in their communities.
- Children and young people will be active participants in the ongoing development of the Library Service.

- As a universal service library staff and volunteers will be trained to recognise where a child or family are starting to struggle and may have additional needs; to 'think family' and to listen to what families want.
- Libraries support children and families to develop the skills and provide them with the tools they need to manage their own health and wellbeing. They also provide a wide range of health promoting information and activity.
- Libraries provide a safe environment where children and families can form supportive communities of interest without barriers, regardless of their social and personal backgrounds, special educational needs or disabilities.
- Libraries will work in partnership with health professionals, schools, charities and other council services to support families' needs, sharing information and providing creative solutions to help children and young people to fulfil their aspirations.

*Why does this matter?*

- Public sector agencies can no longer afford to support the number of people in the way they once did, so a joined-up approach to building resilience in individuals, families and communities is required for those that need it the most. By aligning our Libraries and Early Help services, we will be able to make scarce resources go further to support families.
- Community resources, including libraries, help to promote health and wellbeing in local communities. National public health campaigns and other resources can be used to promote community solutions and improve outcomes for children and families in Somerset.
- We want children and young people in Somerset to enjoy good emotional wellbeing and mental health. This will reduce the need for access to more specialist services. Mental health is everyone's business.
- Somerset has a strategic vision of Achieving Excellence for All to drive aspiration and ambition for all children and young people, equipped well for achievement in life.
- Every young person will benefit from a broad range of pathways to further learning and employment, for their own achievement and for the success of the Somerset economy.

## APPENDIX 3: Library Service Re-Design Project – Initial Equalities Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessment Form and Action Table				
<p><i>"I shall try to explain what "due regard" means and how the courts interpret it. The courts have made it clear that having due regard is <b>more than having a cursory glance</b> at a document before arriving at a preconceived conclusion. Due regard requires public authorities, in formulating a policy, to give equality considerations the weight which is <b>proportionate in the circumstances</b>, given the potential impact of the policy on equality. It is not a question of box-ticking; it requires the equality impact to be <b>considered rigorously and with an open mind.</b>"</i></p> <p><b>Baroness Thornton, March 2010</b></p>				
<b>What are you completing the Impact Assessment on (which policy, service, MTFP reference, cluster etc)?</b>		Library Service Re-design Project		
<b>Version</b>	1	<b>Date</b>	14/09/2017	
Section 1 – Description of what is being impact assessed				
<p>The way people use libraries is changing, and Somerset's Library Service is undergoing a journey of change and modernisation. Over the last few years, the service has delivered over £1m of savings; in parallel re-focusing service delivery to meet a new, wider range of objectives, supporting the Council's priority outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and Young People are supported through early years reading activities, skills development (Code Clubs, technology activities, volunteering opportunities) and study space with free Wifi.</li> <li>• We provide books on prescription and other health and wellbeing information resources, a wide range of health and wellbeing activities, and combat social isolation by bringing people together.</li> <li>• Through business events, access to digital making equipment and our specialist business resources collections, we support businesses to develop and thrive.</li> </ul> <p>The service is performing well and has delivered a number of successful, innovative projects and initiatives which have gained national recognition. The Library Service is guided by its vision statement:</p> <p><i>Somerset Libraries are a dynamic, evolving and integral part of the community that open up a world of opportunities for reading, understanding and discovery.</i></p> <p>Working with the finance service, officers have developed an estimated budget profile for the Library Service over the next three years, set out here as a forecast reduction in the net budget likely to be available:</p>				
	2017/18 (£'000)	2018/19 (£'000)	2019/20 (£'000)	2020/21 (£'000)
<i>Estimated service budget for the year:</i>	3,890	3,690	3,560	3,570

In order to continue to support the County Council's wider priorities, and put the Library Service on a sustainable financial footing over the life of the current medium term financial planning cycle, a long term strategy is required. The proposed strategy to achieve the objectives and vision of the Library Service, within the likely reduction in available funding, is as follows:

- 1. To continue to offer and develop a range of services focused on delivering a range of outcomes.** To achieve this we will build on the existing delivery of economic development, health and wellbeing, reading and digital inclusion outcomes, as well as exploring new opportunities to support wider health outcomes through engagement with the Sustainability and Transformation Programme team, and extending our offer to Children and Young People.
- 2. To review and re-design the libraries network, seeking community solutions to sustain smaller libraries and maximise value for money and service effectiveness across the network.** To achieve this we will work with stakeholders to agree the criteria we will use to analyse need and demand. We will also consult with communities and stakeholder groups to re-determine the statutory 'comprehensive and efficient' library network and the funding provided beyond that network. We will work with other council programmes and communities to improve the utilisation of library buildings, co-locating and integrating with other services wherever possible and appropriate to share premises and staff costs. Where funding may be withdrawn or reduced to individual libraries, we will work with community groups to consider transferring assets to community management where appetite exists. In parallel, we will develop outreach service delivery models to improve the delivery of outcomes in areas where we are not addressing need through the current network – moving beyond the traditional focus on library buildings towards a more holistic and innovative model of Library Service delivery.
- 3. To implement a workforce development plan and associated re-structure of the frontline workforce, including greater utilisation of volunteers.** Across the funded network, the use of volunteer resource will be supplemented by skilled staff who will focus on supervisory and co-ordination tasks, and the delivery of activity programmes – both within libraries and through outreach services. Our larger / busier libraries are likely to retain a predominantly paid workforce, with volunteers providing 'added value' activities as they do now.
- 4. Invest in and develop technology infrastructure in libraries.** This objective represents a significant investment in the Library Service, much of which is funded through current capital investment budgets. We will also pilot technology solutions that could extend opening hours, and enable greater community use of library buildings.

This assessment considers the potential impacts of the likely reduction in funding, and the proposed service re-design strategy at this time. The Equalities Impact Assessment will need to evolve as the strategy develops and as more detail is known about the likely impacts.

Somerset's libraries service is predominantly delivered through 34 static libraries, a mobile service, and the Home Library Service. The service is a universal one, however certain activities are targeted towards specific groups - for example, people with long term health issues, children and young people, people being cared for in their own

homes.

The library network is dispersed geographically around Somerset with libraries in all large towns, together with many in market towns and in several smaller settlements.

The Council has a statutory duty to provide a '*comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof*' under the 1964 Public Libraries & Museums Act.

## **Section 2A – People or communities that could be affected**

People use the Library Service for many things. Whilst the majority of service users are library members, and use their membership cards to access lending and People's Network services, there are other groups of users who come to our libraries to browse newspapers, attend an event or activity, use the Wifi service, or many other things.

In 2016/17 there were:

- 74,486 active borrowers;
- 1.8 million visits across all libraries;
- 2,057,837 items issued;
- 139,922 hours of People's Network usage;
- 87,806 log-ons onto library Wifi networks.

When registering for a library card, library members are asked to complete some personal details. The questions are not compulsory, and some customers decline to answer certain questions. However, we are able to get a reasonable sense of the types of people or communities who could be affected by the changes described in section 1 by analysing responses to these questions. In the following tables, 'Active Library Members' means a library service user who has carried out a transaction with their library card over the previous 12 months, and who answered the relevant question when they joined the library. Where comparable (or nearly comparable), the proportion of Active Library Members belonging to a certain group has been compared to the proportion of the Somerset population belonging to that group, in order to get a sense of which groups are more likely to be library users. Somerset population figures are taken from the 2011 census.

Table 1: % of active library members and Somerset population in certain age ranges:

Age range	% Active library members	Age range	% of Somerset population as a whole
0-4	6.8%	0-4	5.4%
5-11	12.9%	5-9	5.2%
12-17	4.8%	10-15	7.2%
18-64	52.2%	16-64	61.1%
65+	23.3%	65+	21.1%

Table 1 indicates that children and older people may be more likely to be affected by changes to Library Services, because these groups are more likely to use libraries than other groups. The total number of active library members broken down in the table above is 156,289.

***Table 2: % of active library members and Somerset population by gender:***

<b>Sex</b>	<b>% Active library members</b>	<b>% of Somerset population as a whole</b>
Female	61.67%	51.20%
Male	38.13%	48.80%
Prefer not to say	0.19%	-

Table 2 indicates that females may be more likely to be affected by changes to Library Services, because a higher proportion of library users are female. The total number of active library members broken down in the table above is 156,564.

***Table 3: % of active library members and Somerset population by ethnicity:***

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>% Active library members who registered ethnicity</b>	<b>% of Somerset population as a whole</b>
Black & Minority ethnic groups	3.48%	2.02%
White British	91.34%	94.64%
White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Any other White	5.18%	3.34%

Table 3 indicates that Black & Minority ethnic groups, and non-British white groups, may be more likely to be affected by changes to Library Services than White British people, because these groups are more likely to use libraries than White British people. The total number of active library members broken down in the table above is 113,957. The ethnicity of a further 40,814 active library members is unknown because these members have either declined to answer the question or have not registered their ethnicity.

***Table 4: % of active library members registering a disability (of active library users who answered this question), and 2011 census responses on disability / long term health problems:***

<b>Disability status</b>	<b>% Active library members</b>
Disabled	5%
Non-disabled	95%

<b>Disability / long term health problem status (2011 census response)</b>	<b>% of Somerset population as a whole</b>
Long term health problem or disabled	19%*
No long term health problem or disability identified	81%

\* People whose day-to-day activities are limited because of a long-term health problem or disability.

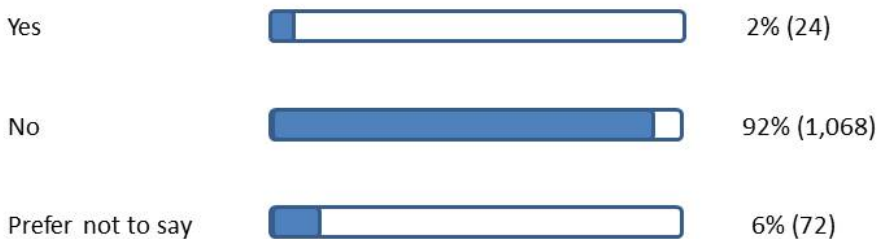
The total number of active library members broken down in the table above is 117,904. A further 17,401 active library members declined to answer this question, and we have no comparable records for the remaining group of around 20,000 active library members.

To support the development of the strategy set out in section 1 above, we have carried out a significant exercise mapping (anonymously) the home addresses of our active library members. The results of this exercise give an indication of the number of active library users living in more rural parts of Somerset. We have been unable to summarise this data here as it is mapped across over 1800 statistical output areas across Somerset; work to develop this dataset continues at the time of writing and will be used to form an understanding of the rural / urban balance of our customer base. In the meantime, further details of the mapping data are available on request from the author.

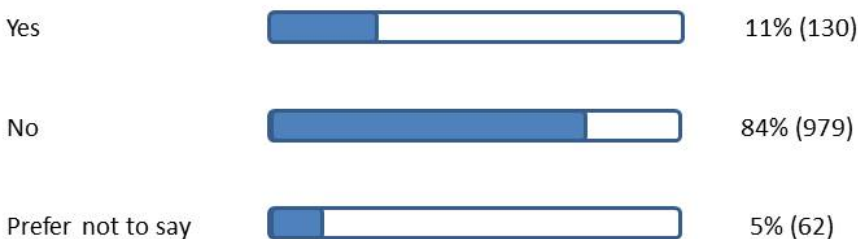
We do not collate any data on the income levels for library customers, however our judgement is that those with low incomes are more likely to use the Library Service. We know from the day-to-day experiences of our frontline staff that many homeless people use Somerset libraries; people on low incomes are also more likely to utilise free-at-the-point-of-use borrowing or internet access facilities as an alternative to more expensive purchasing of reading material or computers / internet access at home. Increasingly under the new Universal Credit benefit procedures, people on income-related benefits are using the library to apply for jobs and engage in learning.

Because of the nature of our universal, free at the point of use service, we have very little data on service users who are not library members. The service carried out a customer survey, open to all library users and non-library users, in June / July 2017. Over 1200 people responded to the survey, and a summary of responses to questions on certain protected characteristics is shown below:

**Do you consider yourself to be from a minority background?**

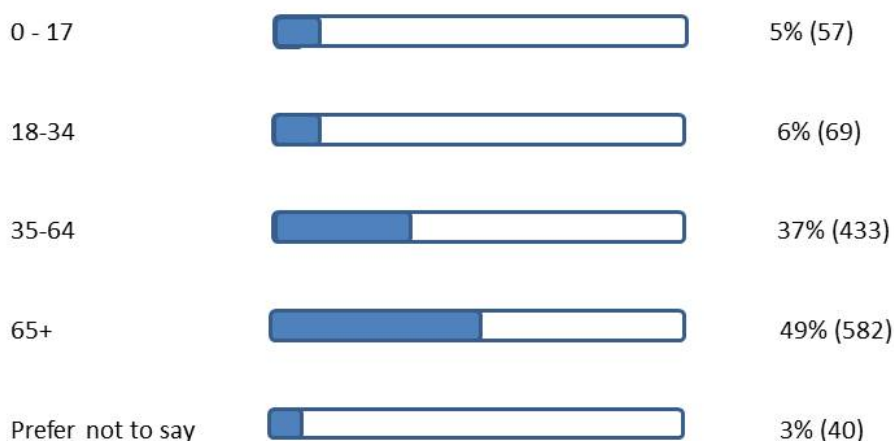


**Do you consider yourself to have a disability?**

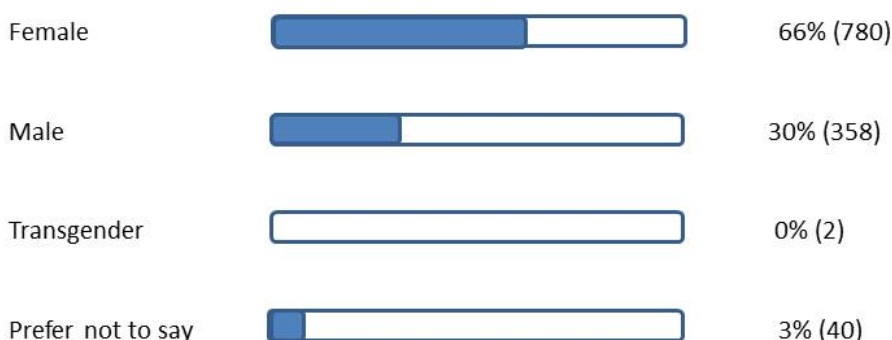




### What is your age?



### What is your gender?



As with the data on active library users, responses to the recent customer satisfaction exercise would indicate that groups with certain protected characteristics (women and older people) are more likely to be affected by changes to Library Services. This data would also seem to suggest that a relatively higher proportion of Library Service users are disabled people, although this could be due to the higher rate of responses amongst elderly people.

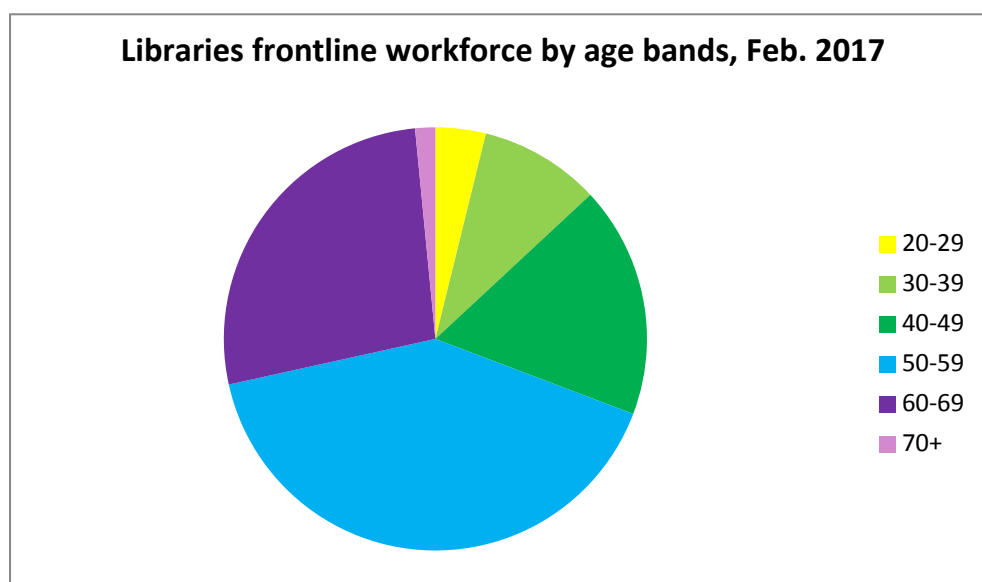
A very wide range of community groups use library premises for their activities, and many of these groups share protected characteristics. The Library Service also runs a further wide range of activities and events across the network. Some of these activities - such as the University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age, 'Knit and Natter' and 'Feel better with a book' groups tend to be utilised by older people; other activities (such as homework clubs, code clubs, lego clubs) tend to be focussed on children. Other activities and services are used by other groups sharing protected characteristics – for example, baby rhyme time sessions are very frequently used by people on maternity leave; the 'conversation café' service which brings together English and non-English speakers to develop language skills is heavily used by ethnic minority groups; some of our specialist health collections are used by people with long term physical or mental health conditions. 539 customers are supported to use Library Services from their own homes/residential homes through the Home Library Service; the majority of this group are elderly and all have some sort of mobility restriction or long-term health condition.

## Section 2B – People who are **delivering** the policy or service

The service is provided by in-house staff in a range of management, back-office and frontline (library & information assistant) roles. The service also draws upon hundreds of volunteers directly recruited to work within individual libraries and also through the Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) outreach service to housebound customers. The group of staff most likely to be impacted by the strategy proposed in section 1 above are the frontline workforce.

As at February 2017, the various proportions of our frontline workforce (Library and Information Assistants & Supervisors – a group of around 130 people) sharing certain relevant protected characteristics were as follows:

- 91% are female; 9% are Male.
- 88% describe themselves as belonging to the 'white british' ethnic group; 2% belonging to the 'white: any other white background' ethnic group; with the remainder (10%) preferring not to respond to this question.
- 89% said that they did not have a disability, with the remaining 11% not responding to this question.
- 69% are aged over 50. The pie chart below shows the age distribution of the frontline workforce:



Furthermore, Library and Information Assistants are paid at one of the Council's lowest pay scale bands and often work part time. We do not hold any information about total household income for our workforce, but it is likely that many frontline staff have lower than average levels of income.

This analysis of staff delivering the service indicates that women, older working age people and those on lower incomes may be more likely to be affected by changes to Library Services, because the vast majority of our frontline workforce are likely to have one or more of these protected characteristics.

## Section 3 – Evidence and data used for the assessment (Attach documents where appropriate)

At this early stage we have focused on gathering the evidence and data set out in section 2 above; this gives an indication of who is using libraries, and what proportions of our

workforce share relevant protected characteristics. Going forward, we will be developing the evidence base to support the development of the high level strategy proposed at this stage, and to inform specific proposals and decisions. Four main areas of evidence and data will form the focus of this work:

*1. Evidence from engagement and consultation exercises.*

An engagement exercise with local communities, library friends groups and library staff will commence very shortly. Later on in the project we will be carrying out a full consultation exercise involving communities, library users, staff and a range of other stakeholder groups. Information gathered from these exercises will be used to inform further iterations of the assessment, as well as the development of proposals and mitigating measures.

*2. Further analysis of equalities data & evidence from staff engagement and consultation.*

The data set out in section 2 above can be further analysed to indicate the proportion of groups sharing protected characteristics who have registered / used particular libraries, which we hope will give a more 'granular' level of evidence on the various characteristics of the Library Service customer base. We expect to use this information, together with more subjective information on the protected characteristics of customers of various libraries gathered through engagement and consultation exercises with our staff, to inform further iterations of this assessment.

*3. Needs assessment*

The review and re-design of the Library Service network will be informed by a comprehensive needs assessment exercise, which will analyse the level of need for Library Services in different areas of Somerset. This exercise will provide an evidence base for assessing the impact of proposals on certain protected characteristics: census and other data will be used to analyse the population of library catchment areas. The methodology and data to be used is still being developed at the time of writing, but it is likely that we will draw upon the following datasets (amongst others less relevant to the consideration of protected characteristics):

- Elderly population
- Population of children
- Health deprivation
- Income deprivation, employment rate

Whilst rurality may not be considered as a factor within the needs assessment, we are likely to be able to map 'access to services' deprivation (a measure of rurality) at catchment and sub-catchment level, and this may also be used (in addition to the datasets listed above) within further iterations of this impact assessment.

Assessing the level of these needs in particular library catchments is likely to give us more information about the likely impact of changes on people within certain age groups, those with a long term health condition, people with lower household incomes, and those who live in rural areas.

*4. Analysis of ease of access to alternative locations.*

As with the needs assessment data referred to in (3) above, the review and re-design of the library network will also be informed by an analysis of access levels to alternative libraries. Access will be considered by reviewing driving time, public transport access, and (if possible) other proxy factors such as car ownership levels in certain catchment areas. The data collated and analysed as part of this exercise will also be used to inform an assessment of the impact of proposed changes on certain groups sharing protected characteristics – for example, elderly and disabled groups who are less likely to have access to a car, and those living in rural areas.

**Section 4 – Conclusions** drawn about the equalities impact (positive or negative) of the proposed change or new service/policy:

The results of this initial assessment indicate a wide range of potential impacts across protected characteristics that could result from the Library Service Re-design Project. At this stage, with only high level strategic objectives (as well as an estimated budget reduction) identified, and no specific proposals developed, it is difficult to evaluate equalities impacts with any degree of detail. In light of this, we have given an initial consideration of those protected characteristics that could be affected by a change in the delivery of the Library Service. At the moment this is a broad consideration that will be used to inform the direction of the project, the questions we ask as part of the consultation and the specific tasks that are taken forward. As the project progresses these will change and become more specific to the proposals that are being identified.

A number of specific potential impacts are set out in the action plan table below. This section provides a high level summary of the potential equalities impact of the project.

There is good evidence that people with the protected characteristics of Age (younger children and elderly people), Gender (females) and Race (Black and Ethnic Minority Groups, non-British White groups) are more likely to use Library Services, and some evidence that people with the protected characteristics of Pregnancy / Maternity and Low Income are also more likely to use Library Services. This in itself means that these groups are likely to be more affected by any change to Library Services. Impacts of the strategy proposed at this stage are likely to be positive and negative for these groups:

- Potential positive impacts include improved technology through investment in new hardware and software; improved library opening hours through a greater use of volunteers and through communities supporting libraries; a wider range of services provided as a result of restructuring the workforce; a greater use of volunteers, releasing capacity for frontline library staff to be more effective.
- The likely reduction in funding to Library Services may potentially have some negative impacts. Whilst hopefully making Library Services more sustainable, a greater reliance on volunteers or community support could diminish the quality of some aspects of the Library Service in some areas. We hope that communities will come forward to support libraries in all areas but we have to be realistic about the prospect that Somerset County Council could be operating fewer library buildings in the future. The project will work to mitigate these impacts as far as possible.

Libraries in smaller, more rural communities tend to be less well-used than others, and many have lower levels of certain categories of need. People with the protected characteristic of rurality are potentially more likely to be impacted by the review and re-design of the libraries network, although this should be balanced by the potential positive impact of improved opening hours and a more vibrant and sustainable future for some of

our more rural libraries, where local community support enables this.

In the event that the council operates fewer library buildings as a result of implementing this strategy, some people may need to travel further to access Library Services. This can have a disproportionate impact on elderly people, disabled people, and people with the protected characteristic of maternity. These groups are less likely to drive, and may find it more difficult to access alternative Library Services.

For some people with protected characteristics (some people with disabilities, some elderly people, some transgender people, some people from minority ethnic groups, some bisexual or homosexual people), changes to much-valued services can create a heightened state of anxiety that directly relates to a protected characteristic. Changes in the location of services, technology platforms, staff, or the introduction of new volunteer roles or community-supported libraries, could all impact on these groups.

Finally, the majority of staff who are likely to be affected by the changes are likely to be female, or over 50, or have lower than average incomes (or they may have a combination of these protected characteristics). Again, impacts of the strategy proposed at this stage are likely to be positive and negative for these groups:

- Potential positive impacts include lower levels of work-related stress as improved capacity could be delivered by an increase in the use of volunteers and / or by support from community groups. New job roles are likely to be more enriching, and could be better paid.
- Potential negative impacts include anxiety and stress related to potential workforce changes. Some affected staff could lose their jobs if the county council ends up running fewer library buildings.

**If you have identified any negative impacts you will need to consider how these can be mitigated to either reduce or remove them. In the table below let us know what mitigation you will take. (Please add rows where needed)**

Identified issue drawn from your conclusions	Actions needed – can you mitigate the impacts? If you can how will you mitigate the impacts?	Who is responsible for the actions? When will the action be completed?	How will it be monitored? What is the expected outcome from the action?
<p><b>Age</b></p> <p>Although people of all age groups use libraries, a higher proportion of library service users are older people or younger children than is the case for the proportion of these groups in the population as a whole. This being the case, any change which led to a reduction of local library services or service levels could indirectly discriminate against the elderly and younger children. A significantly higher proportion of frontline library staff are over 50, and there is a similar risk of indirect discrimination against staff with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Other, more specific potential issues include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes to the physical library network and/or to how and where services are delivered may make it more difficult for elderly people to access services, as they are more likely to rely on public transport, and less able to walk longer distances.</li> <li>• Changes to technology used in library service delivery may create a level of anxiety, or be perceived as a reduction in service, by elderly people, some of whom may be less comfortable using technology.</li> <li>• Any reduction in staff could affect those aged over 50 more as this group may find it more difficult to find alternative employment.</li> </ul>	<p>Ensure that the needs of older adults and children are analysed and used to inform specific proposals for consultation, and that consultation effectively engages with these groups.</p> <p>Ensure that the assessment of access to alternative libraries takes account of public transport.</p> <p>Assess the impact of new technologies before deployment.</p> <p>Support staff at risk through re-deployment opportunities and access to support services.</p>	<p>Library Service Re-design Project Board</p>	<p>Recommendations have clear reference to assessed need and show how impacts to those likely to be most affected are mitigated. Any changes to service provision meet the assessed needs of the elderly and of children.</p> <p>Any changes to service provision maintain reasonable access to library services for a reasonable majority of the population, considering the needs of those who are unable to drive. Staff are supported as far as possible through</p>

<p>One potential positive impact on this protected characteristic is that by improving the capacity of the workforce to provide a better range of services, increasing opening hours through the use of volunteers or technology, and the improving the performance and reliability of technology, we may be able to develop a more attractive offer for the 'young adults' demographic, who are currently under-represented within the population of library users.</p>			workforce changes.
<b>Disability</b>			
<p>Re-designing the Library Service, including potential changes to where services are provided, could have a negative impact upon people with physical or learning disabilities in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical ability to access services on offer, either due to the location/building itself or an increased need to travel;</li> <li>• the ability to understand communications on how services have changed, potentially leading to a situation where they aren't accessed by those who could benefit. A lack of ability to ensure understanding and adaptation to the new service being provided could cause anxiety and have other mental health and wellbeing impacts;</li> <li>• changes or reductions to the services could mean people who experience sensory loss have less access or provision of a range of non-print formats e.g. braille books, spoken word material, online and other resources (although at this stage we do not anticipate any significant changes to the type and range of borrowing material available, changes to service delivery points could impact on people with sensory loss in certain specific locations). People who experience sensory loss may find it more difficult to access alternative web-based / digital delivery of Library Services.</li> </ul>	<p>Ensure that the needs of disabled people are understood and used to inform specific proposals, by ensuring that consultation effectively engages with this group. Ensure that the assessment of access to alternative libraries takes account of public transport and disabled access to buildings. Ensure that the re-designed service is effectively promoted to people with disabilities.</p>	Library Service Re-design Project Board	<p>Any changes to service provision maintain reasonable access to library services for a reasonable majority of the population, considering the needs of those who are unable to drive or who have difficulty walking.</p> <p>Library Services are delivered in locations which are fully accessible to disabled people. The specific needs of people with sensory loss are effectively met.</p>

<b>Gender Reassignment</b>			
For persons with this protected characteristic, any significant change to the location or staffing of a library may cause heightened anxiety, because societal responses to gender reassignment may increase nervousness of change.	Ensure that proposed changes are communicated effectively in advance.	Library Service Re-design Project Board	
<b>Marriage and Civil Partnership</b>			
No impacts identified at this stage.			
<b>Pregnancy and Maternity</b>			
<p>A large number of parents with very young children use library services targeted at babies. This being the case, any change which led to a reduction or diminution of local library services could indirectly discriminate against people with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Changes to the physical network and/or to how and where services are delivered may mean parents with young families could find it more difficult to travel to alternative library services, perhaps because they do not have access to a second car, or because household income is lower.</p> <p>Staff who are on maternity leave during any restructuring exercise may feel more vulnerable because they are away from the office; they may not become involved in any staff consultation exercise and may feel less well supported.</p> <p>More positively, additional capacity provided by a potential increase in the use of volunteers could enable the Library Service to improve the range of services offered to parents of young children.</p>	<p>Ensure that the assessment of access to alternative libraries takes account of public transport.</p> <p>Ensure that the re-designed service is effectively promoted to people with very young children.</p> <p>Ensure that staff who are on maternity leave are effectively communicated with and supported throughout any workforce changes, including engaging these staff in any consultation exercises.</p>	Library Service Re-design Project Board	<p>Any changes to service provision maintain reasonable access to library services for a reasonable majority of the population, considering the needs of those who may find it more difficult to travel.</p> <p>Staff who are on maternity leave are effectively supported and engaged in any workforce changes.</p>



**Race** (including ethnicity or national origin, colour, nationality and Gypsies and Travellers)

Those whose first language is not English may be disadvantaged by difficulties in understanding changes proposed, difficulties in engaging in a consultation exercise and making their views heard, or difficulties in understanding any new technologies deployed.

At this stage we do not anticipate any significant changes to the type and range of borrowing material available, including materials in foreign languages. However, this will be kept under review.

Where communities with this protected characteristic are congregated in specific library catchments, they could be disproportionately affected (and suffer indirect discrimination) if changes are made to service provision within that catchment.

More positively, increased capacity as a result of changes to the workforce structure and a potential increase in the use of volunteers could enable the service to develop its targeted offer to groups with this protected characteristic, for example by expanding the successful 'conversation café' for those whose first language is not English.

Ensure that consultation effectively engages with people whose first language is not English group.

Assess the impact of specific proposals by evaluating whether communities with this protected characteristic are concentrated within certain library catchment areas.

Library Service Re-design Project Board

As far as possible, the Library Service continues to effectively serve Black and Ethnic Minority groups; the proportion BME library customers is not significantly impacted by changes.

**Religion and Belief**

At this stage we do not anticipate any significant changes to the type and range of borrowing material available, including materials relating to religion or belief; however this will be kept under review.

Where communities with this protected characteristic are congregated in specific library catchments, they could be disproportionately affected (and suffer indirect discrimination) if changes are made to service provision within that catchment.

Assess the impact of specific proposals by evaluating whether communities with this protected characteristic are concentrated within certain library

Library Service Re-design Project Board

	catchment areas.		
<b>Sex</b>			
<p>A higher proportion of Library Service users are women. This being the case, any change which led to a reduction or diminution of local library services could indirectly discriminate against the elderly and younger children. A significantly higher proportion of frontline library staff are women, and there is a similar risk of indirect discrimination against staff with this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Other than this general concern we do not envisage any specific impacts arising from the strategy.</p>		Library Service Re-design Project Board	
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			
<p>For persons with this protected characteristic, any significant change to the location or staffing of a library may cause heightened anxiety, because societal responses to gender reassignment may increase nervousness of change.</p>	Ensure that proposed changes are communicated effectively in advance.	Library Service Re-design Project Board	
<b>Other</b> (including caring responsibilities, rurality, low income, Military Status etc)			
<p><b>Rurality</b> – Libraries in smaller, more rural communities tend to be less well-used than others, and many have lower levels of certain categories of need. People with the protected characteristic of rurality are potentially more likely to be impacted by the review and re-design of the libraries network, although this should be balanced by the potential positive impact of improved opening hours and a more vibrant and sustainable future for some of our more rural libraries, where local community support enables this.</p>	<p>Ensure that the needs of those living in rural areas are analysed and used to inform specific proposals for consultation.</p> <p>Ensure that the assessment of access to alternative libraries and outreach services takes account of travel time from more rural</p>	Library Service Re-design Project Board	<p>Any changes to service provision maintain reasonable access to library services for a reasonable majority of the population, considering the needs of those who live in rural areas.</p>

	communities as well as public transport.		
<p><b>Low Income</b> – There is some evidence that people with lower incomes are more likely to use the Library Service; and further evidence that people on low incomes may be more reliant on library services (for example, to access the digital world without having to fund internet access or purchase expensive computer equipment). People in receipt of universal credit are increasingly using libraries to meet the requirements of this new benefit.</p> <p>Those on lower incomes are less likely to have access to a car, or more likely to only have one car in a family. They may, therefore, be more reliant on public transport and less able to travel to access alternative library services if changes are made in their local area.</p> <p>Frontline Library staff are on lower pay scales and, whilst this does not necessarily correlate to low levels of total household income, they may feel more vulnerable to the effects of a workforce re-design process, with heightened sense of anxiety.</p> <p>More positively, increased capacity as a result of changes to the workforce structure and a potential increase in the use of volunteers could enable the service to develop its targeted offer to unemployed people or people on low incomes, for example through improved micro-business start-up support and information.</p>	<p>Ensure that the needs of people on lower incomes are understood and used to inform specific proposals, both through robust needs analysis and through effectively consultation.</p> <p>Ensure that the assessment of access to alternative libraries takes account of public transport</p>	Strategic Manager	<p>As far as possible, the library service continues to effectively serve the needs of people with low incomes.</p> <p>All staff affected by potential restructuring arrangements are effectively supported and engaged.</p>

**Section 6** - How will the assessment, consultation and outcomes be published and communicated? E.g. reflected in final strategy, published. What steps are in place to review the Impact Assessment

The Equalities Impact Assessments will be published as and when they are produced to support successive scrutiny and decision reports; each will contribute towards a suite of Assessments that will provide a consistent thread from start to finish and which will demonstrate how due regard to the Council's equality duty has been made through the process.

<b>Completed by:</b>	Barry James / Oliver Woodhams
<b>Date</b>	07/09/17
<b>Signed off by:</b>	Oliver Woodhams
<b>Date</b>	21/09/17
<b>Compliance sign off Date</b>	21/09/17
<b>To be reviewed by:</b> (officer name)	Library Service Redesign Project Board
<b>Review date:</b>	Regular review at project board meetings

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

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**Scrutiny for Policies and Place Committee Work Programme**

<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Details and Lead Officer</b>
	<b>3 October 2017</b>	
Council Performance Monitoring report Q1 – 2017/18		Emma Plummer/ Louise Day
Flood + Water Management – to include Bridgwater Tidal Barrier update		Barry James + Dan Martin
Library Services Update & Proposed Strategy		Ollie Woodhams/Jackie Swabey
Verbal update from County Farms Task & Finish Group		Task and Finish Group Chair
2017/18 Revenue Budget Month 4		Elizabeth Watkin
	<b>31 October 2017</b>	
Draft County Plan Refresh		Simon Clifford
	<b>5 December 2017</b>	
Draft Medium Term Financial Plan		Kevin Nacey
Council Performance Monitoring report Q2 – 2017/18		Emma Plummer/ Louise Day
County Farms update		Richard Williams
	<b>2018</b>	
Draft MTFP (Jan)		Kevin Nacey
Parking Services update (to include data on the use of surplus) (March/April)		Steve Deakin/Ollie Woodhams
Highways Terms Maintenance Contract (March/April)		Andrew Turner/Alyn Jones
Property Disposals update (May/June)		Steve Gale

**Note:** Members of the Scrutiny Committee and all other Members of Somerset County Council are invited to contribute items for inclusion in the work programme. Please contact Jamie Jackson, Service Manager Scrutiny, who will assist you in submitting your item. [jajackson@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:jajackson@somerset.gov.uk) 01823 359040

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## Somerset County Council Forward Plan of proposed Key Decisions

The County Council is required to set out details of planned key decisions at least 28 calendar days before they are due to be taken. This forward plan sets out key decisions to be taken at Cabinet meetings as well as individual key decisions to be taken by either the Leader, a Cabinet Member or an Officer. The very latest details can always be found on our website at:

<http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=134&RD=0&FD=1&bcr=1>

Regulation 8 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 defines a key decision as an executive decision which is likely:

- (a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards or electoral divisions in the area of the relevant local authority.

The Council has decided that the relevant threshold at or above which the decision is significant will be £500,000 for capital / revenue expenditure or savings. Money delegated to schools as part of the Scheme of Financial Management of Schools exercise is exempt from these thresholds once it is delegated to the school.

Cabinet meetings are held in public at County Hall unless Cabinet resolve for all or part of the meeting to be held in private in order to consider exempt information/confidential business. The Forward Plan will show where this is intended. Agendas and reports for Cabinet meetings are also published on the Council's website at least five clear working days before the meeting date.

Individual key decisions that are shown in the plan as being proposed to be taken "not before" a date will be taken within a month of that date, with the requirement that a report setting out the proposed decision will be published on the Council's website at least five working days before the date of decision. Any representations received will be considered by the decision maker at the decision meeting.

In addition to key decisions, the forward plan shown below lists other business that is scheduled to be considered at a Cabinet meeting during the period of the Plan, which will also include reports for information. The monthly printed plan is updated on an ad hoc basis during each month. *Where possible the County Council will attempt to keep to the dates shown in the Plan. It is quite likely, however, that some items will need to be rescheduled and new items added as new circumstances come to light.* Please ensure therefore that you refer to the most up to date plan.

For general enquiries about the Forward Plan:

- You can view it on the County Council web site at <http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=134&RD=0&FD=1&bcr=1>
- You can arrange to inspect it at County Hall (in Taunton).
- Alternatively, copies can be obtained from Scott Wooldridge or Julia Jones in the Community Governance Team by telephoning (01823) 359027 or 357628.

To view the Forward Plan on the website you will need a copy of Adobe Acrobat Reader available free from [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)  
Please note that it could take up to 2 minutes to download this PDF document depending on your Internet connection speed.

To make representations about proposed decisions:

Please contact the officer identified against the relevant decision in the Forward Plan to find out more information or about how your representations can be made and considered by the decision maker.

The Agenda and Papers for Cabinet meetings can be found on the County Council's website at:  
<http://democracy.somerset.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=134&Year=0>

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FP Refs	Decision Date/Maker	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring it to be considered in private?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
<b>Fp/17/07/07</b> First published: 19 July 2017	27 Sep 2017 Cabinet	Issue: End of July 2017 Performance Monitoring Report Decision: To consider the latest quarterly performance monitoring report			Emma Plummer, Strategic Manager Performance Tel: 01823 359251
<b>FP/17/07/08</b> First published: 19 July 2017	27 Sep 2017 Cabinet	Issue: Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring Report End of July 2017 Decision: to consider the latest quarterly budget monitoring report and any proposed decisions			Elizabeth Watkin, Service Manager - Chief Accountant Tel: 01823359573
<b>FP/17/08/04</b> First published: 15 August 2017	Not before 28th Sep 2017 Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development	Issue: To approve the inclusion of the Welsh Government in the existing SME Business Support for HPC Supply Chain & Nuclear South West Inward Investment Expertise Cross-LEP Contract for which SCC is the accountable body. Decision: Approve the acceptance of £500,000.00 from the Welsh Government to extend the SME Business Support for HPC Supply Chain element of the Contract to include Wales			Julie Wooler, Economic Development & Strategic Tourism Officer

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<p><b>FP/17/07/05</b> First published: 13 July 2017</p>	<p>Not before 28th Sep 2017 Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport</p>	<p>Issue: Award of specialist traffic signals contract. Decision: To approve the procurement of specialist Traffic Signals design services via a Framework contract.</p>	<p>Confidential tender appendix</p>	<p>Part exempt</p>	<p>Bev Norman, Service Manager - Traffic Management, Traffic &amp; Transport Development, John Kitchen, Traffic Control Engineer, Traffic Control, Traffic &amp; Transport Development Tel: 01823358089, Tel: 01823358140</p>
<p><b>FP/17/06/04</b> First published: 13 June 2017</p>	<p>Not before 2nd Oct 2017 Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development</p>	<p>Issue: Disposal of Surplus Land and Farms Decision: Authority to conclude negotiations for the disposal of surplus land and farms including those disposals to be conducted via public auction, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Cabinet Minutes June and July 2010: County Farm Review Cabinet Member Key Decision 18 October 2010: County Farm Estate – Outcome of farm by farm reviews Notification of proposed decision for Disposal of Surplus Land and Farms Appendix A - List of proposed surplus assets for disposal Chilton Polden land Edington Middle Thrupe Farm Willets and Paul's Copse, Donyatt Donyatt Oxenford Farm</p>	<p>Part exempt</p>	<p>Charlie Field, Estates Manager, Corporate Property Tel: 01823355325</p>

FP Refs	Decision Date/Maker	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring it to be considered in private?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
<p><b>FP/17/08/01</b> First published: 9 August 2017</p>	<p>Not before 2nd Oct 2017 Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development</p>	<p>Issue: Disposal of Surplus Land at Castle Cary Decision: Authority to conclude negotiations for the disposal of surplus (former) farm land (13 acres, land only) at Castle Cary. Authority to conclude negotiations for the disposal of surplus (former) farm land (13 acres, land only) at Castle Cary.</p>	<p>Disposal of Surplus Land</p>		<p>Richard Williams, Commercial &amp; Business Services Director Tel: 01823 359007</p>
<p><b>FP/17/07/03</b> First published: 10 July 2017</p>	<p>Not before 2nd Oct 2017 Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport</p>	<p>Issue: To agree to the purchase of the land for the construction of the M5 Junction 25 Highways Improvement Scheme. Decision: The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport agrees to: • the acquisition of land required for the construction of the M5 Junction 25 highways scheme • the continued development of the scheme.</p>	<p>Cabinet Member Key Decision - M5 Junction 25 – decision to proceed with consultation, design, planning and procurement – 19 Aug 2016 Cabinet Member Key Decision - To agree to enter into a funding agreement with the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (HotSW LEP) for the M5 J25 Improvement scheme – 13 Jan 2017</p>	<p>Part exempt</p>	<p>Sunita Mills, Service Commissioning Manager Tel: 01823 359763</p>
<p><b>FP/17/04/08</b> First published: 24 April 2017</p>	<p>Not before 2nd Oct 2017 Finance &amp; Performance Director, Director of Commissioning for Economic and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>Issue: Approval to accept Highways England Growth &amp; Housing Fund award toward the M5 J25 improvement scheme. Decision: To accept the funding awarded by Highways England &amp; sign the funding agreement</p>	<p>Copy of the funding agreement to be signed.</p>		<p>Sunita Mills, Service Commissioning Manager Tel: 01823 359763</p>

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FP Refs	Decision Date/Maker	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring it to be considered in private?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
<p><b>Fp/17/03/11</b> First published: 29 March 2017</p>	<p>Not before 2nd Oct 2017 Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development</p>	<p>Issue: Asset Rationalisation : A refreshed approach Decision: Sets out our principles for a refreshed approach to assets and disposals with a more proactive approach working with services in order to deliver the council's priorities</p>			<p>Claire Lovett, Head of Property Tel: 07977412583</p>
<p><b>FP/17/07/09</b> First published: 24 July 2017</p>	<p>Not before 2nd Oct 2017 Finance &amp; Performance Director, Director of Commissioning for Economic and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>Issue: Wiveliscombe Enterprise Centre (WEC) – Approval to start a procurement process, to accept ERDF/LEP funding and to sign the grant funding agreements Decision: Approval to accept the ERDF/LEP funding and sign the grant funding agreements for the WEC development. Approval to start the procurement process to find a suitable supplier for the development of the WEC.</p>	<p>ERDF grant funding agreement LEP grant funding agreement Equalities Impact Assessment Key Decision to authorise the purchase of the land at Wiveliscombe</p>	<p>Part exempt</p>	<p>Nathaniel Lucas, Senior Economic Development Officer Tel: 01823359210</p>
<p><b>FP/17/07/10</b> First published: 24 July 2017</p>	<p>Not before 2nd Oct 2017 Director of Commissioning for Economic and Community Infrastructure, Finance &amp; Performance Director</p>	<p>Issue: Wells Technology Enterprise Centre (WTEC) – Approval to start a procurement process, to accept ERDF/LEP funding and sign the grant funding agreements Decision: Approval to accept the ERDF/LEP funding and sign the grant funding agreements for the WTEC development. Approval to start the procurement process to find a suitable supplier for the development of the WTEC.</p>		<p>Part exempt</p>	<p>Nathaniel Lucas, Senior Economic Development Officer Tel: 01823359210</p>

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<b>FP/17/06/07</b> First published: 26 June 2017	Not before 2nd Oct 2017 Commercial & Business Services Director, Director of Commissioning for Economic and Community Infrastructure	Issue: Authorise the purchase of Land at Cathedral Park, Wells for the development of Wells Technology Enterprise Centre. Decision: Authority to: • Purchase of land at Cathedral Park, Wells for the development of the Wells Technology Enterprise Centre	Any relevant decision paper which have acted as precursors to this decision paper.		Nathaniel Lucas, Senior Economic Development Officer Tel: 01823359210
<b>FP/17/08/01</b> First published: 14 August 2017	Not before 2nd Oct 2017 Director of Children's Services	Issue: AdoptSW, Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) virtual Adoption Panel Decision: Operating an AdoptSW adoption panel is a first step to regionalisation ahead of the move to full regionalisation on 1st April 2018.			Suzanne Lyus, Operations Manager, Resources - Fostering Adoption Placements Tel: 01823357146
<b>FP/17/08/15</b> First published: 1 September 2017	Not before 2nd Oct 2017 Public Health Director	Issue: New Model of Healthy Weight Services Decision: To agree a new model of healthy weight services from 1st January 2018 at the end of the current contract. This new model will be a population-level approach to encourage healthy eating and physical activity.			Matthew Hibbert, Public Health Specialist

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<p><b>FP/17/02/01</b> First published: 14 February 2017</p>	<p>Not before 2nd Oct 2017 Commercial &amp; Business Services Director</p>	<p>Issue: Award of Contract for the provision of a 3 Classroom Block at Court Fields School, Wellington Decision: To approve the awarding of the contract to the successful contractor</p>	<p>Confidential Financial Report Capital Programme Paper</p>	<p>Part exempt</p>	<p>Carol Bond, Project Manager, Property Programme Team Tel: 01823 355962</p>
<p><b>FP/17/07/12</b> First published: 27 July 2017</p>	<p>Not before 2nd Oct 2017 Cabinet Member for Children and Families</p>	<p>Issue: Creation of a new Academy in Somerset Decision: The Secretary of State for Education has directed via an Academy Order, the conversion to Academy Status for Ashill Community School. This is a technical decision to facilitate the transfer of non fixed assets.</p>	<p>Academies Act 2010</p>		<p>Elizabeth Smith, Service Manager – Schools Commissioning Tel: 01823 356260</p>



FP Refs	Decision Date/Maker	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring it to be considered in private?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
<p><b>FP/17/08/16</b> First published: 1 September 2017</p>	<p>Not before 9th Oct 2017 Cabinet Member for Resources and Economic Development</p>	<p>Issue: Library Service Redesign - Strategy Decision: Agree the recommendation of commissioners (following a strategic review of delivery model options) to continue to manage the Library Service predominantly in-house and not to pursue an alternative / externalised delivery model for the whole service for the next three years. 2. Agree a revised outcomes framework for the Library Service for the period to 2020/21. 3. Agree indicative 3 year financial targets for the Library service budget, to support the delivery of the County Council's wider Medium Term Financial Plan, having regard to potential impacts assessed. 4. Agree a 3 year strategy for the re-design of the service, in order to maximise delivery of outcomes within a reduced financial envelope, noting proposed investment. 5. Endorse the proposed process and timetable for developing and consulting on specific proposals to implement the overarching service re-design strategy.</p>	<p>Appraisal of alternative service delivery model options Library service redesign Cabinet Report - December 2015</p>	<p>Part exempt</p>	<p>Oliver Woodhams, Strategic Manager, Community and Traded Services Tel: 07977400667</p>

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<b>FP/17/09/06</b> First published: 13 September 2017	Not before 12th Oct 2017 Cabinet Member for Children and Families	Issue: The transfer of Educational services within North Somerset to SCC's Support Services for Education Decision: The transfer of Educational services within North Somerset and associated staff to Support Services for Education from April 2018.			Ian Rowswell
<b>FP17/09/07</b> First published: 13 September 2017	Not before 16th Oct 2017 Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Commercial & Business Services Director	Issue: Creation of two new Academies in Somerset Decision: The Secretary of State for Education has directed via an Academy Order, the conversion to Academy Status for the following two schools - King Alfred School and Pawlett Primary School. This is a technical decision to facilitate the transfer of land and non fixed assets			Elizabeth Smith, Service Manager – Schools Commissioning Tel: 01823 356260
<b>FP/16/05/02</b> First published: 9 January 2017	18 Oct 2017 Cabinet	Issue: Road Safety Strategy Update Decision: To agree to adopt the updated Road Safety Strategy			Sunita Mills, Service Commissioning Manager Tel: 01823 359763
<b>FP/17/09/09</b> First published: 15 September 2017	18 Oct 2017 Cabinet	Issue: Proposed new 14 class primary school at Nerrols, Taunton Decision: To approve the appointment of a contractor at a gross maximum expenditure			Carol Bond, Project Manager, Property Programme Team Tel: 01823 355962

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<p><b>FP/17/09/08</b> First published: 15 September 2017</p>	<p>19 Oct 2017 Finance &amp; Performance Director, Director of Commissioning for Economic and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>Issue: SCC to proceed with the delivery of the iAero (Yeovil) Centre project at risk, pending final approval of the entire £6.84 million external funding package (ERDF and Growth Deal) Decision: SCC proceeding with the delivery of the iAero (Yeovil) Centre project at risk, pending final approval of the entire external funding package</p>			<p>Lynda Madge, Commissioning Manager – Economy &amp; Planning Tel: 01823 356766</p>
<p><b>FP/17/08/03</b> First published: 15 August 2017</p>	<p>18 Oct 2017 Cabinet</p>	<p>Issue: Updated policy in respect of the introduction of Resident Parking Schemes Decision: To agree the new policy of how resident parking schemes are introduced.</p>			<p>Steve Deakin, Parking Services Manager, Parking Services, Community and Traded Services Tel: 01823355137</p>
<p><b>FP/17/09/02</b> First published: 11 September 2017</p>	<p>Not before 30th Oct 2017 Director of Commissioning for Economic and Community Infrastructure</p>	<p>Issue: Somerset Energy Innovation Centre - Building 2 (2,000 sq m) Decision: The acceptance of the offer of ERDF FUNDING (£869,090), subject to legal acceptability of the final funding agreement for the Somerset Energy Innovation Centre, Phase 2</p>			<p>Lynda Madge, Commissioning Manager – Economy &amp; Planning Tel: 01823 356766</p>

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<p><b>FP/17/09/03</b> First published: 11 September 2017</p>	<p>Not before 6th Nov 2017 Director of Commissioning for Economic and Community Infrastructure, Finance &amp; Performance Director</p>	<p>Issue: iAero (Yeovil) Aerospace Centre (2,500 sq m) Acceptance of Growth Deal Funding Decision: The acceptance of the offer of Heart of the South West LEP Growth Deal funding, commence the procurement process for a management operator the the iAero (South) Centre, and commence procurement process for the construction of the iAero (South ) Centre</p>			<p>Lynda Madge, Commissioning Manager – Economy &amp; Planning Tel: 01823 356766</p>
<p><b>FP17/7/06</b> First published: 19 July 2017</p>	<p>15 Nov 2017 Cabinet</p>	<p>Issue: Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 - proposed revenue savings Decision: To consider the proposed revenue themed savings and proposed approach</p>			<p>Kevin Nacey Tel: 01823 359014</p>
<p><b>Fp/17/08/12</b> First published: 16 August 2017</p>	<p>15 Nov 2017 Cabinet</p>	<p>Issue: County Plan 2017-2021 Decision: to consider the proposed County Plan to recommend to November's Full Council</p>			<p>Simon Clifford, Customers &amp; Communities Director</p>
<p><b>FP/17/08/05</b> First published: 16 August 2017</p>	<p>15 Nov 2017 Cabinet</p>	<p>Issue: Quarter 2 Revenue and Capital Budget monitoring reports Decision: to consider the Quarter 2 position in relation to the Council's revenue and capital budgets for 2017/18</p>			<p>Elizabeth Watkin, Service Manager - Chief Accountant Tel: 01823359573</p>

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FP Refs	Decision Date/Maker	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring it to be considered in private?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
<b>Fp/17/08/06</b> First published: 16 August 2017	15 Nov 2017 Cabinet	Issue: Quarter 2 2017/18 Performance monitoring report Decision: to consider the quarter 2 update against the council's performance targets			Emma Plummer, Strategic Manager Performance Tel: 01823 359251
<b>FP/17/08/07</b> First published: 16 August 2017	15 Nov 2017 Cabinet	Issue: 2018/19 Proposed Capital Programme Decision: to consider and recommend to November's Full Council the proposed Capital Programme for 2018/19			Elizabeth Watkin, Service Manager - Chief Accountant Tel: 01823359573
<b>FP/17/08/11</b> First published: 16 August 2017	15 Nov 2017 Cabinet	Issue: 2017/18 Treasury Management mid-year report Decision: to consider and recommend to November's Full Council the mid-year report			Alan Sanford, Principal Investment Officer Tel: 01823 359585
<b>FP/17/09/04</b> First published: 11 September 2017	Not before 27th Nov 2017 Finance & Performance Director, Director of Commissioning for Economic and Community Infrastructure	Issue: iAero (Yeovil) Aerospace Centre (2,500 sq m) Acceptance of ERDF Funding Decision: The acceptance of the offer of ERDF funding (£2.8 million), for the iAero (Yeovi) Aerospace Centre			Lynda Madge, Commissioning Manager – Economy & Planning Tel: 01823 356766

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<b>FP/17/09/01</b> First published: 11 September 2017	Not before 4th Dec 2017 Cabinet Member for Children and Families	Issue: Prescribed Alteration to Selworthy School - Implementation Decision: To implement the proposal to expand Selworthy School on to a second site in Taunton			Phil Curd, Service Manager: Specialist Provision and School Transport Tel: 01823 355165
<b>Fp/17/07/04</b> First published: 12 July 2017	13 Dec 2017 Cabinet	Issue: Family support services for Somerset Decision: To outline the proposed approach and outline business case			Philippa Granthier, Assistant Director - Commissioning and Performance, Children's Services Commissioning Tel: 01823 359054
<b>FP/17/08/12</b> First published: 17 August 2017	17 Jan 2018 Cabinet	Issue: Full Business Case for proposed Joint Strategic Commissioning Function Decision: to consider the full business case for establishing a new Joint Strategic Commissioning Function with NHS England and Somerset CCG			Trudi Grant, Public Health Director Tel: 01823 359015
<b>FP/17/08/13</b> First published: 25 August 2017	17 Jan 2018 Cabinet	Issue: Family support services for Somerset - Full Business Case Decision: to consider the consultation results and full business case			Philippa Granthier, Assistant Director - Commissioning and Performance, Children's Services Commissioning Tel: 01823 359054

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FP Refs	Decision Date/Maker	Details of the proposed decision	Documents and background papers to be available to decision maker	Does the decision contain any exempt information requiring it to be considered in private?	Contact Officer for any representations to be made ahead of the proposed decision
<b>FP/17/08/09</b> First published: 16 August 2017	7 Feb 2018 Cabinet	Issue: 2018/19 - 2021/22 Medium Term Financial Plan Decision: to consider and recommend the 2018/19 MTFP and Annual Revenue Budget proposals to February's Full Council meeting			Elizabeth Watkin, Service Manager - Chief Accountant Tel: 01823359573
<b>FP/17/08/08</b> First published: 16 August 2017	7 Feb 2018 Cabinet	Issue: Quarter 3 2017/18 Revenue and Capital budget monitoring report Decision: to consider the quarter 3 update for the 2017/18 revenue and capital budgets			Elizabeth Watkin, Service Manager - Chief Accountant Tel: 01823359573
<b>FP/17/08/08</b> First published: 16 August 2017	7 Feb 2018 Cabinet	Issue: 2017/18 Quarter 3 Performance Update Decision: to receive the quarter 3 performance update			Emma Plummer, Strategic Manager Performance Tel: 01823 359251

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