

Heart of the South West Joint Committee

Friday 29 January 2021
12.00 pm Teams online meeting

To: The Members of the Heart of the South West Joint Committee

Nominated Members

Cllr John Hart	Leader - Devon County Council
Cllr David Fothergill	Leader - Somerset County Council
Cllr Tudor Evans	Leader - Plymouth City Council
Cllr Steve Darling	Leader - Torbay Council
Cllr Philip Bialyk	Leader - Exeter City Council
Cllr Bob Deed	Leader - Mid Devon District Council
Cllr Judy Pearce	Leader - South Hams District Council
Cllr Ken James	Leader - Torridge District Council
Cllr Neil Jory	Leader - West Devon Borough Council
Cllr Val Keitch	Leader - South Somerset District Council
Cllr Frederica Smith-Roberts	Leader - Somerset West & Taunton Council
Cllr Andrea Davis	Deputy Chairman - Exmoor National Park Authority
Cllr Alan Connett	Leader – Teignbridge District Council
Cllr Duncan McGinty	Leader – Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr David Worden	Leader – North Devon District Council
Ms Pamela Woods	Chairman – Dartmoor National Park Authority
Cllr Ros Wyke	Leader – Mendip District Council
Cllr Paul Arnott	Leader – East Devon District Council

Nominated Substitute Members

Cllr Paul Hayward	East Devon District Council
Cllr Rachel Sutton	Exeter City Council
Cllr Peter Smith	Plymouth City Council
Cllr Marcus Kravis	Somerset West & Taunton Council
Cllr Malcolm Prowse	North Devon District Council
Cllr Lois Samuel	West Devon District Council
Cllr John Clark	South Somerset District Council
Cllr Alistair Dewhirst	Teignbridge District Council
Cllr Gill Slocombe	Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr Claire Hodson	Torridge District Council
Andrew Cooper	Secretary of State Appointee - Dartmoor National Park Authority
Cllr Hilary Bastone	South Hams District Council
Robin Milton	Exmoor National Park Authority
Cllr Luke Taylor	Mid Devon District Council
Cllr Darren Cowell	Torbay Council
Cllr David Hall	Somerset County Council
Cllr Liz Leyshon	Mendip District Council
Cllr James McInnes	Devon County Council

Non-voting Members

Karl Tucker	Chairman - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
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Issued By Scott Wooldridge, Strategic Manager - Governance and Risk – 21 January 2021

For further information about the meeting, please contact Scott Wooldridge, Democratic Services, Somerset County Council or 01823 357628

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



RNID typetalk

AGENDA

Item Heart of the South West Joint Committee (Please Note – all public meetings are taking place virtually until further notice.) - 12.00 pm Friday 29 January 2021

Guidance Notes for Virtual Meetings

1 **Apologies for Absence**

To be received and recorded.

2 **Declarations of Interest**

To be reported and recorded.

3 **Minutes of previous HotSW Joint Committee Meeting** (Pages 13 - 18)

To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 9th October 2020 as a correct record.

4 **Public Question Time**

The Chair will allow any members of the public who have registered to speak, 2 minutes to give their statement.

5 **Formal agreement of the Building Back Better document** (Pages 19 - 40)

To receive and consider the report from David Ralph Chief Executive of The LEP.

6 **HotSW 2020/21 Budget update and draft budget 2021/22** (Pages 41 - 46)

To consider and formally agree the Budget Report from Scott Wooldridge, Monitoring Officer, Somerset County Council.

7 **Coastal Communities Plan**

To receive the Presentation and Agreement of the revised Coastal Communities Action Plan and covering Planning Supplement by Anne-Marie Bond and Alan Denby from Torbay Council.

8 **Climate Emergency Update** (Pages 47 - 62)

To receive a presentation from Devon County Council and Somerset County Council representatives.

9 **Peninsula Transport** (Pages 63 - 66)

To receive a presentation.

10 **Date of next Meeting**

All to note the dates of the next meetings.

12th March 2021

25th June 2021
1st October 2021

Somerset County Council Virtual Meetings Procedure **Using Microsoft Teams**

1. Introduction

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

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

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

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

A precis of the Regulations is contained in Appendix 1 of this protocol.

2. Microsoft Teams

Teams is the system recommended for hosting remote / virtual meetings. It has functionality for audio, video, and screen sharing and you do not need to be a member of an organisation (or have a Teams account) to join a Teams meeting.

3. Access to documents

Democratic Services will publish the agenda and reports for committee meetings on the Council's website and will notify councillors by email in line with usual practice.

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

4. Setting up the Meeting

This will be organised by the Democratic Services Team. They will send a meeting request via Microsoft Teams and will also appear in your Outlook calendar. This effectively enables them to be the 'organiser' and gives them slightly more functionality than other participants. This will be used to support the Chair of the meeting.

5. Including external participants

Everyone employed by the Council has Microsoft Teams on their laptop/device linked to their email account and therefore they can join a meeting.

For external users, they can also use the Teams app, by downloading it to their laptop, smartphone or tablet.

External participants can be sent the meeting request via email and if a participant is included in this way, they can use all the functions of Teams (video / chat) in the meeting. This might be useful for external presenters at Committee meetings, for example NHS / CCG Officers.

Alternatively, someone can be added to a meeting as a voice call. This can be done at the appropriate time in the meeting by the Democratic Services Officer.

There is also provision for a conference call number and ID to be given to external people who are calling in, which is another mechanism for them to join the meeting. Again, this will be done by the Democratic Services Officer as part of the meeting administration.

6. Joining the Meeting

Best practice would be for an officer in Democratic Services to join the meeting at least 10 minutes before the meeting starts to manage the lobby and assist those trying to join the meeting.

Members and officers are encouraged to join the meeting promptly (i.e. at least three minutes before the scheduled start time) in order to avoid disrupting the meeting.

Attendees should use the link within the calendar invite for the meeting which will say 'Join Microsoft Teams Meeting', which will open the Microsoft Teams app on the laptop/tablet automatically.

7. Starting the Meeting

At the start of the meeting, the Democratic Services Officer will check all required attendees are present (viewing the participant list).

The Democratic Services Officer will also have details of any Members of the public attending and / or press. The public and press will be notified via the meeting information on the website that they will need to contact the Democratic Services Officer to obtain the conference call number and ID for the meeting.

The Chair will ask all Members and Officers to **turn off all unnecessary microphones**, unless they are speaking. This prevents background noise, coughing etc which is intrusive and disruptive during the meeting. The Democratic Services Officer will also keep a watch on this and will be able to turn off participant mics when they are not in use. The Chair can also do this, but the Democratic Services Officer will fulfil this function. Members would then need to turn their microphones back on when they wish to speak.

The Chair, who will use video when speaking will ask all participants to **turn off their video cameras**. It cannot be stressed enough how important it is to turn off the video (unless you are the Chair or speaking). This helps with call quality. There is no facility for the Democratic Services Officer to turn off other participants video (like you can with microphones) or even see who has their video turned on, so it is even more important that participants are aware of this.

Some of the virtual meetings will be recorded. Participants will be asked to only turn on their microphones **when they are invited to speak**. This is good practice for all meetings, but especially important because the meeting is recorded. The recording is not like a webcast, because what is being recorded can be different to what you see on screen, even as a meeting organiser. So, participants could be being filmed, even if they are not speaking, simply by virtue of having their video switched on. It might be helpful for Members to think in terms of switching the video and mic on and off at the appropriate times, just like it would be in the committee room.

8. Notice to Speak - Members

The Council's Standing Orders relating to Member speaking at meetings will continue.

Members wishing to speak can either use the new 'hand up' by pressing the hand icon or use the chat facility to show they wish to ask a question.

9. Public Participation

Participation by members of the public will continue in line with the current public participation scheme.

This can include speaking and / or asking formal questions and / or making representations at various Committee in line with the scheme.

Members of the public can listen to the proceedings of a committee. They are asked to contact the Democratic Services Officer so they can be sent the link direct into to the meeting or be dialled in at the appropriate time.

When a member of the public is addressing a meeting, in line with the public participation scheme, they will be invited to speak at the appropriate time.

Both they and the Democratic Services Officer will need to ensure their microphone is enabled so the meeting can hear them.

It must be switched off again after they have made their statement or asked their question.

As stated earlier, for those who do not have access to the internet / teams, the Democratic Services Officer can dial the member of the public into the meeting using either a mobile or landline phone number.

10. The Meeting and Debate

Councillors who are not Members of the Committee who wish to speak on a particular agenda item must indicate their wish to speak to the Democratic Services Officer in advance of the meeting, within the required timescales.

For Members of the Committee who wish to speak in the debate, they should click on the meeting chat facility and simply write their question or state they wish to ask a question? The Chair will then be aware you wish to speak and can take the requests in the appropriate order.

There will be an upgrade to Microsoft Teams, shortly, which will allow participants to virtually 'raise a hand' i.e. signalling that they wish to speak, which will be used when available.

It is important that the chat function is used solely for this purpose or to raise a point of order, otherwise it is very distracting if other questions/conversations are happening within the chat, simultaneous to the meeting.

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

If the debate appears to be coming to an end, the Chair may ask if any other Member wishes to speak before concluding the debate.

When you speak, remember to switch on your mic and video, refer to any relevant page numbers and speak clearly.

11. Meeting Etiquette Reminder

- Mute your microphone when you are not talking.
- Switch off video if you are not speaking.
- Only speak when invited to do so by the Chair.
- Speak clearly (if you are not using video then please state your name)
- If you're referring to a specific page, mention the page number.
- Switch off your video and microphone after you have spoken.

12. Voting

Within the Team facility, there is a straight-forward mechanism to deal with voting.

The chat function should be used to ask the Committee to take a vote. When it comes to taking formal votes, the Democratic Services Officer will type in the chat 'All those in favour'. Those in favour of the proposal should type in 'yes' and those against should type 'no'. Members wishing to abstain from voting should type 'abstain' or alternatively no response will represent an abstention. Alternatively members may use the raise hand facility.

If a Chair does not wish to use this mechanism, they may choose to ask each Member (of the Committee) to vote in turn. If this is the case, Councillors should express their vote verbally and the Democratic Services Officer will record the outcome of votes and announce these to the meeting.

13. Part 2 Reports and Debate

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

Any Councillor in remote attendance who fails to disclose that there are fact persons present, such as those who may be able to see and/or hear the meeting, who are not entitled could be in breach of the Council's Code of Conduct.

If there are members of the public and press listening to the open part of the meeting, then the Democratic Services Officer will, at the appropriate time, remove the participant from the meeting.

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

14. Interpretation of standing orders

Where the Chair is required to interpret the Council's existing standing orders in light of the requirements of remote participation, they shall take advice from the Democratic Services Manager or Monitoring Officer prior to making a ruling. However, the Chair's decision shall be final.

15. Disorderly Conduct by Members

If a Member behaves in the manner as outlined in the Constitution persistently ignoring the ruling of the Chair or behaving irregularly, improperly or offensively or deliberately obstructs the business of the meeting, the Chair can propose that the Member is silent and if seconded, the proposal will be voted on without discussion.

If agreed and the Member continues to behave improperly, the Chair can propose that either the Member is excluded from the meeting or that the meeting is adjourned for a specified period. If seconded, the proposal will be voted on without discussion.

16. Disturbance from Members of the Public

In line with the council's procedural rules, if any member of the public interrupts a meeting the Chair will warn them accordingly.

If that person continues to interrupt or disrupt proceedings the Chair can ask the Democratic Services Officer to remove them as a participant from the meeting.

17. After the meeting

Please ensure you leave the meeting by clicking on the red phone button to hangup.

Some virtual meetings may be recorded and uploaded to the public website.

18. Technical issues

In the event that the Chair or Democratic Services Officer identifies a failure of the remote participation facility, the Chair should declare a recess while the fault is addressed.

If it is not possible to address the fault and the meeting becomes inquorate through this fault, the meeting will be abandoned until such time as it can be reconvened. If the meeting is quorate, then it should continue.

Those attending remotely would be aware and accept that the meeting would continue and a vote would be taken without their attendance.

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

19. Disability

It is also important for authorities to ensure that the needs of any disabled members are taken into account when considering the practicality of a remotely attended meeting.

A Briefing on the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 come into force from 4th April 2020.

The regulations are made by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, in exercise of the powers conferred by section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020(1) and paragraph 36(1)(b) of Schedule 6 to the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011(2).

The Regulations apply to local authority meetings (and police and crime panel meetings) that are required to be held, or held, before 7th May 2021.

In the Regulations, "the 1972 Act" means the Local Government Act 1972 and "local authority" includes a County Council (and numerous other bodies).

Frequency of Meetings / Annual Meetings

A local authority is permitted to alter the frequency, move or cancel such meetings, without requirement for further notice. In reality this means a meeting can be cancelled, even if the agenda has been published.

When an appointment would otherwise be made at an annual meeting, such an appointment continues until the next annual meeting of the authority or until such time as that authority may determine.

Remote Attendance in Local Authority Meetings

A meeting is not limited to a meeting of persons all of whom, or any of whom, are present in the same place. The reference to a "place" includes reference to more than one place including electronic, digital or virtual locations (internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers).

A Member 'in remote attendance' can attend the meeting as long as certain conditions are satisfied. These include that the Member is able to hear and be heard by the other Members in attendance. Also, being able to hear and be heard any members of the public entitled to attend the meeting. The regulations would prefer a visual solution, but audio is sufficient.

This also relates to members of the public attending the meeting being heard, but preferably seen.

To be clear, the above caveats (in relation to Members of the authority and the public) includes a person who is attending by remote access.

The Regulations clarify that any reference to being "present" at a meeting includes being present through remote attendance... and a "place" where a meeting is held, or to be held, includes reference to more than one place (including electronic, digital or virtual locations such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers).

Standing Orders

The provision in the Regulation overrides provisions in existing standing orders or rules governing the meeting.

However, a local authority may make other standing orders regarding issues such as voting, member and public access to documents; and remote access of public and press to a local authority meeting to enable them to attend or participate. This doesn't appear necessary as current processes allow this and access to meetings and public participation will continue.

Annual Meeting

Paragraphs 1 and 7 of Schedule 12 to the 1972 Act are disapplied which means the removal of the requirement to hold an annual meeting.

Access to Information

The requirement for a paper copy of an agenda to be displayed in the Council's offices has been removed, so publishing on the website only is acceptable.

Access of Public and Press

The Regulations clarify that a meeting being "open to the public" includes access to the meeting through remote means (video conferencing, live webcast, interactive streaming). Where a meeting is accessible to the public through such remote means the meeting is deemed open to the public whether or not members of the public are able to attend the meeting in person.

Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 have also been amended to reflect the new arrangements in terms of access to documents and meetings, but still retains the need for publication of key decisions, general exception, cases of special urgency etc.

The provisions in relation to the inspection and supply / copy of documents have been disapplied, but the Authority would still need to make any background papers available for inspection through other means (for example the website).

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**Minutes of the meeting of the Heart of the South West (HotSW) Joint Committee
Virtual Meeting, 12.00pm on Friday 9 October 2020.**

Attendance

Members:

Cllr Val Keitch	Leader – South Somerset District Council (Chair)
Cllr Tudor Evans	Leader - Plymouth City Council (Vice-Chair)
Cllr David Fothergill	Leader – Somerset County Council
Cllr Bob Deed	Mid Devon District Council
Cllr Philip Bialyk	Leader - Exeter City Council
Cllr David Worden	Leader - North Devon District Council
Cllr Judy Pearce	Leader - South Hams District Council
Cllr Ken James	Leader - Torridge District Council
Cllr Claire Hodson	Deputy Leader - Torridge District Council
Cllr Neil Jory	Leader - West Devon Borough Council
Cllr Ros Wyke	Leader - Mendip District Council
Cllr Gill Slocombe	Deputy Leader - Sedgemoor District Council
Cllr Paul Hayward	East Devon District Council
Cllr Alistair Dewhirst	Teignmouth District Council
Cllr Pamela Woods	Dartmoor
Cllr Swithin Long	Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Tourism and Housing - Torbay Council
Cllr Paul Arnott	Leader - East Devon District Council
Cllr Marcus Kravis	Somerset West and Taunton Council
Cllr Andrea Davis	Deputy Chairman - Exmoor National Park Authority
Cllr Liz Leyshon	Mendip District Council
Cllr Liz Brookes-Hocking	Devon/Somerset Associations of Local Councils

Officers/Local Enterprise Partnership etc:

Phil Norrey	Chief Executive – Devon County Council
Sue Rose	Policy Lead – Devon County Council
Scott Wooldridge	Strategic Manager, Governance and Democratic Services – Somerset County Council
Andrew Randall	Clerk to the Joint Committee – Somerset County Council
Tracey Lee	Chief Executive – Plymouth City Council and Senior Responsible Officer, Heart of the South West Partnership
Alison Ward	Regional Portfolio Manager – Plymouth City Council
Mark Williams	Chief Executive – East Devon District Council

Anne-Marie Bond	Chief Executive – Torbay Council
Stephen Walford	Chief Executive - Mid Devon District Council
Ken Miles	Chief Executive - North Devon Council
Pat Flaherty	Chief Executive – Somerset County Council
James Hassett	Chief Executive - Somerset West and Taunton Council
Alex Parmley	Chief Executive - South Somerset District Council
Karl Tucker	Chair - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
David Ralph	Chief Executive - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
Andy Bates	Chief Executive - South Hams District Council
Doug Bamsey	Strategic Director – Sedgemoor District Council
Michael Tichford	Head of Place - North Devon Council
Mike O’Dowd- Jones	Strategic Manager Highways & Transport – Somerset County Council
Steve Hearse	Strategy Manager (Resources) - Torrington
Suzanne Bond	Cities & Local Growth, BEIS

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence: No apologies were received in advance of the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the Previous HotSW Joint Committee Meeting

The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 26th June 2020 as a correct record, following an amendment for Councillor Leyshon to be listed under Mendip District Council and not Somerset County Council.

4. Public Question Time

No Public Questions were received in advance of the meeting.

5. HotSW Budget Update 2020/21 and Draft Budget 2021/22

Scott Wooldridge, Monitoring Officer for the Administering Authority, presented the Budget update 2020/21 and set out the Draft Budget for 2021/22.

The report provided an update for the Constituent Authorities on the Joint Committee's pooled budget for 2020/21. The report set out recommendations for budget allocations from the available residual budget. It also set out proposals for a draft 2021/22 Budget and partner contributions, to recommend to Constituent Authorities.

In recent months the Joint Committee had reviewed and updated its Governance arrangements in the light of experience, since its establishment in early 2018, and in response to changing Government policy and local circumstances. Some changes are required to the Committee's Arrangements document as a result and these need to be formally agreed by the Constituent Authorities. It is essential that the Joint Committee remains fit for purpose, represents a sustainable way of working into the future, and delivers value for the resources committed to it by the Constituent Authorities.

The Joint Committee approved the 2020/21 Budget at its meeting in September 2019. The Committee also re-appointed Somerset County Council as the Administering Authority until 22 January 2022.

During the consideration of the item there was a request for future contributions from Exmoor and Dartmoor National Parks Authorities to be lower due to their annual budgets being lower than district partners, along with existing budgetary pressures and the prospect of voluntary redundancies being faced within the next year. The Committee was supportive of the National Parks Authorities situation. It was acknowledged that a review of the National Parks Authorities contribution would be undertaken as part of setting 2022/23 budgets.

RESOLVED

The Committee agreed that: -

(a) funding is allocated, and Plymouth City Council are re-appointed to provide Officer support for the Project Management Office for 2020/21 and until 22 January 2022 (see section 4.4 and table in 4.5.1).

(b) funding is allocated, and Somerset West & Taunton Council are reappointed for 2020/21 to provide staff resources to support the HEROG work (see section 4.4 and table in 4.5.1).

(c) funding is allocated for project officer resources to support and develop the Housing Task Force priorities during 2020/21 (see table in 4.5.1).

(d) the draft 2021/22 Budget is considered in section 4.6 together with recommending to the Constituent Authorities that the Joint Committee budget contributions for 2021/22 should be:

- County Councils - £21,000
- Unitary Councils - £8,000
- District Councils and National Park Authorities - £2,800

Note: see para 4.6 in the supporting report for the detail behind this recommendation.

6. Local Industry Strategy

David Ralph, CEO of the HotSW LEP outlined that the Heart of the South West was invited to co-develop a Local Industrial Strategy with Government in July 2018. Building on the strongly evidence based HotSW Productivity Strategy, published in March 2018, work commenced to distil local priorities that matched the Government's Industrial Strategy criteria. The LEP, councils, universities and businesses worked with central Government colleagues to develop the HotSW Local Industrial Strategy, reaching a final draft by the end of 2019.

Changes at the top of Government and a gradual policy shift has meant that the Local Industrial Strategy has not been finally ratified by Government and is unlikely to be published in its originally intended form as a co-owned document. The impact of Covid-19 has been significant but the underlying structural challenges and opportunities within the HotSW economy remain; the latest Oxford Economics work forecasts a 0.6-1.2% per year growth rate across the four upper tier areas to 2025 compared with 1.3% nationally; the challenge of clean and inclusive growth remains.

The LIS was based on a robust evidence base that was extensively tested by Government. Despite not receiving Ministerial sign-off, officials have consistently praised the HotSW LIS, its rigour, clarity and evidence-based approach. Alongside the vital response work currently under way, the LIS therefore is still highly relevant as a guiding strategy for planning HotSW's recovery, sitting within the wider context of the Productivity Strategy. The intention therefore is to publish it locally and to use it as the basis for developing the recovery work.

RESOLVED

The Committee endorsed the publication of the Heart of the South West Local Industrial Strategy.

6. Closing Remarks and Planning for the Public Meeting

The Chair recognised the collective efforts of all partners and the Committee acknowledged the 2021 meeting dates as follows:

29th January 2021

12th March 2021

25th June 2021

1st October 2021

(The meeting ended at 12.25am)

Cllr V Keitch
Chair

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Build Back Better

Lead Officer: David Ralph, Chief Executive, HotSW Local Enterprise Partnership
Author: Eifion Jones HotSW Programme Management Office

1. Summary

- 1.1.** The Covid-19 pandemic has had a greater economic impact on the Heart of the SW area than many other parts of the country; indeed, analysis by the Institute of Fiscal Studies¹ shows that Heart of the SW is one of the areas most severely economically affected by the Covid crisis, as shown on the map in the annex.
- 1.2.** This results in particular from the structural challenges the area has long faced and include a business mix with a higher proportion of sectors more severely impacted by the numerous restrictions of the last 9 months.
- 1.3.** In autumn 2020 the Joint Committee and LEP published the area's Local Industrial Strategy which highlighted the key opportunities, based on local strengths, to address these long-standing challenges and deliver clean and inclusive growth. In so doing this will help ensure the area is more prosperous and that businesses, communities and individuals have a higher degree of resilience for future crises.
- 1.4.** Starting from the LIS and reflecting the immediate recovery challenge, the Build Back Better plan sets out the key programmes to deliver this ambition. Build Back Better effectively sets out a framework from which to make the case for investment in Heart of the SW, potentially as part of a 'recovery deal' for the area

2. Recommendations

2.1. It is recommended that:

The Joint Committee endorses the publication of the Build Back Better plan.

Noting that the plan is still draft, that the Joint Committee delegate final sign off to the Chair

3. Reasons for recommendations

¹ [CH7-IFS-Green-Budget-2020-Levelling-up.pdf](#)

- 3.1** A clear Build Back Better plan provides a framework for a) making the case with Government for investment in Heart of the SW and b) to help guide investment decisions made by members of the partnership as part of the area's recovery work.

4. Background

- 4.1** As previously noted by the Joint Committee, the Local Industrial Strategy is an evidence-based approach to develop a more prosperous economy based around clean and inclusive growth and the key opportunities in the Heart of the SW area. The LIS is in turn based on the Productivity Strategy which sets out the wider programme to tackle the area's long-standing productivity challenge. Build Back Better builds on the LIS to describe the key programmes needed to achieve the ambitions in the LIS over the short-medium term as part of the area's work to recover from the pandemic.
- 4.2** Build Back Better provides a framework to shape discussions with Government over investment in the area as we move to recovery. Build Back Better is agnostic in how funding is delivered and the funding streams that may be involved. For example little is known about the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Levelling Up Fund, what the priorities will be, which organisations money will flow through, how devolved decision making will be etc. Some of the programmes in Build Back Better may be funded directly from central Government, Innovate UK etc. At this stage the goal is to describe the priorities in the area; how these will be funded is a later piece of work depending on Government policy as it crystalises in the next few months.
- 4.3** A draft has been circulated to Joint Committee members with the opportunity to provide feedback and it has also been discussed with the LEP Board. With a Budget planned for March it would be prudent for the area to have a coherent proposition and set of asks for this and, with the key messages already drawn from the LIS, it is recommended that final Joint Committee sign-off of Build Back Better is delegated to the Chair.

5. Equalities Implications

- 5.1** There are no specific equalities implications associated with the recommendations.

6. Other Implications

- 6.1** Legal:
None

- 6.2** Financial:
There are no immediate financial implications. Programmes within Build Back Better require a mix of funding that would be determined as and when it becomes available.

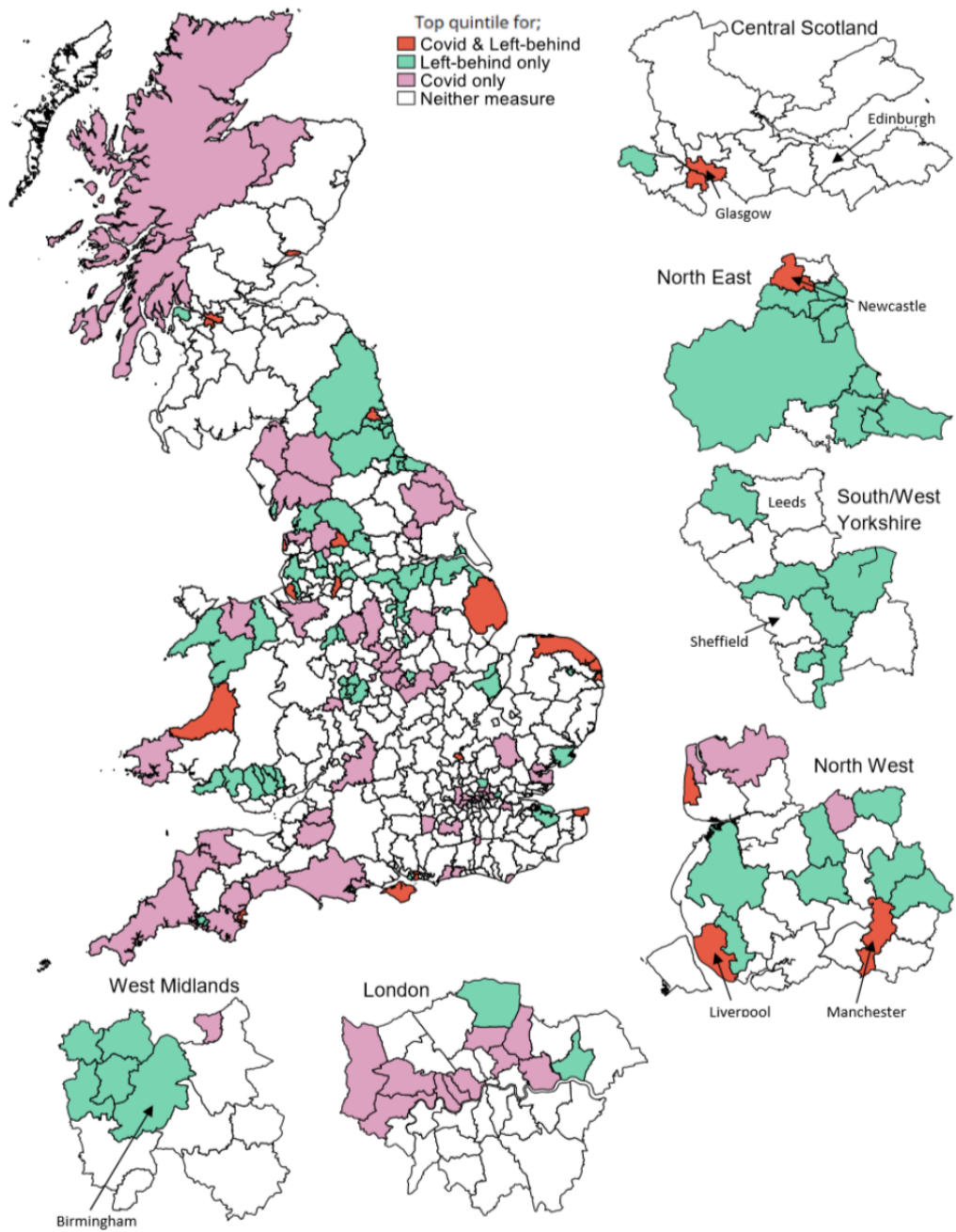
6.3 HR
None

6.4 Risk
The key risk is that delivery fails to materialise as quickly as hoped due to a lack of Government support for the area's priorities.

6.5 Other Implications: Health and Well-being; Health and Safety; Sustainability; Community Safety; Privacy
No implications.

7. Background papers: none

Figure 7.4. Areas economically impacted by the COVID-19 crisis and considered 'left behind'




Source: IFS Green Budget October 2020



Build Back Better





BUILDING BACK
BETTER BY DELIVERING
INCREASED PROSPERITY
THROUGH CLEAN AND
INCLUSIVE GROWTH

INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 is a dislocation as severe as any ever experienced. As well as the personal cost, the economic and societal impact is profound; the crisis is extending longer than many had thought, pre-existing trends such as the growth of digital have been accelerating rapidly, new opportunities are opening up and there is considerable uncertainty over the longer term effect on parts of our economy such as the high street.

Transitioning to the post-Covid world will be a challenge, but it is a chance to innovate and Build Back Better. The Heart of the South West has demonstrated time and again that it is a place willing to push the boundaries, take on challenges and seize opportunities. This pioneering spirit is now evident in our vision to create a more resilient, stronger and prosperous area through our focus on clean and inclusive growth but we need support to turn our ideas into reality.

WHAT DOES BUILDING BACK BETTER MEAN TO US?

Building Back Better is an integral part of the Heart of the South West's Covid-19 recovery. It is supported by leading figures from the region in business, academia, the social economy and the public sector. Extensive efforts continue to be made by Government and local partners to mitigate the immediate impact of the pandemic. We have been working with business and Local Authority partners on recovery plans to support the hardest hit places and the hardest hit sectors including Nuclear, Marine, Aerospace, Tourism, Construction, Creative/Cultural, High Streets and Manufacturing. These efforts to help our communities and businesses recover will continue, ensuring that national government initiatives work for us.

But it is also essential to look ahead – to innovate, plan and invest now for the sort of longer-term future our area needs – unfortunately Covid-19 will not be the last crisis our area faces. Pre-crisis structural challenges and opportunities must be addressed; building a more prosperous, fairer economy will ensure that the area is better able to weather future storms and create better standards of living for all the people who live in Heart of the South West.

So Building Back Better recognises the immediate impact of Covid as well as the long-standing challenges and opportunities we face around productivity growth, climate change and levelling up. It is rooted in the ambitious vision

and robust evidence base of our Local Industrial Strategy which focuses on the dynamic heart of our local economy. That means major opportunities around:



Energy Futures - stemming from the construction of the UK's first nuclear power station in twenty years at Hinkley Point C and the development of the next generation of marine renewables;



Engineering Futures - focusing on the development of marine autonomy, photonics and the sustainable aviation challenge; and,



Digital Futures – building on the environmental, geospatial intelligence and sustainable agri-food systems markets whilst also responding to the challenges of healthy ageing.

Realising the potential of this dynamic heart will help to build a fairer, more prosperous future. It will enable us to rebalance and repurpose our economy to take account of new opportunities, supporting the green revolution and capitalise on unique capabilities such as offshore wind.

To achieve this potential we have identified 15 transformational programmes which set the direction for specific investments in the coming years:

Figure 1: Our programmes for transforming our economy

Energy Futures



- 1. Establishing the UK's Clean Growth Cluster.**
Action will include accelerating plans for Gravity as well as the Exeter and East Devon Growth Point.
- 2. Becoming the UK's first region which is a net exporter of low-carbon energy**
Action will include anchoring the Nuclear sector and creating a green energy powerhouse with partners in the Great South West, leveraging the enormous potential in offshore renewables. The energy grid will also need upgrading to enable this.

Engineering Futures



- 3. Building a high-tech marine cluster: focussed on autonomous and digital systems, clean propulsion and future cyber-secure smart ports.**
Action will include a Centre for Marine Autonomy, completing Phase 3 of Oceansgate & establishing an inward investment Marine High Potential Opportunity.
- 4. Growing the photonics cluster: underpins the growth in digital and autonomous systems.**
Action will include maximising inward investment through the Photonics HPO and provision of high-end workspace.
- 5. Delivering a Future of Flight Programme: based on sustainable aviation in rotary technology and electric planes.**
Action will include establishing an inward investment Sustainable Aviation HPO and delivering the Innovate UK-funded Future Flight initiative.

Digital Futures



- 6. Delivering the potential of analytics and digital and through these tackling economics and societal challenges.**
Action will include growing the environmental from marine geospatial innovation and reducing emissions from agriculture through the development of more sustainable agri-food systems.
- 7. Positioning the Heart of the South West as a Health Technology Pioneer.**
Action will include developing a Plymouth Health Tech Campus and focusing on digital solutions to healthy ageing.

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The following supporting programmes are integral to delivering these opportunities...

People



- 8. Developing and delivering a comprehensive skills strategy** covering the future of work, maximising our opportunity sectors, but also rebuilding and reinforcing our skills foundations and wider social inclusion.

Business Environment



- 9. Establishing a single gateway for businesses support and advice alongside developing financial support packages.**

Ideas



- 10. Establishing an innovation ecosystem for businesses:** driving up the growth of research intensive businesses & innovation more widely.

Places



- 11. A workspace offer of work hubs, Innovation Centres, Enterprise Zones and Freeport offer for a post C-19 world.**
- 12. Supporting rural and coastal areas, and developing our Farming, Food & Fishing offer.** Action will include a rural productivity deal.
- 13. Establishing HotSW as a regional demonstrator for natural capital.** Action will include establishing a pilot demonstrating how this can be applied.
- 14. Establishing a Tourism Action Zone to help the sector recover and prosper post-C19.**

Infrastructure



- 15. Ensuring strategic connectivity:** Action will include working with Government to make the case for duelling of the A303/A30/A358 corridor, ensuring the resilience of the national rail lines into and through HotSW, de-carbonisation of rail travel and the provision of gigabit-capable infrastructure and at least 30Mbps services for all by 2025.



WHAT DO WE NEED?

This potential will not be delivered without a strong partnership between Government and partners in the Heart of the South West. Working in partnership has already paid dividends but our collective efforts can be further strengthened, specifically through:

- ▶ **Co-design; working together with Government on taking forward key parts of the programmes we have identified**, e.g. scope and implementation of a rural productivity deal;
- ▶ **Powering locally led delivery through meeting the manifesto commitment to develop a UK Shared Prosperity Fund** to support local and regional recovery, re-committing to a devolved locally led single pot of both capital and revenue funding which as a minimum comprises the following:
 - Replacement for EU Structural Funds
 - Replacement for historic Local Growth Fund and Regional Growth Fund programmes
 - Devolving ESFA funding to the local level to provide skills programmes tailored to local needs and opportunities
- ▶ **Local decision-making on innovation and growth:** putting local areas at the centre of setting out how places will reach the UK 2.4% R&D target including extending Enterprise Zone benefits to 2030 and if appropriate supporting a Freeports programme;
- ▶ **Supporting business growth:** specifically targeting SMEs, scale-up, start-up and Covid-19 support for business by extending and increasing Growth Hub Funding for the duration of Parliament to bring forward the single gateway we envisage; and
- ▶ **Enabling areas to develop local talent:** a further commitment to Skills Advisory Panels, retraining and further devolution of skills funding. This should also include support for careers hubs, Digital Skills Partnerships and specifically ensuring funds for adult training and re-training can be deployed flexibly as needed by the local area.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Covid-19 has had an immense effect on the Heart of the South West economy due to its sectoral mix; although the Heart of the South West has had comparatively low levels of coronavirus cases, the pandemic has had a more severe impact here than elsewhere in the country. Modelling by Oxford Economics, and re-confirmed by EY in their regional analysis,, shows that the high proportion of businesses and employment in the hospitality and manufacturing sectors and the lower levels of professional services means the economy is projected to be 1.9% smaller in 2025 than pre-Covid, averaging 1% growth per year compared with 1.3% nationally. This will exacerbate pre-Covid structural challenges.

KEY FACTS

- ▶ Major growth potential has been identified in digital, clean tech and energy, all sectors Heart of the SW has specific advantages in
- ▶ The mix of businesses in much of our area is skewed towards those sectors most exposed to the crisis such as tourism, hospitality, retail, manufacturing and construction
- ▶ GVA is expected to contract by 8% in Devon and Somerset, 8.2% in Plymouth and 10% in Torbay
- ▶ We are likely to see significant job losses and increased unemployment across the region
- ▶ The effects will be disproportionately felt in rural and coastal areas
- ▶ Recovery is likely to be slower in some sectors (e.g. tourism) and for some areas (e.g. coastal communities)
- ▶ It will affect those furthest from the labour market, the young and the poorest most significantly

Heart of the South West remains a significant economy, some £35 billion a year, making it the size of Birmingham or Liverpool.

There are 72,000 businesses and a population of almost 1.8 million across its urban, rural and coastal areas. It is home to a range of natural assets including two National Parks, a UNESCO geopark and World Heritage sites, alongside unique scientific expertise and research capabilities in sectors that support our growth ambitions. Despite the impact of the pandemic the Heart of the South West still has a number of globally competitive strengths, providing a range of potentially transformational opportunities.

Historically, the area has been held back by one of the tightest labour markets in the country and an over reliance on low skilled,

low wage and often seasonal employment. It is essential that this pattern is not repeated in the post-Covid recovery. Moreover, whilst many new jobs have been created over the last few years, prosperity benefits have been disparate with significant increases seen in in-work poverty.

Now is the time to think and respond differently. Our commitment to Building Back Better is underpinned by our vision to transform the economy through clean and inclusive growth, seizing new opportunities to move the economy towards a greener future. It is unashamedly ambitious, marking a step change in the Heart of the South West's potential to evolve and grow the local economy in the exciting years that lie ahead.

Figure 2. The Heart of the South West



HOW ARE WE DEVELOPING OUR ROUTE-MAP TO RECOVERY?

In response to these issues the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership has already published its route-map to recovery (<https://heartofswlep.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Heart-of-the-SW-C-19-Route-Map-to-Recovery-June-2020.pdf>).

As we moved out of the first national lockdown this focused on three phases to recovery that would enable us to re-start, revitalise and grow the economy which will be actively monitored and managed as the situation evolves. Our £35 million Getting Building Fund award from Government marked progress on this journey but a step-change is now needed and this document sets out our pathway for the future.



Figure 3. Phases of Recovery





HOW WILL OUR PLAN SUPPORT INCLUSIVE GROWTH?

Inclusive growth is at the core of our plan to Build Back Better – enabling us to focus on levelling up and providing the opportunity for everyone to contribute to and benefit from growth.

There is enormous disparity in economic performance across the Heart of the South West and, building on the Local Authorities' recovery plans, our vision for Building Back Better will support our urban, rural and coastal communities which are likely to recover at differing levels and on differing time frames.

The LEP has already established an Expert Panel to accelerate and mobilise its plans for 'mainstreaming inclusive growth both socially and spatially across all investments in our area. With its inaugural meeting in autumn 2020, the Panel is tasked with ensuring that all of our communities can benefit from and contribute to increased productivity, addressing inequalities of opportunity. An early priority will be to review the local finance market and make proposals for financial instruments that can work for our people across the Heart of the South West.

WHAT ARE THE BUILDING BACK BETTER PROGRAMMES?

Our aim is to harness 15 transformational programmes under our established energy, engineering and digital themes and ensure the right supporting activities are in place to enable these to happen.

Within these programmes we identify specific actions, investments or projects that will facilitate or accelerate delivery and examples of these are given here.

Energy Futures

PROGRAMME 1

Establishing the UK's First Clean Growth Cluster

The Heart of the South West has made substantial inroads in developing a clean growth cluster, with the Gravity Enterprise Zone located along the M5/A38 corridor as its focal point, extending across the Heart of the South West including the East Devon and Exeter Enterprise Zone.

Gravity is bringing to fruition one of the most sustainable smart campuses in Europe with access to a world-class regional talent pool and expertise in clean growth sectors. Its location along the M5/A38 corridor supports an economic spine that runs through the core of the area from Bridgwater to Plymouth, with arterial roads such as the A30/303 supporting growth and productivity to the East and opening up multiple opportunities across the whole area. With continued investment these developments will enable the Heart of the South West to achieve something truly special that makes a difference socially, economically and environmentally.



FINANCIAL ASK: £XXXX, DELIVERING XXX



PROGRAMME 2

Becoming the UK's First Region which is a Net Exporter of Low-Carbon Energy

The Heart of the South West will be home to the first new nuclear power station in decades: Hinkley Point C in Somerset. With associated opportunities estimated to be worth over £50 million to the region, HPC is also integral to realising the national strategy for energy and the Nuclear Sector Deal. Through the delivery of specific skills, Nuclear Fusion and supply chain projects, our goal is to anchor this high value sector in the area, facilitating a pipeline of long-term opportunities. These actions will also help us to unlock the area's huge potential to become the UK's world leader in clean growth. Working with Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly and Dorset LEPs under the Great South West brand and backed by the region's wealth of natural and research assets we will create a green energy powerhouse. Through developments in nuclear, geothermal, marine renewables and especially focusing on our assets in floating wind we will transform our green and blue economy. The Great South West will effectively become a test bed for new thinking and new technologies to accelerate the move to a greener, more prosperous economy, whilst also tackling shared challenges like poor connectivity, an ageing population, poor productivity and climate change. Together, these ambitious actions, along with an upgrading of the energy grid, will enable the region to become the first net-zero carbon economy and a net exporter of clean energy.

FINANCIAL ASK: £XXXX, DELIVERING XXX

PROGRAMME 3

Building a High-Tech Marine Cluster: Focused on Autonomous and Digital Systems, Clean Propulsion and Future Cyber-Secure Smart Ports

Marine autonomy is a growing, disruptive technology that has the potential to transform the marine sector. The Heart of the South West is home to a range of assets such as the UK Hydrographic Office, alongside extensive research capabilities and innovative coastal testing facilities such as Smart Sound. Supported by an emerging photonics sector, Heart of the South West also has a strong commercial base to exploit this opportunity with a concentration of defence primes, marine platform manufacturers and supply chain companies for sensors, navigation and communication equipment.

This programme will seek to develop our unique marine autonomy proposition through investment in a Centre for Marine Autonomy, covering defence and civil applications, along with completing Phase 3 of the Oceansgate development in Plymouth and establishing a Marine High Potential Opportunity (HPO) proposition.



PROGRAMME 4

Growing the Photonics Cluster: Underpinning the Growth in Digital and Autonomous Systems

Photonics is a £13.5 billion industry nationally and is projected to grow by around 8.5% between 2020 and 2025. There is a strong and established cluster of 174 companies, employing over 3,000 highly skilled people across the Heart of the South West, contributing over £603 million per year to the HotSW economy. The cluster boasts a broad range of capabilities across the value chain and is a key enabling technology for a range of industries from UK Security and Resilience through to Robotics. As a specific action, the establishment of a Photonics High Potential Opportunity (HPO) proposition will help us to develop our world class cluster, placing us at the forefront of cutting edge innovation with a focus on 5G, Big Data and autonomous vehicles. We will build on this with other actions, such as skills development, to support the continued growth of this cluster.

FINANCIAL ASK: £XXXX, DELIVERING XXX

PROGRAMME 5

Delivering a Future of Flight Programme: Based on Sustainable Aviation in rotary and fixed wing technology

The Aerospace Sector Deal looks to position the UK to take advantage of global moves toward cleaner aircraft including electric/hybrid power along with the use of alternative fuels such as hydrogen, as well as to exploit new markets such as drones. The Heart of the South West, in partnership with neighbouring LEPs through i-Aero, is well placed to support this challenge, being host to key industry players including the only industry prime in the UK with a complete end-to-end capability in rotary technology.

As a key part of our Future of Flight Programme, the establishment of a High Potential Opportunity (HPO) proposition and securing Innovate UK investment in developing low carbon aviation will enable us to make a specific contribution to the sustainable aviation challenge in rotary technology and electric planes. With associated skills and R&D opportunities, this programme will strengthen both the Yeovil and Exeter & East Devon Aerospace clusters.

FINANCIAL ASK: £XXXX, DELIVERING XXX





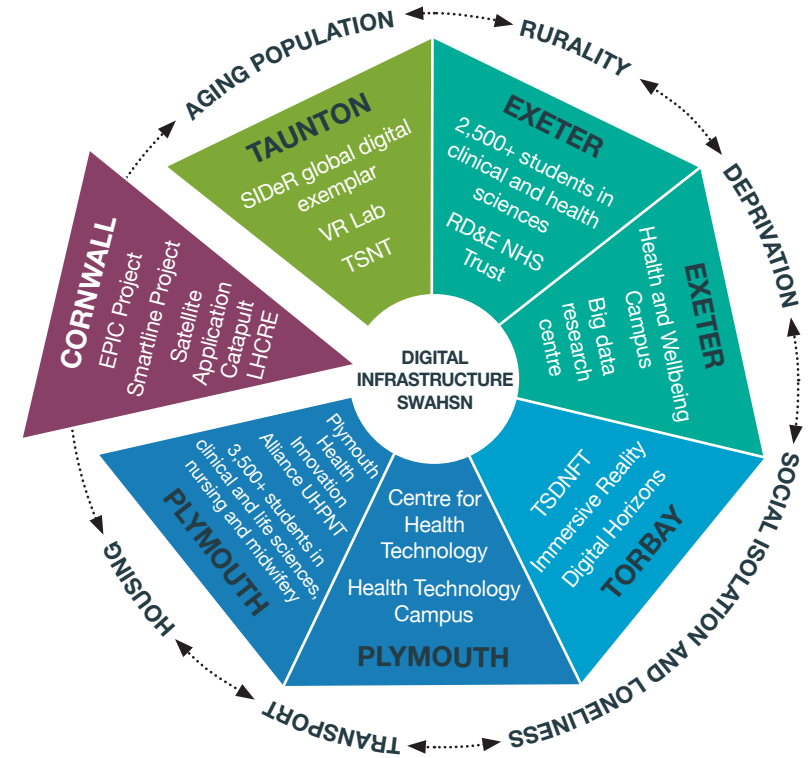
Digital Futures

PROGRAMME 6

Maximising our Data Analytics and Digital Capabilities and using them to Tackle Economic and Societal Challenges

The Heart of the South West is home to two national capability government facilities with a focus on environmental and geospatial data (the Met Office and the UK Hydrographic Office). Sitting alongside expertise in the universities of Exeter and Plymouth and a growing commercial capability in the application of data and machine learning, they are attracting partnerships with global organisations such as Amazon Web Services, Microsoft, Google, IBM, the World Health Organisation and NASA, as well as talented academics from around the world. Specific actions will include harnessing data analytics and digital solutions to grow the environmental intelligence market and maximising the potential from marine geospatial innovation. Our capabilities will also be harnessed to reduce emissions from agriculture through the development of more sustainable agri-food systems, supporting the recovery and future of agriculture.

FINANCIAL ASK: £XXXX, DELIVERING XXX



PROGRAMME 7

Positioning the Heart of the South West as a Health Technology Pioneer

The Heart of the South West is significantly ahead of the UK's ageing curve, spread across a peripheral-dispersed population. It is also home to a number of exceptional regional assets and health technology innovation capabilities, based in our universities and clinical trials units as well as in the wider business ecosystem, presenting us with a range of market opportunities. As a specific action, the Plymouth Health Campus will support the user-led design, development, evaluation and adoption of digital health technologies that are not found elsewhere in the UK. This will support the Heart of the South West in its aim to become a Health Technology Pioneer, providing a national centre for the development, evaluation and application of solutions to the challenges of an Ageing Society.

FINANCIAL ASK: £XXXX, DELIVERING XXX



People

PROGRAMME 8

Developing and Delivering a Comprehensive Skills Strategy

In a modern, innovative and creative economy, an area's most significant asset is its people. Ensuring that the Heart of the South West's workforce, and training / education offer, emerges more skilled, more flexible and more economically focused than before is crucial if the area is to achieve its ambition to Build Back Better. Led by the Heart of the South West Skills' Advisory Panel, partners will work together to finalise the area's Skills Strategy/Local Skills Report, and then accelerate its delivery. With a focus on maximising our opportunity sectors, but also rebuilding and reinforcing our skills foundations and wider social inclusion, the strategy will focus the area's efforts around creating clear pathways into work, progression and higher earning. Starting with additional support for employability, basic skills and educational achievement and aspiration, partners will coral funding and communication efforts to reinforce routes to academic and vocational/apprenticeship success; reinforce support into work/progression through work for adults; widen our existing strengths in technical skills and further and higher education alignment; and seek to create a skills and training landscape both better able to drive the recovery and meet the needs of our future economy. To achieve this, the area will seek to fully harness the tools now at its disposal, including England's largest Careers Hub, our two Institutes of Technology and excellent partner colleges, our world class universities, our nationally recognised pathfinder activity around digital skills and adult retraining, as well as the Government's new universal skills offer for adults, employment and Kickstart programmes, and wider support for employers and learners alike as we emerge.

FINANCIAL ASK: £XXXX, DELIVERING XXX



Business Environment

PROGRAMME 9

Establishing a Single Gateway for Heart of the South West Businesses to Access a Comprehensive Range of Support and Advice alongside Financial Support for Businesses

The Heart of the South West is home to 72,000 businesses across a wide range of sectors and industries. This includes a number of high-profile businesses that exhibit best practice and have transformative potential. It also includes a growing social enterprise sector, providing an important opportunity to support inclusive growth. With an ambition to be one of the best areas in the UK to start and grow a business, we are developing a strong business support infrastructure. Central to this is a single gateway providing business support, advice and guidance alongside support for apprenticeships, shorter supply chains, increased inward investment and exporting. With a dedicated team of sector specialists we will promote the area's strong and emerging sectors as well as supporting entrepreneurship and start-up companies, ensuring businesses at all stages receive the right support at the right time. Additionally, we will develop a financial support package enabling our business to access the finance they need to invest and grow.

FINANCIAL ASK: £XXXX, DELIVERING XXX

These programmes must be supported by underlying work in key areas. These are...



Ideas

PROGRAMME 10

Establishing an Innovation Ecosystem for Businesses: Driving up the Growth of Research Intensive Businesses & Innovation More Widely

The Heart of the South West has unparalleled place-based opportunities for innovation, commercialisation and the dissemination of ideas that have both commercial and societal value. We also have many of the ingredients necessary to capitalise on these opportunities, including demonstrable research excellence in a range of technologies and sectors, together with a vibrant community of research-intensive businesses. However, the area still exhibits comparatively low levels of innovation activity and businesses face a number of challenges in bringing ideas to market. Heart of the South West will lead a partnership in the creation and delivery of a HotSW Technopole which addresses this. This will strengthen the local innovation ecosystem by connecting businesses with the area's knowledge and R&D base, facilitate more multi-disciplinary collaboration, open access platforms, a talent pipeline and effective support for businesses to innovate and engage in R&D. They will also enable the Heart of the South West to plug gaps in the diffusion of technology and ideas across key sectors, supporting businesses to innovate and bring ideas to market.

FINANCIAL ASK: £XXXX, DELIVERING XXX



Places

PROGRAMME 11

A Workspace Offer of Work Hubs, Innovation Centres, Enterprise Zones and Freeport Offer for a Post Covid-19 World

The Heart of the South West has a diverse network of settlements. This includes growing cities such as Exeter and Plymouth, industrial towns such as Bridgwater and Yeovil and market and coastal communities such as Torbay and Barnstaple. These sit alongside a number of smaller towns, villages and settlements, reflecting the rural nature of much of the area. Whilst this diversity can be a strength, it also poses a challenge in terms of securing agglomeration effects. Partners in the area have responded to this challenge by starting to create an exciting network of innovation centres and work hubs, complementing our high profile Enterprise Zones, and providing an opportunity to stimulate enterprise in more rural and peripheral areas. Acceleration of these plans will bring the network fully on line and ensure that the spaces are well-connected, fit for the future and reflect the changing world of work in a post Covid-19 environment.

FINANCIAL ASK: £XXXX, DELIVERING XXX



Places

PROGRAMME 12

Supporting Rural and Coastal Areas and Developing our Farming, Food and Fishing Offers

As part of our aim to lift economic performance across the Heart of the South West including underperforming towns, peripheral areas and coastal communities, we will strive to improve the productivity of the farming, food and fishing sectors which are also intrinsically linked to the area's natural capital. Businesses in these sectors will be supported with the adoption and diffusion of technology, including digital technology which can transform how they operate. Alongside this, working with partners in the Great South West we have been getting more rural areas ready for the future, setting ourselves up as a test bed for new thinking - able to trial new ideas at scale and at speed. Our Rural Productivity Commission was established to examine the barriers and opportunities for delivering sustainable growth in our rural areas and identified a fantastic range of ideas, a number of which are already being tested, developed, funded and brought to market. Taking this to the next level we are exploring the establishment of a Great South West Rural Task Force with the ultimate aim of achieving a Rural Productivity Deal.

FINANCIAL ASK: £XXXX, DELIVERING XXX

PROGRAMME 13

Establishing the Heart of the South West as a Regional Demonstrator for Natural Capital

Natural Capital is a fundamental part of what makes Heart of the South West so special and there is stand out activity already happening in the area. We will build on these by showcasing the area as a pioneer in natural capital, demonstrating how economic development and the environment can co-exist to mutual benefit.

Initially this will consist of a series of pilot projects and we will seek opportunities to expand on these.

FINANCIAL ASK: £XXXX, DELIVERING XXX



Places

PROGRAMME 14

Establishing a Tourism Action Zone to help the Sector Recover and Prosper Post Covid-19

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Heart of the South West had been working on plans to improve the productivity of the visitor economy and generate higher value tourism. Working with neighbouring LEPs, this included development of a skills and data-led proposal for a Tourism Zone aligned with the Tourism Sector Deal. The aim was to bring together a coherent regional proposal for this important bedrock sector to boost productivity by extending the season, reaching a more diverse market (including accessible tourism) and capitalising on the area's wider digital expertise. With tourism having been one of the hardest hit sectors by the pandemic, efforts to support the sector are even more crucial and they will also support some of our hardest hit places which are reliant on the visitor economy.

FINANCIAL ASK: £XXXX, DELIVERING XXX



Infrastructure

PROGRAMME 15

Ensuring Strategic Connectivity

In order for our transformational programmes to succeed, our plan also includes a series of enabling investments, supporting our drive to increase both competitiveness and inclusion. Given that the Heart of the South West suffers significantly through long standing poor infrastructure, securing our economic recovery has to be underpinned by a step-change in improvements. This includes digital connectivity of gigabit-capable infrastructure and at least 30Mbps services for all by 2025 which can also reduce the need to travel. In addition we will work with Government to make the case for dualling of the A303/A30/A358 corridor and a smart motorway to support strategic transport connectivity along with rail improvements and decarbonisation of rail travel to ensure the resilience of lines into and through the Heart of the South West.

FINANCIAL ASK: £XXXX, DELIVERING XXX

WHAT ARE OUR NEXT STEPS?

This document sets out our ambitions for delivering a stronger, greener and more inclusive future for the Heart of the South West. We know that there are challenges ahead but we have the vision, energy and commitment to seize the moment and Build Back Better. With the right investment, these opportunities can become reality

Our plan requires collaboration and partnership both within and beyond our region. But we are confident that by working together with all of our partners across and with government we will achieve a better future.



Building Back Better
by delivering increased
prosperity through clean
and inclusive growth





Heart of the South West Joint Committee Budget Update - 2020/21 and draft budget for 2021/22

Lead Officer: Patrick Flaherty, Chief Executive, Somerset County Council
Author: Scott Wooldridge, Monitoring Officer, Somerset County Council
Contact Details: 01823 357628

1. Summary

- 1.1.** This report provides a further update for the Constituent Authorities on the Joint Committee's pooled budget for 2020/21. The report follows from the report in October 2020 and contains some revised recommendations for budget allocations from the available budget. It also sets out updated proposals for a draft 2021/22 budget.

2. Recommendations

2.1. It is recommended that:

(a) as part of continuing to support economic recovery work that further funding is allocated and Somerset West & Taunton Council are re-appointed for 2021/22 until 22 January 2022 to provide staff resources to support the HEROG work (see section 4.4 and table in 4.5.1);

(b) the bulk of the 2020/21 funding already allocated for project officer resources to support and develop the Housing Task Force priorities is deferred to provide funding in 2021/22 due to the impacts of Covid 19 emergency work (see tables in 4.5.1 and 4.6).

(c) the revised draft 2021/22 Budget is endorsed (see section 4.6)

3. Reasons for recommendations

- 3.1** It is essential that the Joint Committee remains fit for purpose, represents a sustainable way of working into the future; and delivers value for the resources committed to it by the Constituent Authorities. To that end it is important that the Committee reviews its funding allocations and proposed future funding commitments and makes any appropriate adjustments in order to support the delivery of its priorities.

4. Background

4.1 The Joint Committee approved the 2020/21 budget at its meeting in September 2019. At the same meeting the Joint Committee refined its focus into the following areas:

- Strategic policy development
- Influencing Government / key agencies to achieve direct intervention, support, funding and powers
- Designing and delivering strategic HotSW responses to 'Government' offers
- Designing and delivering public sector reform where this will deliver improved productivity, eg in health and education
- Delivering at scale –(beyond what individual councils can achieve)
- Oversight of the Delivery Plan – working with the HotSW LEP to ensure delivery of the HotSW Productivity Strategy.

4.2 In October 2020, the Committee reviewed and approved a series of funding allocations for 2020/21 and a proposed draft budget for 2021/22, within the envelope of budget contributions from Constituent Authorities and carry over funding from previous financial years.

4.3 Officers maintain a regular review of budget allocations and funding commitments to ensure that the budget is used efficiently and to recommend any appropriate adjustments as a result of changing circumstances or other external factors e.g. Covid 19 pandemic.

4.4 Work on some of the proposed funding allocations, such as the Housing Task Force, has been affected by the councils' collective support towards the Covid 19 emergency response and addressing the impact on the local economy. Some work has been undertaken, particularly in preparing a Joint Committee response to consultations. Additional work is partially dependent on the government's timeline for policy development around housing and planning.

4.4 HEROG support

4.4.1 Comprehensive management support arrangements have been in place to support the partnership (and latterly the Joint Committee) since 2015. These were reviewed and refined in 2019 and 2020. To minimise direct support costs impacting on the Committee's budget, most of the officer resource is provided by the Constituent Authorities on an 'in-kind' voluntary basis. Other direct budget contributions towards the Committee support costs have been allocated to refund those Constituent Authorities who have provided officer resources for project management capacity and administrative support to HEROG.

4.4.2 Devon County Council have provided resources in kind to support the

HEROG work of the Committee and this has been supplemented by officer resources from Somerset West & Taunton (£20k in 2019/20 and 2020/21). Following review by HEROG it is recommended that a further funding allocation is made for 2021/22 to support this work. It is recommended therefore that funding is allocated and Somerset West & Taunton council continue to provide staffing resources until 22 January 2022 (same date as the review of the Administering Authority and project management office).

4.5 Joint Committee 2020/21 Budget Position

4.5.1 The Joint Committee remains completely reliant on the Constituent Authorities for its budget and there are no obvious sources of additional funding to support running costs or delivery of its work programme. Joint Committee members' costs and expenses are funded and administered by each respective Constituent Authority. All Constituent Authorities have been invoiced in July 2020 for their 2020/21 contributions.

The latest position with the 2020/21 Joint Committee budget is as follows:

	£	
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Income		
Carry-over from 2019/20	(£17,768)	
2020/21 Contributions		
County Council x2	(£42,000)	
Unitaries x 2	(£16,000)	
Districts / National Park Authorities x 14	(£39,200)	
Total contributions	(£97,200)	
Total 2020/21 budget (including carry over)	(£114,968)	
Expenditure		
<u>Allocated funding</u>		
Administering Authority and meeting support	£24,968	
<u>Recommended funding allocations</u>		
Plymouth City Council (PMO support)	£20,000	
Somerset West & Taunton (HEROG support)	£20,000	
Housing Task Force support	£3000 (see 4.3 above)	
2020/21 Residual Budget unallocated	£47,000	

4.6 Joint Committee 2021/22 Draft Budget

Each year the Joint Committee needs to consider and approve a draft budget. The Joint Committee budget covers the costs of running the Committee and funding priority projects within its work programme.

A key unknown aspect of the future work programme is the Committee's response to the anticipated Government White Paper on Devolution, together with specific project support for its Investment Priorities and associated lobbying. This will be kept under review during 2021 as the position becomes clearer.

The Joint Committee endorsed a draft 2021/22 budget at its meeting in October 2020. **Since then this has been reviewed and minor revisions to budget allocations (shown in red below) are proposed.** The proposed draft budget for 2021/22 is therefore as follows:

	£
Projected Income	
Carry-over from 2020/21	(£47,000)
2021/22 Contributions (if at 2020/21 levels)	
County Council x2	(£42,000)
Unitaries x 2	(£16,000)
Districts / National Park Authorities x 15	(£39,200)
Total contributions	(£97,200)
Total 2020/21 budget (including carry over)	(£144,200)
Forecast Expenditure	
<u>Allocated funding</u>	
Administering Authority and meeting support	£27,200
Plymouth City Council (PMO support)	£20,000
Devolution lobbying and project funding support	£50,000
Housing Task Force support	£17,000
<u>Recommended funding allocations</u>	
HEROG work	£20,000 (see 4.4.2 above)
2021/22 Residual Budget unallocated (assuming recommended funding allocations are approved)	£10,000

The above draft budget projection assumes that partners continue to provide most of the staffing resource support in kind and the partner contributions are maintained at 2020/21 levels. Those assumptions would leave a residual unallocated budget of £10,000 to carry over into 2022/23 as a contingency / reserve.

At this stage there is a lot of uncertainty regarding the scope and scale of activity requiring funding in and beyond 2021/22 and whilst the above

assumptions may appear prudent there is a risk that the ambitions of the Joint Committee may subsequently require additional funding to be made available from constituent authorities and / or other sources.

5. Equalities Implications

5.1 There are no equalities implications associated with the recommendations.

6. Other Implications

6.1 Legal:

The review of the role and functions of the Joint Committee have taken account of the legal framework within which the Joint Committee operates.

6.2 Financial:

As stated in the report.

6.3 HR

As stated in the report.

6.4 Risk

The key risk to the Constituent Authorities is potentially the need for additional partner contributions during 2021/22 and/or future years in order to the delivery of the Committee's ambitions and plans.

6.5 Other Implications: Health and Well-being; Health and Safety; Sustainability; Community Safety; Privacy

No implications.

7. Background papers

7.1 Heart of the South West Joint Committee Governance Arrangements – 27 September 2019 and Budget Update report in October 2020

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

Joint Committee Update

January 2021



Contents

1. Status of the Interim Devon Carbon Plan
2. Current carbon reduction projects
3. Work of the Climate Impacts Group
4. Proposed governance



The Interim Devon Carbon Plan

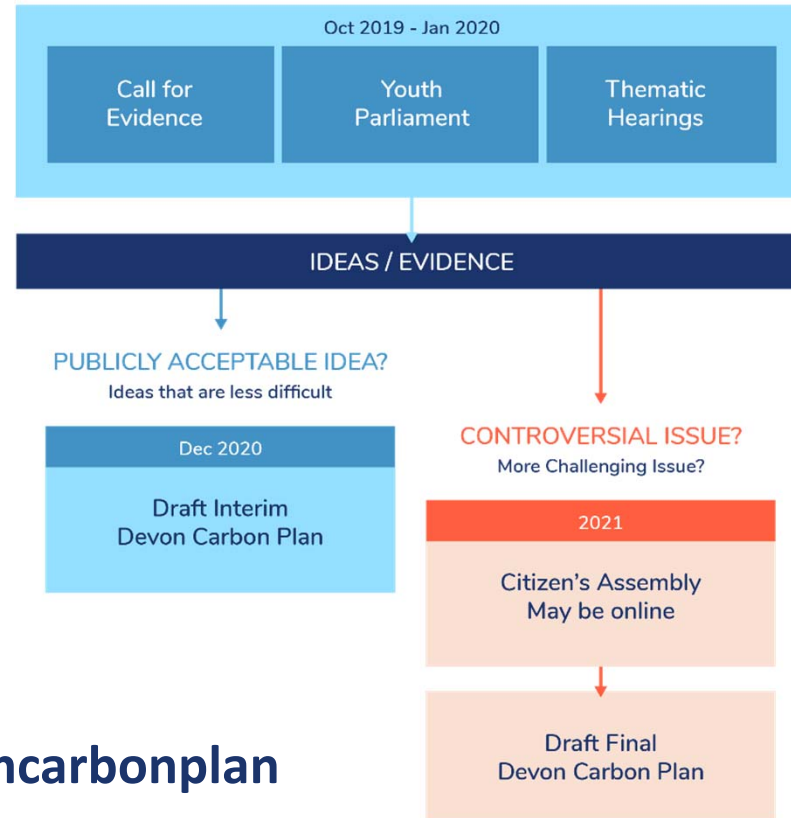
Engagement

A plan for everyone one in Devon.

400 submission so far.

Consultation closes 15th February 2021.

devonclimateemergency.org.uk/interimcarbonplan



The Interim Devon Carbon Plan

Funding:

- The Plan makes clear that net-zero cannot be achieved within existing resources.
- The current funding status of each action is described. Most need new resources.
- Significant opportunities for individuals and organisations to redirect their spending.

Geography:

- Devon's rural nature is a challenge and an opportunity.
- Some net-zero actions and behaviours will be easier in town and cities.
- Where actions apply to a specific type of area, this is described.

Net-Zero Date:

- The date is a specific consultation point.
- The Plan discusses the challenges of achieving net-zero sooner than 2050.



Current Projects

AgroRES

- EU-Funded project increasing renewable energy in the agriculture sector.

Solar Farms

- Various partners developing solar farms on their land

Devon Solar Together

- Collective purchasing of 900 domestic rooftop solar projects

Electric Vehicle Charging

- 40 fast chargers to be installed in spring in car parks (EU funded)
- On-street trial underway in Exeter



Current Projects

New Capacity

- Most local authorities have recruited new staff for the emergency

Nature Recovery Network

- Mapping Devon's habitats and opportunities for their enhancement for nature, people and climate.

Devon Environment Investment Platform

- Developing opportunities to match carbon investors with project developers in Devon

Green Homes Grant

- £5m from government to upgrade energy efficiency of vulnerable households



Climate Impacts Group

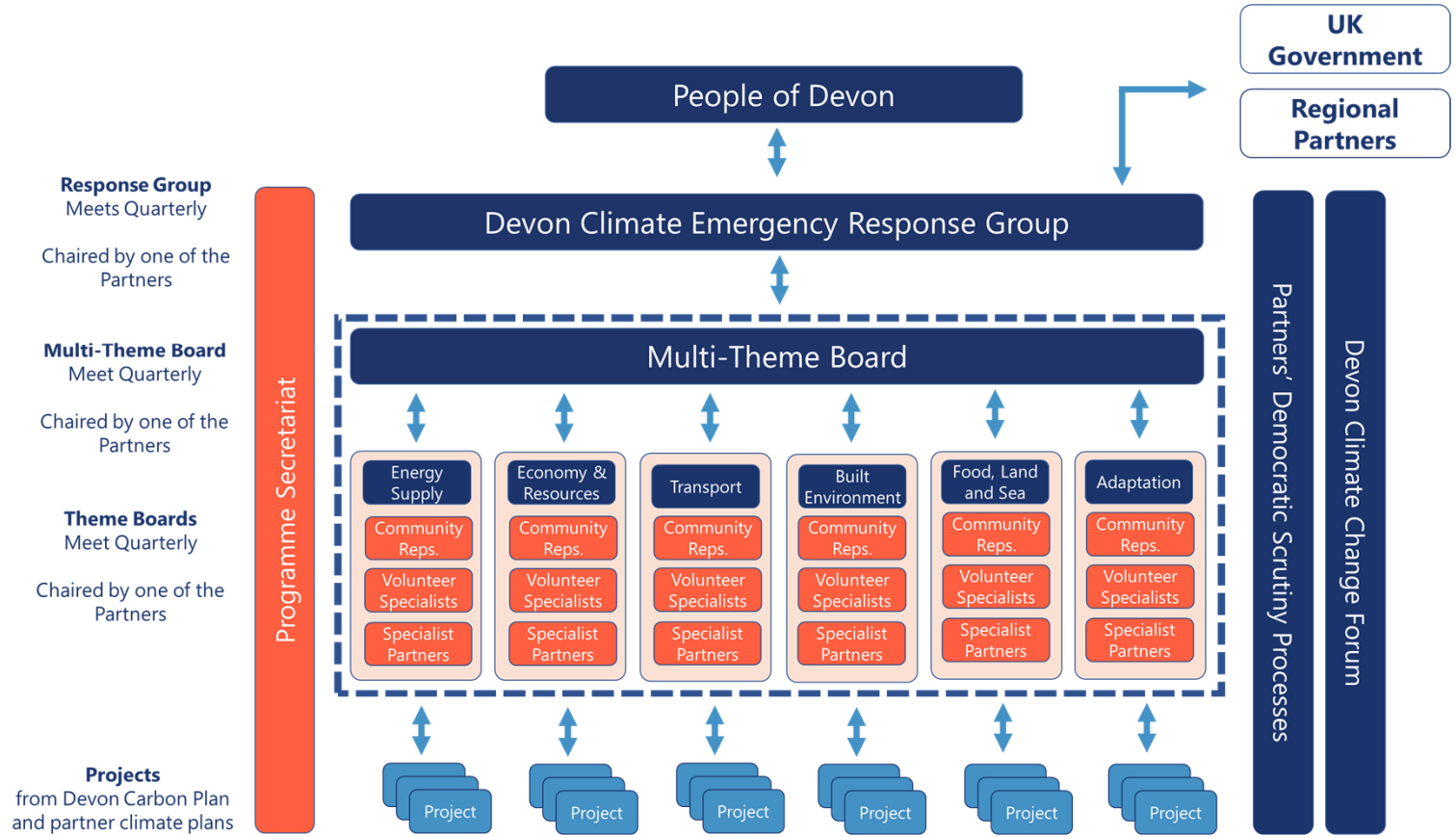
- Developing a Devon, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Adaptation Plan
- A set of climate-related risks to communities has been prepared
- Currently assessing these risks with the help of the Local Resilience Forum
- Next stage is to establish any gaps in preparedness. Actions to address the gaps will form the skeleton of the Adaptation Plan.



Proposed Governance

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This proposal is subject to the current consultation



Towards a Climate Resilient Somerset

Somerset's Climate Emergency Strategy



Climate Emergency Strategy

Since last update;

- Somerset's Climate Emergency Strategy was finalised and a Summary Strategy produced
- the Strategy presented at the various Scrutiny, Cabinet/Executive and Full Councils of the 5 Councils
- the Strategy was **adopted** in full by all 5 Somerset Local Authorities November 2020
- the Strategy (and the supporting documents) now all available on Somerset Climate Emergency Website [Climate emergency \(somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.somerset.gov.uk/climate-emergency)

Implementing the Strategy

Following adoption, the focus now moves to implementation.

This requires further political oversight, scrutiny and the involvement of a broad spectrum of Members, Officers, communities of interest and partners to;

- ensure the aims of the Strategy is implemented in the agreed timescales
- ensure shared actions are regularly reviewed and revised in light of emerging national and local policy, technological developments and funding opportunities
- allow and facilitate wide ranging community engagement
- provide challenge to the impact and pace of delivery
- support the measurement and monitoring of progress against agreed Goals and Outcomes

Implementing the Strategy (continued)

Governance

The first priority will be to establish a suitable Governance structure

This will likely involve:

- a Senior Leadership group
- an Implementation Board
- an independent Member Scrutiny function
- a management group
- various workstream or project groups
- a Community Forum

The various groups will be responsible for:

- Prioritising actions, programme management and delivery against targets
- Allocating funding, resourcing projects
- Collaborative working, identifying efficiencies, communicating progress

Key Actions

Since adoption of the Strategy, some key projects have been identified to be funded and resourced

- These include;
 - **Commercial Waste Contract Review:**
Analysis of existing Commercial Waste contracts across the 5 Councils
 - **Energy Planning:**
Work with WPD and SSEN and other key partners to develop a Countywide Energy Plan
 - **Scoping Renewable Energy Potential and Opportunities**
Identifying potential Renewable Energy opportunities on Council owned assets

Also early stages of developing a **Communications and Engagement Plan**

Electric Vehicle Strategy

The 5 Somerset Councils have also commissioned a Countywide Electric Vehicle (EV) Strategy

The Strategy;

- Sets the scene for EV's
- Provides a market review
- Somerset Baseline of existing infrastructure
- Forecast for uptake

Recommendations: 24 recommendations identified

- Lead by example
- Home & workplace charging,
- Fleet reviews,
- Policy changes etc

Adoption and Implementation:

- All 5 Councils to seeking to adopt
- Recommendations into action

Climate Emergency Actions Progressed

E-scooter pilots

Somerset West and Taunton (SWaT) and South Somerset District Council (SSDC) successful rollout of Electric Scooter pilots

- Taunton - 30,000 miles travelled since Oct 2020 with 6,000 registered users
- Yeovil - 28,000 miles travelled since mid Oct 2020 – 6,800 journeys

EV chargers

SWaT - 3 EV chargers in Taunton by late Spring

SSDC – procuring EV chargers for 25 Council car parks (DELETTI project)

Green Homes Grants

bids submitted by the District Councils for funding from the Green Homes Grant to tackle energy efficiency in 'hard to treat homes' across Somerset

Carbon Literacy Training

Carbon literacy Training delivered to Members

Climate Emergency Actions Continued

Low Carbon Skills Grant Fund

Successful £30k bid by SCC for design and project management for decarbonisation initiatives at a number of SCC properties

Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme

Successful £311k bid by SCC for energy improvements and heat decarbonisation measures at Yeovil Library

Green Recovery Challenge Fund

Mendip Hills AONB successful £249k bid to the to enhance connections for wildlife and transitional habitats between the Hills and the Levels.

SCC £1m Climate Emergency Community Fund

£1m fund for Parish and Town Councils across Somerset for Climate Change initiatives
Around 140 applications and over-subscribed

Early stages of assessing applications – Successful applicants informed in April

Heart of the South West Joint Committee

Peninsula Transport Sub-National
Transport Body Update.
January 2021

Paula Hewitt, Somerset County Council



Progress Update

Peninsula
Transport

Leaders

for the Heart of the South West

- DfT awarded £425k funding to the body to contribute towards the work programme.
- Local Authority contributions continuing.
- High level transport vision, goals and objectives agreed, with vision document to be published and consulted on in March 2021.
- Integrated Impact Assessment Scoping Report completed and due to be published for consultation to put in place robust framework for future strategy decisions. Covers Strategic Environmental, Equality and Health Impact requirements.
- Coast Communications appointed through procurement process to deliver comms activity.
- Programme management up and running with monthly programme meetings and monthly progress reporting to DfT. Project and programme dashboard in place. Meeting with DfT programme team every other month.
- Continuing to attend national STB grouping meetings with DfT officials and participate in various national STB communities of interest on Decarbonisation, Rural Mobility, Freight etc. DfT extremely keen that their funding does not fund duplicate work across STBs.
- Local Authority scheme promoters continuing to develop the prioritised Major Road Network (MRN) and Large Local Major (LLM) schemes in their areas.



Progress Update

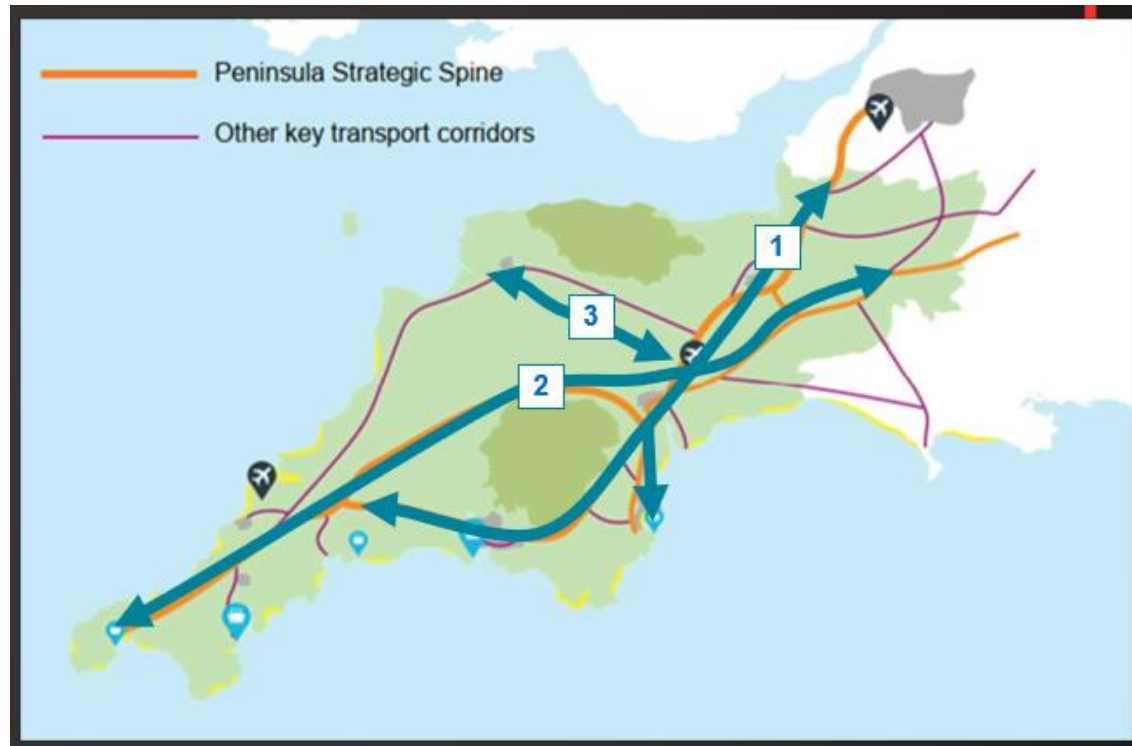
Leaders

for the Heart of the South West

Peninsula
Transport

- Strategic Economic Corridor Studies currently inception taken place and work underway.
- Currently defined three strategic corridors to assess and will build on this in future work Programme subject to further funding from DfT.
- Working with Western Gateway STB on their corridor study workshops and rail strategy.
- Commissioning of remaining work packages underway:
 - Carbon Transition Strategy
 - Technology and EV strategy
 - Rail Strategy (phase 1)
 - Freight Study
 - Rural Mobility Study
 - Detailed Transport Strategy

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1. M5 / A38 Corridor (including A380), Paddington / Penzance mainline, Newton Abbot / Torquay line.
2. A303 / A30 Corridor.
3. Waterloo line to Exeter A361 North Devon corridor and Exeter / Barnstaple branch line.

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