



District Executive

Thursday 1st April 2021

9.15 am * Please note earlier start time *

**Virtual Meeting
using Zoom meeting software**

The following members are requested to attend the meeting:

Jason Baker
Mike Best
John Clark
Adam Dance
Sarah Dyke

Peter Gubbins
Henry Hobhouse
Val Keitch
Tony Lock
Peter Seib

Any members of the public wishing to address the meeting at Public Question Time need to email democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk by 9.00am on Wednesday 31 March 2021.

The meeting will be viewable online at: <https://youtu.be/pLuQVbqiHR0>

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk

This Agenda was issued on Wednesday 24 March 2021.

Alex Parmley, Chief Executive Officer

**This information is also available on our website
www.southsomerset.gov.uk and via the modern.gov app**

Information for the Public

The District Executive co-ordinates the policy objectives of the Council and gives the Area Committees strategic direction. It carries out all of the local authority's functions which are not the responsibility of any other part of the Council. It delegates some of its responsibilities to Area Committees, officers and individual portfolio holders within limits set by the Council's Constitution. When major decisions are to be discussed or made, these are published in the Executive Forward Plan in so far as they can be anticipated.

Members of the Public are able to:-

- attend meetings of the Council and its committees such as Area Committees, District Executive, except where, for example, personal or confidential matters are being discussed;
- speak at Area Committees, District Executive and Council meetings;
- see reports and background papers, and any record of decisions made by the Council and Executive;
- find out, from the Executive Forward Plan, what major decisions are to be decided by the District Executive.

The Council's Constitution is also on the web site and available for inspection in Council offices. The Council's corporate priorities which guide the work and decisions of the Executive are set out below.

District Executive

Meetings of the District Executive are usually held monthly, at 9.30am, on the first Thursday of the month (unless advised otherwise). However during the coronavirus pandemic these meetings will be held remotely via Zoom video-conferencing. For more details on the regulations regarding remote/virtual meetings please see the Local Authorities and Police and Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 as part of the Coronavirus Act 2020.

The Executive Forward Plan and copies of executive reports and decisions are published on the Council's web site:
<http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

Agendas and minutes can also be viewed via the modern.gov app (free) available for iPads and Android devices. Search for 'modern.gov' in the app store for your device, install, and select 'South Somerset' from the list of publishers, then select the committees of interest. A wi-fi signal will be required for a very short time to download an agenda but once downloaded, documents will be viewable offline.

Public participation at meetings (held via Zoom)

Public question time

We recognise that these are challenging times but we still value the public's contribution to our virtual meetings. If you would like to participate and contribute in the meeting, please join on-line through Zoom at: <https://zoom.us/join> You will need an internet connection to do this.

Please email democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk for the details to join the meeting.

If you would like to view the meeting without participating, please see: <https://youtu.be/pLuQVbqiHR0>

The period allowed for participation in Public Question Time shall not exceed 15 minutes except with the consent of the Chairman and members of the Committee. Each individual speaker shall be restricted to a total of three minutes.

If you would like to address the meeting at Public Question Time, please email democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk by 9.00am on Wednesday 31 March 2021. When you have registered, the Chairman will invite you to speak at the appropriate time during the virtual meeting.

Virtual meeting etiquette:

- Consider joining the meeting early to ensure your technology is working correctly.
- Please note that we will mute all public attendees to minimise background noise. If you have registered to speak during the virtual meeting, the Chairman will unmute your microphone at the appropriate time.
- Each individual speaker shall be restricted to a total of three minutes.
- When speaking, keep your points clear and concise.
- Please speak clearly – the Councillors are interested in your comments.

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District Executive

Thursday 1 April 2021

Agenda

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the District Executive meeting held on 4th March 2021.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest

In accordance with the Council's current Code of Conduct (as amended 26 February 2015), which includes all the provisions relating to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI), personal and prejudicial interests, Members are asked to declare any DPI and also any personal interests (and whether or not such personal interests are also "prejudicial") in relation to any matter on the Agenda for this meeting.

Members are reminded that they need to declare the fact that they are also a member of a County, Town or Parish Council as a Personal Interest. Where you are also a member of Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council within South Somerset you must declare a prejudicial interest in any business on the agenda where there is a financial benefit or gain or advantage to Somerset County Council and/or a Town or Parish Council which would be at the cost or to the financial disadvantage of South Somerset District Council.

4. Public Question Time

5. Chairman's Announcements

Items for Discussion

6. South Somerset District Council Recovery and Renewal Strategy (Pages 5 - 47)

7. Annual review of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) (Pages 48 - 84)

8. Rural Designation of Areas in South Somerset (Pages 85 - 95)

9. District Executive Forward Plan (Pages 96 - 101)

10. Date of Next Meeting (Page 102)



South Somerset District Council Recovery and Renewal Strategy

Executive Portfolio Holder: Cllr Val Keitch, Council Leader, Strategy and Housing
Strategic Director: Clare Pestell, Director Commercial Services
Lead Officer: James Divall, Income Opportunities Development Manager,
Commercial and Income Generation Service
Contact Details: James.divall@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462261

Purpose of the Report

1. This report sets out the reviewed and updated Recovery strategy, its rationale and approach that South Somerset District Council (SSDC) will take in the Recovery and Renewal phases of the Coronavirus pandemic. Following updated expert advice and best practice, local data and lessons learnt from the Response phase of the pandemic, it outlines the proposed Roadmap to Recovery for the Council and the wider community of South Somerset.
2. This report and strategic document seeks the approval of this council to adopt the updated Recovery and Renewal Strategy and to proceed with implementation.
3. Attached to this report is the proposed Recovery & Renewal Strategy and the overview document of the key work streams involved in the recovery plan along with the Action Plans for each area in the appendices which are live documents and will evolve as priorities emerge and the situation changes into the future.

Forward Plan

4. This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of April 2021

Public Interest

5. This report is of interest to the public as it seeks to approve the Council updated Recovery & Renewal Strategy, which impacts on how our council services will recover and continue to work going forwards; and the wider recovery of our economy, environment and communities.
6. This District Executive report is the council's strategic document outlining the rationale and approach in recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic across South Somerset. It also explains the objectives we seek to achieve, work streams, focus areas and resources required.

Recommendations



7. That the District Executive:

- a) approves the Recovery & Renewal Strategy with supporting documentation in the manner outlined in this report.
- b) approves the transfer of £464,140 from the COVID Recovery Reserve to the revenue budget for 2021/22 within the Place & Recovery Directorate.

Background

8. The Coronavirus pandemic has been a disruptor to normal life with some services stopping, demand for health and care services increasing, and additional Response services stood up. Our communities, lives and wellbeing has and is being severely tested and normal freedoms have been adversely impacted. The outlook for the UK economy has become increasingly uncertain.
9. Unlike a more conventional Recovery from a major incident, e.g. flooding, the time period and potential fluctuations that will occur over the coming months will be a new recovery challenge that we will need to deal with. For example;
 - Fluctuating movement and activity restrictions depending on future peaks and outbreaks of the virus that may be uneven across the region and unpredictable.
 - Services may be 'switched on and off' with flexibility between the recovery and any future response functions needed
 - The recovery period may be at least 12 months – 24 months (or even longer) depending on the actions taken, virus spread, or until widespread immunity achieved via vaccinations is completed (expected July 2021)
 - Different population segments will have different need for restrictions i.e. Shielded population may have greater restrictions for longer.
10. Against this backdrop, the Recovery Strategy to COVID 19 is complicated and multi-dimensional and requires an agile and adaptive mode of working to match it. Our **Recovery** can be defined as the process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating following this emergency and our plan to get back to 'normal' community and economic functions. However, it is also an opportunity to rebuild a better, **Renewal** for communities, environment, internal council services and the wider economy making the most of the opportunities presented by the disruption, our learning and experiences from living through the pandemic and subsequent ways of working to create a 'new normal' that sets a path towards longer term strategic goals.
11. This 'new normal' will require dedicated, collective and focussed leadership, alongside and working in collaboration with our communities, our businesses and our public services for some time and it is likely that we are, to an extent, already moving to a new way of working for our places, services and through adapted new digital norms.

Report Detail (Recovery & Renewal Strategy)



South Somerset District Council

12. The recovery planning process will be influenced by the central government strategy that is emerging, but the South Somerset District Council recovery action plan is to be designed and specifically tailored to help the people of South Somerset bounce back quickly, once lockdown restrictions start to be lifted.
13. There will also be alignment to regional political structures including Avon & Somerset Local Resilience Forum (ASLRF) and the Heart of the South West LEP. This will work alongside both the District and County Councils (including Somerset County Council Multi Agency Recovery Co-ordination Group) to bring the recovery and renewals to our economy, environment, council services and communities. This will provide political leadership both at a regional and local level connecting the various places and communities right across South Somerset.
14. The Recovery Plan will cover the 5 key themes that are aligned with the District Council Corporate Plan, these are:
 - Economy
 - Healthy, self-reliant communities
 - Environment
 - Places where we live
 - Protecting core services
15. As part of the work for recovery planning, South Somerset District Council will consider data on the potential economic, environmental and social impacts of the pandemic; and what this impact will mean when taking action on issues such as investment, business support, community enabling and support, environmental planning, housing and regeneration to name just a few.
16. Although South Somerset District Council aims to start recovery immediately with identified priority actions, the Roadmap approach provides points along the process to engage in wider consultation and feedback workshops, meetings, summits and conferences with representation from political, community, business and resident groups and individuals. This will provide a sense check to measure impact, identify gaps in Recovery and highlight opportunities for the Renewal Action Plan covering the five council strategic priorities.
17. A Recovery and Renewal Board will be established with membership including Council Portfolio Holders whose portfolios are key to the strategy, council senior officers as appropriate, including the Director of Place and Recovery as a regular member. Additional board member's invitations from external stakeholders will include other local authorities, substantial businesses, health and care bodies, leading education providers, charities and other public expert agencies concerned for example with innovation and technology, but this list is not exhaustive.
18. The Board will oversee and review progress of the Recovery and Renewal Strategy as set out in this document on behalf of the District Executive. The Board will set priorities where necessary, and it will discuss the action plans; and receive reports on progress from the Director of Place and Recovery.



South Somerset District Council

19. At the end of the Recovery process, a report containing recommendations on the actions that will guide the recovery, renewal and lessons learned from this pandemic for the District will be published.

Financial Implications

20. Financial implications of the Recovery and Renewal Strategy and subsequent corporate themed action plans are not transparent at this present moment in time. Work will progress utilising current council resources and service operational budgets where possible, whilst detailed project identification and business cases are developed and financial implication identified.

21. The revenue budget for 2021/22 approved by Full Council in February 2021, set aside a revenue reserve of approximately £464K for Covid recovery. If the recommendation is agreed, this funding to be transferred from the reserve into the revenue budget for 2021/22 within the Place and Recovery Directorate. Each priority project will be costed against a business case and funding requested on a case by case basis.

22. As part of the Council wide recovery plan, a review of the financial health of the council is being undertaken which will result in an updated Financial Strategy. The overall financial assessment of the Council will include a review of reserves and the financial risk register. This is anticipated to come forward for approval by District Executive in the summer.

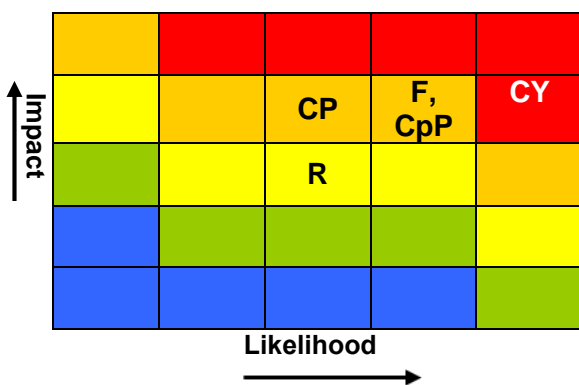
Legal implications (if any) and details of Statutory Powers

23. There are no legal implications that relate directly to this report.

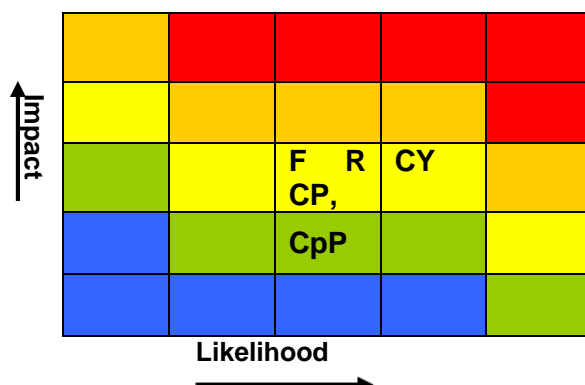
Risk Matrix

The risk matrix shows risk relating to the Council Plan headings.

Risk Profile before officer recommendations



Risk Profile after officer recommendations



Key



Categories	Colours (for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)
R - Reputation	High impact and high probability
CpP - Corporate Plan Priorities	Major impact and major probability
CP - Community Priorities	Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY - Capacity	Minor impact and minor probability
F - Financial	Insignificant impact and insignificant probability

24. The reputational risk could and should be seen as a positive as the Council will be demonstrating its desire to respond effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic to support and aid local council taxpayers, as well as the wider community, environment and economy.
25. As the Recovery and Renewal Strategy and action plan evolves, an impact assessment with details of the risks per corporate theme will be developed including identified risks and what mitigation action has been, or will be taken to minimise and address such impacts on our economy, council services, environment and communities.
26. An appropriate exit strategy will be developed from the Recovery phase, at the appropriate time, within the detailed Recovery action plans showing how the activities could cease or be included in new operating models, becoming our business as usual, and the impact that would have upon the future support function to aid our community and economy.
27. Overall it is considered that the risk associated with implementing the Recovery and Renewal Strategy is low. That the initial proposed recovery activities and resulting impact on the Council will be beneficial; and at this stage essential for supporting our communities, environment and economy.

Council Plan Implications

28. The Recovery & Renewal Strategy has been designed based on the Corporate Plan themes and objectives, it is the priorities and actions with these themes that will aid a swift Recovery, moving into Renewal. It follows the operating framework of establishing actions plans for the 5 corporate themes by working within the focussed Communities of Practice (CoPs), which are groups populated with relevant service employees that have appropriate skills and knowledge from across the Council and represented politically by the Portfolio holder for the individual CoPs.
29. Essentially the Recovery and Renewal Strategy meets the overarching outcomes of the 5 corporate priority areas but is aligned and forms the Strategy and Roadmap to achieve the renewed Council Plan 2020 - 2024 Priority 1: Lead the recovery and revitalisation of our economy and communities to be stronger, more resilient and more vibrant than before Covid-19.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications



South Somerset District Council

30. Right now, the coronavirus pandemic is the global priority. We all need to work together to save lives and keep our communities together. But the climate and nature emergencies will still be there when the spread of Covid-19 is brought under control. With the right Recovery, this could be a once in a life time behaviour change opportunity to build upon and improve matters highlighted in Climate Emergency recognised by South Somerset District Council in May 2019 addressing the climate crisis, at the same time as we recover from the pandemic.
31. The South Somerset District Council Recovery & Renewal Strategy will explore how the pandemic has unintentionally proven that we can dramatically decrease pollution levels in a short period of time and see significant improvements in spaces for nature. The report and strategy will use intelligence and data collected from COVID-19 (including SSDC's own annual carbon calculator) and build in new actions to address the wider environment implications across South Somerset. It will seek to retain and build on the positive environmental implications and also retain the momentum and desire for positive change in our communities.
32. These actions will be held within the Environment Community of Practice (CoP) and officers will ensure work is aligned with the Environment Strategy and progress is made against the Environment delivery plan and recovery plan.

Equality and Diversity Implications

33. An Equality Impact Relevance Check Form has been completed in respect of the updated Recovery and Renewal Strategy, and in discussion with the Equalities lead officer it has been agreed that in respect of this high level document a full Equality Impact Assessment is not required. However, Equality Impact Assessments will be required for the specific actions/projects falling out of this Strategy which will be the responsibility of the relevant Community of Practise to complete. A copy of the Equality Impact Relevance Check Form is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.

Privacy Impact Assessment

34. At this time there are no material implications on personal privacy

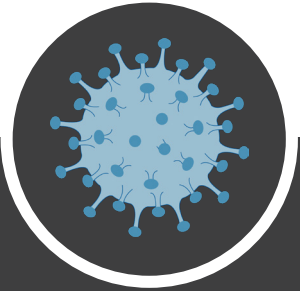
Background Papers

- SSDC Council Plan 2020 – 2024
- Original SSDC Recovery and New Horizons Strategy
- Attached papers to this report

Appendices

Appendix 1: SSDC Recovery and Renewal Strategy document

Appendix 2: Equalities impact relevance check form



South Somerset District Council's

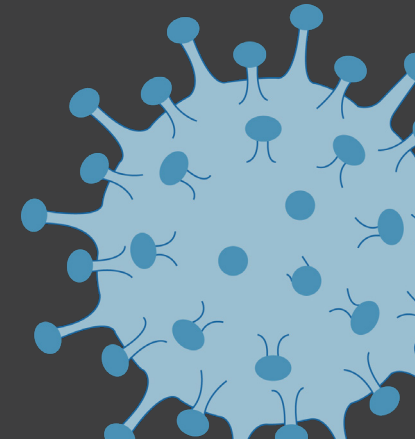
Recovery and Renewal Strategy

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**The next chapter in rebuilding from the
Coronavirus pandemic (COVID19).**

2021/2023 FINAL VERSION

Version 9.0 Updated: 23 MARCH 2021



Introduction



Foreword from Our Council Leader: Val Keitch

During the pandemic I have been extremely proud of our combined response from both our Council and how our communities have rallied round to help those who were vulnerable or in need. This period of lockdown and enforced social distancing has made us take a closer look at what is important; caring for one another, valuing what we have and what others do to support us in our daily lives. We must continue to review our priorities and evolve to ensure that this work remains relevant to enable both the council and our community to recover effectively and create an environment for economic and social prosperity.

Pandemic
2020
We find ourselves in an unprecedented position. The Covid-19 pandemic has been a disruptor to normal life with services stopping, demand for health and care services severely tested, the public sector stretched to capacity and the outlook for the UK economy uncertain. There will be consequences of the coronavirus pandemic that will influence our lives now and in the years to come. This Recovery and Renewal Strategy sets out the action we will take over the next 12 months to 5 years to address the challenges and grasp the opportunities whether they are economic, social or environmental. We shall continue to take opportunities arising to work collectively across all sectors. Collaborating with the South West Local Resilience Forum (LRF) actively engaging with the LRF Recovery Advisory Group, whilst, aligning with the Somerset Multi Agency Recovery Coordination Group (SMARCG) will ensure we are acting consistently. The increased knowledge and information from partners, drawing on others' experiences will help us to deliver coordinated recovery services to the public and business. The voluntary organisations across South

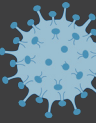
Somerset have been outstanding in their response and the joint working established must be continued to ensure all residents have access to support and advice for their physical, mental and financial wellbeing. We will need to be aware that some communities have suffered particular loss and hardship and may need additional, longer term support to recover from the impacts of the pandemic. There has been wide acknowledgment that the restrictions introduced to minimise transmission of the Coronavirus have significantly reduced climate change emissions. There is now a global discussion about how this could become mainstream; supporting the green economy through helping business to transition away from carbon intensive activities, assisting individuals to work differently and smarter, utilising technology, less commuting and increasing active travel options which prioritise pedestrians and cyclists.

South Somerset's council leader said in May 2019 when addressing the climate change emergency 'When future generations look back at how we

responded to this crisis we want them to be proud of what we have done and to know that we cared, not just for the current generation but for them as well'. In this Recovery Plan our actions are carefully considered to ensure wherever possible they are contributing to carbon reduction by taking opportunities to introduce new ways of working and supporting changes to enable a more sustainable way of living. As the restrictions are gradually eased we will need to be responsive and ready to advise, where necessary, how this can be effected safely such as the reopening of town and village centres, help local businesses to recover and diversify through identifying new opportunities, aid our communities to heal and come together once again and to capture positive lessons learnt from the pandemic to integrate into new daily norms. This Recovery Plan will evidence that we have seized opportunities and addressed the challenges thrust upon us by the pandemic to build a better future.



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Response to COVID-19

How have we supported our communities to date?



Established a community distribution and support hub for the most vulnerable in our district
High streets operating safely



Delivered over 1400 emergency food parcels to our shielded and vulnerable residents, homeless and rough sleeper meals and free school meals from the SSDC Distribution Hub



We got all rough sleepers and homeless in to emergency accommodation and provided support to get them into permanent housing. Support to meet the complex challenges they face continues including food and medicines delivered directly to them, access to physical and mental health assessment and support with COVID-19 vaccinations.



Since March 2020 SSDC has paid out 45m+ in grants to over 2000+ businesses and we continue to reach out to eligible businesses. A discretionary business grant scheme of £5m+ has also been set up and fully distributed



District Country Parks have kept open for residents to take exercise during lockdowns, whilst adhering to social distancing requirements



Covid Wardens: SSDC has employed 2 Wardens shared across the 4 Districts and an additional full time warden for SSDC until May 2021. The roles have had a visible presence on our high streets, country parks and open spaces encouraging people to follow the rules.



Covid Compliance and Enforcement Officer employed for SSDC to November 2021 engaging businesses, providing advice and guidance while flagging the need for enforcement where needed. Made over 500 visits to businesses to date.



Redeployed one third of staff to support health authority vaccination and testing centres. Delivered NHS test and trace isolation payments.



Redeployment/ upskilling of staff to ensure critical services are maintained
Minimise service disruption – all services able to be operated have continued

Framing the Strategy

Why the need for an updated strategy?

Since the start of 2020 and the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic to the UK and South Somerset we have seen a lot of change, especially in terms of our experiences and learning outcomes to the way we have all responded to the pandemic but also in our planning for recovery. Although the original 2020 South Somerset DC Recovery Strategy is still relevant in terms of our approach, our priorities and our commitment to support our communities, there have been a number of new developments. Our corporate planning and our collective learning, both within the Council and across the Country has evolved and expanded our knowledge and need to align with wider regional issues and partners. This has also offered an opportunity to clarify our Strategy in its intent and ambition as the pandemic has evolved, to ensure it's relevance for our communities and businesses.

This reviewed Recovery and Renewal Strategy will align with other South Somerset District Council Strategies and work plans including:

- Our reviewed 2021 Corporate Plan (In particular priority project 1: Recover and grow back the economy and community stronger than before COVID-19)
- The Economic Development Recovery Growth Strategy
- The Income Generation and Commercial Strategy
- The Environment Strategy and Climate Change Emergency Action Plan
- The Community of Practice (CoP) workstreams and Action Plans
- South Somerset District Council Digital Strategy

The document is also influenced by:

- Somerset Recovery and Growth Plan
- Somerset Multi Agency Recovery Co-ordination Group Strategy
- The South West Local Resilience Forum Recovery Strategy
- The UK Government Recovery Strategy – Our Plan to rebuild, May 2020
- The 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015

Our framework approach to Recovery and Renewal



1

SSDC: Set up framework for recovery and co-ordination through our community of practice (CoP) workstreams

- Review membership of groups
- Access and align resources
- Identify & communicate with external interested partners

2

Assess and look forward

- Understand context of recovery
- Identify themes to explore based on learning, knowledge, need and data
- Calculate impact and loss
- Analysis & present assessment
- Collect information
- Select action areas to recover

3

Develop recovery plan

- Manage delivery of recovery plan (publish plan, monitor delivery)
- Identify transactional activity (Reflect, & learn, review, preparedness, reinstate operations)

4

Develop a renewal plan

- Review recovery plan (is there a better way?)
- Identify challenges to renewal
- Organise workshop, engagement and renewal summits
- Encourage commitment to deliver renewal
- Establish Recovery board
- Agree transformational initiatives

5

Continuous improvement

- Scenario plan & exercise
- Performance management review
- Identify lessons
- Case study development
- Act on lessons

An uncertain future



What challenges lie ahead for business?



South Somerset local economy is highly exposed to the impact of COVID-19:

Some South Somerset businesses have closed or temporarily ceased operations.



Poor digital infrastructure and connectivity made many of our businesses more vulnerable to the economic shock of Covid, limiting their flexibility to develop on-line alternatives.



The visitor economy, hospitality, and retail sectors have been hit hardest and earliest: Loss of visitor nights between April – June led to an estimated loss of £178.8 million to the accommodation sector and 27% of furlough taken up by the accommodation and food industry sector in Somerset (October 20).



High streets: The full extent of the challenges for high streets is unknown however we expect to see the need for rapid adaptation for both businesses and physical landscape. It is expected that town centre space will become available, however the future use of this space will determine challenges acquired.



Need for continued financial support: Responding to the Somerset business recovery survey, 52% of respondents reported achieving turnovers of 50% or less than normal, with 30.1% of businesses reported have made 0% of their normal profits.



Creative & cultural industries: A large number of local creatives have lost at least half of income, few are confident in trading through 2021. Limitations in accessing Government support.



Need for highly skilled employees: Although we have seen an increase in unemployment there is still a requirement from businesses who require highly skilled employees.



Confidence in the future: Businesses are hugely impacted in the uncertainty of future lockdowns and the challenges that this brings in future planning and strategy creation.

An uncertain future



Employment skills

17%
furloughed

17% of the workforce of UK businesses were furloughed (28th December 2020 – to 10th January 2021), an increase from 14% in the previous fortnight.

5%
unemployment

The UK unemployment rate, in the three months to November 2020, was estimated at 5%, 1.2 percentage points higher than a year earlier.

South Somerset claimant count as a proportion of residents is 4.2%.

4.4%

Claimant Count 18th February 2021 – 4,205 (up 2,365 from this time last year). As a proportion of residents aged 16-64 – 4.4% (up 2.5% from this time last year) *Please Note: Claimant count figures do NOT provide a direct measure of unemployment and claimant conditionality's were relaxed in response to the COVID-19 crisis.*

27%
of DE adults

27% of DE adults do not use the internet. Those that do primarily do so only on a smart phone - 19% have no other access to the internet. A lack of access to adequate IT will have made it almost impossible to job hunt during the pandemic. As well as making searching and applying for jobs difficult, poor digital literacy will limit employability as even jobs that are primarily unskilled, increasingly require some IT skills.



An uncertain future



Investing in communities



Limited ability to access training and work:

This is particularly the case in light of the COVID-19 crisis.



Existing local inequalities exacerbated:

There are health, social and economic inequalities found throughout the District even within some seemingly affluent areas we need balanced approaches for all communities.



High Impact from COVID-19 on industries and supporting voluntary organisations that support vulnerable people: This has a disproportionate impact on poverty, accessibility and well-being in the community.



Need for high quality public realm, green open spaces and community green infrastructure has been amplified and there is an opportunity for greater social inclusion and encouragement to participate in rebuilding communities.



Care in our community:

The COVID-19 Pandemic has seen 44 local voluntary community groups start up to support the most vulnerable in need with food parcels, collecting medication and general support.



Young people in our community:

There has been a substantial increase in social isolation and poor mental health (+80%) over the last year. The scarring in terms of education, employment and wellbeing will be with us for the next decade.



Children's education:

By the time the pandemic is over, most children across the UK will have missed over half a year in person schooling or more than 5% of their entire time in school. For those whose parents who did not do well at school or without access to books or wifi etc, the pre-existing inequalities have been compounded.



The digital divide has been laid bare and digital exclusion correlates very closely with poverty and other forms of social inequality making basic services and opportunities harder to access and increases social isolation.

An uncertain future

Digital Landscape



Digital adoption

Covid has accelerated digital adoption by orders of magnitude giving rise to the use of new platforms and new behaviours. This presents huge opportunities for South Somerset, and a challenge for SSDC to keep up with citizens' expectations.



Digital Infrastructure

South Somerset lags behind the national average in superfast broadband and mobile coverage and transfer speeds. Poor digital infrastructure and connectivity creates a competitive disadvantage for our businesses and hampers the recovery and regeneration of our communities and public spaces.



Demographics

Today approximately 50% of Somerset's population is over 55 and that population is becoming older as people of working age move out, and retirees move in. It is in the 55+ age groups that digital media usage begins to drop off; fewer 55's use mobile devices to go online; fewer have social media accounts; and a higher proportion do not use the internet at all.



Digital Technologies

We can do more now with digital technology, we can do it better and we can do it more cheaply. Technologies that seemed out of reach are here now or just round the corner, including robotic process automation (RPA) Artificial Intelligence (AI), Cloud Computing and 5G.



Cyber Security

The increase in online activity that Covid has ushered in brings with it a greater threat from cyber criminals – for businesses, citizens, and for council officers and members.



Poverty and Digital Exclusion

Digital accessibility in some households is poor and there is a clear correlation between digital exclusion and other forms of social inequalities. We need to reach out to ensure that digitally excluded adults of all ages can access services and information, we need to work with partners to improve access and confidence.

Recovery and Renewal vision & ambition

The South Somerset 10 year vision and ambition:

To be a thriving, productive and inclusive Council in 2030 and beyond; a vital part of Somerset and the South West where local businesses, communities and the public sector collectively shape the new normal to

promote shared prosperity, happiness and well-being.

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Recovery and Renewal Strategy themes:



**Organisational
change & workforce
development**



**Economic
recovery**



**Place making,
regeneration &
infrastructure**



**Community
recovery**

Recovery and Renewal objectives:

Each action with our plans will be assessed to make sure it at least meet one of the following criteria:

- Promote decarbonisation and nature recovery
- Good work for All (including job creation)
- Rebuilding more inclusive communities and economy
- SSDC: improving customer access and service
- Robust economic safety net for all
- Promoting health and well-being
- Addressing the causes of inequality
- Increasing digital access
- Support the development and enhance the future prospects of our young people
- Healthy food, healthy activities
- High streets for all

SSDC Service Design Principles:

The framework that guides the Council when designing services to ensure our services are:

- Efficient
- Consistent
- Inclusive
- Improving customer experience

(Please find the detailed list of the South Somerset District Council Design Principles in Appendix 1).

Recovery and Renewal vision & ambition

Recovery and Renewal objectives - our 11 steps:

The Pandemic has created a great need for support across South Somerset economic, social and academic communities. Before starting the recovery phase, it is important to be honest that we (the council and our partners) cannot do everything but are choosing to focus on key areas that show commitment and ambition that might really move us forwards. The plans may change and adapt in Recovery to emerging evidence and lessons learnt from Response. Similarly, new actions may be developed where appropriate.

Detailed plans to meet these objectives will be created as part of the South Somerset District Council Community of Practice workstreams and through its partnership approach at the South Somerset Recovery Board. Progress and identified collaborative working opportunities will be shared with our partners at District, County and Regional level:

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1

Promote decarbonisation and nature recovery: Tackle the climate and ecological emergencies and improve air quality across South Somerset.

2

Good work for all: We aim to help all South Somerset residents into good work. We will support our residents with access to training and further learning to help establish pathways into good jobs.

3

Rebuilding more inclusive communities and economy: By 2025, all South Somerset residents will have more opportunities to be involved in community life, ensuring they can volunteer and participate in dynamic community networks.

4

Improving our customer journey (SSDC): By 2024, we want a two-way relationship with customers to create and deliver the best services as efficiently as possible. We want our customers to be able to access, the right information to help themselves and the right service at the right time.

5

A robust economic safety net: For South Somerset to have a strong performing economy achieving higher value jobs, greater inward investment and increased innovation by 2023.

6

Promoting health and well-being: South Somerset residents will have access to physical and social health & well-being activities, events and support programmes so that the people of South Somerset feel more positive about their health and well-being as well as supported in places where they live, learn, work and play.

7

Tackling inequalities: By 2023, develop a new Community Strategy with our voluntary sector partners to build on the assets and strengths that exist in all South Somerset communities to coherently address the causes and consequences of economic, social and health inequalities.

8

Increasing digital access: Every South Somerset resident and business will have good connectivity, basic digital skills and access to a device or support they need to be online by 2026.

9

Support the development and enhance the future prospects of our young people: By 2025, all more vulnerable young people can access proactive support and personal development activities. Also in place will be structured opportunities for young people to develop their confidence and skills in leading innovative social action across the District.

10

Healthy food, healthy activities: By 2023 a structured local approach and programme of activities are in place to ensure greater and secure access to healthy food, access to active green spaces (including growing spaces) and the promotion of tailored physical activity opportunities.

11

High streets for all: Deliver our ambitious Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton regeneration programmes, enhance our public spaces and create new exciting new uses for underused high street buildings in our key market towns.

For more information about the sorts of projects that might be involved in delivering each objective please see appendix 4.

Recovery and Renewal vision & ambition



Environmental principles:



All investment to support recovery and future growth should have low or zero carbon emissions, use resources efficiently and aim for environmental net gain.



Employees and residents are supported to protect and enhance their well-being through a cleaner environment and more access to rich and varied nature.



Communities are well connected both digitally, and through an effective network of footpaths, cycle ways, green corridors and public transport.



Future development and existing communities are resilient and adapted to the changing climate and severe weather events.



Biodiversity is protected, restored and created; nature based solutions and recovery networks are considered first and invested in at every opportunity.



Ensure any green recovery solutions are equitable and fair; a green and equitable recovery go hand in hand.



Greater partnership working and collaboration.

The Recovery and Renewal plan is underpinned by strong recovery principles:

- Targeted recovery, renewal activity and support to where most needed through evidence-based decisions and focussing on agreed priorities and outcomes
- Stabilise and accelerate the recovery for South Somerset people, places and businesses, including the recovery of Council Tax
- Tackle inequalities to work with our most vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens and communities overcome the negative impact of COVID-19
- Join up and work in Partnership to maximise connection with partners (public services, private sector, communities, voluntary sector and citizens) to speed up recovery
- Focus on environmental challenges – use the recovery efforts to accelerate South Somerset's Climate Change ambitions
- Apply our learning from COVID-19 – utilise learning and good practice to improve the Council as an organisation, deepen collaboration and partnership working both with internal services and with other councils, and strengthen place and system-based working, community development and commercialisation across South Somerset

Recovery and Renewal vision & ambition

How do the Recovery plans align with our wider strategic workstreams?

Although the process of recovery can be divided into four key areas, it is designed on our corporate priority areas (CoP workstreams), all of which need to be addressed in order to achieve a successful outcome of both our Corporate Plan and our Recovery Strategy.

The Recovery Strategy itself is a priority 1 project of the reviewed corporate plan. The themes and the priority projects will be captured within the Community of Practice Action Plans under the heading of Recovery Plan. The CoP will provide support and report on progress made on the priority projects.

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South Somerset Corporate Plan



Within South Somerset District Council, our 5 Community of Practice workstreams will engage with our communities to identify, design and develop local solutions and establish a 'grass roots' approach to community recovery (e.g. work with our Town & Parish Councils, community groups, faith organisations, Spark, CCS, our increased volunteer responders and other community organisations etc). We will learn from the lessons of COVID 19 and how our communities have adapted, grown and come together to provide sustainable, supportive approaches that we can retain and build on.

The benefits



Economy - Economic Recovery

To lead and support ambitious projects for growth and productivity in strong partnership with key stakeholders, achieving higher value jobs, greater inward investment, innovation and skills.

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Healthy, Self-reliant Communities - Community Recovery

The response of local communities, during the pandemic in supporting and helping each other has been inspiring. Sharing insights and working collaboratively, over the coming months, will be critical to forging stronger more cohesive communities that are enabled to promote their own wellbeing. We will work with the statutory agencies and assist voluntary, faith and community organisations to reach and engage more vulnerable people in our District as we enter a recovery phase.



Protecting Core Services - Organisational change and workforce development

The coronavirus pandemic has thrust upon many organisations a need to work differently. We must consider where it can be of continued benefit for our staff and customers to establish different approaches to how we work. Our income streams have been reduced and we must be innovative in how we adapt to a challenging financial outlook to maintain quality service delivery. We will seek to improve our customer's experience of accessing services and participating in the democratic process whilst ensuring no-one is excluded. We will be guided by our service design principles and corporate priorities. We will embrace the use of technology to make services more responsive and effective.



Environment - Underpinned by Environmental Principles

Our environmental workstreams will work across all the recovery themes ensuring that green recovery solutions are equitable and fair and meet the council's corporate climate change priorities and the targets set out in the Environment Strategy.



Places where we live - Place making, regeneration and infrastructure

The council has a strong track record delivering a wide range of projects, many in collaboration with partners, which have brought prosperity, events and heritage to the fore in the District. As we adapt to the challenges post coronavirus, we prioritise projects over the next 18 months that will make a significant contribution to creating sustainable, vibrant and inclusive pace to live.

The recovery delivery plan illustrating how each priority action contributes to the overall recovery of South Somerset can be found in appendix 4.

The challenges and opportunities

The Recovery Strategy and associated Action Plan approach is the step change needed to put us back on a path to a sustainable future. In our work to develop our reviewed Corporate Plan, a number of challenges and opportunities were identified. Some of these have been heightened by the coronavirus pandemic, others will emerge as we recover. Over the next 18 months our endeavors will be focused on responding to the challenges we face and how everyone who lives and works in South Somerset can benefit from any opportunities that arise.



Impacts on economy

Challenges:

People – increased unemployment, low skills, low wages, concentrated high deprivation areas, and economic exclusion.

Business & Sectors – Businesses across all sectors have been impacted particularly; hospitality, leisure and retail.

Digital Infrastructure – The past 12 months has exacerbated the need for digital infrastructure for business, education and day to day activities.

Opportunities:

People - Reskill and upskill individuals to meet the needs of businesses.

Business & Sectors – Encourage start-ups, high growth businesses, increased productivity whilst building on existing economic strengths.

Digital Infrastructure – To accelerate ultrafast connectivity to businesses and communities to kick start a connected recovery

Work the environment CoP workstreams to create a green recovery by investigating, research and taking advantage of opportunities for new green growth industries and jobs.



Impacts on the community

Challenges:

Voluntary and charitable organisations funding & fundraising opportunities decreasing

Less affluent communities and groups are disproportionately affected

Effects of unemployment on poverty and social isolation

Risk of eviction from homes

Mental health and well-being issues

The compounding effects of digital exclusion on attainment, social connection and social mobility

Opportunities:

Greater recognition of the South Somerset volunteer effort during the pandemic

Promoting greater resilience with communities, voluntary, community and faith organisations

Empowering communities to help themselves where possible

Increased recognition of community strengths and challenges

Greater collaboration work across sectors/organisations

Enhancing community safety and confidence

Taking forward the learning from the pandemic to rethink services and their delivery to assist those most in need



Impacts on the council

Challenges:

Additional demands – Benefits/ Debt recovery / Homelessness/ ASB / Environmental Health

Office accommodation (social distancing)

Participation in meetings (actual and virtual)

Face to face customer contact and third party visits

Loss of revenue Stretched workforce

Understanding Council BAU and what the new normal will look like?

Need for digital upskilling

Opportunities:

Capturing changes to working practices as a result of remote working

More staff able to homework, reduces travel and carbon emissions

Virtual meeting: reducing travel and can increase public participation

Digitalisation of services: more access for staff & customers to online methods

Develop a commercial approach to generate income

Agile structure enable redeployment but potential for review to improve further (resource management need)

Experience of agile working throughout the pandemic and the opportunity to integrate the digital strategy

Develop a digital culture



Impacts on the environment

Challenges:

Positive impact of free access to nature and greenspaces on community health and driving forward improvements at a community level

Use of social value tool across SSDC procurement; embedding measurable social and environmental value in purchasing operations

The increased take up of 'grow your own' and the sourcing of more localised food produce within our South Somerset communities

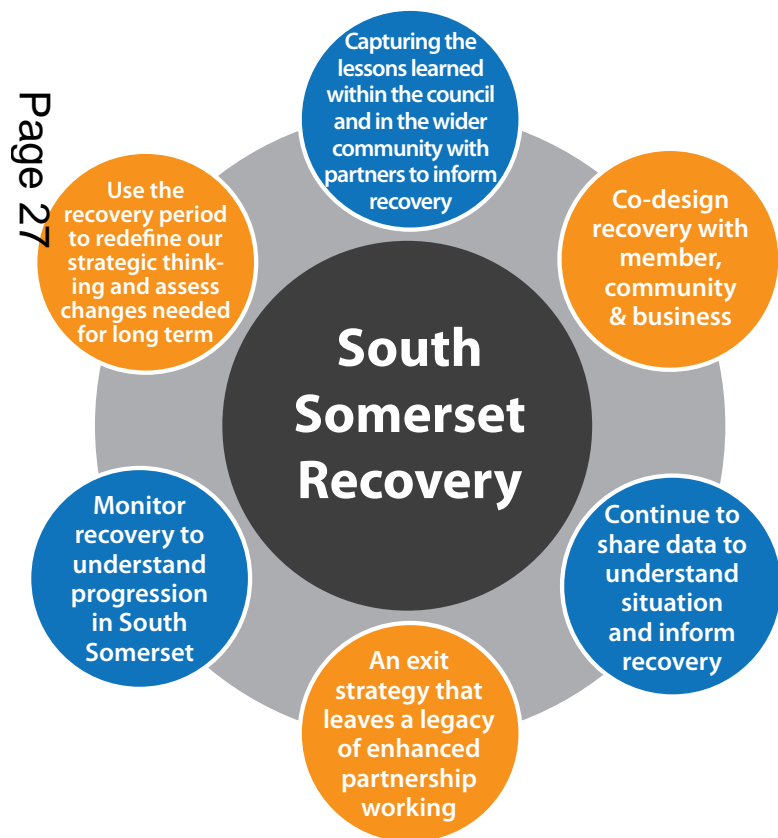
Increased uptake of all green forms of travel (walking, cycling, running, etc)

How are we working together locally?

We have always been proud of South Somerset, our heritage, our places, our communities and our local businesses who collectively make South Somerset a great place to live, to work and enjoy life. Now, more than ever, we must work collaboratively with all partners and our communities, to listen, to respond and to act.

Aspirations – the way we want to collaborate to recover together

As we complete our impact assessment, define our objectives and those indicators that will set out what we want to achieve there is a need to set out how we will work collaboratively, both internally and externally to achieve them. We will do this by:



Somerset Multi-Agency Recovery Co-ordination Group and South West Local Resilience Forum (LRF): to recover together

Recovery is a complex and potentially a long running process that may involve many more agencies and participants than the emergency response phase. South Somerset is committed to working collaboratively and in partnership with our District and County colleagues as part of the Somerset Multi Agency Response Co-ordination Group. We continue to work in partnership, collaborating on workstreams and are committed to aligning our recovery strategy and Action Plan with the key themes of the Multi Agency group and the South West LRF recovery plans, so that we follow a consistent approach whilst still tailoring it in the communities where we live. By doing this we will also:

- Use the 5 R's (Return, Retain, Resist, Radical, Resilient) to define what we want to see as a result of the recovery to our services and provide relevant steer if needed (see Appendix 2)
- Clarify our strategic intention both as an individual Council and as a collective multi agency group
- Add resilience to recovery commitment even when any future cases in COVID, mental health, homelessness, domestic abuse and suicides cause extra pressure on the system

How are we working together locally?

Developing a Renewal Action Plan: COVID-19 Local renewal summits, public engagement and workshops

Where the recovery focus is more a short term approach to agreeing and implementing plans to reinstate operations and a return to business and usual after a time of healing, review and reflection, the renewal stage is more about transformational change and innovation towards broader complex, ambitious initiatives that are positive and co-produced strategies that improve People, Places and Processes and builds resilience.

South Somerset District Council knows that this important plan cannot be developed in isolation as so many people have lived through this life changing experience. We collectively have an opportunity to come together across the District, share experiences, best practice, ideas and thoughts that can redesign and improve our District for the better. South Somerset will run a number of different forums, public consultations and workshops to understand further the needs our communities, to expand our recovery and renewal Action Plans and to identify and approach individuals and organisations who can help us deliver this plan.

The aim is to bring together knowledge and influential people to think about longer-term renewal of South Somerset, its places and focus workstream areas (i.e. Environment, community, Economy & regeneration).

Forum to give space to think, discuss, brain storm, negotiate and align priorities together.

Vision of the summit approach:

- To agree a positive direction of change
- To identify and align multiple relationships and broader partnerships
- To engage local stakeholders needed for renewal
- Capture council and community pandemic learning to feed in to national research and inquiries in to what happened during the pandemic and what the impacts have been for businesses and residents in South Somerset?

Targeted groups:

- Elected members
- South Somerset District Council workforce (for internal renewal)
- Community agencies and organisations
- Public sector partners – Towns & Parish Councils, County Council (including education, police, fire, Public health etc)
- Businesses and entrepreneurs

Enabled by:



Optimism: Opportunities that have risen from the COVID-19 pandemic



Ambition: Aligning the common action, funding, efficiency and opportunities



Good Practice: Case studies of good practice from around the country



Participation: encourage and confidence that this plan is a South Somerset collective and an Action Plan that will evolve and develop together

How are we working together locally?



South Somerset: Recovery and Renewal Board

We want to work together to shape our recovery and renewal and build a prosperous new future

- Agree a strategic plan with key stakeholders for an integrated and ambitious innovation ecosystem, which will maximise the way that YIC, Bunford Innovation Park, iAero and start-up projects will advance our local economy and key enterprises. Ensuring that the approach to recovery supports workers, businesses and communities that aids recovery towards a productive, inclusive and sustainable economy
- To provide visible and strong leadership during the recovery and renewal phase and build public confidence
- To create and implement a tailored response to address the impact of Covid 19 on South Somerset's economy and communities
- To ensure businesses and workers affected receive the best possible support based on data and evidence
- To make the case to Government for the resources South Somerset needs to recover from COVID-19 and generate future growth
- To mobilise partners and ensure partnership working across the region, in order to make best use of resources across the region

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How are we working together locally?

To support transition there is a need to focus on South Somerset's longer-term recovery from COVID-19. To this end, South Somerset District Council will work with all the leaders of public, private and voluntary sector organisations of South Somerset to form The South Somerset Recovery & Renewal Board.

The South Somerset Recovery & Renewal Boards remit is to oversee, review progress and highlight opportunities within the District wider long term economic, environment and social recovery, developing a call to action to reshape South Somerset as a fairer, more inclusive, greener and resilient District for the future.

The context for this work is extremely challenging. We have seen the disproportionate impact COVID-19 has had on different communities and groups further increasing deep seated inequalities. Our towns are rapidly changing and local economies and high streets have been particularly affected, and there are significant pressures on the services that Somerset's local authorities (including South Somerset District Council) and our partners deliver.

But despite the challenging context, this is also a chance to reimagine our District and define our aspirations and priorities for the recovery effort. A district where we build on the inspiring community spirit displayed by South Somerset residents during these toughest of times, to deliver a cleaner, greener and fairer District, which is more economically resilient and supports thriving neighbourhoods, with improved wellbeing and better access to a strengthened health system. It is also an important opportunity to bring about a culture change in our District so that multiple organisations and sectors pool their expertise, resources and efforts to meet shared goals.

The South Somerset Recovery & Renewal Board

The South Somerset Recovery and Renewal Board will review and highlight opportunities for collaborative working and action to meet these challenges and will work in partnership with local authorities, health and care bodies, business groups, the voluntary sector, academia, and other bodies. We want to work together to shape our recovery and build a prosperous new future. See Appendix 6 for information on the governance and the role of the South Somerset Recovery and Renewal Board.

Tasking the Actions for Recovery

To take forward the work on South Somerset recovery, an Action Plan will be established by Council Officers under the CoP workstream themes. Officers and Partnership identified staff (either individually or collectively) will be assigned against these actions to carry out work and report to the South Somerset Recovery Board. The District Council Community of Practice (CoPs) groups will consider ways in which to support organisations across the District to help in the effort to meet the grand challenge. Through the reporting process the Recovery and Renewal Board will oversee and coordinate a range of practical initiatives to help drive forward South Somerset's recovery from COVID-19.



How will we know that we have been successful?

Delivering, monitoring and review

This Recovery Strategy together with the delivery plan (appendix 4) will be regularly monitored and reviewed in the light of any changing circumstances. This will ensure the intended outcomes are being delivered and we can adapt to any changes rapidly. There are many external factors, some unknown to us at this time, which will influence this plan over the next 18 months. A lead Director is responsible for overseeing the council's recovery from the Coronavirus pandemic; with monitoring, progress reports on actions and delivery provided by the Community of Practice workstreams.

Delivery

The Community of Practice (CoP) working groups along with individual project leads will have the overall responsibility for the effective delivery and monitoring of the Recovery Strategy Delivery Plan under the direction of the lead Director for Place and Recovery. The delivery leads for each CoP will liaise closely with and update their respective Portfolio Holders and Sponsors, who will feedback and comment to the CoP.

Any significant concerns or proposed changes to the delivery plan will be reported to the CoP and their delivery leads who will update both their Portfolio Holder and the Director for Place and Recovery. In turn this will be reported to the South Somerset Recovery and Renewal Board, District Executive and wider Council on a regular basis.

In order to monitor progression, the South Somerset District Council will develop a recovery and renewal dashboard of measures to identify the impact of Covid-19 on the 5 corporate themes – Environment; Healthy self-reliant communities (Community recovery); Economy (Economic recovery); Places where we live (Place making, regeneration and infrastructure); and Protecting core services (Organisational change and work place development). Indicators and frequency of monitoring can be found in appendix 5).

Monitoring

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and the District Executive will be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the Recovery and Renewal Strategy and for authorising any significant policy or practical changes, which will be reported to Full Council. The South Somerset Recovery and Renewal Board will meet quarterly to receive progress reports on key actions from our partners or from South Somerset Community of Practice workstreams under the direction of the Director of Place and Recovery.

Public consultation and engagement activities to review and shape the on-going recovery plan via workshops, summits and forums.

Review

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will receive annual reports on progress and will be invited to scrutinise, comment and recommend as appropriate.

Monitoring

Next steps for our strategy?

The actions set out within this plan build on the momentum from the council current Corporate Plan and the subsequent Community of Practice (CoP) work setting activity. Where activity is new, we will work across the Council, and with partners, to follow good business planning and governance processes; this will ensure we use resources effectively and deliver in a co-ordinated and effective manner.

We will continue to review activities across the CoP group and will collaborate with the Change Review Group and People Management Forum to ensure our resources are prioritised in accordance with this plan first and foremost.

As part of our annual business planning cycle, we will ensure we refresh the Council Plan and our Medium Term Financial Plan to ensure that the costs of all the activity in this recovery plan is considered and accounted for. The refresh will also embed any recovery priorities not yet delivered against the Council's existing outcomes and objectives. This means that the refreshed Council Plan will take account of any remaining recovery activity.

To ensure we hold ourselves to account, we will track our progress using a recovery dashboard and metrics showing our performance in delivering the plan. With these we will provide regular updates to our communities and economic recovery board.

Monitoring will be overseen by Director of Place and Recovery.

Key actions for next steps:

This is the start of a process of fundamental change for South Somerset. It will take time, but we need to start now. By the end of April 2021 we will produce a detailed Action Plan for each priority area for recovery under our Community of Practice work plans. Additional actions will include:

- Establish and run a number of public engagement and consultation workshops, summits and forums to review and shape recovery plans with our CoPs and capture ideas, thoughts and priorities to support the development of a renewal plan.
- Work with Strategy and Commissioning to deliver a performance Recovery and Renewal Dashboard.
- Establish an Economy Recovery and Renewal Advisory Board initially to support the lead officer of the Economy CoP workstream in achieving the priority theme 'Economic recovery' but in time to support other aspects of recovery including communities and environment.
- Lobby government to fully compensate the council for the financial impact of COVID-19
- Continue to modernise the council, looking at how local services can be delivered more effectively with no impact on our more vulnerable residents alongside reviewing our office usage
- Lobby central government and regional organisations, work with partner organisations, invest in development funding to deliver a world class digital infrastructure (fixed and mobile) across South Somerset.

Appendix

Appendix 1:

We need to promote the use of our South Somerset District Council Design Principles to encourage services operators and leads to take action in our day to day work to improve our services for customers. These design principles for the council include:



Focus on the customer experience


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Fewest number of steps for the customer



Keep customers informed



Digital by default



Resolve issues first time



Collect less and tell us once



Use our skills and expertise effectively



Efficient working



Use technology to help ensure compliance



Real time measures to improve



Support customers to do more

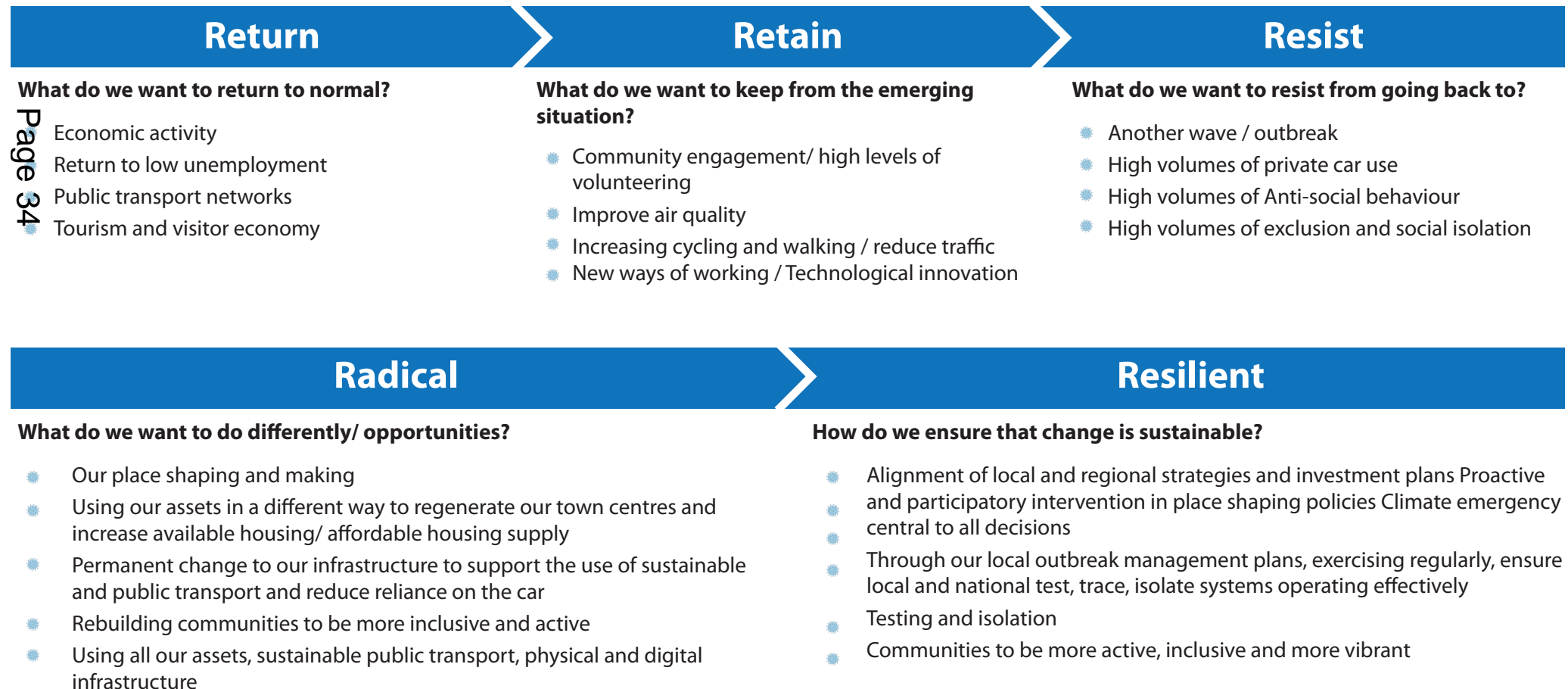


Proactively prevent and shape demand

Appendix

Appendix 2: Examples of how we can use the 5 R's recommended from the LRF within our service reviews?

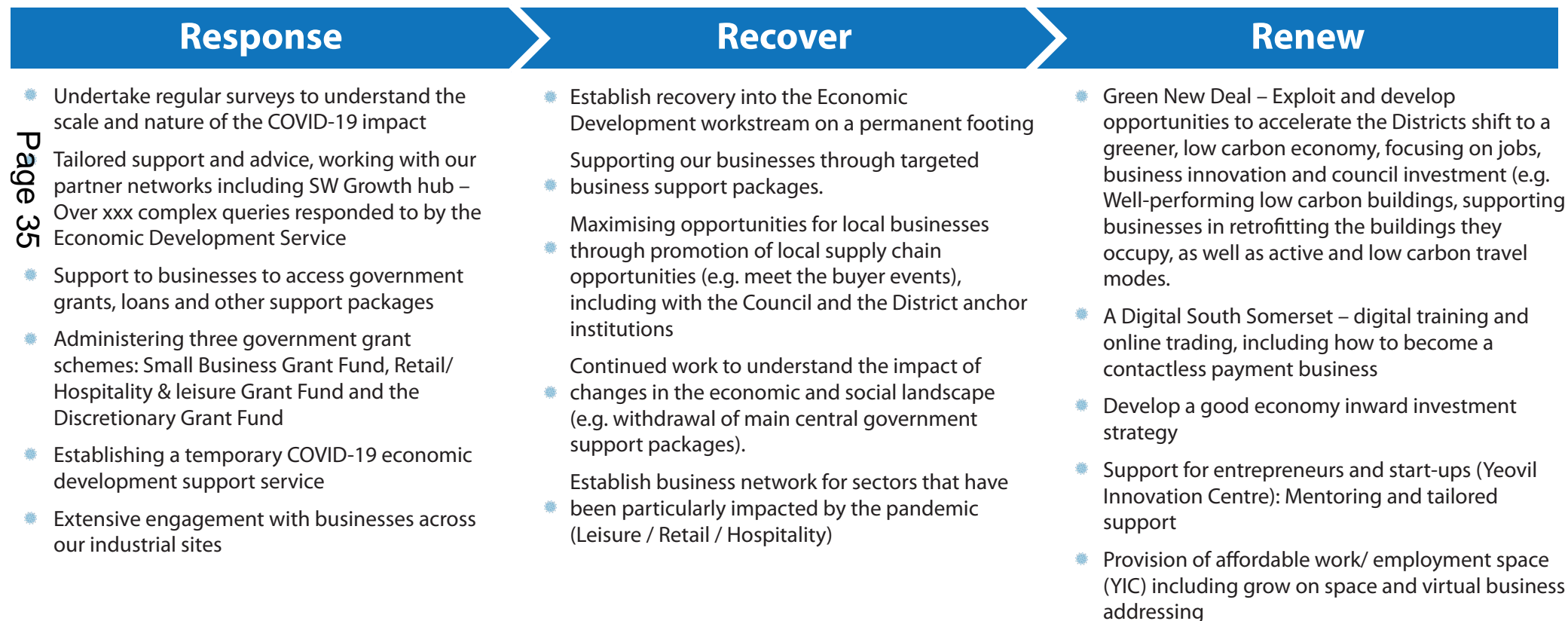
Listed below are some examples of how we can use the 5 R's to review our services when recovering from the Pandemic. An assessment sheet will be provided to services leads to help assist with this assessment.



Appendix

Appendix 3: Response, Recover and Renew approach to project planning

An example of an Economic Development themed project covering the journey of the Coronavirus pandemic: 'To build an exemplar local business support model – that provides a holistic range of services to businesses and demonstrates our commitment to a successful, thriving and green business base in South Somerset that supports the whole community'



We will complete this template approach with each project highlighted within the recovery Action Plans. This way we will highlight the work completed for review as well as design in developmental opportunities both for recovery and renew.

Appendix

Appendix 4: Summary of the key themes of the Recovery Delivery Plan

The table below illustrates how each priority action contributes to the overall recovery of South Somerset. For each the darker shading represents the main contributions and the lighter shading additional contributions.



Economy Community of Practice: Recovery Theme: Economic Recovery

We will deliver the Council's Economic Covid-19 Recovery Plan, the Economy Area of Focus and the Somerset Recovery and Growth Plan whilst leading and supporting ambitious projects for growth and productivity in strong partnership with key stakeholders, achieving higher value jobs, greater inward investment, innovation and skills.

SLT Sponsor: Martin Woods

Portfolio Holder: Cllr John Clark

Lead Officer: Peter Paddon / Joe Walsh

Priority Action:	SSDC Lead:	Partners:	Decarbonisation & nature recovery	Good work for all	Rebuilding more inclusive communities and economy	Improve customer access & service	Robust economic safety net	Promo health & well-being	Addresses causes of inequalities	Increasing digital access	Support the development and enhance the future prospects of our young people	Health food, healthy activities	High street for all
<p>To work in partnership to deliver:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council Plan Priority Project 1 (Lead the recovery and revitalisation of our economy and communities to be stronger, more resilient and more vibrant than before Covid-19) The Council's Economic Covid 19 Recovery Plan The Economy Area of Focus The Somerset Recovery and Growth Plan The Heart of the South West's Build Back Better Covid 19 response 			○	●	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	●
To implement tailored Covid-19 Economic Recovery programmes that suit the needs of local businesses, communities and individuals			○	●	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
To lead and support ambitious projects for growth and productivity in strong partnership with key stakeholders, achieving higher value jobs, greater inward investment, innovation and skills			○	●	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○
To establish employment and skills hubs in 3 towns across South Somerset			○	●	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	●
To produce a High Streets Recovery Action Plan for our Market Towns including Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton			○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●
To facilitate and deliver projects that enhance digital connectivity for businesses and residents across South Somerset			○	○	○	●	○	○	○	●	○	○	○

Appendix



Appendix 4: Summary of the key themes of the Recovery Delivery Plan

The table below illustrates how each priority action contributes to the overall recovery of South Somerset. For each the darker shading represents the main contributions and the lighter shading additional contributions.



Healthy, self-reliant Communities Community of Practice: Recovery key theme: Community Recovery

SLT Sponsor: Martin Woods

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Mike Best

Lead Officer: Leigh Rampton

Priority Action:	SSDC Lead:	Partners:	Decarbonisation & nature recovery	Good work for all	Rebuilding more inclusive communities and economy	Improve customer access & service	Robust economic safety net	Promo health & well-being	Addresses causes of inequalities	Increasing digital access	Support the development and enhance the future prospects of our young people	Health food, healthy activities	High street for all
Reanimated & more inclusive communities: Enable the relaunch of our community life and capacity across the district, particularly for groups who have become more marginalised or isolated during the pandemic. e.g. unemployed, disabled, older people and those with health conditions. After young adults, and those impacted mental and physical health (Priority project 1&4)			Light	Dark	Light	Light	Light	Light	Dark	Light	Light	Light	Light
More proactive community support and services: Maximise community collaboration across communities in South Somerset and ensure that local services are taking a proactive and preventative approach to responding to the consequences of the Covid pandemic. (Priority project 4)			Light	Light	Dark	Dark	Light	Light	Dark	Light	Light	Light	Light
Targeted interventions with groups most affected by socio-economic consequences: Reach out and develop new offers with those groups facing new challenges due to the consequences of the Covid pandemic, especially young adults. (priority project 1)			Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Light	Dark	Light	Dark	Light	Light

Appendix



Appendix 4: Summary of the key themes of the Recovery Delivery Plan

The table below illustrates how each priority action contributes to the overall recovery of South Somerset. For each the darker shading represents the main contributions and the lighter shading additional contributions.



Places where we live Community of Practice: Recovery key theme: Place Making, Regeneration & infrastructure

SLT Sponsor: Martin Woods

Portfolio Holder: Val Keitch

Lead Officer: Matthew Loughrey-Robinson

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Priority Action:	SSDC Role:	Partners:	Decarbonisation & nature recovery	Good work for all	Rebuilding more inclusive communities and economy	Improve customer access & service	Robust economic safety net	Promo health & well-being	Addresses causes of inequalities	Increasing digital access	Support the development and enhance the future prospects of our young people	Health food, healthy activities	High street for all
Recovery plan for private housing			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Recovery plan for affordable housing			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Develop a pro-active approach to tackling homelessness and rough sleepers			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Plan to accelerate community infrastructure projects related to S106 / CIL			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Establish a design review group to educate and encourage develops to adopt aspirational design codes for South Somerset (Could link to image / identification document of what communities could ask for within new developments (i.e. EV chargers, growing spaces, etc))			●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Appendix



Appendix 4: Summary of the key themes of the Recovery Delivery Plan

The table below illustrates how each priority action contributes to the overall recovery of South Somerset. For each the darker shading represents the main contributions and the lighter shading additional contributions.



Protecting Core Services Community of Practice: Recovery Theme: Organisational change & work place development

SLT Sponsor: Nicola Hix

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Tony Lock

Lead Officer: Peter Paddon

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Priority Action:	SSDC Lead:	Partners:	Decarbonisation & nature recovery	Good work for all	Rebuilding more inclusive communities and economy	Improve customer access & service	Robust economic safety net	Promo health & well-being	Addresses causes of inequalities	Increasing digital access	Support the development and enhance the future prospects of our young people	Health food, healthy activities	High street for all
Workforce:													
COVID testing for work force & vaccinations for high risk front line staff	Gold / SLT Officers: Digital Change Lead	Somerset County Council NHS	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○
Workforce re-engagement and on-going redeployment	Gold / SLT Officers: Digital Change Lead	Somerset County Council NHS	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○
Well-being, welfare & resilience (SSDC Staff and Councillors)	OD & People People Manager Roles Officers: Lead Specialist People, Lead Specialist People, Performance & Change.	Care First	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○
Service Delivery:													
Service reviews with tiger teams	Officers: Income Generation Manager, Lead Specialist People, Performance & Change.		○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Service working practices (Agile):	Working group with all Directorates												
● Workforce flexibility / service capacity etc	Lead Officers: Commercial												
● Home working / resourcing / home assessments	Property, Land & Dev Manager, Lead Specialist People, Performance & Change, Lead Specialist Digital Change, Lead Specialist People.		○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
● Buddy system / Home Working													

Appendix



Protecting Core Services Community of Practice: Recovery Theme: Organisational change & work place development

SLT Sponsor: Nicola Hix

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Tony Lock

Lead Officer: Peter Paddon

Priority Action:	SSDC Lead:	Partners:	Decarbonisation & nature recovery	Good work for all	Rebuilding more inclusive communities and economy	Improve customer access & service	Robust economic safety net	Promo health & well-being	Addresses causes of inequalities	Increasing digital access	Support the development and enhance the future prospects of our young people	Health food, healthy activities	High street for all
Resource management: Horizon scanning and future considerations (pinch points on service delivery)	Organisational Development Officers: Lead Specialist People, Performance & Change.		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4D Digital skills and literacy in SSDC work force	Organisational Development / Digital Strategy Officers: Lead Specialist People, Performance & Change. Lead Specialist Digital Change.		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Financial Recovery & Strategy: Review of Financial Strategy Corporate approach to Debt Recovery	SLT / Members Officers: S151 Officer		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recovering our commercial operations: Review commercial strategy	SLT / Members Officers: Commercial Property, Land & Dev Manager		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Integration of recommended transformation next steps	Organisational Development Officers: Lead Specialist - Performance & Change		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Review procurement strategy	Officers: Income Generation Manager. Lead Specialist People, Performance & Change		<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix



Protecting Core Services Community of Practice: Recovery Theme: Organisational change & work place development

SLT Sponsor: Nicola Hix

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Tony Lock

Lead Officer: Peter Paddon

Priority Action:	SSDC Lead:	Partners:	Decarbonisation & nature recovery	Good work for all	Rebuilding more inclusive communities and economy	Improve customer access & service	Robust economic safety net	Promo health & well-being	Addresses causes of inequalities	Increasing digital access	Support the development and enhance the future prospects of our young people	Health food, healthy activities	High street for all
SSDC Estate:													
Future use of our estates/offices	Working group with all Directorates Lead Officers: Commercial Property, Land & Dev Manager		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
COVID compliance and cleaning of our estate	Facilities Management Lead Officers: Commercial Property, Land & Dev Manager		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outbreak management and quarantining plan	Facilities Management Lead Officers: Commercial Property, Land & Dev Manager		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Councillors:													
Councillors introduction to the Recovery Strategy and the new normal operating practices at SSDC	Recovery Lead Officers: Lead Specialist Strategic Planning		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accessibility of local democracy including public meetings	Strategic Planning Officers: Commercial Property, Land & Dev Manager		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Digital skills and literacy for Councillors	Democratic Services Officers: Lead Specialist Strategic Planning. Lead Specialist Digital Change.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix



Appendix 4: Summary of the key themes of the Recovery Delivery Plan

The table below illustrates how each priority action contributes to the overall recovery of South Somerset. For each the darker shading represents the main contributions and the lighter shading additional contributions.



Environment Community of Practice: Recovery underpinning principles

SLT Sponsor: Clare Pestell (Director for Income Generation & Commercial Services)

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Sarah Dyke

Lead Officer: Vicky Dawson & Katy Menday

Page 42

Priority Action:	SSDC Lead:	Partners:	Decarbonisation & nature recovery	Good work for all	Rebuilding more inclusive communities and economy	Improve customer access & service	Robust economic safety net	Promo health & well-being	Addresses causes of inequalities	Increasing digital access	Support the development and enhance the future prospects of our young people	Health food, healthy activities	High street for all
Environment strategy Mobilise finance to support environmental programmes, investigate a low carbon fleet to improve air quality, help drive adaptations as a response to climate change and to also deliver for better health	Delivery, enabling and supporting roles Officers: Vicky Dawson Katy Menday	Opium Power	●	○	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	○
Open Space Strategy Accelerate programmes that increase access to greenspaces, support active travel including walking, cycling and wider accessibility. Enhance public spaces for biodiversity, pursue urban greening and engagement for all across greenspaces	Delivery, enabling and supporting roles Officer: Vicky Dawson	Somerset County Council, Local Nature Partnership, developers, nature conservation charities	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	○
Green Energy Invest in commercial infrastructure, scale up programmes to retrofit and improve existing buildings, source renewable energy contracts, create jobs and tackle fuel poverty. Introduce electric transport programmes include electric vehicles and e scooters	Delivery, enabling and supporting roles Officer: Vicky Dawson	DELETTI, Devon Councils, Somerset County Council, Highways England, Zwings, Engie, Salix.	●	●	●	●	○	●	●	○	●	●	○
Natural Environment Support environment champions to roll out nature recovery in their parishes; encourage tree planting, management for pollinators and community eco projects. Use natural greenspaces to roll out a series of family and children's play events supporting wellbeing through access to nature	Delivery, enabling and supporting roles Officer: Katy Menday	Local Nature Partnership, Somerset Environmental Records Centre, Somerset Wildlife Trust, Somerset County Council.	●	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Appendix

Appendix 5: Indicators and performance

Our Recovery & Renewal Strategy sets out a number of priorities and actions that we will look to deliver in the coming months and years. A key approach to measure the effect of our actions and interventions is to use Key Performance Indicators and Metrics. This allows us to set targets, measure progress and Correct our course as required.

In support of the Recovery & Renewal Strategy we have identified a number of metrics that, with ongoing review and effective interventions, will help us keep on track for the delivery of this strategy. These metrics are loosely aligned to the 5 Communities of Practice & key priorities but should be seen as a whole. This is because many of our actions and metrics will impact on more than one area of our strategy so we should view them as a reflection of the whole organisational performance.

We have also identified both internal and external metrics. The internal metrics generally relate to the work that SSDC and our partners will deliver directly, and are a measure of our own effectiveness and efficiency. The external metrics are broader national or regional metrics (e.g. employment rates, economic growth) that set the scene and identify a need. Although these metrics are not under our direct control it is important to include these as they are areas where we can anticipate our strategy – and if successful - may start to have an positive influence in the longer term.

These metrics will develop over time and may change as new challenges and opportunities emerge, but taken as a whole we hope these measures will support our Recovery & Renewal Strategy and delivery plan.

Appendix

External Measures:

Utilisation of SSDC charger Network.

- Number of Charging Session
- Number of unique users

Facilitated Digital Connectivity

- Average broadband speeds across the district % increase to meet National average
- Broadband connections per premise (No.)
- Additional mobile coverage facilitated per premise (No.)

Community Wellbeing

- Passport to leisure % of population)
- Nr individuals participating in SSDC hosted events

Regeneration Programme

- Nr of buildings brought back into use

Economic activity rate (16-64):

- Employment rate (employee/self-employed)
- Un-employment rate (Inactive and unemployed)

EV ownership in Somerset / South Somerset

- Nr. DVLA registered electric vehicles

Achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2030

- Annual % reduction

Internal measure:

Digital Behaviours: - % of total completed customer service requests initiated on-line.
- Increase in uptake of e-billing.

Rollout of EV charger Network:
- Nr. of chargers on SSDC owned sites.
- Nr. Chargers used (% utilisation).

Plastic Waste: - Nr of Water points at SSDC sites.
- Nr of businesses in refill 4 free scheme.

SSDC Response to Climate Emergency

Income and Carbon offset from BESS MegaWatt production

Environment Strategy Carbon Neutrality targets

Delivery of SSDC tree planting scheme:
- Nr trees planted against annual target.
- SQM SSDC land released to tree planting.

Service Responses:
- Process new benefit payment claim (days).
- Process benefit change of circumstance (days).

Regeneration Programme Outputs:
- Public realm improvement delivered (metres).
- Investment in physical infrastructure (£).
- Cycleway created (metres).
- External investment attracted (£).
- Nr of Historic buildings preserved.

Affordable housing: - % of all completed new builds (covers social housing).

SME & Local Spend:
- % of SSDC spend with local Small Businesses.

SSDC Viability: - Increase per annum of 5% net yield across council

SSDC Capital Investment: - Positive financial Return on Investment, community benefit or carbon improvement

(For Capital Investment a positive financial return or carbon reduction should be sought, as per each business case proposal approved.)

SSDC Energy investment:
- Income from BESS £
- MW production from SSDC green supply

Expansion of nature recovery network:
- % of agreed priority areas in active land management against annual plan.

Green Development:
- Delivery of 30% urban canopy over on all new developments.

Business support:
- business grants provided (£).
- workshops/training provided (hrs).

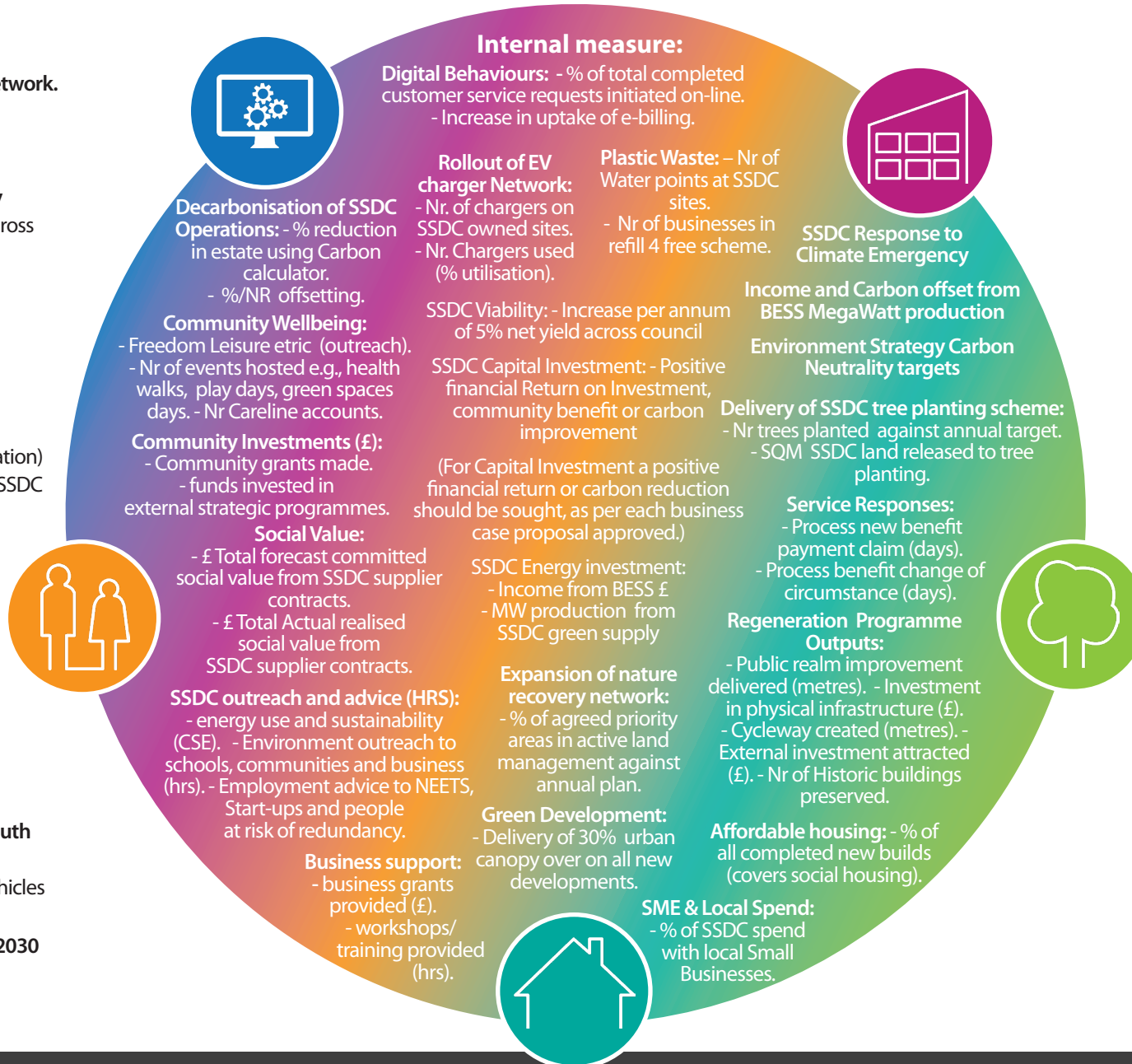
Decarbonisation of SSDC Operations: - % reduction in estate using Carbon calculator.
- %/NR offsetting.

Community Wellbeing:
- Freedom Leisure etric (outreach).
- Nr of events hosted e.g., health walks, play days, green spaces days. - Nr Careline accounts.

Community Investments (£):
- Community grants made.
- funds invested in external strategic programmes.

Social Value:
- £ Total forecast committed social value from SSDC supplier contracts.
- £ Total Actual realised social value from SSDC supplier contracts.

SSDC outreach and advice (HRS):
- energy use and sustainability (CSE).
- Environment outreach to schools, communities and business (hrs).
- Employment advice to NEETS, Start-ups and people at risk of redundancy.



External Measures:

Sustainability of Businesses

- Birth rate
- Death rate
- 3-year survival rate

South somerset / national tree canopy

- % urban canopy cover
- % Total canopy cover (12.8%)

EV chargers

- Nr. New builds Residential
- Nr. New builds Non-residential
- Nr. On-street chargers

Number of registered homeless in South Somerset (relate to National figures)

Key:

5% yield - Overall net financial improvement through blend of cost savings/efficiency measures, grant income, traded, new and improved services or income generation (For more information please refer to the SSDC commercial strategy)

BESS - Battery Energy Storage Sites

SME - Small and medium sized enterprise

CSE - Centre of Sustainable energy

NEET - Not in Education, Employment or Training

EV - Electric Vehicles

Appendix

Appendix 6: Governance and role of the South Somerset Recovery and Renewal Board

South Somerset District Council Senior Leader Team will ratify the full role and governance of the Board, but provisional # outline arrangements are set out below.



Primary board:

The Board will oversee and review progress of the Recovery and Renewal Strategy as set out in this document on behalf of the District Executive.

The Board will set priorities where necessary, and it will discuss the Action Plans; and receive reports on progress from the Director of Place and Recovery.

It will propose and monitor activities with key external stakeholders in the private, public and voluntary sector, including community groups, where they are essential to the aims of the strategy.



Governance:

The Board will be chaired initially by the Portfolio Holder for Economic Development, as also a lead for the Economy CoP, although the chair may change, if appropriate, as other corporate priorities come to the forefront of the boards focus.

At its first meeting the Board will consider terms of reference and governance.



Membership:

Membership of the Board will include Portfolio Holders whose portfolios are key to the strategy (see earlier in the document the leads for the CoPs), and the Board will be attended by relevant senior officers as appropriate, including the Director of Place and Recovery as a regular member.

External stakeholders can include other local authorities, substantial businesses, health and care bodies, leading education providers, charities and other public and expert agencies concerned for example with innovation and technology, but this list is not exhaustive.

The Board will meet at least quarterly, with additional meetings as required.

The Board will make financial decisions for specific Recovery and Renewal funding or make recommendations for approval by the Leader, District Executive or Full Council in accordance with the Council's delegated authorities, especially where direct Recovery and Renewal funding and resources are required.

Scrutiny of the Board's activities will be agreed with other details in the full report which follows, but recommendations on the agenda of District Executive will come before Scrutiny Committee in the normal way.

Appendix

Appendix 7: Time for our District to heal, reflect, mourn and remember

Nationally we have a number of established days of reflection including the 'national day of reflection' held at noon on the 23rd March to mark the first anniversary of Britain going into lockdown and in remembrance of people who have died during the coronavirus pandemic. At 12 noon there will be a minute's silence followed by bells tolling at 12.01pm and the prominent landmarks being lit up across the country at 8pm.

Additionally, around the annual birthday of the NHS there are moments of remembrance for those who have been lost during the pandemic as well as a 'Thankyoutogether' event of national recognition of applause for all of those who have been helping through the pandemic including the vital community connections that continue to support us all today.

The pandemic has been one of the toughest ordeals for businesses, communities and residents of South Somerset to live through in recent history. We need to reflect on the pandemic's deep toll, mourn for those who we have lost and mark the service and sacrifice of all who have helped through the pandemic from the NHS, local government and school to our supermarkets, community organisations and volunteers.

As part of our Action Plan South Somerset District Council would like to organise a number of events and actions that helps us heal, reflect, mourn and remember. These activities may include:



Memorial service



Support, promote and recognise the national memorial days of reflection and thanks



Service or public event of recognition and thanks for all of those who have supported communities through the pandemic



Physical memorial in South Somerset for those who have lost their lives and to recognise the efforts of so many who gave so much to help response and support others in need.

Through adversity we have seen strength, as friends, neighbours, businesses, public bodies, voluntary groups and communities have come together to help each other through the nation's worst ordeal since the second world war. While we need to continue to be vigilant against the virus, we will recover. The remarkable NHS vaccination programme is bringing hope of better times to come and we are committed as a council to support our business, communities and residents to recover together.

Equality Impact Relevance Check Form



The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. This tool will identify the equalities relevance of a proposal, and establish whether a full Equality Impact Assessment will be required.

What is the proposal?	
Name of the proposal	SSDC Recovery & Renewal Strategy
Type of proposal (new or changed Strategy, policy, project, service or budget):	updated Strategy document
Brief description of the proposal:	Strategy & road map for the South Somerset recovery from COVID-19
Name of lead officer:	James Divall

You should consider whether the proposal has the potential to negatively impact on citizens or staff in the following ways:

- Access to or participation in a service,
- Levels of representation in our workforce, or
- Reducing quality of life (i.e. health, education, standard of living)

A negative impact is any change that could be considered detrimental. If a negative impact is imposed on any citizens or staff with protected characteristics, the Council has a legal duty to undertake a full Equality Impact Assessment.

Could your proposal negatively impact citizens with protected characteristics? (This includes service users and the wider community)	NO
Could your proposal negatively impact staff with protected characteristics? (i.e. reduction in posts, changes to working hours or locations, changes in pay)	NO

Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required?	NO
If Yes, Please provide a brief description of where there may be negative impacts, and for whom. Then complete a full Equality Impact assessment Form	
N/a	
If No, Please set out your justification for why not.	
As this a high level Strategy concerned with recovery from Covid19 it is unlikely to result in any negative impacts on any of the Protected Characteristics. The detailed actions that are necessary to deliver the Strategy will need to be subject to greater scrutiny requiring individual Equality Impact Relevance checks to be conducted by the relevant COP. Where these identify any potential negative impacts full EIA's will be required in order that appropriate mitigations can be identified.	
Service Director / Manager sign-off and date	Clare Pestell 18/03/2021
Equalities Officer sign-off and date	Dave Crisfield 18/03/2021



Annual review of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)

Executive Portfolio Holder: Peter Seib, Finance and Legal Services
Strategic Director: Martin Woods, Place
Lead Officer: Paula Goddard, Specialist - Legal, Support Service
Contact Details: Paula.goddard@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462186

Purpose of the Report

1. The Council must have arrangements in place to ensure compliance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (“RIPA”) and those arrangements are subject to inspection by the Investigatory Powers Commissioners’ Office (“IPCO”). Compliance is achieved through the adoption of a policy and a set of procedures that adhere to the requirements of the legislation. The Council has had arrangements and procedures in place for authorising and conducting necessary surveillance since 2002. Members should review the policy and the use of RIPA at least once per year. They should also consider internal reports on use of RIPA periodically to ensure it is being used consistently with the policy and that the policy remains fit for purpose.

Forward Plan

2. This report did not appear on the Forward Plan as, given the absence of any RIPA authorisations since the last consideration by District Executive in January 2018, it was intended that updates would be provided via the Councillor Bulletin. However, at our most recent inspection the Inspector indicated that the Policy and any authorisations need to be reviewed by elected members at least once a year.

Public Interest

3. The Council has a Policy and set of procedures for authorising and conducting surveillance linked to the Council’s enforcement powers. These Policy and procedures need to be reviewed and approved by the District Executive annually.

Recommendations

4. That members note the Council’s use of RIPA powers and amendments to the Policy and Procedures.

Background

5. RIPA provides a statutory mechanism to make sure that the way investigatory powers are used by organisations such as local councils and government departments



South Somerset District Council

complies with human rights law, in particular the European Convention on Human Rights.

6. As mentioned above, the Council must have arrangements in place to ensure compliance and it is subject to inspection by the IPCO.
7. RIPA was introduced in order to provide the correct balance between an individual's right to privacy under human rights law and the proper use of data and surveillance by public authorities, who are entrusted to carry out certain enforcement duties. RIPA identifies certain areas where carrying out these enforcement duties will inevitably conflict with an individual's rights to privacy. The main areas which are of concern to the Council are:
 - The use of directed surveillance ; and
 - The use of covert human intelligence sources (CHIS).

Report Detail

Annual review of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)

8. Some of the Council's activities necessarily require surveillance as part of enforcement activity, for example in relation to benefit fraud, environmental health & protection, planning, licensing and fraud generally. However, the use of RIPA powers by the Council has been very limited (see **Appendix 1**). This summary shows there have only been two authorisations sought since 2008, which reflects the fact that the Council will generally use overt methods of investigation to obtain the necessary evidence that can be relied upon in a case, and that RIPA powers are used very much as a "last resort".
9. The Policy and Procedure was before this committee in December 2020, following an inspection which took place in September 20.
10. The Inspector commented that the Policy was "well written and accurate, requiring little alteration".
11. The Inspector reiterated the need for members to receive both annual and regular RIPA covert surveillance reports to ensure they are kept aware of the level of RIPA activity/inactivity within the Council. Following his recommendations, Changes were made to the policy and procedures and these were brought to committee.
12. We have also used the Portal to raise awareness of RIPA, and this will be the mechanism by which officers and members are notified of any new Codes of Practice (including those published in September 2018). The Code of Practice for Covert Surveillance and Property Interference was updated to reflect changes introduced by the Investigatory Powers Act 2016, including the introduction of 'equipment interference warrants' under Part 5 of the 2016 Act. The current Code and the new Code for Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS) both reflect the new oversight framework.

Financial Implications

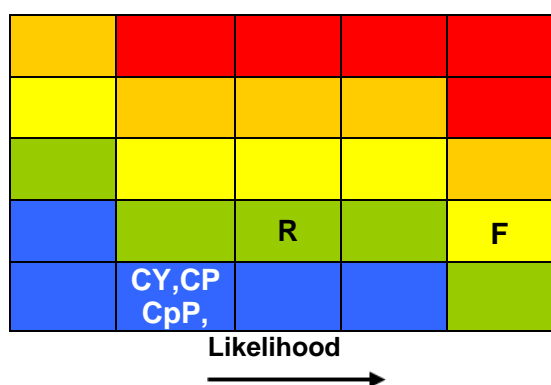
13. There may be a requirement for training additional officers in RIPA, the cost of which would have to be met from existing training budgets.

Legal implications (if any) and details of Statutory Powers

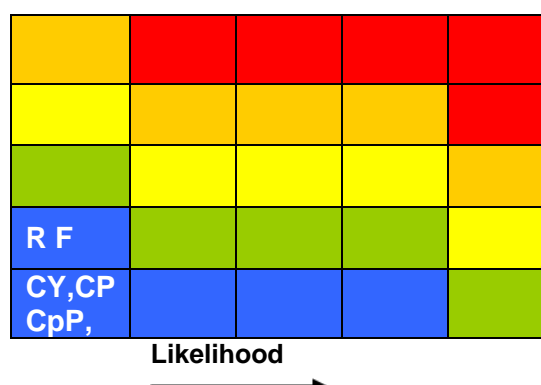
14. As set out in the report above.
Surveillance investigations which are not authorised could leave the Council open to legal challenge by individuals who consider that there has been an intrusion of their privacy.
15. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

Risk Matrix

Risk Profile before officer recommendations



Risk Profile after officer recommendations



Key

Categories	Colours (for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)
R - Reputation	High impact and high probability
CpP - Corporate Plan Priorities	Major impact and major probability
CP - Community Priorities	Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY - Capacity	Minor impact and minor probability
F - Financial	Insignificant impact and insignificant probability

Council Plan Implications

16. Protections Core Services
By complying with RIPA we are continuing to be a modern efficient and effective Council that delivers for its community by;
- Delivering a high quality, effective and timely service to our customers and communities.
 - Harnessing intelligence to ensure priorities are informed by evidence.



17. There are no carbon emissions and climate change implications associated with this report.

Equality and Diversity Implications

18. There are no equality and diversity implications associated with this report

Privacy Impact Assessment

19. No direct privacy impacts arise from the decision members are being asked to take under this report. Personal data is highly likely to be involved when RIPA activity is undertaken and the Council's RIPA Policy and Procedures provide guidance to officers about the collection, use and storage of such data.

Background Papers

- RIPA Policy and Procedure
- Social Media Policy for RIPA - Appendix 5 to the Policy and Procedure
- Appendix 1 – report of RIPA authorities

Appendix 1

Year	No. Authorisations	Type of Authorisation	Service Requesting
2008	0		
2009	0		
2010	1	Directed Surveillance	Benefit Fraud
2011	0		
2012	0		
2013	1	Communication Data	Environmental Services
2014	0		
2015	0		
2016	0		
2017	0		
2018	0		
2019	0		
2020	0		
2021	0 (to date)		

South Somerset District Council



CORPORATE POLICY & PROCEDURES GUIDE

ON

THE REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000

(‘RIPA’)

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Revised version date: 3.11.20

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- A Introduction and Key Messages**
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- C Effective Date of Operation (21st September 2006) and Authorising Officer Responsibilities**
- D General Information on RIPA**
- E What RIPA Does and Does Not Do**
- F Types of Surveillance**
- G Conduct and Use of a Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS)**
- H Authorisation Procedures**
- I Working With Other Agencies**
- J Record Management**
- K Concluding Remarks of the Senior Responsible Officer**

Appendix 1 - List of Authorising Officer Posts

Appendix 2 - RIPA Flow Chart

Appendix 3 – Form of RIPA Authorising Officer Certificate

**Appendix 4 – Magistrates' Courts In Avon And Somerset Other Than Bristol
Procedure for dealing with Applications/Warrants out-of-hours**

Appendix 5 - Using Social Media and Networking Sites in Investigations Policy

NB:

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ('RIPA') refers to 'Designated Officers'. For ease of understanding and application, this Corporate Policy & Procedures Guide refers to 'Authorising Officers'. Such Officers can only act under RIPA if they have been duly certified by the Councils Director- Service Delivery (or his authorised deputy for such purposes). For the avoidance of doubt, all references to duly certified Authorising Officers in this Guide are the same as references to 'Designated Officers' under RIPA.

A. Introduction and Key Messages

1. This South Somerset District Council ('SSDC') *Corporate Policy & Procedures Guide on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 ('RIPA')* is based on the requirements of RIPA and the Home Office's Codes of Practice on Covert Surveillance and Covert Human Intelligence Sources ('CHIS'). Further explanation of these terms is given below, but it can be said immediately that what we in SSDC are primarily concerned with is covert surveillance and not CHIS.
2. The authoritative position on RIPA is, of course, the Act itself (and the interpretation of the Act by the courts). Any officer who is unsure about any aspect of this Guide should contact, at the earliest possible opportunity, the Director of Service Delivery who is the Senior Responsible Officer (SRO) for RIPA, for advice and assistance. Appropriate training and instruction will be organised by the SRO for relevant Authorising Officers and other appropriate senior managers. Further information and guidance on RIPA can be found on the Home Office website and the website of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO)
3. Once approved, copies of this Guide and the RIPA authorisation forms will be placed on the SSDC InSite intranet, a list of useful websites linking to legislation and guidance documents will also be placed on the intranet. The Guide minus the appendices will be put on the SSDC public website.
4. Since the introduction of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 the authorisation procedure must now undergo judicial scrutiny. Following an internal authorisation being made by an authorising officer judicial approval by a Justice of the peace at the Magistrates Court is necessary before the surveillance can take place.
5. The SRO will maintain (and check) the Corporate Register of all RIPA authorisations, reviews, renewals, cancellations and rejections as well as the judicial applications and approvals. However, it is the responsibility of the relevant Authorising Officer to ensure that the SRO receives a copy of any completed RIPA form within 1 week of the date of authorisation, review, renewal, cancellation or rejection or judicial approval.
6. RIPA and this Guide are important for the effective and efficient operation of the Council's actions with regard to covert surveillance and the use of CHIS. This Guide will be reviewed every 6 months by the SRO to keep it up to date. Authorising Officers and other officers involved with RIPA are asked to bring any suggestions for the improvement of this Guide to the attention of the SRO at the earliest possible opportunity (in writing please). The Council wishes to ensure that RIPA procedures are continuously monitored and improved or updated as necessary.
7. In terms of monitoring e-mails and internet usage, it is important to recognise the interplay and overlaps with the Council's e-mail and internet policies and guidance, together with the Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and its Codes of Practice. RIPA forms should be used where relevant and they will be only relevant where the criteria listed on the RIPA forms are fully met.
8. **If you are in any doubt about RIPA, this Guide or the related legislative provisions, please consult the SRO at the earliest possible opportunity.**

B. Council's Policy Statement

1. SSDC takes its statutory responsibilities seriously and it will at all times act in accordance with the law and take action that is both necessary and proportionate to the discharge of such statutory responsibilities. In that regard, the SRO is duly authorised by SSDC to keep this Guide up to date and 'user friendly'; and to amend, delete, add or substitute any provisions of this Guide as he deems necessary, whereupon such amendments, deletions, additions or substitutions shall stand as duly approved by SSDC. For administrative and operational effectiveness, the SRO is also authorised to add or substitute officers authorised for the purposes of RIPA (known as 'Authorising Officers') – see Appendix 1.

C.**Authorising Officer Responsibilities**

1. It is essential that Authorising Officers in those Services take personal responsibility for the effective and efficient operation of this policy Guide.
2. The SRO will ensure the authority have sufficient numbers of officers (after suitable training and instruction on RIPA and this policy Guide) duly certified to act as Authorising Officers.
3. The Authority will also ensure that all relevant members of staff likely to use RIPA are suitably trained as 'Applicants' for seeking RIPA authorisation, so as to avoid common mistakes appearing on RIPA forms. This can be done in conjunction with the SRO
4. Authorising Officers will need to ensure that relevant staff in their Service all follow the procedures set out in this Guide and do not undertake or carry out any type of surveillance without first obtaining the relevant RIPA authorisation.
5. Authorising Officers must also pay particular attention to Health and Safety issues that may arise from any proposed surveillance or CHIS activity. Under no circumstances should an Authorising Officer approve any RIPA form until s/he is satisfied that the health and safety of Council employees/agents has been suitably addressed and a risk assessment carried out. Risks should be minimised as far as possible. Health and safety considerations and risks should be proportionate to the surveillance or CHIS activity being proposed. If an Authorising Officer is in any doubt, s/he should obtain prior guidance on these issues from his/her Service Manager, the Council's Safety Adviser and/or the SRO.
6. Authorising Officers must also ensure that RIPA forms (originals or copies) sent to the SRO (or any other relevant authority) are sent in sealed envelopes and marked 'Strictly Private & Confidential'.

D. General Information on RIPA

1. The Human Rights Act 1998 (which enacted much of the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms 1950 into UK domestic law) requires SSDC (and agencies working on its behalf) to respect the private and family life of citizens, their home and their correspondence. See Article 8 of the European Convention.
2. However, the European Convention does not make this an absolute right, but a qualified right. Accordingly, in certain circumstances SSDC may interfere with the citizen's right mentioned above if such interference is:
 - (a) in accordance with the law;
 - (b) necessary; and
 - (c) proportionate.
3. RIPA provides a statutory mechanism for authorising covert surveillance and the use of a 'covert human intelligence source' ('CHIS'), such as undercover agents. (SSDC will rarely use a CHIS and the advice of the SRO must be sought before any authorisation is sought for the use of a CHIS). RIPA seeks to ensure that any interference with an individual's right under Article 8 of the European Convention is necessary and proportionate. In doing so, RIPA seeks to ensure that both the public interest and the human rights of individuals are suitably balanced. This balancing exercise has to be carried out every time that action is taken that may affect an Article 8 right, as it is part of the assessment of the proportionality of the proposed action.
4. Directly employed SSDC staff and external agencies working for SSDC are covered by RIPA during the time they are working for SSDC. Therefore, all external agencies used by SSDC must comply with RIPA. Work carried out by agencies on SSDC's behalf must be properly authorised by an SSDC RIPA designated Authorising Officer. Authorising Officers are those whose posts appear in Appendix 1 to this Guide (as may be added to or substituted by the SRO).
5. If the correct RIPA procedures are not followed, evidence could be disallowed by the courts, a complaint of maladministration could be made to the Ombudsman, and the Council could be ordered to pay compensation. If this happened, the good reputation of the Council would be damaged and the matter would undoubtedly be the subject of adverse press and media comment. Therefore, it is essential that all SSDC staff and agents involved with RIPA regulated activities comply with the procedures set out in this Guide, and any further guidance that may be issued from time to time by the SRO.
6. A flowchart of the procedures to be followed appears at Appendix 2.

E. What RIPA Does and Does Not Do

1. RIPA does:

- require prior authorisation of directed surveillance.
- prohibit the Council from carrying out intrusive surveillance.
- require authorisation of the conduct and use of a CHIS.
- require safeguards for the conduct and use of a CHIS.

2. RIPA does not:

- make unlawful conduct which is otherwise lawful.
- prejudice or disallow any existing powers available to SSDC to obtain information by any means not involving conduct regulated by RIPA. For example, it does not affect SSDC's current powers to obtain information from the DVLA about the keeping of a vehicle or from the Land Registry about the ownership of a property.

3. If an Authorising Officer or any officer is in doubt about the above or any other aspect of RIPA, s/he should ask the Director of Service Delivery BEFORE any directed surveillance and/or CHIS is applied for, authorised, renewed, cancelled or rejected. As stated elsewhere, CHIS applications must in any case be subject to prior legal advice before they are submitted.

F. Types of Surveillance

1. 'Surveillance' includes
 - monitoring, observing, listening to people, watching or following their movements, listening to their conversations and similar activities.
 - recording anything mentioned above in the course of authorised surveillance.
 - surveillance by, or with the assistance of, appropriate surveillance devices.

Surveillance can be overt or covert.

2. Overt Surveillance

Most of the surveillance carried out by the Council will be done overtly - there will be nothing secretive, clandestine or hidden about it. In many cases officers will be behaving in the same way as a normal member of the public (e.g. in the case of most test purchases carried out by Environmental Health for food hygiene or other purposes), or will be going about Council business openly (e.g. a car parks inspector walking through a Council car park).

3. Similarly, surveillance will be overt if the subject has been told it will happen. Examples could be where a noisemaker is warned (preferably in writing) that noise will be recorded if the noise continues; or where an entertainment licence is issued subject to conditions, and the licensee is told that officers may visit without notice or without identifying themselves to the owner/proprietor to check that the conditions are being met. Such a warning should be repeated if the surveillance is prolonged – say every 2 months.

4. Covert Surveillance

Covert Surveillance is carried out in a manner calculated to ensure that the person subject to the surveillance is unaware of it taking place. (Section 26(9)(a) RIPA).

5. RIPA regulates two types of covert surveillance - **Directed Surveillance** and **Intrusive Surveillance** (plus the use of **Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS)**).

6. Directed Surveillance

Directed Surveillance is surveillance that:

- is covert; and
- is not intrusive surveillance (see definition below - the Council must not carry out any intrusive surveillance);
- is not carried out as an immediate response to events that would otherwise make seeking authorisation under the Act unreasonable (e.g. spotting something suspicious without prior knowledge and continuing to observe it); and

- is undertaken for the purpose of a specific investigation or operation in a manner likely to obtain private information about an individual (whether or not that person is specifically targeted for purposes of an investigation). (Section 26(10) RIPA).
7. Private information in relation to a person includes any information relating to his private and family life, his home and his correspondence. The fact that covert surveillance occurs in a public place or on business premises does not mean that it cannot result in the obtaining of private information about a person. Prolonged surveillance of a single person will undoubtedly result in the obtaining of private information about that person - and other persons who he contacts or with whom he associates.
 8. Similarly, although overt town centre CCTV cameras do not normally require authorisation, an authorisation will be required if the camera is used for a specific purpose that involves prolonged surveillance of a particular person. The way a person runs their business may also reveal information about their private life and the private lives of others.
 9. For the avoidance of doubt, only those officers designated and certified to be 'Authorising Officers' for the purpose of RIPA can authorise 'Directed Surveillance' - and only if the RIPA authorisation procedures set out in this Guide and effective from the operative date are followed. Authorising Officers not yet 'certified' for the purposes of RIPA cannot carry out any such procedures, including approving or rejecting RIPA authorisations. Further, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the Council's 'Schedule of Functions Delegated to Officers' (i.e. the officer delegation scheme) as set out in the Council's Constitution, or in any other statutory provisions, RIPA Authorising Officers cannot delegate their power of authorisation to another officer unless that officer is also an Authorising Officer for RIPA purposes (and listed in Appendix 1), in which case the officer would be authorising in his/her own right. If in doubt, check with the SRO. Officers will bear personal responsibility for ensuring correct RIPA authorisation procedures.
 10. **Intrusive Surveillance**
This is when surveillance:
 - is covert;
 - relates to activities inside residential premises and private vehicles; and
 - involves the presence of a person in the premises or in the vehicle or is carried out by a surveillance device in the premises/vehicle. Surveillance equipment mounted outside the premises will not be intrusive, unless the device consistently provides information of the same quality and detail as might be expected if it was in the premises or vehicle.
 11. Intrusive surveillance can only be carried out by the police and certain other law enforcement agencies. Council officers must not carry out intrusive surveillance.

12. **Examples of different types of Surveillance**

Type of Surveillance	Examples
Overt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Police Officer or Countryside Ranger on patrol. - Signposted Town Centre CCTV cameras (in normal use). - Recording noise emitted from premises after the occupier has been warned that this will occur if the noise persists.
Covert but not requiring prior RIPA authorisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CCTV cameras providing general traffic, crime or public safety information. <p>Most test purchases (where the officer behaves no differently from a normal member of the public).</p>
Directed (must be RIPA authorised)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Officers following someone over a period to establish whether they are working when claiming benefit, or genuinely on long term sick leave from employment. - Test purchases where the officer has a hidden camera or other recording device to record information, which might include information about the private life of a shop-owner, e.g. where they are suspected of running their business in an unlawful manner.
<u>Intrusive (the Council cannot do this)</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planting a listening or other device (bug) in a person's home or in their private vehicle.

G. Conduct and Use of a Covert Human Intelligence Source ('CHIS')

Who is a CHIS?

1. Someone who establishes or maintains a personal or other relationship for the covert purpose of covertly using or covertly disclosing information obtained by that relationship. In common parlance, an 'undercover' police officer or, indeed, council officer. The archetypal CHIS would be a police officer carrying out an undercover drugs investigation where the 'target' does not know the officer's true identity. It would be most unusual for a local authority to use a CHIS.
2. RIPA does not apply in circumstances where members of the public volunteer information to the Council as part of their normal civic duties, or where the public contact telephone numbers set up by the Council to receive information.

What must be authorised?

3. The Conduct or Use of a CHIS requires prior authorisation.
 - **Conduct of a CHIS means:** Establishing or maintaining a personal or other relationship with a person for the covert purpose of (or incidental to the covert purpose of) obtaining and passing on information.
 - **Use of a CHIS means:** Inducing, asking, or assisting a person to act as a CHIS and the decision to use a CHIS in the first place.
4. The Council can only use a CHIS if the RIPA procedures in this Guide are followed. As mentioned above, it will be most unusual for the Council to use a CHIS. **THE ADVICE OF THE SRO MUST BE SOUGHT BEFORE ANY AUTHORISATION IS SOUGHT FOR THE USE OF A CHIS.**
5. In accordance with The Home Office Code of Practice on Covert Human Intelligence Sources the Council will ensure that arrangements are in place for the proper oversight and management of CHIS. This will include in each case requiring a CHIS the appointment and designation of individual officers to take the role of 'handler' 'controller' and 'record keeper'
6. The 'handler' will be of a rank or position below that of an authorising officer and this person will also be the 'record keeper', they will be;
 - Dealing with the CHIS on behalf of the authority concerned;
 - directing the day to day activities of the CHIS;
 - recording the information supplied by the CHIS; and
 - monitoring the CHIS's security and welfare
7. The 'controller' of the case will be responsible for the management and supervision of the handler and general oversight of the use of the CHIS.

Juvenile Sources

5. Special safeguards apply to the use or conduct of juvenile sources (i.e. sources under 18 years of age). On no account can a child under 16 years of age be authorised to give information against his or her parents. **Only the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Services are authorised by the Council to use Juvenile Sources**, as there are other onerous requirements that apply.

Vulnerable Individuals

6. A Vulnerable Individual is a person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness, and who is or may be unable to take care of himself or herself, or unable to protect himself or herself against significant harm or exploitation.
7. A Vulnerable Individual will only be authorised to act as a source in the most exceptional circumstances. **Only the Chief Executive and Head of Paid Services are authorised by the Council to use Vulnerable Individuals**, as there are other onerous requirements that apply.

Test Purchases

8. As mentioned above, carrying out test purchases will not require the purchaser to establish a relationship with the supplier for the covert purpose of obtaining information. Therefore, the purchaser will not normally be a CHIS. For example, authorisation would not normally be required for test purchases carried out in the ordinary course of business (e.g. walking into a shop and purchasing a product over the counter).
9. However, developing a relationship with a person working in the shop for the purpose of obtaining information about the seller and his/her business (e.g. the seller's suppliers who are supplying illegally imported products) will require authorisation as a CHIS. Similarly, using mobile hidden recording devices or CCTV cameras to record what is going on in the shop will require authorisation as directed surveillance. A combined authorisation can be given for a CHIS_ and also for directed surveillance.

Anti-social behaviour activities (e.g. noise, violence, race etc.)

10. Persons who complain about anti-social behaviour (such as playing music too loudly) and who are asked to keep a diary of incidents will not normally be a CHIS, as they are not required to establish or maintain a relationship for a covert purpose. Recording the level of noise (e.g. the decibel level) will not normally capture private information; therefore, it does not require authorisation.
11. Recording sound on private premises could constitute intrusive surveillance unless it is done overtly. It will be possible to record noise levels without it being intrusive surveillance if the noisemaker is given written warning that such recording or monitoring will occur. (Such a warning should be repeated at least every 2 months if the operation is on-going). Placing a stationary or mobile video camera outside a building to record anti-social behaviour on residential estates will require prior authorisation.

Social Networking and Internet Site

12. Rapidly increasing use of the Internet and social networking sites across communities and businesses has resulted in law enforcement having access to

- an array of investigative tools, Social network sites (and other 'open source' intelligence resources) contain a wealth of information, intelligence and evidence about suspects, victims, witnesses, members of organised crime groups and other aspects of crime and anti-social activity.
13. Although social networking and internet sites are easily accessible, if they are going to be used during the course of an investigation, consideration must be given about whether RIPA authorisation should be obtained.
 14. Care must be taken to understand how the social media site being used works. Officers must not be tempted to assume that one service provider is the same as another or that the services provided by a single provider are the same.
 15. Whilst it is the responsibility of an individual to set privacy settings to protect against unsolicited access to their private information on a social networking site, and even though the data may be deemed published and no longer under the control of the author, it is unwise to regard it as 'open source' or publicly available; the author has a reasonable expectation of privacy if access controls are applied. Where privacy settings are available but not applied the data may be considered open source but you must be mindful that an individual is not expecting this source to be used to covertly monitor their actions and whereas an authorisation may not usually be required you must be careful of how you access this type of account and for what purpose. If you are scoping (this includes an initial look at someone through open source material) no authority would be required, however if from this you then identify the subject and a plan is made for the gathering of evidence and you access the same websites to monitor that person more than once or on a regular basis a RIPA authority must be considered. You must consider any collateral intrusion on third parties when accessing websites. You should keep details of the websites accessed, information obtained and your reasons for using the website and the information gained or for discounting it from your investigation. You must always record access to accounts as part of your investigation log.
 16. If it is necessary and proportionate for the Council to covertly breach access controls, the minimum requirement is an authorisation for directed surveillance. An authorisation for the use and conduct of a CHIS is necessary if a relationship is established or maintained by the officer (ie the activity is more than mere reading of the site's content). This could occur if the officer covertly asks to become a 'friend' of someone on a social networking site.
 17. CHIS authorisation is only required when using an internet trading organisation such as E-bay or Amazon Marketplace in circumstances when a covert relationship is likely to be formed. The use of disguised purchaser details in a simple, overt, electronic purchase does not require a CHIS authorisation, because no relationship is usually established at this stage. (Refer to G 5-7 above regarding the need to establish an officer for the roles of 'handler', 'controller' and 'record keeper' if a CHIS authorisation is required.)
 18. See Appendix 5 – The Social Media and Networking Sites in Investigations Policy for more information

H. Authorisation Procedures

1. Directed surveillance and the use of a CHIS can only be lawfully carried out if properly authorised and in strict accordance with the terms of the authorisation. Appendix 2 gives a flow chart of the authorisation process from application consideration to recording of information. Although this flow chart covers both Directed Surveillance and CHIS authorisations, remember that CHIS forms must not be completed without obtaining prior legal advice, as CHIS authorisations will be very unusual.
2. Once the Authorising officer has authorised the application, an application must be made on the correct form to the Magistrates Court for the Justice of the Peace to authorise.

Authorising Officers

3. Forms can only be signed by Authorising Officers holding a 'RIPA Authorising Officer Certificate' issued by the SRO (as shown at Appendix 3). Authorising Officer posts are listed in Appendix 1. Any Authorising Officer filling a post shown in Appendix 1 and holding such a Certificate can sign the forms.
4. Appendix 3 training will be kept up to date by the SRO and revised as necessary. If a Service Manager wishes to add, delete or substitute a post, s/he must refer such a request to the SRO for consideration. The SRO is authorised to add, delete or substitute posts listed in Appendix 1.
5. Remember that RIPA authorisation procedures are separate from powers delegated to officers under the Council's 'Schedule of Functions Delegated to Officers' (forming part of the SSDC Constitution). RIPA procedures are governed by this Guide. RIPA authorisations are for specific investigations only, and they must be renewed or cancelled once the specific surveillance is complete or about to expire. The authorisations do not lapse with time.

Training Records

6. Proper training in RIPA procedures will be given or approved by the SRO before Authorising Officers are issued with a RIPA Authorising Officer Certificate enabling them to sign RIPA forms. RIPA training already undertaken or to be undertaken will need to be verified and approved by the SRO. Instruction on RIPA procedures will be by means of a one-to-one meeting with the SRO (or his nominated representative). The issue of a RIPA Authorising Officer Certificate will be confirmation that the Authorising Officer has been properly trained in RIPA procedures. The SRO will keep a 'Central Register of Issued RIPA Authorising Officer Certificates' containing copies of Certificates issued to individual officers.
7. If the SRO considers at any time that an Authorising Officer has not fully complied with the requirements of this Guide, or is no longer properly trained in RIPA procedures or requires additional training, the SRO is duly authorised to revoke that Officer's RIPA Authorising Officer Certificate until such time as he is satisfied that the Certificate should be re-issued. SRO will need to be satisfied that the Officer concerned is a fit and proper person to be an Authorising Officer for RIPA purposes. RIPA forms cannot be signed by an officer who does not hold a RIPA Authorising Officer Certificate.

Application Forms

8. Only the current RIPA forms downloadable from the Home Office Security (Surveillance) website (and also available on the SSDC portal or from the SRO) must be used. Any other forms used after the operative date will be rejected by Authorising Officers and/or the SRO. Remember that CHIS forms must not be completed without obtaining prior legal advice, as CHIS authorisations will be very unusual. In respect of all forms, while we will do our best to ensure that the version on the intranet is the latest version, it is good practice to check the Home Office website (as above) to ensure that the SSDC version is the current version. Do not rely on the intranet/portal version being the latest version.

9. **Types of Directed Surveillance Forms**

Application for Authorisation to Carry Out Directed Surveillance
Review of a Directed Surveillance Authorisation
Application for Renewal of a Directed Surveillance Authorisation
Cancellation of Directed Surveillance Authorisation

10. **Types of CHIS Forms – not to be used without obtaining prior legal advice**

Application for Authorisation of the Conduct or Use of a CHIS
Review of CHIS Authorisation
Application for Renewal of CHIS Authorisation
Cancellation of CHIS Authorisation

11. Any boxes not needed on the form(s) must be clearly marked as being 'NOT APPLICABLE', 'N/A' or a line put through the box. Great care must also be taken to ensure that accurate information is used and inserted in the correct boxes. Reasons for any refusal of an application must also be put on or stapled to the form and the form retained for future audits. Such refusal reasons must be signed and dated by the Authorising Officer.

Grounds for Authorisation

12. Directed Surveillance or the Conduct and Use of a CHIS can be authorised by the Council only on the following ground:

- For the prevention or detection of crime or preventing disorder

- 12A A further condition for authorisation of Directed Surveillance (but that does not apply to CHIS authorisations) is that the Crime being investigated can only be an offence punishable on summary conviction or indictment by a maximum term of at least 6 months imprisonment or is an offence under:

- i) Section 146 of the Licensing Act 2003 (sale of alcohol to children)
- ii) Section 147 of the Licensing Act 2003 (allowing the sale of alcohol to children)
- iii) Section 147A of the Licensing Act 2003 (persistently selling alcohol to children)
- iv) Section 7 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (sale of tobacco etc to persons under eighteen).

Assessing the Application Form

13. Before an Authorising Officer signs a form, s/he must:
- (a) Have regard to this Corporate Policy & Procedures Guide, the training provided or approved by the SRO and any other guidance and advice issued by the SRO on such matters generally, or the authorisation sought specifically;
 - (b) Satisfy his/herself that the RIPA authorisation is:
 - (i) in accordance with the law;
 - (ii) necessary in the circumstances of the particular case on the ground mentioned in paragraph 10 above; and
 - (iii) proportionate to what it seeks to achieve;
 - (c) In assessing whether or not the proposed surveillance is proportionate the authorizing officer must be satisfied that the surveillance is proportionate to the mischief under investigation, that it is proportional to the degree of anticipated intrusion on the target and others and it is the only option after considering other appropriate means of gathering the information. The least intrusive method will be considered proportionate by the courts;
 - (d) Take into account the risk of intrusion into the privacy of persons other than the specified subject of the surveillance (called 'Collateral Intrusion'). Measures must be taken wherever practicable to avoid or minimise collateral intrusion as far as possible, and this issue may be an aspect of determining proportionality;
 - (e) Set (and diarise) a date for review of the authorisation and review on that date;
 - (f) Allocate a Unique Reference Number (URN) for the application as follows:

Year / Service Code (see Appendix 1) / Number of Application

e.g. 2006/HRB/01
 - (g) Ensure that the RIPA Service Register is duly completed, and that a copy of the RIPA form is forwarded for inclusion in the SRO's Central Register within 1 week of the relevant authorisation, review, renewal, cancellation or rejection.

Additional Safeguards when Authorising a CHIS

14. When authorising the conduct or use of a CHIS, the Authorising Officer must also:
- (a) be satisfied that the conduct and/or use of the CHIS is proportionate to what is sought to be achieved;
 - (b) be satisfied that appropriate arrangements are in place for the management and overseeing of the CHIS. These arrangements must address health and safety issues by the carrying out of a formal and recorded risk assessment;
 - (c) consider the likely degree of intrusion for all those potentially affected;

- (d) consider any adverse impact on community confidence that may result from the use or conduct of the CHIS or the information obtained; and
- (e) ensure that records contain particulars of the CHIS and that they are not available except on a 'need to know' basis.

Judicial Approval

15. The judicial approval process introduced by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and effective from 1st November 2012 requires that once the form has been approved by the Authorising Officer, judicial approval of a Justice of the Peace at the Magistrates Court is necessary.

The JP will decide whether a local authority grant or renewal of an authorization or notice to use RIPA should be approved and it will not come into effect unless and until it is approved by a JP. Although it is possible for local authorities to request judicial approval for the use of more than one technique at the same time, in practice, as different considerations need to be applied to different techniques, this would be difficult to perform with the degree of clarity required. As a rule authorisations or notices should be submitted separately for each different technique.

Following the authorisation or renewal of an application the Authorising Officer must forward the authorisation and supporting documents to a Legal Officer, who will liaise with the investigation officer and assist in the making of an application to the Magistrates Court for judicial approval. The forms for this application will be kept by the SRO or are found on the Home Office website.

The Legal Officer assist in obtaining a court hearing date and time and will if necessary attend court along with the Authorising Officer or the Investigating Officer whoever is the most appropriate, to give evidence of the case and the technique required.

In emergency situations applications can be made to the Court outside usual office hours, Authorising Officers are advised to refer to Appendix 4. In such cases the investigating officer will need to provide two partially completed judicial application forms so that one can be retained by the JP. The Investigating Officer will have to provide a copy of the application form signed by the authorisation officer to the court on the next working day.

A copy of the signed Judicial Application form must be retained and sent to the SRO who will place it on the central register and enter it on the spreadsheet. There is not a requirement for the JP to consider either cancellations or internal reviews.

Duration of Authorisations

16. The authorised RIPA form must be reviewed at least at monthly intervals and cancelled once it is no longer needed. The authorisation to carry out/conduct the surveillance lasts for a maximum of 3 months from authorisation for Directed Surveillance, 12 months from authorisation for a CHIS and 1 month from authorisation for a Juvenile CHIS. However, whether or not the surveillance is carried out or conducted in the relevant period has no bearing on the authorisation becoming spent. In other words, authorised RIPA forms do not expire. The authorised forms have to be reviewed and/or cancelled once they are no longer required.

17. Authorisations can be renewed in writing before the maximum period has expired. The Authorising Officer must consider the matter afresh, including taking into account the benefits of the surveillance to date and any collateral intrusion that has occurred. The SRO may review the case to ensure all procedures have been followed. Renewal's must be authorised by a JP, an application being made in the way described above.

I. Working With Or Through Other Agencies

1. When another agent or agency (such as a private investigator) has been instructed by or on behalf of the Council to undertake any action under RIPA, this Guide and the appropriate RIPA forms and Judicial approval mentioned must be used by the Council officers concerned (in accordance with the normal RIPA procedures) and the agency advised and kept informed of the various RIPA requirements. They must be made explicitly aware of what they are authorised to do by means of written instructions from the instructing officer, with a copy of the written instructions countersigned by the agency by way of acknowledgement of their instructions and returned to the instructing officer to be kept on the case file. If for reasons of urgency oral instructions are initially given, written confirmation must be sent (and acknowledged) within 4 working days. Officers should be satisfied that agencies are RIPA competent and RIPA trained before they are used, and a written record of that satisfaction (and the evidence for it) must be placed on the SSDC case file.
2. When some other agency (e.g. Police, Customs & Excise, Inland Revenue etc):
 - (a) wishes to use the Council's resources (e.g. CCTV surveillance systems), that agency must use its own RIPA procedures. Before any Council officer agrees to allow the Council's resources to be used for the other agency's purposes, s/he must obtain a copy of that agency's completed RIPA form for the Council's records (a copy of which must be passed to the SRO for the Central Register), or relevant extracts from the agencies RIPA form which are sufficient for the purposes of protecting the Council and the use of its resources;
 - (b) wishes to use the Council's premises for their own RIPA authorised action, the Council officer concerned should normally co-operate with such a request, unless there are security or other good operational or managerial reasons as to why the Council's premises should not be used for the agency's activities. The request must be put in writing and any consent from the Council must also be in writing. Suitable insurance or other appropriate indemnities may need to be sought from the other agency to protect the Council's legal position (the Council's Insurance Officer and/or the SRO can advise on this issue). However, in such cases the Council's own RIPA forms should not be used as the Council is only 'assisting' and not being 'involved' in the RIPA activity of the external agency.
3. With regard to 2(a) above, if the Police or other agency wish to use Council resources for general surveillance (as opposed to specific RIPA authorised operations), an appropriate letter requesting the proposed use (and detailing the nature and extent of the use, duration, who will be undertaking the general surveillance, the purpose of it, and why it is not subject to RIPA) must be obtained from the Police or other agency before any Council resources are made available for the proposed use. The insurance/indemnity considerations mentioned above may still need to be addressed.
4. **If in doubt, please consult with the SRO at the earliest opportunity.**

J. Record Management

1. The Council must keep a detailed record of all authorisations, renewals, cancellations and rejections generated by Services and a Central Register of all authorisation forms will be maintained and monitored by the SRO.

2. **Records maintained in the individual Service**

The following documents must be retained by the relevant Service Manager or his/her designated RIPA Service Co-ordinator (such Co-ordinator to be appointed by the Service Manager and the name notified to the SRO) retention must be in accordance with the date retention policy. These will be retained in electronic file format.

- Copies of any completed application form together with any supplementary documentation, plus notification of the approval given by the Authorising Officer;
 - A copy of the signed Judicial Approval;
 - a record of the period over which the surveillance has taken place;
 - the frequency of reviews prescribed by the Authorising Officer;
 - a record of the result of each review of the authorisation;
 - a copy of any renewal of an authorisation, together with the supporting documentation submitted when the renewal was requested;
 - a copy of any cancellation of an authorisation;
 - the date and time when any instruction was given by the Authorising Officer and a note of that instruction;
 - the Unique Reference Number for the authorisation (URN).
3. Each form will have a URN. The Service Manager or RIPA Service Co-ordinator will issue the relevant URN to applicants. The cross-referencing of each URN takes place within the forms for audit purposes. The relevant Service code to be followed is shown in Appendix 1. Rejected forms will also have URN's.
 4. A 'Surveillance Log Book' will be completed by the investigating officer(s) to record all operational details of authorised covert surveillance. Once completed, the Log Book will be passed to the Service Manager or the designated RIPA Service Co-ordinator for safe keeping in a secure place. Each Service will also maintain a 'Surveillance Log Book Issue and Movement Register' for such Surveillance Log Books. The maintenance of the latter Register will be the responsibility of the Service Manager or the designated RIPA Service Co-ordinator. The SRO will prescribe the form of the latter Registers and Services must substantially follow that form.

Central Register maintained by the SRO

5. Authorising Officers must forward details of each issued RIPA form to the SRO for keeping on the Central Register within 1 week of the issue of the authorisation, review, renewal, cancellation or rejection. The SRO will monitor

forms, give appropriate guidance from time to time, and amend this Guide, as necessary.

6. The Council will retain records for a period of at least three years from the ending of the authorisation. The Service Manager or RIPA Service Co Ordinator will ensure that only one copy of the relevant documents of a RIPA authority and the evidence resulting from it is kept on file for the relevant case and the SRO will keep on copy on file in the central register until it requires destruction. The Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) can audit and review the Council's policies and procedures, and individual authorisations.

K. Concluding Remarks of the SRO

1. Where there is an interference with a European Convention right such as the right to respect for private and family life guaranteed under Article 8 of Convention, and where there is no other source of lawful authority for the interference, or if it is held to be unnecessary and disproportionate in the particular circumstances, the consequences of not obtaining or not following the correct authorisation procedures set out in RIPA, RIPA Regulations and associated Codes of Practice may be that the action taken (and the evidence obtained) will be held by a court to be an infringement of a Convention right (possibly more than one) and thus unlawful behaviour under Section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998. This could result in the Council losing a case and having costs (and possibly damages) awarded against it. Following this Guide should ensure that this does not happen.
2. It needs to be stressed that the concept of proportionality, i.e. proportional action, is very important under RIPA and under human rights. Action that is disproportionate in terms of the end to be achieved when judged against the Convention right infringed will be unlawful, even if a RIPA authorisation has been issued. Therefore, it is probably best to err on the side of caution when considering if covert surveillance is really required for an investigation. If the information can be obtained by other overt means, then it should be. Ask yourself the question: “Do I really need to do this, what will be the effect on others if I do it, and is there any other way to achieve the same ends?” Weigh it all in the balance. If possible, do a file note of your reasoning.
3. Authorising Officers must exercise their minds as to their RIPA obligations every time they are asked to sign a form. They must never sign or rubber stamp form(s) without thinking about both their personal responsibilities and the Council's responsibilities under RIPA, the Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention. Again, ask yourself the question: “Do I really need to do this, what will be the effect on others if I do it and is there any other way to achieve the same ends?” Weigh it all in the balance. If possible, do a file note of your reasoning.

Definition of Roles

- (1) SRO – Senior Responsible Officer

Director Service Delivery, maintains central records of authorisations and collating the authorisations, reviews, renewals and cancellations they also have oversight of submitted RIPA documents. Is responsible for – integrity of the process, compliance with RIPA and its regulatory framework, engage with the Commissioners and Inspectors when they conduct an inspection, oversee the implementation of recommendations made by the IPCO to ensure authorising officers are of the appropriate standard

- (2) RIPA Co-ordinating Officer

Specialist Legal, maintains Policy and Procedure, Organises training and raises awareness.

- (3) RIPA Authorising Officer

Is certified to authorise applications before referral to the Magistrates Court.

(4) RIPA Services Co-ordinating Officer

Officer in relevant service who ensures relevant RIPA documents are retained and destroyed according to the Council's Policies.

(5) CHIS Controller

Officer appointed in relevant service on a case by case basis – responsible for the management and supervision of the handler and has oversight of the use of the CHIS

(6) CHIS Handler and Record Keeper

Officer appointed in relevant service on a case by case basis of rank below authorising officer to deal with day to day activities of the CHIS, recording information supplied and monitoring security and welfare of the CHIS

4. For further advice and assistance on RIPA, please contact the SRO. Contact details are provided at the front of this Guide.

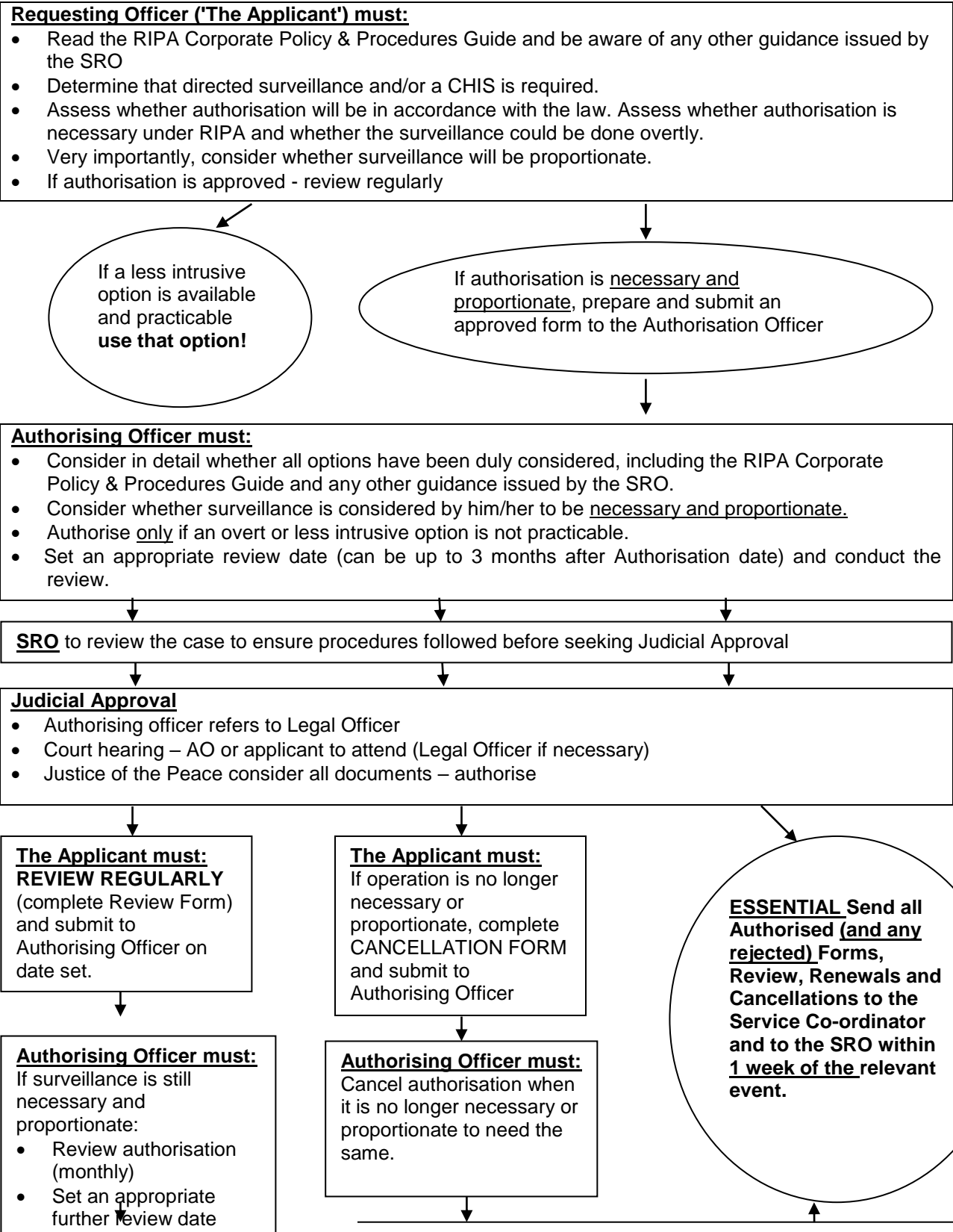
List of Authorising Officer Posts

Post	Service Identifier
Lead Specialist Legal	LSM
Director Commercial Services and Income Generation	DCSIG
Director of Strategy and Commissioning	DSC
Specialist Services Manager	SSM
Director Service Delivery	DSD

IMPORTANT NOTES

- A. Even if a post is identified in the above list, the persons currently employed in such posts are not authorised to sign RIPA forms (including a renewal or cancellation) unless s/he has been certified by the SRO to do so by the issue of a RIPA Authorising Officer Certificate.
- B. Only the Chief Executive and the head of Paid services are authorised to sign forms relating to Juvenile Sources and Vulnerable Individuals (see paragraph G of this Guide).
- C. If a Service Manager wishes to add, delete or substitute a post, s/he must refer such request to the SRO for consideration.
- D. If in doubt, ask the SRO BEFORE any directed surveillance and/or CHIS is authorised, renewed, rejected or cancelled.

RIPA FLOW CHART



NB: If in doubt, ask the SRO BEFORE any directed surveillance and/or CHIS is authorised, renewed, cancelled, or rejected. Appropriate Managers will designate one of their staff to be a Service Co-ordinator for the purpose of RIPA and advise the SRO accordingly. CHIS forms are not to be used without prior legal approval.



SOUTH SOMERSET DISTRICT COUNCIL
RIPA AUTHORISING OFFICER CERTIFICATE
No. [] / 20

I HEREBY CERTIFY that the Officer whose personal details are given below is an Authorising Officer for the purposes of authorising covert surveillance and the use and/or conduct of Covert Human Intelligence Sources ('CHIS') under the provisions of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

It is further certified that this Officer has received training to perform such authorisation procedures.

Certificate issued to: [Full name of Officer]

Job Title:

Service:

Location:

Certificate date:

(signed)

Martin Woods
Senior Responsible Officer
Director Place
South Somerset District Council

(PLEASE NOTE: This certificate and the authorisation granted by it is personal to the officer named in it and cannot be transferred. Any change in personal details must be notified in writing to the SRO immediately. This certificate can be revoked at any time by the Director of Service Delivery by written revocation issued to the officer concerned. It is the named officer's personal responsibility to ensure full compliance with RIPA authorisation procedures and to ensure that s/he is fully trained in such procedures and that such training is kept up to date).

MAGISTRATES' COURTS IN AVON AND SOMERSET OTHER THAN BRISTOL

Procedure for dealing with Applications/Warrants out-of-hours

i.e. between: **5pm and 8.30 am Mondays – Thursdays**
 5pm on Friday and 8.30am Monday
 Bank Holidays

(but please note the at the Magistrates Court sits at Bristol and Taunton on Saturdays and Bank Holidays at 10am and where possible applications should be made to the Court rather than using the Out of Hours procedures on these days)

PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO RESTRICT APPLICATIONS TO THOSE OF EXTREME URGENCY. NON URGENT APPLICATIONS MAY NEED TO BE REFUSED.

APPLICATIONS BY OTHER AGENCIES

- **Agencies may only make contact with a Legal Adviser via the Avon and Somerset Constabulary Force Control Inspector Telephone 08454 567000**
- Force Control Inspector/his staff shall contact a Legal Adviser working in the area where the application is sought giving contact details of the agency to enable the Legal Adviser to contact the person requesting the warrant/making the application under the Children Act 1989. **Agency staff must not retain any contact details.**
- Where the officer is unable to contact a legal adviser in his/her area, he/she should make contact with a Legal Adviser in nearest proximity.
- The person making the application/requesting the warrant will give the Legal Adviser a summary of the nature of the application and its urgency.
- Legal Adviser then to make contact with a Magistrate who is able to hear the application.
- Arrangements to be agreed between the Legal Adviser and the agency regarding the venue and time the application to be heard.
- Agency staff may be required to collect the Legal Adviser from his/her home address and then go to the Magistrates home, returning the Legal Adviser thereafter. The Legal Adviser will have the discretion to make other arrangements where the need arises.
- Applications under the children Act 1989: The list of Legal Advisers states who can deal with these applications. (Only Legal Advisers with delegated powers are able to deal with applications for emergency process under Part IV of the Children Act, 1989). Please direct the application in the first instance to a Legal Adviser working in the area where order sought. **Page 79**

Using Social Media and Networking Sites in Investigations Policy

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A. Introduction

- 1.0 Social Media has become a significant part of many people's lives. By its very nature, Social Media also often known as Social Networking sites can accumulate a sizable amount of information about a person's life. Their accessibility on mobile devices can also mean that a person's precise location at a given time may also be recorded whenever they interact with a form of Social Media on their devices. This means that incredibly detailed information can be obtained about a person and their activities.
- 1.2 Social Media can therefore be a very useful tool when investigating alleged offences with a view to bringing a prosecution in the courts. However, there is a danger that the use of Social Media can be abused, which would have an adverse effect damaging a potential prosecution and could even leave the Council open to complainants or criminal charges itself.
- 1.3 This Policy sets the framework on which the Council may utilise Social Media when conducting investigations into alleged offences. Whilst the use of Social Media to investigate is not automatically considered covert surveillance, its misuse when conducting investigations can mean that it crosses over into the realms of covert and or targeted surveillance, even when that misuse is inadvertent. It is therefore crucial that the provisions of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), as it relates to covert and directed surveillance, are followed at all times when using Social Media information in investigations.
- 1.4 It is possible for the Council's use of Social Media in investigating potential offences to cross over into becoming unauthorised surveillance, and in so doing, breach a person's right to privacy under Article 8 of the Human Rights Act. Even if surveillance without due authorisation in a particular instance is not illegal, if authorisation is not

obtained, the surveillance carried out will not have the protection that RIPA affords and may mean it is rendered inadmissible.

- 1.5 If is the aim of this Procedure to ensure that investigations involving the use of Social Media are done so lawfully and correctly so as not to interfere with any persons human rights but to ensure that evidence gathered from Social Media is captured and presented to court in the correct manner by obtaining the correct authorisations where necessary.
- 1.6 Officers who are involved in investigations, into both individuals and businesses they suspect to have committed an offence, should consult Legal Services if they are unsure about any part of this Policy and how it affects their investigative practices.

B. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)

- 2.0 As there is an increase in the use of smartphones and other personal and portable devices, there is a significant amount of information on an individual's Social Media pages. This information might be relevant to an investigation being undertaken by the Council. However unguided and thought out research into a person's site could fall within the remit of RIPA and therefore require authorisation prior to it being undertaken.
- 2.1 Officers embarking on any form of investigatory action should always do so with RIPA in mind. Whilst RIPA will not always be relevant to every investigation, it is vital that enforcement officers and those involved in investigations regularly review their conduct with respect to investigatory actions. Any investigation is capable of evolving from one not requiring any RIPA authorisation to one that does at any point.
- 2.2 This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Council's current RIPA Policy and Procedures as well as statutory codes of practice issued by the secretary of state and the office of Surveillance Commissioners Guidance.

C. Definition of Social Media

- 3.0 Social Media also referred to as a Social Network can take many forms. Therefore, it is difficult to provide a definitive list of sites.
- 3.1 Current examples of popular forms of Social Media include (but the list is not exhaustive and new ones can be created whilst established ones popularity can wain).

Facebook	Twitter	Instagram
Linkedin	Pinterest	Reddit

- 3.2 Social Media will always be a web-based service that allows individuals and/or businesses to construct a public or semi-public profile which contains personal information and is viewable by others, whether accepted as "friends" or otherwise.

3.3 The definition of 'private information' under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) includes:

"any information relating to a person's private or family life and should be taken generally to include any aspect of a person's private or personal relationship with others, including family and professional or business relationships.'

D. Privacy Settings

- 4.0 The majority of Social Media services will allow its users to decide who can view their activity, and to what degree, through the use of privacy settings. Whilst some users are happy, or indifferent about who is able to view their information, others prefer to maintain a level of privacy.
- 4.1 Many users may purposely use Social Media with no privacy settings applied, this could be their intention as they are actively promoting something such as a business or event, and therefore require as many people as possible to be able to view their profile. Others may do so for reasons of self-promotion – this is known as a public profile and the information is "open source".
- 4.2 Persons operating Social Media without or with limited privacy setting do so at their own risk. Whilst the content or information shared by individuals on Social Media remains the property of that individual, it is nonetheless considered to be in the public domain. Publishing content or information using a public rather than a private setting means that person is allowing anyone to access that information however you have to proceed with care when accessing such accounts as although the privacy settings might allow you to enter them the information was not made available in this way for a covert purpose such as investigating and monitoring.
- 4.3 A private Profile is one set up on Social Media where the individual has set privacy settings and does not want their information open to public view, they will set the privacy setting appropriate to what they require.
- 4.4 By setting a private profile setting a user does not allow everyone to access their content and respect should be shown to that person's right to privacy under Article 8 of the Human Rights Act. This does not however extend to instances where a third party takes information and shares it on their own profile. So Person A has a private profile but a friend of theirs Person B takes something from Person A's page and shares it on their public page, this cannot be used from Person A's page but could from Person B's as they have a public profile.

E. Process to Follow when considering Using Social Media Sites

- 5.0 If an individual has a public profile an officer needs to be careful only to gather such information that is relevant to proving the offence they are investigating, if in any doubt seek advice from Legal Services. Even with Public profile sites care must be taken to ensure that the correct authorisation is required if the monitoring of an account becomes planned and directed.

- 5.1 Officers must not use their own personal or private account when accessing social media sites for investigation and evidence gathering purposes. Only Council accounts should be used. Interaction and conversations of any kind should be avoided.
- 5.2 Officers should keep in mind that simply using profiles belonging to others, or indeed fake profiles, in order to carry out investigations does not provide them with any form of true anonymity. The location and identity of an officer carrying out a search can be easily traced through tracking of IP Addresses, and other electronic identifying markers.
- 5.3 One off visits or infrequent visits to an individual's Social Media profile spread over time cannot be considered "directed surveillance" for the purposes of RIPA, repeated or frequent visits may cross over into becoming "directed surveillance" requiring RIPA authorisation. A person's Social Media profile should not, be routinely monitored on a daily or weekly basis in search of updates, as this will require RIPA authorisation. If an officer requires more advice on this they should contact Legal Services.
- 5.4 Each viewing of a company or individual's social media profile for the purpose of investigation or evidence gathering must be recorded on the case log.
- 5.5 See paragraphs 4.11 to 4.17 of the Covert Human Intelligence Source Code of Guidance (August 2018)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742042/20180802_CHIS_code_.pdf
- 5.6 See Paragraphs 3.10 to 3.17 of the Covert Surveillance and Property Interference revised code of practise
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742041/201800802_CSPI_code.pdf

F. Capturing Evidence

- 6.0 Evidence that is of a readable form, ie text, status updates or photographs should be copied directly from the site or captured via a screenshot, onto a hard drive or some other form of storage device and then subsequently printed to a hard copy. The hard copy of evidence should then be exhibited to a prepared witness statement in the normal way.
- 6.1 If evidence is an audio or video content then efforts should be made to download that content onto a hard drive or some other form of storage device such as CD or DVD. Those CD's and/or DVD's should then be exhibited to a suitably prepared witness statement in the normal way. If you have difficulties with this contact the Council's IT Unit.
- 6.2 Screen shots – should display the time and date in order to prove when the evidence was captured, without this information the effectiveness of the evidence is potentially lost as it may not be admissible in court.
- 6.3 When capturing evidence from a Social Media profile steps should be taken to minimise the collateral damage of inadvertently capturing innocent third parties

information. This might be particularly prevalent on Social Media profiles promoting events

G. Retention and Destruction of Information obtained

- 7.0 Where recorded material (in any form or media) is obtained during the course of an investigation which might be relevant to that investigation, or another investigation, or to pending or future civil or criminal proceedings, then it should be retained in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and any other legal requirements including the council's Information asset register and Council's retention schedule. Advice should be sought from the relevant officer at the Council. Contact the Council's Compliance Officer for details of how to log the details.
- 7.1 All information should be retained and destroyed in accordance with the time scales provided in the Councils retention Policy

H. Review

- 8.0 This Policy will be reviewed periodically and in line with the Council's RIPA Policy and Procedure (Section A, para 6) to ensure that both documents remain current and compliant with relevant legal requirements and best practice guidance.

Revised - 3.11.20

Rural Designation of Areas in South Somerset

Executive Portfolio Holder: Val Keitch, Strategy and Housing
Strategic Director: Martin Woods, Director of Place
Service Managers: Peter Paddon, Lead Specialist Strategic Planning
Leigh Rampton, Lead Specialist Communities
Matthew Loughrey-Robinson, Accelerated Housing
Delivery Programme Manager
Lead Officer: Tessa Saunders, Specialist, Strategic Planning
Jo Calvert, Specialist, Housing
Contact Details: Tessa.Saunders@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462114

Purpose of the Report

To set out the requirements to make an application to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to consider applying a rural designation status to parishes within South Somerset district under S.157 of the Housing Act 1985.

Forward Plan

This report appeared on the District Executive Forward Plan with an anticipated Committee date of April 2021.

Public Interest

The report sets out the case to enable the Council to make an application to Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to apply a rural designation status to qualifying parishes within South Somerset district. The rural designation will enable more affordable housing to be delivered in our rural communities once new policies in the Local Plan Review have been prepared and are supported by viability evidence. This designation will also help to protect our rural communities from potential future national policy changes that seek to accelerate housing delivery, but having the unintended consequence of reducing affordable housing delivery in rural communities.

Currently, the Council is only able to require affordable housing on residential schemes that are major developments, where 10 or more homes will be provided – this is a blanket approach introduced through national policy and guidance. National policy and guidance also states that local planning authorities can set their own lower threshold (i.e. below 10 dwellings) in Local Plans and seek affordable housing contributions from developments above that threshold in areas with a rural designation.

The Government has selected areas qualifying under S.157 of the Housing Act 1985 as designated rural areas to apply this lower threshold. Currently only a small area of the district within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) would currently qualify. If an application to MHCLG to apply the rural designation to our qualifying parishes is successful, the Council will be able to include a policy in the Local Plan Review for a lower threshold for affordable housing contributions in parishes with a rural designation.

Recommendations

1. To agree that the Council submits an application to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for all rural parishes in South Somerset district with populations of under 3,000 to be designated as rural under section 157(1) of the Housing Act 1985.

Background

2. In November 2014 the government announced new national planning practice guidance introducing a national threshold of 10 units on market housing sites above which affordable housing contributions could be sought. It also advised that local planning authorities could choose to apply a lower threshold to rural areas described under section 157(1) of the Housing Act 1985, which included National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and areas designated by order of the Secretary of State as a rural area. In such cases commuted sums could be sought on developments of between six and ten units.
3. Although, two councils won a landmark High Court challenge in August 2015 and the relevant paragraphs of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) were withdrawn. This was successfully appealed by the Secretary of State and the paragraphs reinstated that proposed a 5-unit threshold in designated rural areas with commuted sums for developments of between 6-10 dwellings. This area of the PPG has been subject to further revision and currently states:

In designated rural areas local planning authorities may instead choose to set their own lower threshold in plans and seek affordable housing contributions from developments above that threshold. Designated rural areas applies to rural areas described under [section 157\(1\) of the Housing Act 1985](#), which includes National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.¹

4. Currently all rural parishes in the district are designated as rural under the Housing Act 1996 for the purpose of the Right to Acquire restrictions and also under the Leasehold Reform Act 1967 for the purpose of shared ownership restrictions. However, these rural parishes are not designated as 'rural' under section 157(1) of the Housing Act 1985. Consequently, under the PPG, the district council is unable to apply a lower threshold for affordable housing to developments in the rural parishes outside the small areas of the AONBs within the district.
5. Since this guidance was introduced the Council has only been able to require affordable housing for residential developments that are major developments (where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5ha or more and it is not known whether the development will contain 10 dwellings or more). As a result, in our Rural Settlements, many schemes have not provided any affordable housing (i.e. for developments of 9 or fewer dwellings), exacerbating the issue that rural areas tend to have a lower proportion of affordable housing compared to larger settlements. Affordable housing in our Rural Settlements has only come forward on Rural Exception Sites, or on larger schemes that have generally benefitted from the presumption in favour of sustainable development exercised when the Council could not demonstrate a five-year housing land supply.

¹ [Planning Practice Guidance](#) - Paragraph: 023 Reference ID: 23b-023-20190901

6. The rural designation is therefore an important policy tool that will enable the Council to take forward a lower threshold for affordable housing on development sites in our rural parishes in the Local Plan Review. This will be informed by the plan wide viability assessment, and depends on the application to MHCLG proving successful.
7. The Council has been considering this matter for some time, as preparation of the emerging Local Plan Review continues. However, the consequences of not having a rural designation for our rural parishes was particularly emphasised through the Government consultation on Changes to the Current Planning System (August 2020). This proposed various measures to support housing delivery and affordable home ownership and set out protections for designated rural areas. The consequences of only having very limited designated rural areas (within the AONBs) in South Somerset would mean the proposals would have significant impacts on our rural communities (see paragraphs 13-14).

Applying for Rural Designation

8. MHCLG has issued guidance to Councils that wish to submit an application for all rural areas to be designated under the section 157 of the Housing Act to enable a lower threshold for affordable housing to be applied to all rural parishes. This guidance (see Appendix 1) advises that local authorities may apply to have specified areas designated as 'rural'. Parishes must meet the criteria of a population density no more than two persons per hectare, and any settlements in them must have with a population of fewer than 3,000 inhabitants. The first criterion can be applied flexibly. For example, some parishes just over these limits may be designated in order to avoid a 'patchwork' situation where some parishes are designated while others, broadly similar, are excluded.
9. The primary purpose of rural designation under section 157 of the Housing Act 1985 is to restrict the consequences of the Right to Buy. It allows restrictive covenants to be put in place so that the property can only be sold on to someone who has been living or working in the parish for 3 years. Alternatively, the landlord may require the tenant to offer the home back to them if the tenant wishes to sell within 10 years of buying.
10. Currently, outside the AONBs there are no designated rural parishes within the district. This is an anomaly when compared to surrounding districts, and it is not understood why this section of the Housing Act omits the identification of rural parishes within the district.

Outcomes to be achieved

11. Rural designation of all rural parishes under section 157 of the Housing Act 1985 will enable the Council to apply a lower threshold for affordable housing contributions in the next iteration of the Local Plan Review, to all new housing sites within rural parishes and maximise the contribution towards the delivery of affordable housing to meet local housing need and our affordable housing targets.
12. The current affordable housing unit threshold policy does not work for rural areas as it limits the supply of much-needed rural affordable housing and often results in schemes that no longer meet genuine community need. There is little evidence that requirements for affordable housing contributions made small housing sites in rural areas unviable in the past, and there is considerable documentary evidence to demonstrate that housing in rural areas commands much higher values compared to other urban areas (outside



of London)². A lower threshold can only be set in the Local Plan Review after the approach has been appropriately viability tested.

13. The importance of this rural designation was highlighted by the government's consultation on Changes to the Current Planning System³, published in August 2020. This document proposed significant changes including increasing the threshold for affordable housing to schemes of 40 or 50 dwellings to assist the recovery small and medium enterprises in the construction industry – this was proposed to exclude areas designated as rural. However, for South Somerset, this would only include areas within the AONBs. A further change was to propose to allow First Homes Exception Sites, but not in designated rural areas, where delivery would continue to be through rural exception sites policy. Both proposals would have significant adverse impacts for affordable housing delivery in the rural areas of the district and our concerns were submitted to the consultation.
14. The Government has not fully responded to this consultation (only on changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need), although the Minister for Housing has indicated that the increase to thresholds for affordable housing will kept under review. However, as the Government continues to use designated rural areas as a policy and rural-proofing tool to determine approaches to national policy and guidance, it emphasises the significance of the need to secure this designation for the rural parishes in the district.
15. Rural designation of all rural parishes may also help to reduce the consequences of the government's proposed Voluntary Right to Buy scheme that is intended to extend the Right to Buy to housing association tenants. A pilot has been running in the Midlands – this used guidance where housing associations could exercise discretion over sales which include properties in rural locations. The pilot finished in 2020 and the government has published the evaluation report. Future policy decisions will be taken following the evaluation.

Proposal

16. It is proposed that an application, comprising of parishes listed in Appendix 2 be submitted to the MHCLG Right to Buy Team. This shows that we are requesting that a significant proportion of parishes should be designated as rural. The only exceptions are the two parishes that are wholly within the Blackdown Hills AONB (Buckland St Mary and Whitestaunton) and therefore already benefit from the rural designation, and the urban areas of the largest settlements. For consistency, the parishes of Ansford, Castle Cary, Langport and Huish Episcopi have also been included as urban areas even though their populations are below the 3,000 threshold. This is because both Ansford & Castle Cary and Langport & Huish Episcopi are identified respectively as one settlement with a population of over 3,000 in the Local Plan.
17. Consideration has been given as to whether Abri (formerly Yarlinton) tenants with the Preserved Right to Buy would be adversely affected by such designations. The Housing Act 1985 Section 157(1) states, "...the conveyance or grant **may** contain a covenant

² Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, *Rural Economic Bulletin for England*, December 2020

³

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/927157/200805_Changes_to_the_current_planning_system.pdf



South Somerset District Council

limiting the freedom of the tenant (including any successor in title of his and any person deriving title under him or such a successor) to dispose of the dwelling-house...”

18. Rural designation does not imply a statutory restriction but one that can be applied by a local authority or housing association on disposal of a property under the Right to Buy legislation. Homes owned by South Somerset District Council that were transferred to Yarlington Housing Association (now Abri) in March 1999, have a Preserved Right to Buy for tenants that still occupy these homes from the point of transfer. For those homes located in areas proposed to be designated as rural for Right to Buy purposes, it means anyone with the Preserved Right to Buy, the sale will be on the condition that they may only resell it to someone who has been living or working in the area for 3 years. It is considered that due to the length of time that has elapsed since the transfer of our housing stock, that the number of existing tenants who have the means to exercise the Preserved Right to Buy will be relatively low, as there has been a period of over 20 years in which to exercise this right before the Council considers an application for a rural designation. The implications for Abri tenants with the Preserved Right to Buy are considered to be minimal.

19. The policy on thresholds for affordable housing was introduced by government to reduce the planning obligations on small sites, encourage their development and improve their viability. A whole local plan viability assessment will need to be undertaken for the Local Plan Review to provide the appropriate lower threshold for affordable housing in rural areas, should the application for rural designation be successful.

Financial Implications

20. There are no financial implications arising from the report.

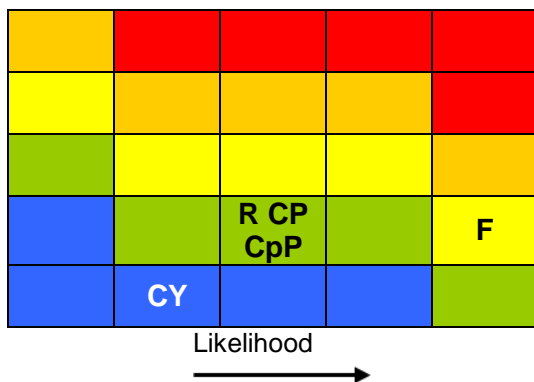
Legal implications (if any) and details of Statutory Powers

21. The application for rural designation must be made to the Secretary of State under [section 157\(1\) of the Housing Act 1985](#). If the application is approved by the Secretary of State, then a Statutory Instrument must be laid before Parliament to enable the designated rural areas to be identified in statute.

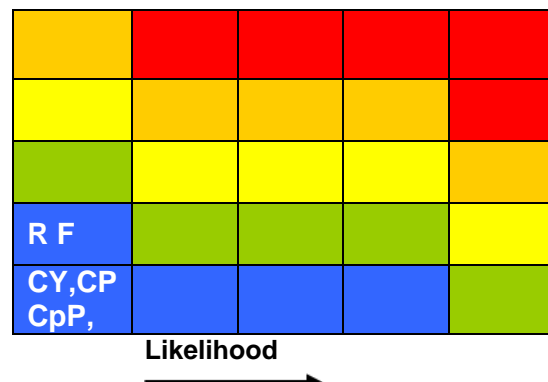
Risk Matrix

The risk matrix shows risk relating to the Council Plan headings.

Risk Profile before officer recommendations



Risk Profile after officer recommendations



Key

Categories	Colours (for further detail please refer to Risk management strategy)
R - Reputation	High impact and high probability
CpP - Corporate Plan Priorities	Major impact and major probability
CP - Community Priorities	Moderate impact and moderate probability
CY - Capacity	Minor impact and minor probability
F - Financial	Insignificant impact and insignificant probability

Council Plan Implications

The rural designation will assist with delivering Council Plan priorities for delivering the housing needed in our rural communities.

PLACES WHERE WE LIVE

To enable housing and communities to meet the existing and future needs of residents and employers we will work to:

- Enable sufficient housing in appropriate places to meet community needs
- Maximise the number of affordable homes including providing more affordable homes to support rural economies and communities

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

No implications as purely a procedural matter.

Equality and Diversity Implications

Rural designation under section 157(1) of the Housing Act 1985 of the district's rural parishes with populations of fewer than 3,000 (see Appendix 2) will have a positive impact on the availability of affordable housing to local communities in the district, including people with protected characteristics.

Privacy Impact Assessment

Not required – no personal data is affected by the report.

Background Papers

Please bear in mind that, for executive decisions, all background papers listed here must be available for public inspection and posted on the SSDC website. Do not list working files.

- [Planning Practice Guidance – Planning Obligations](#)
- [Housing Act 1985](#)

Appendix 1:

Right to Buy – rural designation

Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985 provides that local authorities in certain areas can impose certain restrictions on the subsequent resale of homes acquired under the Right to Buy scheme. The areas concerned are (i) National Parks, (ii) Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and (iii) areas designated by the Secretary of State as ‘rural’.

Local authorities may apply to have specified areas designated as ‘rural’. These areas might be a whole district or part of a district. When an application is submitted, an assessment is made for each parish in the area for which designation is sought. The criteria are that:

- There should be a population density of no more than two persons per hectare, and
- Towns with more than 3,000 inhabitants are ineligible.

The first criterion (the density test) can be applied flexibly. For example, some parishes just over these limits may be designated in order to avoid a ‘patchwork’ situation where some parishes are designated while others, broadly similar, are excluded.

Applications should be formally made to the Secretary of State and sent to the Right to Buy team, Department for Communities and Local Government, Eland House, Bressenden Place, London, SW1E 5DU. They should include density and population figures for each parish seeking designation and also a plan (map) of the whole district showing;

- Its extent;
- All urban areas;
- The parishes to be considered
- Any National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty already designated for as ‘rural’ for this purpose.

Please contact the Right to Buy team on 0303 444 3798 if you require any further information.



Appendix 2 – Proposed Designated Rural Parishes

(chart and map)

Parish	Currently designated as rural under S157 of the Housing Act 1985	Total Population 2011 Census	Parish Area (Ha)	Persons/Ha based on 2011 Census	2019 Mid Year Population Estimate ONS
Bratton Seymour		104	556.29	0.2	132
Puckington		117	312.99	0.4	105
Yarlington		123	486.82	0.3	102
Seavington St Michael		127	116.36	1.1	143
Beercrocombe		134	314.44	0.4	140
Compton Pauncefoot		139	565.77	0.2	121
Maperton		140	465.29	0.3	98
Lovington		141	466.07	0.3	155
Isle Brewers		150	545.49	0.3	159
Stocklinch		154	209.62	0.7	141
South Barrow		162	309.29	0.5	170
Chillington		164	748.89	0.2	190
Cucklington		173	722.40	0.2	178
Wambrook	Partially - Blackdown Hills AONB	184	1,126.01	0.2	196
Corton Denham		189	464.76	0.4	194
Kingstone		-	-	-	190
Muchelney		195	643.60	0.3	208
Isle Abbots		205	481.25	0.4	200
Shepton Montague		208	866.97	0.2	198
North Cheriton		208	369.17	0.6	196
Whitelackington		209	776.69	0.3	185
Closworth		220	1,266.14	0.2	209
Chaffcombe		229	471.34	0.5	220
North Barrow		233	742.99	0.3	234
Alford		-	-	-	234
Rimpton		235	407.96	0.6	250
Holton		238	481.88	0.5	235
Knowle St. Giles		244	1,265.60	0.2	268
North Perrott		246	517.69	0.5	286
Babcary		248	974.52	0.3	236
Dinnington		-	-	-	251
Whitestaunton	Wholly within Blackdown Hills AONB	256	954.01	0.3	301
Lopen		260	215.04	1.2	274
Cricket St Thomas		-	-	-	268
Cudworth		-	-	-	268
Pen Selwood	Partially - Cranborne Chase AONB	273	522.85	0.5	315
Chiselborough		275	324.29	0.8	314
Dowlsh Wake		277	490.64	0.6	275
South Cadbury		284	489.48	0.6	298
Kingsdon		303	941.38	0.3	329



Parish	Currently designated as rural under S157 of the Housing Act 1985	Total Population 2011 Census	Parish Area (Ha)	Persons/Ha based on 2011 Census	2019 Mid Year Population Estimate ONS
Curry Mallet		306	616.85	0.5	334
Stoke Trister		313	670.03	0.5	345
Kingweston		-	-	-	318
Wayford		-	-	-	312
Long Load		332	587.74	0.6	333
Limington			-	-	334
Donyatt		347	753.56	0.5	365
Pitney		374	549.98	0.7	369
Drayton		379	817.56	0.5	352
Seavington St Mary		384	447.60	0.9	382
Charlton Musgrove	Partially - Cranborne Chase AONB	398	1,485.27	0.3	424
Aller		410	1,457.22	0.3	392
Barrington		438	457.47	1.0	409
Brewham	Partially - Cranborne Chase AONB	441	2,312.87	0.2	446
Hinton St. George		442	859.97	0.5	467
Chilton Cantelo		445	1,153.94	0.4	334
West Camel		459	806.66	0.6	467
East Chinnock		479	545.91	0.9	487
Hambridge and Westport		514	673.74	0.8	539
Buckland St Mary	Wholly within Blackdown Hills AONB	521	1,477.15	0.4	529
Marston Magna		523	563.29	0.9	528
Ashill		529	985.01	0.5	618
Pitcombe		532	909.26	0.6	520
Barton St. David		561	901.91	0.6	619
Horsington		571	1,266.15	0.5	564
Chilthorne Domer		574	599.94	1.0	539
Hardington Mandeville		585	1,083.74	0.5	554
Charlton Horethorne		591	1,339.18	0.4	626
West and Middle Chinnock		592	467.01	1.3	556
Fivehead		609	1,322.42	0.5	562
Sparkford		617	659.21	0.9	676
Ash		626	793.01	0.8	597
West Crewkerne	Partially - Dorset AONB	631	1,993.08	0.3	602
Mudford		696	911.64	0.8	734
Compton Dundon		705	1,115.13	0.6	740
Shepton Beauchamp		728	339.48	2.1	701
Broadway		740	837.47	0.9	799
Norton sub Hamdon		743	341.67	2.2	692
Haselbury Plucknett		744	841.12	0.9	726
Winsham		748	1,221.72	0.6	689
Odcombe		759	455.01	1.7	764
Horton		812	254.23	3.2	824
Misterton		826	577.32	1.4	987
Montacute		831	593.46	1.4	832



Parish	Currently designated as rural under S157 of the Housing Act 1985	Total Population 2011 Census	Parish Area (Ha)	Persons/Ha based on 2011 Census	2019 Mid Year Population Estimate ONS
Long Sutton		833	1,543.50	0.5	891
Ilton		854	830.48	1.0	939
Tintinhull		902	959.45	0.9	926
Queen Camel		908	943.02	1.0	974
High Ham		909	2,029.22	0.4	909
North Cadbury		950	1,086.28	0.9	969
Keinton Mandeville		1,068	277.37	3.9	1076
Charlton Mackrell		1,073	1,414.07	0.8	1064
Langport*		1,081	68.02	15.9	1018
Ansford*		1,085	372.38	2.9	1040
Barwick		1,221	493.65	2.5	12115
Yeovilton		1,226	1,125.51	1.1	1418
Kingsbury Episcopi		1,307	1,505.45	0.9	1359
Combe St Nicholas	Partially - Blackdown Hills AONB	1,373	1,938.33	0.7	1381
Abbas and Templecombe		1,560	772.17	2.0	1571
East Coker		1,667	802.33	2.1	1644
Henstridge		1,814	1,719.61	1.1	1739
Stoke sub Hamdon		1,968	491.91	4.0	1952
Merriott		1,979	1,096.56	1.8	1950
West Coker		2,018	642.67	3.1	2019
Huish Episcopi*		2,095	895.43	2.3	2527
Curry Rivel		2,148	1,481.75	1.4	2140
Ilchester		2,153	626.76	3.4	2096
Castle Cary*		2,276	889.90	2.6	2406
Tatworth and Forton	Partially - Dorset AONB and Blackdown Hills AONB	2,660	1,500.05	1.8	2621
Milborne Port		2,802	1,335.19	2.1	3030
Bruton		2,907	1,620.75	1.8	3058
South Petherton		3,367	1,414.63	2.4	3728
Somerton		4,697	2,684.96	1.7	4899
Martock		4,766	1,538.65	3.1	4675
Wincanton		5,272	1,148.82	4.6	6138
Ilminster		5,808	585.26	9.9	6018
Yeovil Without		6,834	678.09	10.1	8785
Crewkerne		7,000	522.29	13.4	7038
Brympton		7,308	611.13	12.0	7679
Chard Town		13,074	631.55	20.7	13873
Yeovil		30,378	968.08	31.4	31302

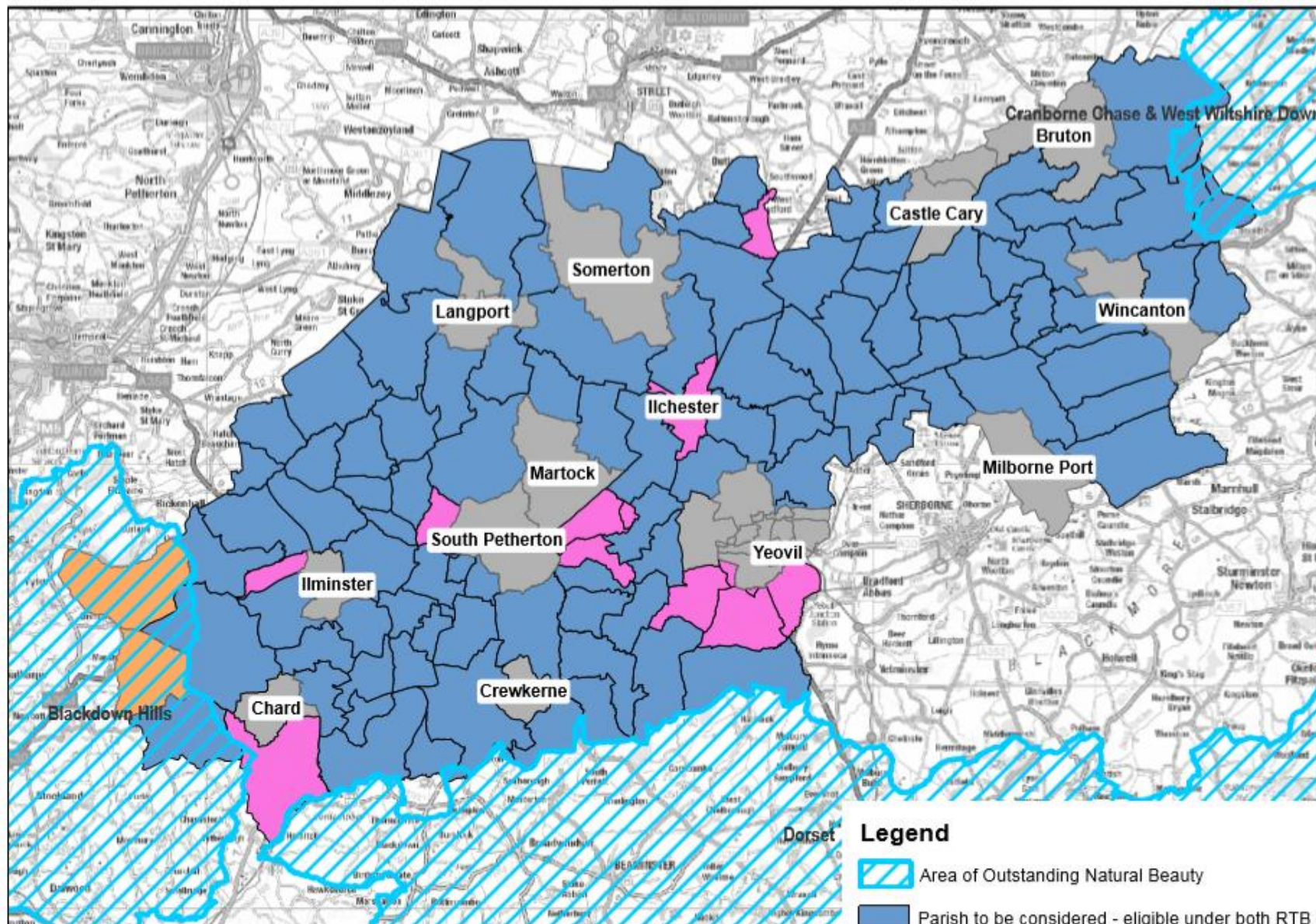
Parishes to be considered - eligible under both RTB criteria






Parishes to be considered - eligible if the RTB criteria is applied flexibly

Urban Area

Parishes already described as rural under S157 of the Housing Act 1985

*A settlement closely associated with another settlement in a separate parish – together considered as one settlement (with over 3,000 population) for planning purposes - Ansford & Castle Cary and Langport & Huish Episcopi.



- Legend**
-  Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
 -  Parish to be considered - eligible under both RTB criteria
 -  Parish to be considered - eligible if the RTB criteria is applied flexibly
 -  Urban Area
 -  Parish already described as rural under S157 of the Housing Act 1985



District Executive Forward Plan

Executive Portfolio Holder: Val Keitch, Leader, Strategy and Housing
Strategic Director: Nicola Hix, Strategy and Support Services
Lead Officer: Angela Cox, Democratic Services Specialist
Contact Details: angela.cox@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462148

Purpose of the Report

1. This report informs Members of the current Executive Forward Plan, provides information on Portfolio Holder decisions and on consultation documents received by the Council that have been logged on the consultation database.

Public Interest

2. The District Executive Forward Plan lists the reports due to be discussed and decisions due to be made by the Committee within the next few months. The Consultation Database is a list of topics which the Council's view is currently being consulted upon by various outside organisations.

Recommendations

3. That District Executive is asked to:
 - a) approve the updated Executive Forward Plan for publication as attached at Appendix A
 - b) note the contents of the Consultation Database as shown at Appendix B.

Executive Forward Plan

4. The latest Forward Plan is attached at Appendix A. The timings given for reports to come forward are indicative only, and occasionally may be re scheduled and new items added as new circumstances arise.

Consultation Database

5. The Council has agreed a protocol for processing consultation documents received by the Council. This requires consultation documents received to be logged and the current consultation documents are attached at Appendix B.

Background Papers

6. None.

APPENDIX A - SSDC Executive Forward Plan

Date of Decision	Decision	Portfolio	Service Director	Contact	Committee(s)
April 2021 April 2021	SSDC response to the Government proposals for locally-led reorganisation of local government in Somerset	Portfolio Holder - Strategy & Housing	Chief Executive	Jan Gamon, Programme Director, Stronger Somerset	District Executive South Somerset District Council
May 2021	Future Management of the Council's Leisure Facilities	Portfolio Holder - Health & Well-Being	Director Strategy and Support Services	Lynda Pincombe, Specialist - Strategic Planning	District Executive
May 2021	Negotiation Strategy for Planning	Portfolio Holder - Protecting Core Services	Director Service Delivery	Barry James, Interim Planning Lead Specialist	District Executive
May 2021	SSDC Traded Services: Elleston Services Limited	Portfolio Holder - Economic Development including Commercial Strategy	Director Commercial Services & Income Generation	James Divall, Income Opportunity Development Manager	District Executive
May 2021	Quarterly Corporate Performance Report	Portfolio Holder - Strategy & Housing	Director Strategy and Support Services	Cath Temple, Specialist (Performance)	District Executive
May 2021	Review of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's)	Portfolio Holder - Strategy & Housing	Director Strategy and Support Services	Cath Temple, Specialist (Performance)	District Executive
May 2021	Remote Meeting Protocol for SSDC	Portfolio Holder - Finance, Legal & Democratic Services	Director Strategy and Support Services	Angela Cox, Specialist (Democratic Services)	District Executive

Date of Decision	Decision	Portfolio	Service Director	Contact	Committee(s)
June 2021	Investment Assets update report	Portfolio Holder - Economic Development including Commercial Strategy	Director Commercial Services & Income Generation	Robert Orrett, Commercial Property, Land & Development Manager	District Executive
June 2021	Update on Proposals from the Planning Re-imagined Workshops	Portfolio Holder - Protecting Core Services	Director Service Delivery	Kirsty Larkins, Director (Service Delivery)	District Executive
June 2021	Review of SSDC Commercial Strategy	Portfolio Holder - Economic Development including Commercial Strategy	Director Commercial Services & Income Generation	Clare Pestell, Director (Commercial Services & Income Generation)	District Executive
June 2021	SSDC Financial Strategy	Portfolio Holder - Finance, Legal & Democratic Services	Director Strategy and Support Services	Karen Watling, Interim Section 151 Officer	District Executive
June 2021	Result of Neighbourhood Plan Referendum for Martock	Portfolio Holder - Strategy & Housing	Director Service Delivery	Jo Wilkins, Specialist (Strategic Planning)	District Executive
June 2021	Result of Neighbourhood Plan Referendum for Queen Camel	Portfolio Holder - Strategy & Housing	Director Service Delivery	Jo Wilkins, Specialist (Strategic Planning)	District Executive
July 2021	Capital & Revenue Budget Outturn reports for Quarter 4	Portfolio Holder - Finance, Legal & Democratic Services	Director Strategy and Support Services	Karen Watling, Interim Section 151 Officer	District Executive

Date of Decision	Decision	Portfolio	Service Director	Contact	Committee(s)
August 2021	Capital & Revenue Budget monitoring reports for Quarter 1	Portfolio Holder - Finance, Legal & Democratic Services	Director Strategy and Support Services	Karen Watling, Interim Section 151 Officer	District Executive
August 2021 August 2021	SSDC Annual Achievements Report 2020/21	Portfolio Holder - Strategy & Housing	Director Strategy and Support Services	Cath Temple, Specialist (Performance)	District Executive South Somerset District Council

APPENDIX B - Current Consultations – April 2021

Purpose of Document	Portfolio	Director	Response to be agreed by	Contact	Deadline for response
<p>The Future of the New Homes Bonus consultation</p> <p>The New Homes Bonus was introduced in 2011 to provide an incentive for local authorities to encourage housing growth in their areas. The aim of the bonus was to provide a financial incentive to reward and encourage local authorities to help facilitate housing growth.</p> <p>The consultation covers a number of options for reforming the programme to provide an incentive which is more focused and targeted on ambitious housing delivery, complements the reforms outlined in the government’s Planning White Paper, and dovetails with the wider financial mechanisms the government is putting in place, including the infrastructure levy and the Single Housing Infrastructure Fund.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-of-the-new-homes-bonus-consultation?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=bb718755-65e1-4d03-8c96-f5617b6df99e&utm_content=daily</p>	Finance and Legal Services	Service Delivery / Strategy and Support Services	Officers in consultation with Portfolio Holder	Karen Watling, Section 151 Officer	07 April 2021
<p>Proposals for locally-led reorganisation of local government in Cumbria, North Yorkshire and Somerset</p> <p>Councils in Cumbria, North Yorkshire and Somerset have submitted proposals for the reorganisation of local government in their area by creating a single tier of local government.</p>	Strategy and Housing	Chief Executive	Officers in consultation with Portfolio Holder	Jan Gamon, Business Case and Implementation Planning,	19 April 2021

Purpose of Document	Portfolio	Director	Response to be agreed by	Contact	Deadline for response
<p>We are seeking views on these proposals to help the Secretary of State form a judgement on which, if any, proposal best meets the criteria for implementing these reforms.</p> <p>https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposals-for-locally-led-reorganisation-of-local-government-in-cumbria-north-yorkshire-and-somerset?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=832ccc21-de93-40c0-880f-914e575559af&utm_content=daily</p>				Stronger Somerset	



Date of Next Meeting

Members are asked to note that a Special meeting of the District Executive will take place on **Thursday, 15th April 2021** as a virtual meeting via Zoom meeting software commencing at 9.30 a.m.

This meeting will discuss the SSDC response to the Government proposals for locally-led reorganisation of local government in Somerset.
