



South Somerset District Council

Thursday 20th August 2020

6.00 pm

A virtual meeting using Zoom meeting software

All members of Council are requested to attend this meeting.

Any members of the public wishing to address the virtual meeting at Public Question Time need to email democracy@southsomerset.gov.uk by 9.00am on Wednesday 19th August 2020.

The meeting will be viewable online by selecting the meeting at:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSDst3IHGj9WoGnwJGF_soA

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

This Agenda was issued on Wednesday 12 August 2020.

Alex Parmley, Chief Executive Officer

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

South Somerset District Council Membership

Chairman: Paul Maxwell
Vice-chairman: Jenny Kenton

Jason Baker	Henry Hobhouse	Wes Read
Robin Bastable	Ben Hodgson	David Recardo
Mike Best	Charlie Hull	Paul Rowsell
Neil Bloomfield	Kaysar Hussain	Dean Ruddle
Dave Bulmer	Val Keitch	Gina Seaton
Hayward Burt	Andy Kendall	Peter Seib
Tony Capozzoli	Tim Kerley	Garry Shortland
Martin Carnell	Mike Lewis	Alan Smith
Malcolm Cavill	Mike Lock	Jeny Snell
John Clark	Pauline Lock	Andy Soughton
Nicola Clark	Tony Lock	Mike Stanton
Louise Clarke	Kevin Messenger	Rob Stickland
Nick Colbert	Graham Oakes	Lucy Trimmell
Adam Dance	Tricia O'Brien	Gerard Tucker
Sarah Dyke	Sue Osborne	Linda Vijeh
Karl Gill	Tiffany Osborne	Martin Wale
David Gubbins	Robin Pailthorpe	William Wallace
Peter Gubbins	Oliver Patrick	Colin Winder
Brian Hamilton	Clare Paul	
Mike Hewitson	Crispin Raikes	

Information for the Public

The meetings of the full Council, comprising all 60 members of South Somerset District Council, are held at least 6 times a year. The full Council approves the Council's budget and the major policies which comprise the Council's policy framework. Other decisions which the full Council has to take include appointing the Leader of the Council, members of the District Executive, other Council Committees and approving the Council's Constitution (which details how the Council works including the scheme allocating decisions and Council functions to committees and officers).

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.

Meetings of the Council are scheduled to be held monthly at 7.30 p.m. on the third 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 agenda, minutes and the timetable for council meetings are published on the Council's website – <http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

Agendas and minutes can also be viewed via the mod.gov app (free) available for iPads and Android devices. Search for 'mod.gov' in the app store for your device and select 'South Somerset' from the list of publishers and 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.

If you would like to view the meeting without participating, please see:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSDst3IHGj9WoGnwJGF_soA

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 19 August 2020. When you have registered, an officer will provide the details to join the meeting. 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 un-mute 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.

South Somerset District Council

Thursday 20 August 2020

Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes

To approve and sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday, 16 July 2020.

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. Verbal update on the Environment Strategy

7. SSDC Annual Achievements Report 2019-20 (Pages 6 - 21)

8. Review of SSDC Financial Procedure Rules (Pages 22 - 48)

9. Changes to the Constitution - Update of the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations (Pages 49 - 52)

10. Change to the Constitution - Review of Delegation of Decision Making (Pages 53 - 55)

11. Report of Executive Decisions (Pages 56 - 59)

12. Audit Committee (Page 60)

13. Scrutiny Committee (Page 61)

14. Motions

There were no Motions submitted by Members.

15. Questions Under Procedure Rule 10 (Page 62)

16. Date of Next Meeting

Members are asked to note that there will be a Special meeting of the Full Council on **Thursday, 10th September 2020** as a virtual meeting using Zoom meeting software **commencing at 6.00 p.m.**



SSDC Annual Achievements Report 2019-20

Executive Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Val Keitch, Strategy & Housing
Director:	Kirsty Larkins, Strategy and Commissioning
Lead Specialist:	Peter Paddon, Strategic Planning
Lead Officer:	Cath Temple, Specialist - Performance
Contact Details:	Cath.temple@southsomerset.gov.uk 01935 462565

Purpose of the Report

1. This report presents a summary of outcomes achieved against the Council Plan Annual Action Plan for the year April 2019 to March 2020.

Public Interest

2. South Somerset District Council (SSDC) is an ambitious and forward-thinking council that is committed to transforming, improving and adapting to be ready for the future. We place our residents and businesses firmly at the centre of everything we do and we are incredibly proud of the work we have achieved alongside our communities in 2019/20.

Recommendations

3. That Council:-
 - a. notes and comments on the attached Annual Achievements report at Appendix A.
 - b. approve the 2019/20 Annual Achievements report for publication.

Council Plan and Annual Action Plan 2018-19

4. The Council Plan 2020-24 sets out what the Council wants to achieve in support of our vision for South Somerset - ***a place where businesses flourish, communities are safe, vibrant and healthy; where residents enjoy good housing and cultural, leisure and sporting activities.*** An Annual Action Plan for 2020-21 was agreed by Full Council in February 2020 which included eight priority projects and 38 areas of focus under five themes: - Protecting Core Services; Economy; Environment; Places where we live and Healthy, Self-reliant Communities.
5. Our Council Plan shows our ambitions to make major changes in the way that we operate and deliver services over the next few years whilst continuing to deliver services and priority projects that meet the needs of our residents, visitors and businesses.
6. Despite the challenges of Covid-19 we continue to strive to provide excellent services. There are still some areas within the Council which need improvement and we will be focussing on these over the coming year.



South Somerset District Council

7. Just some of last year's highlights and achievements are –

- A balanced budget was delivered with no cuts to services
 - Launched regeneration projects which will support three of our key towns in South Somerset – Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton
 - A 10-year Economic Development Strategy was launched to ensure we are well-placed to attract new businesses, help start-ups and encourage diversity and innovation.
 - We are continuing to be a more commercial organisation, investing in projects that will provide essential income to pay for our highly-valued services.
 - Alongside this we continue to improve customer service with new technology, providing dedicated resources to support those who are most vulnerable, continuing our great work to alleviate homelessness and working hard to protect the environment.
 - The Council received or is shortlisted for a range of national awards or commendations for our work.
8. The attached draft report in Appendix A provides an overview of just some of the great work being undertaken across the Council as we continue to commit to our goals of being great to work for, excellent to work with, leading the way and delivering for our communities.

Financial Implications

9. None.

Council Plan Implications

10. This is the annual report relating to the delivery of the Council Plan

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

11. None

Equality and Diversity Implications

12. None

Privacy Impact Assessment

13. None.

Background Papers

14. Council Plan 2020-24 and Annual Action Plan 2020-21.

SSDC Annual Achievements Report 2019-20 Appendix A – Economy

Executive Portfolio Holder: Cllr John Clark, Economic Development including Commercial Strategy
Strategic Director: Martin Woods, Director of Place
Lead Officer: Joe Walsh, Specialist Economic Development
Contact Details: Joe.walsh@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462289

Purpose of the Report / Appendix

1. This report provides further details regarding the Economy section of the SSDC Annual Achievements Report 2019-20. The purpose is to provide additional information regarding the work which the Economic Development team has progressed during 2019-2020.

Background

2. a) This report sets out in more detail the 2019-20 achievements in the Council Plan priority of Economy. This is the crucial area that contributes to the future prosperity of residents and businesses by enabling real progress in business productivity and growth; broadband and mobile connectivity; reducing rural isolation; skills, innovation and enterprise; tourism; inclusive and green technology.

b) The Economic Development Strategy has been adopted for 18 months and much work has been completed in progressing the 6 priority themes:
 - PT1: Business Support, Retention, Innovation and Inward Investment
 - PT2: Transport and Communications Infrastructure
 - PT3: Economic Inclusion – Skills, Careers and Training
 - PT4: Land, Sites and Workspaces
 - PT5: Supporting Urban Economies
 - PT6: Supporting Rural Economies
c) It should be noted that due to the nature of the work, and external funding streams available, substantial elements are delivered in partnership with other organisations. Some of these include:
 - Other SSDC Teams (including; Tourism, Planning, Regeneration, Commercial etc)
 - Other Councils - County and District
 - Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership
 - Educational Institutions – including Yeovil College
 - Training Providers
 - Businesses (including major employers such as Leonardo, Numatic, Thales etc)
 - Universities and Science Parks
 - Land owners and developers

d) Given the circumstances and timing regarding Covid 19, work had commenced on the response to Covid 19 and preparations were being made for recovery prior to year-end however full reporting will be made in later reports.

Report Detail - SSDC Annual Achievements Report 2019-20

Appendix A – Economy

3. Business productivity and growth;

- a) Engaged over 200 businesses including 83 ‘one to one’ individual business meetings – working with businesses to ensure our projects are aligned with their needs
- b) Worked in partnership with Yeovil Chamber and industry to establish a manufacturing group that seeks to strengthen the sector within South Somerset
- c) Business Rates Retention Pilot (BRRp) funding secured to promote Somerset as a place for businesses to relocate and attract inward investment – securing jobs for the future South Somerset residents
- d) Work commenced on developing a circular economy in line with the Environment Strategy work stream.
- e) Business cases for BRRp funding approved to ‘Enable Growth’ and ‘Unlock (infrastructure) Growth’ to deliver employment land, plus housing growth and regeneration through improved planning and enabling infrastructure provision. Work is underway to evaluate the current methods to see how we can deliver better sites for employment and housing – more efficiently for residents within the area.
- f) Discussions progressed regarding A303 infrastructure improvements and continued work to promote that impacted locations are “open for business”.

4. Broadband and mobile connectivity;

- a) Over 135 (in excess of £300,000) Gigabit Broadband Vouchers allocated in South Somerset throughout the LFFN Programme.
- b) Over 162 (in excess of £250,000) Rural Gigabit Vouchers allocated in South Somerset through the current DCMS Rural Broadband Scheme.

5. Reducing rural isolation;

- a) Broadband and mobile coverage (see above) is crucial in offering rural businesses and residents the opportunities they deserve. In addition, the inadequacy of public transport is an area we are at the cutting edge nationally in progressing.
- b) Bid submitted in partnership with SCC to the Rural Mobility Fund to provide a pilot of Digital Demand Responsive Transport in Somerset with South Somerset having a particular focus on employment and leisure activities.
- c) Work progressed with the Connected Places Catapult to evaluate Digital Demand Responsive Transport solutions
- d) Cycling and active travel reviews conducted in line with Regeneration Schemes – allowing residents to move safely through the district for commuting and leisure purposes

6. Skills, technology, innovation and enterprise;



South Somerset District Council

- a) Successful pilot of the Somerset Catalyst Entrepreneurs Boot Camp and successful funding submission into the BRRp for an extension of the scheme – providing Somerset residents with the opportunity / coaching to start their own business through a tailored accelerator programme
- b) Work progressing in partnership with SCC, HotSW LEP and Leonardo to develop the iAero build project and innovation aspects. Leading to a more resilient future for aerospace within South Somerset
- c) Working with Somerset Education Business Partnership (part funded by SSDC) who have engaged over 66 employers and 16 educational institutions bringing business and education together in South Somerset working closely with students to provide work experience, work placements, apprenticeships opportunities. Additionally learning from businesses the requirements they have now and in the future to help establish the correct courses to provide a talent pool for future opportunities
- d) Business Rates Retention Pilot “Skill Up” funding secured and commenced across South Somerset to support apprenticeships and training and allow individuals to upskill / retrain to fit the changing employment needs
- e) Representation on a strategic “Think Tank” hosted by Yeovil College to work with public and private sector partners to establish a route map to driving Yeovil and the surrounding area forward in terms of industry, innovation, aspirations, education and entrepreneurship
- f) Significant contributions and representations within the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership’s Local Industrial Strategy – a localised version of the national Industrial Strategy which seeks to drive productivity and business growth within the area

7. Tourism

- a) Tourism Service Plan produced for the year
- b) Tourism agreed new partnership with Visit Somerset to help boost tourism
- c) Continued key account visits to tourism businesses
- d) Continued engagement with key attractions on possible expansions and new attractions on their promotion
- e) Work with Visit Somerset to host an event for tourism related businesses concerned about the impact of A303 dualling works between Sparkford and Podimore.
- f) Completed the £420K Heritage Lottery Fund project in Yeovil and secured a first round pass for a £1.6m National Lottery Heritage Fund project; enhancing the authorities own attractions and open spaces.
- g) Delivered a pre-season exchange and networking event for attractions and accommodation providers.
- h) Surveyed and supported Local Information Centre’s across the district.
- i) Started the River Parrett Trail re-launch project with an evaluation workshop and consultation activities

8. Regeneration programmes - supporting urban economies

- a) Yeovil Refresh Programme
 - Yeovil Access Strategy Produced January 2020
 - Public Realm Design Guide Approved and Adopted March 2020
- b) Chard Regeneration Programme
 - Planning Permission Granted in Sep 2019
 - Demolition on site started Dec 2019
 - Construction of Leisure Centre currently underway



South Somerset District Council

- Awarded £1M from the High Street Heritage Action Zone Fund September 2019
- c) Wincanton Town Centre Regeneration Programme
- Wincanton Town centre Strategy supported by Area East Committee July 2019
 - Full Council approved overarching budget October 2019
 - Wincanton Regeneration Board established November 2019

Report End

End of year Achievement Report

2019 - 2020

Page 12



Find out about our achievements for South Somerset



Protecting
Core Services



Economy



Environment



Housing



Healthy, Self-reliant
Communities

Our Vision for South Somerset:

A place where businesses flourish, communities are safe, vibrant and healthy; where residents enjoy good housing, and cultural, leisure and supporting activities.



Priority project:

The Council agrees a small number of priorities each year as part of our Council Plan annual action plan. Priority projects contribute to the achievement of the Council's ambitions for South Somerset. You can read more about the Council's priority projects for 2020-21 [here](#)

South Somerset District Council (SSDC) is an ambitious and forward-thinking council that is committed to transforming, improving and adapting to be ready for the future. We place our residents and businesses firmly at the centre of everything we do and we are incredibly proud of the work we have achieved alongside our communities in 2019/20.

A balanced budget delivered with no cuts to services whilst continuing with regeneration projects. These will support three of our key towns in South Somerset – Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton.

Following acknowledgement of the climate emergency, SSDC approved our Environment Strategy, which aims to make the District carbon neutral by 2030.

The 10-year Economic Development Strategy has been embedded ensuring that we are well placed to attract new businesses, help start-ups and encourage diversity and innovation.

We are continuing to be a more commercial organisation, investing in projects that provide essential income to pay for our highly valued services. Customer Service continues to be transformed and improved with new technology, providing dedicated resource to support those who are most vulnerable, continuing our great work to alleviate homelessness and working hard to protect the environment.

This is all in addition to the excellent value we provide for residents including free school holiday Play days, a superb network of parks and open spaces, waste and recycling collections, leisure, arts and entertainment services including swimming facilities at Wincanton and Yeovil, The Octagon Theatre and Westlands.

This achievements report provides you with an overview of just some of the great work being undertaken by SSDC as we continue to commit to our goals of being great to work for, excellent to work with, leading the way and delivering for our communities.



**Protecting
Core Services**



Economy



Environment



Housing



**Healthy, Self-reliant
Communities**



In order to protect front line services we set out to:

- Transform customer services through technology
- Provide access to services to suit our customers' needs
- Actively manage assets and resources to ensure the best financial or community return
- Seek business opportunities for the council
- Work with partners to achieve economies, resilience and influence

£2.2m

Our ambitious Transformation Programme has continued to make good progress without cutting services and helping to generate £2.2m in commercial income by 2021.



Shortlisted for two national MJ awards

For Workforce Transformation and as Best Commercial Council.



Supported **Local, European** and **General** elections.

79%

Of planning applications were **submitted on-line**, saving time and money. Number of applications up from 1290 to 1322 this year.



Our hub at **Petters Way** has been redesigned, improved access for all including self-serve areas



Our Customer Access Points in Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton provided direct help and advice across the district.



Enhanced our property **portfolio** through prudent, ambitious and exciting investments now providing an annual income of £2.3m



49,000

People following all SSDC's **Facebook accounts** and almost been a **62% growth in SSDC's Facebook page** since April 2019 and March 2020, with posts reaching an average of 236,021 users.





To promote a strong and growing economy with thriving urban, rural and land based businesses and improving productivity we aspired to:

- Work with businesses and use our assets
- Provide advice and support
- Deliver initiatives that ensure worker skills meet the employers' needs
- Lobby for and support infrastructure improvements to enable growth
- Capitalise on our high quality culture, leisure and tourism opportunities to bring people into the district

Page 15



Yeovil Refresh

Our ambitious plan for the regeneration of Yeovil town centre has continued. The Yeovil Access Strategy was produced in January 2020 and the Public Realm Design Guide approved and adopted in March 2020.



Chard Regeneration

Plans for the regeneration of Chard town centre were finalised with planning permission granted in September 2019. Demolition started on site in December 2019 with construction of the Leisure Centre underway. £1m was awarded from the High Street Heritage Action Zone Fund in September 2019.



Wincanton Regeneration

The public consultation ended in March 2019 and the Wincanton Town Centre Strategy was formally supported by Area East Committee in July 2019. The budget was approved in October and the Wincanton Regeneration Board was established in November. Work is now ongoing to progress the priority projects identified in the strategy.



Priority Project

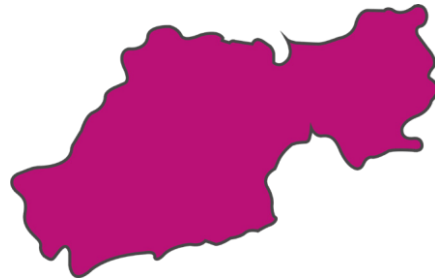
All three of these Priority Projects will continue into 2019-20. You can read more about our plans for 2019-20 in the updated [Council Plan](#).



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Page 18



Local Plan

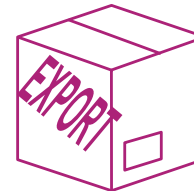
Review ongoing for South Somerset 2016-2036 – including public consultation on the Issues and Options.



New Anchor Tenant

Moved into the Yeovil Innovation Centre Phase 2. New meeting room fitted out with up to the minute conferencing and presentation equipment.

We have worked with and part-funded Somerset Education Business Partnership who have engaged with over 66 Employers & 16 Educational Instructors bringing business and education together in South Somerset. Apprenticeship funding secured and representation on “Think Tank” with **Yeovil College**.



We continued to provide **support and advice to food businesses who may be affected by Brexit** in particular relation to export certification



10-year strategy

We continued with our ten-year strategy for economic prosperity and growth in South Somerset across our 6 priority themes:

- Business Support, Retention, Innovation & Inward Investment
- Transport & Communications Infrastructure
- Economic Inclusion – skills, careers and training
- Land, Sites & Workspaces
- Supporting Urban Economies
- Supporting Rural Economies

You can read more about our [Achievements here](#)



To keep South Somerset clean, green and attractive we worked in partnership to:

- Promote recycling and minimise waste
- Promote the use of 'green' technology
- Maintain and promote access to our Country Parks and open spaces to promote good mental and physical health
- Keep streets and neighbourhoods clean and attractive
- Continue to support long term flood resilience
- Promote a high quality built environment in line with Local Plan policies
- Support communities to develop and implement local, parish & neighbourhood plans

SSDC approved our First Environment Strategy following acknowledgement of the Climate Emergency

4 Climate Emergency drop in events help across the County.

625 residents came along to have their say.



Green Flag Awards

Retained at Ham Hill and Yeovil Country parks and Chard Reservoir Local Nature Reserve.



Awarded a South West in Bloom, **Five star Best Park Award** for Yeovil Country Park



Yeovil won Gold for South West In Bloom for the third year running. **Curry Rivel and Haselbury Plucknett also won Gold.**

Milborne Port & Templecombe won Silver Gilt



To keep South Somerset clean, green and attractive we worked in partnership to:

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- Promote the use of 'green'

technology

- Maintain and promote access to our Country Parks and open spaces to promote good mental and physical health
- Keep streets and neighbourhoods clean and attractive

- Continue to support long term flood resilience
- Promote a high quality built environment in line with Local Plan policies
- Support communities to develop and implement local, parish & neighbourhood plans



The **batayenergy (25MW) storage site near Taunton** – completed and operational by the end of 2019.

Environment

Champions in place across SSDC. Recycling audit undertaken, action plan being worked on. Parishes looking for volunteers to act as Environment Champions.



2280



Trees planted at Yeovil Rec



Over **3000** trees planted as part of the Great Parish

Tree Giveaway across **61**

Flood resilience

Supported the work of the Somerset Rivers Authority



SSDC along with the other members of Somerset Waste Partnership supported the “Slim my Waste, feed my face” initiative to promote recycling food waste.



To enable the provision of housing that meets the future and existing needs of residents and Employers we worked with partners to:

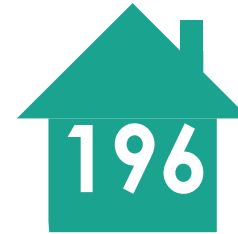
- Minimise homelessness and rough sleeping
- Work with the private rented sector to improve the standard and availability of rented accommodation
- Tackle fuel poverty
- Work to minimise the impact of personal or household debt
- Enable people to live independently for as long as they are able

82

Disabled facilities grants (DFGs) allowed residents to continue to live independently in their homes.

Operated the Severe Weather Emergency Provision for 16 nights and as a result **helped 28 people with emergency accommodation and follow up support.**

In partnership with The Newt Somerset, SSDC won the **Royal Town Planning Institute's Excellence in Planning for Heritage and Culture Award**



New affordable homes In South Somerset by partnership working with developers and housing associations.



Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) were licensed to ensure standards for tenants are maintained in rented accommodation.

254

Households received timely advice and support, which prevented homelessness

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy & Action Plan 2019-2023 was successfully adopted.

Provided **11-Unit temporary accommodation property** for homeless families with self-contained bedsits and communal facilities and commenced work to bring an old building back into use for 6 more units of temporary housing.



Healthy, Self-reliant Communities

2019-20

To build healthy, self-reliant, active Communities we committed to:

- Support communities so that they can identify their needs and develop local solutions
- Target support to areas of need
- Help people to live well by enabling quality cultural, leisure, play, sport & healthy lifestyle facilities & activities
- Work with partners to tackle health issues such as diabetes and hypertension, and mental health
- Work with partners to keep our communities safe



1161

Food inspections completed to ensure safe places for communities to eat and buy food.

359

investigations of noise complaints, helping to address causes or factors of poor mental health and wellbeing.



Construction of a new adventure play park and outdoor gym at Stoke Sub Hamdon



The Octagon Theatre and Westlands Entertainment Venue set a new box office record selling over

161,943 tickets!

£2.8 million worth (64% on-line) across both venues, and supported by 15,800 hours donated by our magnificent volunteers.

Community Heritage Access Centre (CHAC)

CHAC created a First World War commemorative walks guide for Yeovil, funded by the South West Museum Development Fund and launched with a series of locally led events.



47 Community Led projects

We facilitated £167,000 of grants, which helped to create investment of over £560,000 into supporting increased local quality of life.

12,500+



People attended children's play days across the district with support from SSDC including 6000 visitors to the National Play Day event at Yeovil Country Park.

Construction of a new skate park in Wincanton.

Looking ahead - Our future plans for 2020 - 21



Protecting
Core Services



Economy



Environment



Places where we live



Healthy, Self-reliant
Communities

Page 21

Looking ahead to 2020-21 we are set for another year full of ambition for South Somerset – while still facing many of the challenges arising from reduced Government funding and rising demand for services. We are committed to protecting vital front line services, while increasing our digital services to provide 24/7 access to customers.

Our Council Plan for 2020-24 agreed by Full Council in 2020, shows our ambitions to make major changes in the way that we operate and deliver services over the next few years whilst continuing to deliver services and priority projects that meet the needs of our residents, visitors and businesses.

Our Annual Action Plan for 2020-21 includes 38 areas of focus across our five Council Plan themes: Protecting Core Services, Economy, Environment, Places where we live and Healthy, Self-Reliant Communities. We have also identified eight priority projects for the coming year, with dedicated resources and detailed plans to support their progress and long-term contribution to the well-being of South Somerset. This year's Annual Action Plan also includes a series of local priorities for each of our four areas – North, South, East and West.

Council Plan 2020-24

You can read about our Council Plan annual action plan for 2020-24 [here](#).





Review of SSSC Financial Procedure Rules

Executive Portfolio Holder: Peter Seib, Finance and Legal Services
Strategic Director: Nicola Hix, Support Services
Lead Officer: Jo Nacey, Section 151 Officer
Contact Details: Jo.nacey@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462612

Purpose of Report

This report introduces the proposed changes to the Financial Procedure Rules that were considered by the Audit Committee at their meeting on 30 July 2020.

Recommendations

The Council is asked to:

- a) approve the attached revised Financial Procedure Rules as part of the Council's Constitution.
- b) note the Financial Procedure Rules will be reviewed annually.

Introduction

The Financial Procedure Rules outline the financial policies of this authority and the financial accountabilities of individuals that apply to both officers and members. The review of those rules is included within the remit of the Audit Committee under its terms of reference as follows:

“To consider the effectiveness of SSSC’s risk management arrangements, the control environment and associated anti-fraud and corruption arrangements and seek assurance from management that action has been taken”

The last review took place in 2015 and it is best practice to review and update the rules on a regular basis. The main emphasis of this review has been to adjust the rules to reflect changes to other policies and agreements.

Revised Financial Procedure Rules

The attached document shows the main revisions to the current approved rules highlighted in yellow. The S151 Officer will attend the committee to explain the main changes in detail.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

Background Papers

SSSC Financial Procedure Rules as part of the Constitution.

Financial Procedure Rules

Introduction

- i. To conduct its business efficiently a local authority needs to ensure that it has sound financial management policies in place and that they are strictly adhered to. Part of this process is the establishment of Financial Procedure Rules that set out the financial policies of the authority. A modern council should also be committed to innovation, within the regulatory framework, providing that the necessary risk assessment and approval safeguards are in place.
- ii. The Financial Procedure Rules provide clarity about the financial accountabilities of individuals: Elected Members; the District Executive; the Chief Executive; Directors; Section 151 Officer (S151); the Monitoring Officer; other Managers and all other officers of the Council.
- iii. The Council has established other internal regulatory documents as set out in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution. The Constitution lays down the Council's governance structure, which sets out how the Council operates, decision making processes, and the Council's operating procedures.
- iv. It is not possible to draft procedure rules to cover every eventuality or circumstance. Consequently, the principles of sound financial management proper exercise of responsibility and accountability, as set out in this document should be applied in all circumstances.
- v. The following general principles apply: -
 - there should be adequate and understood separation of duties so as to maintain adequate control over all financial transactions and operations;
 - there should be a clear hierarchy of control;
 - there should be adequate training and supervision of staff and there should be adequate management and audit trails;
 - there should be adequate management of risks and additional checks where there are high levels of risk;
 - operational financial procedures should be clearly documented, key risks identified, and such documents kept up to date and there should be adequate business continuity plans in place to maintain effective administration of the Council's finances at all times.
- vi. Financial Procedure Rules apply to every Member and employee of the Council and anyone acting on its behalf.
- vii. Executive Members and Directors should, where decision-making is delegated to them, maintain a written record of all decisions. Where decisions are delegated or devolved to other responsible officers, references to Directors in the rules should be read as referring to them.
- viii. All elected Members and employees have a general responsibility for taking reasonable action to provide for the security of assets, funds and resources under their control, and for ensuring that the use of these resources is legal, is properly authorised, provides value for money and achieves best value.
- ix. The S151 Officer is individually responsible for maintaining a continuous review of the Financial Procedure Rules and submitting any additions or changes necessary to the Audit Committee and then Full Council for approval. She/he is also individually responsible for reporting, where appropriate, breaches to the Council, to the District Executive, or the Audit Committee. Directors and their staff are responsible for promptly notifying the S151 Officer of any breaches of these Financial Procedure Rules.
- x. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is responsible for ensuring that all Managers are aware of the existence and content of the Council's Financial Procedure Rules and other internal regulatory documents, and that all employees comply with them. The SLT shall also ensure that there is an adequate level of understanding of these rules within their teams and that copies are available for reference within their service area or are accessible via other media.

CONTENTS

1	Financial Governance	1.1	Full Council
		1.2	District Executive
		1.3	Chief Executive (Head of Paid Services)

		1.4 1.5 1.6 1.7 1.8	Monitoring Officer Section 151 Officer (Chief Finance Officer) Chief Executive, Directors/Managers and Budget Holders Executive Members Exercising Budget Responsibility All Other Employees
2	Cash Limits	2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 2.5 2.6 2.7 2.8 2.9 2.10 2.11 2.12 2.13	General Revenue and Budget Monitoring Variation to Structures and Staffing Levels Revenue Virement Rules Revenue Under/Overspends General Capital and Budget Monitoring Bidding for Capital Resources Purchase & Disposal of Plant & Vehicles Capital Receipts Capital Virement Rules Monitoring the Capital Programme and Capital Projects Capital Under/Overspends Post Project Appraisals S106 Funds
3	Financial Control	3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4 3.5 3.6	General Local Code of Corporate Governance Annual Governance Statement Internal Audit – South West Audit Partnership Operational Leases Treasury Management
4	Contracts	4.1	General
5	Purchasing	5.1 5.2 5.3	Payment of Invoices Corporate Credit Cards Procurement Cards
6	Payroll	6.1 6.2 6.3 6.4	Appointment of Employees Amendments to Payroll Other Payments Timesheets
7	Banking	7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4 7.5 7.6	General Cash and Cheques Received Money Laundering Payments by Direct Debits Direct Debits and Cheques Paid Handling of Cheques
8	Income Management	8.1 8.2 8.3 8.4	Income Collection Fees and Charges Write-off of Debts Cash Floats and Petty Cash
9	Imprest Accounts	9.1	Imprest Accounts
10	Risk Management and Insurance	10.1 10.2 10.3 10.4 10.5 10.6 10.7	Risk Management Insurances Notification of Loss Review Car Allowances Current Insurance Inventories
11	Stocks, Stores, Furniture and Equipment	11.1 11.2 11.3	General Write Offs Stock Checks

		11.4 11.5	Corrections Disposal of Surplus Furniture and Equipment (including personal computers)
12	Car Loans and Car Leases	12.1	Car Loans and Car Leases
13	Land, Buildings and Other Property	13.1 13.2 13.3 13.4 13.5 13.6	Asset Register Buildings, Land and Property Transactions Condition Surveys Asset Management Plans Custody of Deeds and Documents Security
14	Loans to Third Parties	14.1	Loans Policy
15	External Arrangements	15.1 15.2 15.3	Partnerships External Funding Grants to Outside Bodies
16	Breaches of Financial Regulations	16.1	Breaches of Financial Regulations
	Appendix A		Officer contacts for further information

1 FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE

1.1 Full Council

- a) The Full Council is responsible for approving the policy framework and, through a named vote, the annual revenue and capital budgets within which the Executive operates. This encompasses any medium and longer-term plans for both revenue and capital resources. The policy framework shall also include approval and setting the Council Tax rate.
- b) The Full Council may delegate to a Sub Committee or the Leader the approval of the Full Council Tax Determination that sets out the detailed council tax charges by town/parish and council tax band for each preceptor.
- c) It is also responsible for monitoring the budget including compliance with the Authority's overall framework of accountability and control. If revenue reserves fall below the risk assessed minimum requirement then only Full Council can authorise any further use of those reserves, taking due account of advice from the Council's S151 Officer. Full Council is responsible for approving use of capital reserves greater than 5% of the usable receipts balance in any one year.

1.2 District Executive

- a) The District Executive is responsible for proposing the policy framework and detailed budget to the Full Council and for discharging executive functions in accordance with the policy framework and budget agreed by Full Council. The detailed budget should include the allocations to the various services and projects, proposed funding including taxation levels, and minimum required levels of general reserves. District Executive can approve the use of general reserves to fund Supplementary Budget allocations within the financial year subject to balances remaining at the risk assessed minimum requirements. District Executive can approve the use of usable capital receipts up to a maximum of 5% of unallocated receipts to fund Supplementary Budget allocations in any one year.
- b) Where the District Executive delegates executive decisions to a committee, or an individual Executive Member (Portfolio Holder), or a Member of staff, that delegation will include the financial accountabilities relating to the administration of the budget and spending decisions.
- c) The relevant budget holder will be the employee with responsibility for the relevant service, policy, or project, unless the Executive specifically identifies to whom budget responsibility is delegated e.g. to an Executive Member.

- d) The Chief Executive, Directors or District Executive Members who have responsibility for budgets delegated to them will be accountable to the District Executive or Full Council, as appropriate, for the use of delegated budgets and should report at least quarterly to their accountable body for the use of those budgets and on the latest budget position.
- e) The District Executive is responsible for ensuring individual Executive Members with delegated powers consult with all relevant staff before taking decisions within their delegated authority, so that all implications, including financial implications, are taken into account.
- f) The District Executive will follow general good practice and comply with sound principles of accountability and effective management by delegating management and operational control normally to the Directors/ Managers and other suitable officers wherever feasible and practical.
- g) It is the responsibility of the Executive or Executive Member with delegated budget responsibility to consult with the S151 Officer over the availability of funds before committing the authority to expenditure.

The Statutory Officers

1.3 The Chief Executive

- a) The Chief Executive is the Council's Head of Paid Service, and is responsible for the corporate and overall strategic management of the authority as a whole. This includes responsibility for establishing a framework for management direction, style, and standards and for monitoring the performance of the authority.

1.4 Monitoring Officer

- a) The Council's Monitoring Officer is responsible for promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct, including financial conduct.
- b) The Monitoring Officer in conjunction with the S151 Officer is responsible for advising the Executive, Full Council, Audit Committee and Scrutiny Committee about whether a decision is likely to be considered contrary or not wholly in accordance with the budget.
- c) Actions that may be contrary to the budget include
 - initiating a new policy with additional unfunded budgetary implications
 - committing expenditure in future years above the current year budget level or medium term financial plan
 - incurring virement without approval or outside any limits set by Council
 - causing total expenditure to increase above the approved budget

1.5 Chief Finance Officer

- a) The S151 Officer is the Chief Finance Officer, and is responsible for the proper administration of the Council's financial affairs and shall:
 - i. Advise the Council on insurance and financial risk;
 - ii. Advise the Council on effective systems of internal control;
 - iii. Ensure that there is an effective system of internal financial control;
 - iv. Advise the Council on anti-fraud and anti-corruption strategies and measures;
 - v. Present the annual Statement of Accounts to the Audit Committee subsequent to external audit and submit to the appropriate departments of central government any associated grant claims.
 - vi. Select and consistently apply accounting policies, determine accounting procedures and records, and ensure compliance with relevant Accounting Codes of Practice;
 - vii. Ensure that there is an effective internal audit function and assist managers to provide effective arrangements for financial scrutiny;
 - viii. Secure effective systems of financial administration and provide appropriate financial information to enable budgets to be monitored;
 - ix. Manage the cash and investments of the Council in accordance with the relevant CIPFA Codes of Practice and the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement, and determine effective and compliant Treasury Management Practices;

- x. Ensure that financial management arrangements are in line with the Council's policy objectives, the Council's overall governance arrangements and comply with any internally or externally set financial management standards;
- xi. Advise the Council on the setting of its revenue and capital budgets and the adequacy of its reserves to meet possible future commitments and contingencies. It is the responsibility of the S151 Officer to advise the District Executive on the setting of budget guidelines, to ensure budget estimates reflect agreed service levels and any guidelines set by the District Executive, and to liaise with budget holders throughout the budget preparation process;
- xii. Discharge statutory duties under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations 2003, the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, and the Local Government Act 2003;
- xiii. Advise the District Executive and Full Council on prudent levels of reserves for the Council and on the robustness of the Revenue and Capital Budgets;
- xiv. Advise the District Executive, the Chief Executive, the Directors/ Managers on all taxation issues that affect the Council;
- xv. Ensure the effective billing, collection and recovery of all sums due to the Council, in accordance with the Debt Recovery Policy.

1.6 Chief Executive, Directors, and Budget Holders

- a) The Council delegates all approved budgets for management purposes to a named post of the Council. Each named employee shall:
 - i. Ensure that the financial content of all reports, forms and procedures is approved by the S151 Officer (or a named Finance representative);
 - ii. Report any irregularities concerning the Council's financial affairs to the S151 Officer or Group Auditor at the earliest possible opportunity. The provisions of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy shall also be followed where relevant;
 - iii. Ensure that there are sufficient funds available in their cash limited budget before commitments are entered into;
 - iv. Consult with the S151 Officer prior to submitting to the SLT, District Executive or any Committee any report that may have financial implications;
 - v. Ensure that the Council's Standing Orders, Procurement Rules, and Human Resources Rules and procedural notes are complied with together with all applicable statutes, regulations, and best practice;
 - vi. Monitor and control expenditure against approved budget allocations and report to the District Executive quarterly in conjunction with the S151 Officer on variances and the action being taken to address them;
 - vii. Maintain systems of control that facilitate the achievement of the Council's objectives by using resources economically, efficiently, and effectively and by safeguarding the authority's assets and interests;
 - viii. Review and appraise their operations so as to achieve continuous improvement;
 - ix. Liaise with the Council's external auditor and any other inspectorate with statutory rights of access.
 - x. Ensure any compensation payments are authorised in accordance with the limits set in the Constitution (see Scheme of Delegation). The relevant Director will report to the SLT annually on the number and value of payments made.
 - xi. Maintain systems, procedures and sufficient resources to ensure that collection and recovery of all sums due to the Council follow the Income Management Policy.

1.7 Executive Members Exercising Budget Responsibility

- a) Where an Executive Member exercises budget responsibility they shall comply with the provisions of section 1.6 above and all related Financial Procedure Rules.

1.8 All Other Employees

- a) All other employees of the Council have a responsibility to:
 - i. Report any irregularities concerning the Council's financial affairs to the S151 Officer or the Internal Auditor (Assistant Director – SWAP) at the earliest possible opportunity. The provisions of the Council's Whistleblowing Policy and the Anti Money Laundering Policy shall also be followed where relevant;

- ii. Comply with the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Procedure Rules, Procurement Procedure Rules and procedural notes.

2 MANAGING RESOURCES

2.1 General and Budget Monitoring

- a) Delegation of cash limits shall be in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.
- b) Delegation of cash limits is to the Chief Executive and Directors. The Chief Executive and each Director must maintain a full list of delegations to officers within their functional areas.
- c) Accountability for appropriate budgets shall be held at Chief Executive or Director level.
- d) Budget holders can only vary cash limited budgets in accordance with these Financial Procedure Rules. Accounting recharges (such as Support Services and depreciation) will not be included in cash limits.
- e) Budget monitoring is the responsibility of each Director. Where there is likely to be a significant variation between the budget and actual expenditure you must notify the S151 Officer as soon as possible including an action plan to rectify the situation where appropriate.
- f) Budgets must be managed and monitored at nominal code level. The nominal code describes the type of spending and income e.g. salaries, electricity, grants, fees and charges. Virements must be requested where insufficient funds are available at nominal level. Virements are required where the variance is greater than £1,000.
- g) The S151 Officer is responsible for setting a timetable and reporting the Council's financial performance and financial position to the Leadership Team and the District Executive.
- h) The Council has a statutory responsibility to produce a Statement of Accounts and all budget holders shall comply with the accounts closedown timetable set by the S151 Officer.

2.2 Variations to Structures and Staffing Levels

- a) Within the total cash limit approved by the Council each year, the Directors shall be entitled to vary the numbers and composition of their workforce in order to meet service requirements, provided such variations do not commit the Council to increased expenditure in future years and subject to SLT approval. Directors proposing restructures shall liaise with both Finance Specialists and People Specialists to agree overall cost implications and HR process and procedure. Directors shall ensure they have included the cost implications of the Council's severance scheme, and that the S151 Officer verifies these costs. Directors shall cost salaried posts at the top of the grade in any workforce design, include all potential redundancies and/or early retirements and salary protections, and then be compared to the previous structure. Where there are any actual or potential additional costs associated with restructuring proposals that may commit the Council to increased expenditure in future years, Directors must obtain agreement from the SLT and District Executive including the method of financing.
- b) Directors shall not enter into or change a contract of employment, including the grading of a post without prior consultation with the Lead Specialist - People.
- c) Directors shall adhere to the Council's staffing policies and staffing delegations, including the proper use of appointment procedures, systems for determining remuneration and the method used to make payments to employees. Directors may choose to delegate these functions.

2.3 Virement Rules

- a) Full Council is to approve the Detailed Budget Analysis including income and expenditure totals for each activity as part of the Annual Budget Report.
- b) District Executive have delegated authority to approve virements between activities/services within the overall net budget total and have agreed the following flexibilities and freedoms: -

Directors/Managers

- c) Directors and Managers can increase their expenditure by up to £20,000 in one financial year for goods purchased for resale with a matching increase in income budgets, in consultation with a Finance Specialist.
- d) Directors and Managers can increase their cost centre income budget on services by up to a maximum of £20,000 in one financial year, with supporting evidence, and in consultation with a Finance Specialist.
- e) Directors and Managers can authorise any budget virement within each individual cost centre / activity / service of their responsibility, except the 'employees' budget, provided that the S151 Officer is notified in advance.
- f) Directors can authorise any budget virement to or from the 'employees' budget provided that the Lead Specialist – Finance approval is obtained in advance.
- g) Directors can increase their budgets in respect of 100% externally funded staff provided the Lead Specialist - People has agreed the contract terms and that the Lead Specialist – Finance has been notified in advance. Directors must ensure any additional costs associated with that Member of staff is fully funded at the outset including any provision for possible redundancy costs.
- h) Subject to the above specific virement responsibilities, the following table summarises virement approval limits. Where virements are between different areas of responsibility the approval of all relevant officers and portfolio holders is required. The Lead Specialist – Finance shall ensure all virements above £50,000 are reported to District Executive for information and transparency.

Responsible	Limit	Finance approval required
Manager	£25,000	Specialist – Finance
Director	£50,000	Lead Specialist – Finance
Portfolio Holder	£100,000	S151 Officer
District Executive	Greater than £100,000	S151 Officer

- i) Movements to and from earmarked capital and revenue reserves can be actioned by the relevant Director (or delegated budget holder where appropriate) provided that the use is for the approved purpose.
- j) All budget virements properly approved shall be actioned in the Council's main finance system only by Finance Officers.

Area Committees

- k) Area Committees can approve budget allocations from total budgets and ring-fenced reserves delegated to each Committee by District Executive and Full Council. Area Budget information will be reported to the District Executive for information.

2.4 Revenue Under/Overspends and Budget Carry Forwards

- a) Directors/Managers are responsible for ensuring budgetary control is maintained at all times, and shall take all reasonable action to contain spending and meet income targets within approved targets. All forecast and actual variations to approved budgets by activity/service greater than £50,000 must be reported and fully explained to the District Executive through regular Financial Performance reports.
- b) The S151 Officer is responsible for approving all budget carry forwards due to timing differences between financial years in meeting agreed commitments.
- c) The S151 Officer shall transfer Revenue Budget Net Underspend or Overspend, after approved carry forwards and allocations to/from earmarked reserves, to General Reserves at the end of the financial year. District Executive can approve a net overspend of a maximum of £50,000 to be carried forward to the following financial year to be met from that year's approved budget.

2.5 Capital General and Budget Monitoring

- a) A rolling five-year Capital Programme is to be prepared and reviewed annually to confirm the Capital Budget and Financing requirement within each financial year.
- b) The S151 Officer is responsible for compiling the Capital Budget and the 5-year Programme including the associated capital financing, in consultation with SLT, for consideration by the District Executive prior to submission to Full Council for approval. The programme will include:
 - committed schemes that are in the process of completion
 - schemes for replacement/maintenance of existing assets
 - new starts for the following years
 - receipts from expected sales of assets and
 - external contributions expected
- c) The Chief Executive or Directors may approve Supplementary Capital Budgets of up to £50,000, and District Executive may approve Supplementary Capital Budgets of up to £150,000 during the year, within the resourcing limit delegated by Full Council. Full Council is responsible for approving all other Supplementary Capital Budgets unless specific delegations exist e.g. for investment property acquisitions/disposals under the Council's approved Commercial Strategy. In all Supplementary Budget decisions, the decision-maker must consider affordability of both capital and revenue implications of recommended projects, in consultation with the S151 Officer or Lead Specialist – Finance.
- d) The S151 Officer is responsible for setting the reporting timetable in consultation with the Portfolio Holder responsible for Finance. The Capital Programme will be monitored by District Executive or, where monitoring has been delegated, by the appropriate Area Committee.
- e) The S151 Officer in consultation with Responsible Officers and the SLT will prepare the monitoring reports to the District Executive.

2.6 Bidding for Capital Resources

- a) Schemes where appropriate shall have completed a feasibility study before submission to Area Committees or District Executive. All schemes requiring Feasibility Funds require approval by SLT and then District Executive.
- b) There is a de-minimis value of £10,000 for each Capital Scheme, £250 for Capital Grants, and £10,000 for capital receipts.
- c) During the annual budget setting process, decisions will be made on which new schemes are to be included in the following year's Capital Budget and 5 year Programme. Capital Investment Appraisal shall be completed in line with Guidance provided by Finance and can be submitted to the S151 Officer at any time during the year but will be considered by SLT for onward approval by District Executive and Full Council in line with the agreed timetable.
- d) Proposals shall be clearly linked to the Council Plan and any relevant Service Plans.
- e) The capital investment appraisal form shall disclose any revenue consequences. If these cannot be absorbed by the service a request shall be made to District Executive for additional resources as part of the Revenue Budget setting process.
- f) Each approved scheme will be the responsibility of a named Responsible Officer, who shall monitor the scheme's progress and report accordingly.
- g) Allocations to services from the Internal Capital Loans Fund is delegated to the S151 Officer for assets purchased by the authority and recharged to services within the approved budget.

2.7 Purchase and Disposal of Plant and Vehicles over £10,000

- a) Managers/Lead Specialists are responsible for assessing the need for acquiring, replacing or disposing of plant or vehicles and completing a business case that includes describing the business need and benefit, the costs and funding proposals. This includes regular (at least 6-monthly) reviews of leases.
- b) Managers/Lead Specialists shall liaise with a Finance Specialist in Support Services to determine the most economical approach to financing and confirm sufficient budget is in place.
- c) The Finance Lead Specialist has authority to approve advances from the Internal Loans Fund Reserve to finance vehicles and plant within the overall Fund total approved by Council. Alternatively, freehold or leasehold purchases may be approved by the Finance Lead Specialist if capital costs are affordable within approved capital budget totals and any revenue implications are affordable within approved revenue budgets.
- d) Managers/Lead Specialists shall maintain a maintenance and replacement plan for vehicles and plant, and submit future budget requirements in line with the annual Budget Timetable set by the S151 Officer.

2.8 Capital Receipts

- a) All Directors/Managers shall inform the relevant Finance Specialist of all expected capital receipts as soon as they are identified. Where a land and property asset is identified as available for sale this is to be considered in line with FPR 13.2. Disposal of other assets shall be approved by the relevant Director/Manager, and notified to Finance Lead Specialist. The Director/Manager must always seek to obtain best value when disposing of assets. Proceeds from sale of assets valued at £10,000 or above shall be credited to the Capital Receipts Reserve and allocated in accordance with the approved Capital Programme.

a) Virement Rules – Capital

Approved budget allocations may be transferred between schemes subject the following authorisation responsibilities and limits.

Responsible	Limit	Finance approval required
Manager	£25,000	Specialist – Finance
Director	£50,000	Lead Specialist – Finance
Portfolio Holder	£100,000	S151 Officer
District Executive	Greater than £100,000 (previously £10K)	S151 Officer

- b) All contributions made from revenue budgets to capital budgets (other than those purely made for accounting adjustments such as accounting for leases) shall be approved by the relevant Committee and authorised by the S151 Officer (or nominated representative).
- c) If, during the progress of approved schemes, significant budget variations are projected then virement can be made from another scheme within the Corporate or Area totals. All such proposed virements shall be reported to the District Executive for approval.

2.9 Monitoring the Capital Programme and Capital Projects

- a) Where Responsible Officers require schemes to be re-phased between years they shall notify the S151 Officer at least quarterly so that the overall financing of the Capital Programme can be maintained and investment income maximised.
- b) Progress on each project and funding projections must be submitted to the S151 Officer quarterly. This must include any slippage in the project timetable and spend with the actions being taken if necessary to bring the project back in line.
- c) Projects should be managed and monitored using the Council's Project Management Methodology and regular reports made to each Project Sponsor for monitoring purposes.

- d) Any projects amended, other than for minor changes, between approval and implementation must be resubmitted to the District Executive for approval. This includes projects that have received further external financing to meet additional costs over £50,000.

2.10 Capital Under/Overspends

- a) The S151 Officer can approve the carry forward of underspends against budgets to the following year if the project has commenced before the year-end and has not been completed. District Executive or the appropriate Committee will decide at the year-end whether projects that have a delayed start date of more than one year can continue.

2.11 Post Completion Appraisals

- a) On completion of a project the Responsible Officer will prepare a report in consultation with the S151 Officer (or nominated representative) stating how the project has performed against its set objectives. This will be reported as part of the outturn report to District Executive each year.

2.12 S106 Funds

- a) All S106 funds over £10,000 will be included if appropriate in the capital programme once received and included within a quarterly monitoring statement for reporting to District Executive.

3 FINANCIAL CONTROL

3.1 General

- a) All accounting systems, procedures and records shall be subject to the approval of the S151 Officer. Changes to or discontinuation of existing systems/procedures and the introduction of new systems shall also be approved by the S151 Officer.
- b) All accounts and reports shall be prepared in accordance with these Financial Procedure Rules and in conformity with any Government Regulations and CIPFA Codes of Practice and any other professional guidance held to represent best practice.
- c) The Chief Executive and all Directors/Managers are responsible for specifying the budget requirements for their cost centre in accordance with the cash limit rules and the timetables established by the S151 Officer. Directors and Managers should seek the advice of the S151 Officer, or nominated representative, to ensure that budgets are compiled in accordance with the financial policies agreed by the Council.
- d) Directors and Managers are responsible for the proper operation of financial processes within their functional areas.

3.2 Local Code of Governance

- a) The S151 Officer is responsible for preparing a Local Code of Corporate Governance, in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Directors, which is to be reviewed on a regular basis and at least every three years. The Audit Committee is responsible for approving the Local Code of Corporate Governance.

3.3 Annual Governance Statement

- a) The Council is required to publish an Annual Governance Statement at the end of each financial year, which is to be approved by the Audit Committee and signed by the Chief Executive and Leader. The Chief Executive and Directors/Managers shall annually declare and evidence that the internal controls within their functional area are regularly monitored and reviewed.

3.4 Internal Audit – South West Audit Partnership Ltd (SWAP)

- a) The general standards for Internal Audit shall be those of the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) in conjunction with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards (PSIAS).

- b) The South West Audit Partnership Ltd (SWAP) Chief Executive, or nominated Senior Officer Representative, will be the responsible Chief Internal Auditor (CIA) as agreed with the S151 Officer. The CIA shall compile an Annual Audit Plan in consultation with the S151 Officer, to be approved by the Audit Committee.
- c) The Chief Internal Auditor shall report audit findings and significant control risks, performance in delivering the Audit Plan, and an annual Audit Opinion to the S151 Officer and the Audit Committee.
- d) To assist in the objectivity and independence of the South West Audit Partnership Ltd, all audit employees have:
 - authority to enter any Council premises or land
 - authority to access all Council records, documents and correspondence
 - receive explanations from employees and Members on any matter that they are reviewing or investigating
- e) Such authority will not be used unreasonably.
- f) All thefts and break-ins to Council property shall be reported to the South West Audit Partnership Ltd at the earliest possible opportunity.
- g) Where the Council enters into agreements with partners that involve financial grants or contributions from the Council, those agreements shall give the South West Audit Partnership Ltd authority to examine the financial accounts of the partner.

3.5 Operational Leases

- a) Directors/Managers may enter into an operational lease for equipment provided that the S151 Officer has confirmed in writing that the method of finance is appropriate for the asset concerned. Procedure 2.7 Purchase and Disposal of Plant and Vehicles over £10,000 shall be followed where appropriate. Directors/Managers may not enter into a lease without first taking advice from the Procurement Specialist. Directors/Managers shall ensure that charges arising from such arrangements can be met within approved budget for the current and future years.
- b) Directors/Managers must liaise with the Lead Finance Specialist or Finance Specialist to determine whether a lease shall be accounted for as capital or revenue expenditure.

3.6 Treasury Management

- a) The S151 Officer is responsible for preparing annually a Treasury Management Strategy Statement (TMSS) setting out the main principles of treasury management to be followed, and including Prudential Indicators and other relevant performance measures. Full Council is responsible for approving the TMSS. Revisions to the TMSS or Prudential Indicators require Full Council approval.
- b) All Executive decisions on borrowing, investment or financing shall be delegated to the S151 Officer, who may delegate to appropriately trained Finance Officers in accordance with Treasury Management Practices. All employees are required to act in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Local Authorities and the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement, and comply with the Treasury Management Practices.
- c) The S151 Officer shall review the TMSS mid-year and recommend any changes to Full Council. The S151 Officer shall also provide a Treasury Management activity monitoring report mid-year, and an annual report by no later than 30th June to the Audit Committee and by the 30th September to Full Council.
- d) All investments and borrowing shall be made in the name of the Council or its approved nominees.
- e) All financial balances in the possession of the Council shall be controlled by the S151 Officer.

4 CONTRACT

4.1 General

- a) All employees shall comply with the Procurement Procedure Rules. Procurement rules relates to appropriate arrangements for purchasing works, goods and services, and include authority to approve/sign contracts which commits the Council to expenditure and potentially related obligations. Authorisation of individual invoice payment transactions – which certifies that invoices are correct and valid for payment – are covered under purchasing below.

5 PURCHASING

5.1 Payment of Invoices

- a) The S151 Officer shall make arrangements for the payments of all monies due from the Council, which shall comply with statutory provisions in force.
- b) Invoices to be paid shall not be made out to employees of the Council, except in any case or category of case agreed by the S151 Officer in advance. Employees shall not amend any invoices received but instead return to the supplier to provide an amended invoice if necessary. Copy invoices shall be clearly marked as such, and appropriate checks undertaken to confirm an original invoice has not been received or paid.
- c) Where an order has been raised for goods and services (see Procurement Procedure Rules) the invoice must be matched with the order. In most circumstances, it is appropriate for an official order to be raised.
- d) All suppliers shall be asked to quote on all invoices the name of the group and section, the order number and the place where the work was done or goods delivered.
- e) No payment is to be made on the basis of a supplier's statement of account.
- f) The Chief Executive and Directors/Managers (or other delegated employees) shall be responsible for the verification and certification of all payments from their own budgets only. Certification means a manual signature or a computerised authorisation as required by the Council's E5 Financial Management System. The certification by, or on behalf of the Directors/Managers shall be regarded as an assurance that:
- value has been received and accounted for in the opinion of the Chief Executive, and Directors/Managers
 - expenditure complies with the Procurement Procedure Rules and Financial Procedure Rules in force at the time
 - the document presented to support the payment is correctly priced and the invoice has not been previously passed for payment
 - all trade and prompt payment discounts have been deducted (where appropriate)
 - VAT has been properly accounted for in accordance with the HM Revenues and Customs regulations applicable at the time
 - expenditure and income is posted to the appropriate nominal codes on Cedar to ensure that the financial system reflects the correct nature of the expenditure/income incurred
- g) Where the same person raises the order and authorises the payment, a second person shall input details of the transaction into the Council's E5 Financial System.
- h) The Chief Executive and Directors/Managers can authorise any payments within their area of responsibility, and are allowed to delegate payments of up to £100,000 to their supporting officers by the process described in (g).
- i) A list of those employees authorised to certify all types of expenditure (including those authorisers via the Council's E5 Financial System) shall be prepared and signed by the Director/Manager and copies forwarded to the S151 Officer. The database of authorised employees shall be kept fully up to date by the Directors/Managers and all changes notified as soon as possible.
- j) Where invoices are authorised on line via the Council's Financial System the authoriser shall ensure the due date is in accordance with the invoice terms or the Council's payment policy. This requires that all undisputed invoices for goods and services supplied should be paid within 10 working days of their receipt by the Council.

- k) Invoices shall all be stored electronically in a specified folder ready for importing the image into the E5 system.
- l) As soon as possible after 31 March each year, Directors/Managers shall notify the Financial Services Team of all outstanding expenditure relating to the previous financial year. When such expenditure is subsequently certified for payment it shall be identified as required by the S151 Officer.
- m) The S151 Officer shall publish detailed closedown procedures each year.

5.2 Corporate Credit Cards

- a) The S151 Officer is required to authorise the issue of a corporate credit card. The card shall only be used for business purchases. Receipts for all transactions shall be passed to Support Services-Finance for reconciliation to the monthly statements.

5.3 Procurement Cards

- a) The issue and use of a procurement card shall be in accordance with the Procurement Card Rules as prepared by the Procurement Specialist and approved by the S151 Officer.

6 PAYROLL SERVICES

6.1 Appointment of Employees

- a) The appointment of all employees shall be made in accordance with approved Employment Policies and Procedures. Recruiting managers must ensure there is sufficient budget to fund the appointed position, to be certified by a Finance Specialist, and submit to the People Managers Forum for consultation and approval.

6.2 Amendments to Payroll

- a) Directors / Responsible Managers shall notify the Lead Specialist – People as soon as possible, in the prescribed form, of
 - all appointments, promotions, resignations, retirements, dismissals and suspensions from duty
 - all transfers between services within the control of the Directors
 - all periods of sickness and absence, except normal annual leave
 - all changes in remuneration of employees, except normal increments
 - all payments for compensation and any other emoluments to any employee
 - such other information as may be required by the Lead Specialist-People in connection with the calculation and payment of pay related expenditure
 - All leavers should be immediately reported to Support Services IT to enable their access to be cancelled on the financial system
 - the Directors are also required to contact the Lead Specialist – IT and the Revenues Specialists to identify if there is any outstanding debt owing to the Council – if this is the case, the Director shall then instruct payroll to deduct any debt from the last salary payment
 - The Financial Systems support team will at least once a year circulate an up to date list of Cedar users and access levels to the Directors, who will be required to sign and return this list, noting any amendments

6.3 Other Payments

- a) All travelling, subsistence, financial loss, and any other reimbursements to employees shall be paid through the payroll system and in accordance with the detailed arrangements required by the S151 Officer and approved by the Council. In special cases a payment can be made through BACS.
- b) All travelling claims from both Officers and Members shall be submitted on the appropriate form monthly to payroll by the 5th working day of the month, together with appropriate VAT receipts to cover the mileage claimed. All high mileage claims over 300 miles per month shall be submitted monthly, claims under 300 miles per month shall be submitted at least quarterly.

- c) All payments for allowances, travel and subsistence etc. to elected Members shall be paid through the payroll system and in accordance with the detailed arrangements required by the S151 Officer and approved by the Council.

6.4 Timesheets

- a) All timesheets and records for overtime, expenses etc. shall be in a form approved by the Director Support Services. All claims shall be submitted at least quarterly. Any claims submitted outside of this time limit (without the approval of the Chief Executive) will not be paid.
- b) The standard procedure for employees leaving the Council, or transferring to another post shall be followed in all cases. These procedures are laid down in Employment Policies and Procedures.

7 BANKING ARRANGEMENTS

7.1 General

- a) All arrangements with the Council's bankers concerning the Council's bank accounts and partnership accounts which the Council manages on behalf of any partnership, and the issue and deposit of cheques shall be made through the S151 Officer.
- b) The S151 Officer shall be authorised to operate such subsidiary bank accounts as deemed necessary.
- c) Any overdraft on the Council's bank accounts shall be kept within the limits set out in the Treasury Management Strategy Statement. Bank accounts shall be reconciled by the S151 Officer at intervals no longer than one month and kept up to date.

7.2 Cash and Cheques Received

- a) All monies received on behalf of the Council shall, without delay, be banked in the Council's name in accordance with the instructions of the S151 Officer. Post-dated cheques will not be accepted.
- b) There shall be separation of duties between receiving and paying out monies. Employees who collect cash shall not be involved in the maintenance of cash and deposit books or other financial records in respect of that cash. This requirement can only be excepted on the written approval, in advance, of the S151 Officer.
- c) Post that may contain income shall be subject to control by not less than two persons from the point of delivery through to the receipt of a signature at the cash desk. The S151 Officer will issue detailed written instructions for the handling of postal income and these instructions shall be adhered to at all times.
- d) Where a person or body claims to have made a payment which has not been credited to their account, a Support Services Case Officer, or in his/her absence Support Services Case Team Leader, shall follow the agreed procedure immediately.
- e) All copies of cancelled receipts shall be retained for inspection.
- f) Managers are responsible for ensuring the control, monitoring and regular banking of daily receipts arising from cash collection points under their control. The S151 Officer will provide detailed procedure notes which shall be adhered to at all times.

7.3 Money Laundering

- a) The Council has a nominated Money Laundering Responsible Officer (MLRO). The MLRO is the S151 Officer.
- b) Any transaction involving an unusually large amount of cash should cause questions to be asked about the source. This may particularly be the case where cash paid exceeds the amount needed to pay the transaction and a refund is requested but not in cash form. Any suspicious transaction in cash over £10,000 should be directly reported to the Money Laundering Responsible Officer and Money Laundering procedures followed.

- c) Any property or assets purchased from this Council shall be properly traced to the source of funds. Any suspicious transaction shall be reported to the Money Laundering Responsible Officer.

7.4 Payments by Direct Debit

- a) All agreements with banking organisations regarding direct debits shall be approved by the S151 Officer.
- b) Any telephone lines used to transmit confidential banking information regarding the Council's customers shall meet security standards approved by the Lead Specialist – IT. The Lead Specialist – IT shall ensure that direct debits requested from banks are made on the dates specified by the Support Services Team Leader.

7.5 Direct Debits and Cheques Paid

- a) All cheques and direct debit mandates drawn on bank accounts of the Council shall:
- be signed only by the S151 Officer or other employee authorised by the S151 Officer
 - bear the name of the S151 Officer as produced by approved systems where this has been specifically agreed by the S151 Officer
- b) The S151 Officer shall arrange for such safeguards as are deemed necessary and practicable, including the separation of duties, so that as far as possible the following procedures are the responsibility of separate employees:
- the checking of creditors' accounts
 - the control of cheques
 - the preparation of cheques
 - the signature of cheques
 - authorisation procedures for electronic payments (BACS, CHAPS)
 - the entry of the cash account
 - the reconciliation of bank balances

7.6 Handling of Cheques

- a) The Support Services Team Leader shall ensure the list of outstanding cheques is examined at least monthly and reasons sought for cheques that have not been cashed. Cheques, which have not been cashed six months after the date of issue, shall be cancelled.

8 INCOME

8.1 Income Collection

- a) Arrangements for the collection of all monies due to the Council shall be subject to the control or approval of the S151 Officer.
- b) Managers shall maintain such information in connection with the work done, goods supplied or services provided so that a correct record of all sums due is maintained. Wherever possible income due should be collected in advance. Managers shall ensure that individual customer debtor accounts are raised as soon as possible but no later than five working days from the delivery of goods or provision of services, unless specified terms have been agreed by the S151 Officer.
- c) Monthly and where appropriate quarterly accounts should be produced five working days after the month or quarter's end. Managers shall record promptly, within the Council's Sundry Debtor System, all money due to the Council. The records shall include details relating to contracts, leases and other agreements and any arrangements entered into which involve the periodic receipt of money by the Council.

8.2 Setting Fees and Charges

- a) In line with the budget setting timetable all fees and charges shall be reviewed annually by each Director and Manager in consultation with the S151 Officer. All changes to such charges shall be agreed in advance with the S151 Officer and recorded annually within the Fees and Charges Register. The

Register will be published on the Council's website and it is the responsibility of each Director and Manager to notify the S151 Officer of any changes made in addition to the annual review.

8.3 Writing Off of Debts

- a) Any debts written off shall be in accordance with procedures approved by District Executive, and shall be approved in line with the following delegations.

Income Type	Limits	Authority to Approve Write-Offs
Council Tax and Business Rates	£0.01 to £25	Customer Focus or Case Officer
	£25.01 to £100	Revenues Case Officer
	£100.01 to £1,000	Revenues Specialist / Team Leader
	£1,000.01 to £5,000	Lead Specialist – Finance
	>£5,000	S151 Officer
Other Income	£0.01 to £25	Customer Focus or Case Officer
	£25.01 to £100	Case Officer
	£100.01 to £1,000	Finance Specialist / Support Services Team Leader
	£1,000.01 to £5,000	Lead Specialist – Finance
	>£5,000	S151 Officer

- b) The recovery of all debts shall be in accordance with the Income Management Policy approved by the District Executive and supporting procedures agreed by the S151 Officer. It is the responsibility of Managers to adhere to policy and procedures, and ensure income due is collected.
- c) Managers shall be responsible for accounting for VAT on income, fees and charges in accordance with the Regulations of HM Revenue and Customs. The S151 Officer shall advise those managers of any changes to the Regulations.

8.4 Cash Floats and Petty Cash

- a) Where cash floats, petty cash or cash remittances are held, Managers shall ensure that cash holdings and receipts should be regularly reconciled and recorded to evidence monitoring and minimise the risk of cash differences.

9 IMPREST ACCOUNTS

- a) The Support Services Team Leader is responsible for the arrangements for Imprest Accounts. Guidance notes will be issued and employees in control of Imprest Accounts shall follow the correct procedures at all times. Managers shall ensure that all monies authorised for reimbursement in an Imprest Account are accounted for in accordance with the guidance notes.

10 RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCES

10.1 Risk Management

- a) The Director – Strategy & Support Services will prepare the authority's Risk Management Policy statement and strategy for the approval of the District Executive and review the effectiveness of those arrangements. Systems will be developed to identify and evaluate all significant risks to the authority by all associated in the planning and delivery of services.
- b) A consolidated risk register will be maintained by the Specialist – Procurement. All risks identified in respect of the activities of the Council will be recorded on the register.
- c) The Directors are responsible for managing all risks in respect of their functions, and will ensure named officer(s) are responsible for maintaining risk data and profiles within those functions.
- d) Risks will be identified by:
- Programmed Control and Risk Self Assessments sessions facilitated by the South West Audit Partnership
 - Audit reviews
 - The Directors as part of their responsibilities for maintaining accurate risk records

- e) The South West Audit Partnership in conjunction with the Directors will devise Action Plans to actively manage risks, following all control and risk self-assessment sessions. The Directors will be responsible for ensuring that all actions identified, in respect of any risk, are dealt with in accordance with the timetable specified.
- f) The Specialist – Procurement will provide risk management reports to SLT quarterly and to the Audit Committee twice yearly.

10.2 Insurances

- a) The S151 Officer shall make arrangements for approved insurance cover, maintaining adequate records and negotiating claims with the Council's insurers.
- b) The Directors shall advise the Insurance Case Services Officer of the extent and nature of all new risks where insurance may not exist or may be inadequate.
- c) The S151 Officer can authorise payments of small claims from self-insured funds of up to £2,000.

10.3 Notification of Loss

- a) Directors/Managers shall notify immediately the Insurance Case Services Officer, in writing, of any loss, liability or damage or any event likely to lead to a claim in connection with their areas of responsibility.
- b) All employees of the Council shall be included in a fidelity guarantee policy.

10.4 Review

- a) The S151 Officer shall review insurance cover annually.

10.5 Car Allowances

- a) Recipients of car allowances shall provide Payroll with copies of policies or premium receipts as may be necessary to ensure adequate cover against any liability of the Council arising from official use of their vehicle.

10.6 Current Insurance

- a) The Insurance Case Services Officer shall keep all Directors notified as to the nature and extent of the various risks that are covered or left exposed.

10.7 Inventories

- a) Managers shall be responsible for ensuring proper maintenance of inventories of furniture, equipment and the means for prompt and efficient identification of each item for the purposes of insurance claims or claims under suppliers' guarantees. The information shall be recorded in the format specified by the S151 Officer.

11 STOCKS, STORES, FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

11.1 General

- a) Managers shall be responsible for the care and physical control of all stocks, stores, furniture, plant and equipment in their custody. Records shall be maintained in a form specified by the S151 Officer.

11.2 Write Offs

- a) Any items of stocks, stores, furniture or equipment to be written off shall require the certification of the Director or an employee nominated by the Managers. The certification shall be in writing and details notified to the S151 Officer as soon as possible.

11.3 Stock Checks

- a) All stocks of goods held as stores, or for resale, shall be subject to stock check annually. Managers, shall certify a certificate of the value held at 31 March each year at cost and the certificate forwarded to the S151 Officer within 10 days of the year end. The de minimis level for year-end stock certificate being returned to Support Services Finance is £1,000.

11.4 Corrections

- a) Correction of deficiencies and surpluses on stocks and stores accounts shall be in accordance with the procedures laid down by the S151 Officer.

11.5 Disposal of Surplus Furniture & Equipment (including personal computers)

- a) Prior to disposal the Manager shall offer the surplus furniture or equipment to other services within the organisation at no cost. Only when there is no organisational need to retain the equipment can it be sold.
- b) If there is no established organisational need, disposal of unwanted furniture is the responsibility of the Manager. In order to ensure a consistent approach, and that the Council receives value for money from disposal, the Specialist - Procurement shall co-ordinate disposal of surplus furniture and equipment.
- c) The Manager who wishes to dispose of surplus furniture and equipment shall advise the Specialist – Procurement. If it is reusable it will be sold. An advertisement shall be placed on the Bulletin Board and sealed bids submitted. The highest bid will be accepted and the income credited to the appropriate cost centre.
- d) All redundant ICT equipment including mobile telephones and related items shall be returned to Support Services ICT who will return to stock or dispose of securely.
- e) Managers shall amend inventories to reflect disposals and acquisitions.

12 CAR LOANS AND LEASED CARS

- a) All loans and leases for the provision of motor vehicles shall be administered in accordance with the scheme approved by the District Executive.

13 BUILDINGS, LAND AND PROPERTY

13.1 Asset Register

- a) The S151 Officer shall maintain a full and accurate register of all Council Property, Plant and Equipment and other Long Term Assets for the purpose of maintaining accurate balance sheet records and calculating capital charges in accordance with relevant Codes of Practice.
- b) The Commercial Property, Land and Development Manager shall ensure all land and property assets are fully and accurately recorded in a suitable property asset register / asset management system.
- c) If the property system and accounting asset register are separate systems, it is the responsibility of the Commercial Property, Land and Development Manager and the Lead Specialist – Finance to ensure these are reconciled regularly including as at 31 March each year to evidence accounting balances in the Balance Sheet.

13.2 Buildings, Land and Property Transactions

Buildings, Land and Property

- a) All arrangements for the acquisition and disposal of land and buildings shall be in accordance with approved governance arrangements for the Investment Assessment Group (IAG), Disposal Assessment Group (DAG), Strategic Development Board (SDB) and Regeneration Programme Boards (RPBs) or otherwise in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation and these Rules. Acquisitions and disposals

may include freehold or leasehold sale and purchase, gifts, grant or receipt of property rights and obligations, demolition, destruction or similar transactions.

- b) The following levels of delegation and procedures apply:

	Business Case Assessment By	Values	Approval By
Non-Investment Property acquisition	S151 Officer and Portfolio Holder (Strategy and Policy)	Up to £50,000	Commercial Property, Land & Development Manager in consultation with relevant Director or Portfolio Holder
		>£50,000	District Executive
Non-Investment Property disposal	S151 Officer and Portfolio Holder (Strategy and Policy)	Up to £50,000	Commercial Property, Land & Development Manager in consultation with relevant Director or Portfolio Holder
		>£50,000	District Executive
Asset Transfers to Registered Social Landlords – for social housing or associated parking	Disposal Assessment Group (DAG), and agreement of S151 Officer and Portfolio Holder (Strategy and Policy)	Up to £250,000	Chief Executive
		>£250,000 and within approved Policy and Budget	Chief Executive
		>£250,000 and outside approved Policy and Budget	District Executive
Community Asset Transfers	Disposal Assessment Group (DAG)	Within CAT Policy	Chief Executive
		Outside CAT Policy	District Executive

Investment Properties

- c) Investment Property acquisitions and disposals shall follow the governance and procedures agreed by Full Council as part of the Commercial Strategy, with the Director – Commercial Services responsible for its implementation.
- d) Full Council is responsible for approving the Total Investment Limit for the Property Investment Fund, and related changes to the Capital, Treasury and Investment Strategies.
- e) Authority to approve individual acquisitions and disposals (freehold or leasehold), subject to completion of appropriate business case and due diligence, shall be within the following delegation limits:

Type	Business Case Assessment By	Values	Approval By
Investment Property acquisition	Investment Assessment Group (IAG)	Up to £20,000,000	Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader
		>£20,000,000	District Executive
Investment Property disposal	Disposal Assessment Group (DAG)	Up to £20,000,000	Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader
		>£20,000,000	District Executive

- f) The S151 Officer, in consultation with the Chief Executive and the Commercial Services and Income Generation Director, has authority to reinvest investment property disposal income within the Investment Fund within the overall fund limit approved by Full Council, or to repay residual capital debt for acquired assets. Surplus income from capital growth realised on disposal will be returned to reserve balances.

Disposals at less than best consideration

- g) With the exception of transfers to RSLs under £250,000 (for social housing or associated parking) or disposals outside of policy, the Commercial Property, Land and Development Manager in conjunction with the relevant Portfolio Holder and Director (Commercial Services and Income Generation) report to the DAG requesting approval to proceed with the disposal in such circumstances where either the use of a specific or general disposal consent or a Qualifying Meeting (as defined in the General Disposal Consent of 2003) is required before the disposal can be completed or in any other circumstances where

the recommendation is to accept a tender which is other than the tender which offers the best consideration reasonably obtainable. Approval via DAG procedure and governance.

Regeneration Programme Boards

- h) Governance and delegated authority for implementing Regeneration Programmes shall be approved by Full Council.
- i) Full Council shall approve the total budget limits for each Regeneration Programme.
- j) The S151 Officer shall approve individual scheme Gross Budget, Net Budget and any funding arrangements, within the overall Programme limits set by Full Council.
- k) Individual schemes within approved Programme limits shall be approved by the Lead Director in consultation with the Programme Board Chair and the s151 Officer.

General

- l) In respect of receipts from sale of assets where values are less than £10,000: net proceeds credited to the appropriate revenue budget.
- m) In respect of receipts from sale of assets where values are more than £10,000: where permitted under the Statutory Guidance on the Flexible Use of Capital Receipts (March 2016), net receipts can be used to fund revenue costs up to and including March 2022, provided the expenditure meets the requirements for qualifying expenditure under this guidance.
- n) The Director of Commercial Services and Income Generation (or delegated representative) shall, in the absence of any specific conditions or exemptions agreed by the District Executive and these Financial Procedure Rules, have authority to undertake the following in consultation with the relevant Director, or Portfolio Holder, where the value of the consideration, rent, licence fees, easement or wayleave payment in each case does not exceed £100,000 annually for Non-Investment and is in accordance with the District Valuer (or other RICS professional) valuation, and operates within approved budgets:-
 - the agreement of all monthly tenancies
 - the agreement of all licences
 - the conducting and agreement of all rent reviews
 - the agreement of all lease renewals (new leases approved under acquisitions above)
 - the agreement of lettings
 - the agreement of all easements and wayleaves
 - the agreement of all changes of use
 - the agreement of all compensation claims where there is budgetary provision
 - the agreement of all releases/variations of covenants
- o) For Investment Properties, the Director of Commercial Services and Income Generation (or delegated representative) shall have authority to approve all of the following in consultation with the S151 Officer where the value of the consideration, rent, licence fees, easement or wayleave payment in each case does not exceed £1,000,000 annually. Items in excess of this amount must be referred to the Investment Assessment Group for review and recommendation for approval by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader.
 - the agreement of all tenancies
 - the agreement of all licences
 - the conducting and agreement of all rent reviews including awarding rent free periods
 - the agreement of all lease renewals or new leases where tenancy of existing freehold/leasehold owned property changes
 - the agreement of lettings
 - the agreement of all easements and wayleaves
 - the agreement of all changes of use
 - the agreement of all compensation claims where there is budgetary provision
 - the agreement of all releases/variations of covenants

13.3 Condition Surveys

- a) The Director Commercial Services and Income Generation shall ensure that condition surveys of all buildings and property assets in which the Council has a proprietary interest are carried out at least once every 5 years. Survey details are to be recorded in appropriate systems and work programmes prepared in accordance with priorities set out in the Property Repairs and Maintenance Policy.

13.4 Asset Management Plans

- a) The Director Commercial Services and Income Generation shall maintain an Asset Management Plan in respect of the Council's land and property portfolio. The Plan must detail the actions to be monitored by the Commercial Property, Land and Development Manager
- b) The Director Commercial Services and Income Generation shall maintain records and systems that enable the Council to ensure that the best use is made of all properties. The Director Commercial Services and Income Generation shall advise the Council on alternative uses of land and property as best serves the Council's interests at the time.
- c) The Commercial Property, Land and Development Manager shall ensure that all leases are kept up to date and rents due are revised at the appropriate time.

13.5 Custody of Deeds and Documents

- a) The Lead Specialist – Legal shall have custody of the title deeds and other agreements under seal or hand of all land owned by the Council (together with all deeds and documents held as security for any monies owed to the Council) and are responsible for their safe-keeping.

13.6 Security

- a) Directors shall be responsible for ensuring the proper security at all times for buildings, stocks, stores, furniture, equipment, cash and information held on files. The Directors shall consult with the Director Commercial Services and Income Generation in any instance where security is thought to be defective or where it is considered that special security arrangements may be needed, or where circumstances suggest the possibility of any irregularity.
- b) Directors shall ensure that there are appropriate arrangements for the control of all door, safe and cabinet keys held within their areas of responsibility. There shall be independent control of all receipt forms, cheques, tickets, store notes, order forms or similar documents and it shall be the responsibility of the appropriate Director to ensure that all such items are serially numbered and controlled in accordance with arrangements agreed with the Chief Internal Auditor (Assistant Director, South West Audit Partnership).

14 LOANS POLICY

- a) The Council should only provide small loans to outside bodies where alternative forms of borrowing are not available or at prohibitive costs. The loans will only be made to outside bodies that operate from within the South Somerset District geographical area and are either registered charities, public sector, or not for profit organisations.
- b) All loan agreements will either be charged on the property to which they relate (like a mortgage) or a guarantee will be required from a surety which could be an individual, group of individuals or body.
- c) The maximum repayment period will be 10 years and all loans will be repaid on a repayment basis so that the loan is repaid across the loan period at instalment rates approved in advance (i.e. in the same way as mortgage repayments).
- d) Loans will be given at the appropriate PWLB rate for the period of the loan, or other prudent rate as determined by the S151 Officer in consideration of investment risk. The maximum amount of a loan to an outside body shall be £150,000.

- e) Approval of loans shall be by District Executive and a full appraisal submitted which shall include details of the security offered. In order to qualify for a loan, the outside body shall also submit a Business Plan to the S151 Officer covering the period of the loan.
- f) For small loans of £5,000 or less the approval procedure may be delegated to the area portfolio holders, in consultation with the relevant Managers. The interest rate will be the relevant PWLB rate, or other prudent rate as determined by the S151 Officer in consideration of investment risk, and the loans should be guaranteed by the Town or Parish Council, or similar trustees.
- g) Any loans agreed outside of the loans policy shall be agreed by Full Council.

15 EXTERNAL ARRANGEMENTS

15.1 Partnerships

- a) In leading the community and entering into partnerships the Council will seek to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of its area.
- b) The main criteria for SSDC entering into a partnership are:
 - to provide improvements in service delivery
 - to provide efficiency in the costs of service provision
 - to share risk
 - to achieve specific corporate priorities
- c) A partner is defined as a formal working arrangement involving one or more independent bodies, from any sector, who pool resources and share responsibility for agreeing and then delivering a set of planned actions and outcomes. A formal agreement is made by all partners to work together for specific outcomes.
- d) Partners may participate by:
 - acting as a deliverer or sponsor, solely or jointly with others
 - acting as a funder or part funder
 - being the beneficiary group (or part thereof) of the activity undertaken in a partnership
- e) The District Executive is responsible for determining and agreeing all key partnerships. Directors are responsible for agreeing all substantial and minor partnerships. At inception a review period must be agreed and any associated delegation arrangements approved by District Executive if a key partnership or by the appropriate Director if a substantial or minor partnership.
- f) All partnerships must be reviewed annually and reported by the appropriate Director to the relevant committee (either District Executive or Area Committee). All partnerships must be included within the Partnership Register and updated annually by the appropriate Director.
- g) The Directors and Portfolio Holders shall consider and make provision for any overall corporate governance issues and shall ensure account is taken of any legal issues when arranging contracts with external bodies. They shall ensure that risks have been fully appraised before agreements are entered into with external bodies.
- h) The governance arrangements of all key and significant partnerships require approval of the Members of Corporate Governance Group.
- i) All key partnerships have a requirement to produce, maintain, and monitor a shared risk register.
- j) The same high standards of conduct that apply throughout the authority shall be maintained in partnerships, and representatives to partnerships should exercise these same high standards.
- k) The S151 Officer shall ensure that accounting arrangements to be adopted in relation to partnerships and joint ventures are satisfactory and compliant with relevant regulations and Codes of Practice.

- l) Regular monitoring arrangements must be in place. For key partnerships monitoring must be reported regularly to the District Executive and other partnerships (substantial and minor) to the Area Committees. This can be carried out through the quarterly budget monitoring reports as a minimum.
- m) Directors and Portfolio Holders are responsible for ensuring that appropriate Council approvals are obtained before concluding negotiations in relation to work with external bodies.

15.2 External Funding

- a) The S151 Officer in consultation with the relevant Director/Manager or Portfolio Holder is responsible for ensuring that all funding notified by external bodies is received and properly recorded in the Council's accounts. Each Director and Portfolio Holder is responsible for informing the S151 Officer promptly about such funding. Where such income is receivable against a grant claim the relevant Director or Portfolio Holder shall provide written confirmation to the S151 Officer that all output and other grant requirements have been properly and fully met.

15.3 Grants to Outside Bodies

- a) The District Executive or relevant Area Committee shall approve all grants and other assistance to external bodies, except where such annual assistance in total is less than £1,000 in value to any one body and there is budgetary provision for such assistance. It must not form a commitment of future year's annual budget unless it matches the criteria as set within the Community Grants Policy (4) in respect of those bodies with approved multi-year Funding Agreements / Service Level Agreements. Where the total value per annum to any one body is below £1,000 the relevant Director or Portfolio Holder may approve such assistance subject to the requirements of these Financial Procedure Rules being met. Where the total value per annum to any one body is below £1,000 the relevant Director may delegate the approval to the appropriate designated officer, again subject to the requirements of these Financial Procedure Rules being met.
- b) The District Executive Committee may approve a framework for the administration of any specified class of grant and assistance under that committee's control over the value of £1,000 by a relevant Strategic Director for the efficient conduct of business, subject to the agreed framework and meeting the other requirements of these Financial Procedure Rules.
- c) Reports to the District Executive Committee or Area Committees (and decisions taken under the provisions of (a) above) seeking approval to assist an outside body by grant or other assistance in kind shall provide assurance that the following requirements have been met or will be met, and ensure that the Council's interests are protected before any grant or assistance is actually made:
 - the receiving body has been properly identified, has suitable lead parties, a defined work area/purpose, and suitable trust documents/constitution
 - any conflicts of interest have been declared and properly managed
 - any risks to such agreements and the Council's interests are being adequately and appropriately managed
 - it will be possible to confirm the proper use of the Council's assistance
 - the assistance contributes to the delivery of the Council's services or achievement of the Council's corporate objectives
 - the extent and purpose of the assistance have been properly identified
 - arrangements for the repayment of any loans have been made
 - arrangements to gain repayment/recovery for the value of the assistance are in place in the event of default by the recipient
 - any specific conditions relating to the assistance are identified
 - monitoring arrangements are to be set in place to ensure the assistance is used for the purpose approved
 - the recipient will provide evidence to the Council demonstrating proper accounting for, and use of the assistance, including, for assistance over £1,000 in value, access to the accounts of the body for S151 Officer, or designated representative and to supporting information, documents and evidence
 - a legally binding agreement is in place between the Council and the body covering the above conditions relating to the use of grant or other assistance

- d) Full records will be maintained of all grants and related applications for assistance, which should identify which staff are involved in the processing of applications and grants, and record the date of approval of any grant or other assistance and by whom, and any other relevant transaction information.

16 BREACHES OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

- a) Where a failure to comply with these regulations is identified the matter should be brought to the immediate attention of the S151 Officer and the Chief Internal Auditor (Assistant Director, South West Audit Partnership).
- b) A report shall be made to the S151 Officer for minor breaches and to the District Executive or Audit Committee where the S151 Officer and the Chief Internal Auditor (Assistant Director, South West Audit Partnership) consider the matter to be of significance.

Appendix A

Guidance on Interpretation – Officer Contacts

Section	Financial Regulation	Contact Officer
1	FINANCIAL GOVERNANCE	Section 151 Officer
1.2(e)	Decision Making Procedures	Democratic Services Specialist or Monitoring Officer
2	CASH LIMITS	Section 151 Officer
3	FINANCIAL CONTROL	
3.1	General	Section 151 Officer
3.2	Statement of Internal Control/Statement of Governance	Section 151 Officer
3.3	South West Audit Partnership	Assistant Director-SWAP
3.5	Operational Leases	Lead Specialist – Finance / Specialist - Procurement
3.6	Treasury Management	Finance Specialist
4	CONTRACTS	
4.1	General	Specialist - Procurement
5	PAYMENT OF INVOICES	
5	Payment of Invoices	Support Services Case Team Leader
5.1	Corporate Credit Cards	Section 151 Officer
5.2	Procurement Cards	Procurement Specialist
6	PAYROLL SERVICES	
6.1	Appointment of Employees	Lead Specialist - People
6.2	Amendments	Lead Specialist - People
6.3	Other Payments	Lead Specialist - People
6.4	Timesheets	Lead Specialist - People
7	BANKING ARRANGEMENTS	
7.1	General	Section 151 Officer
7.2	Cheques/Cash Received	Support Services Case Team Leader
7.3	Money Laundering	Assistant Director-SWAP
7.4	Direct Debits (received)	Support Services Case Team Leader
7.5	Direct Debits and Cheques Paid	Support Services Case Team Leader
7.6	Handling of Cheques	Support Services Case Team Leader
8	INCOME	Specialist – Finance
9	IMPREST ACCOUNTS	Specialist – Finance
10	RISK MANAGEMENT AND INSURANCES	
10.1	Risk Management	Specialist - Procurement
10.2	Insurances	Insurance Case Services Officer
10.3	Notification of Loss	Insurance Case Services Officer
10.4	Review	Insurance Case Services Officer
10.5	Car Allowances	Insurance Case Services Officer
10.6	Current Insurance	Insurance Case Services Officer
10.7	Inventories	Insurance Case Services Officer
11	STOCKS, STORES, FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT	
11.1	General	Specialist – Finance
11.2	Write Offs	Specialist – Finance
11.3	Stock Checks	Specialist – Finance
11.4	Corrections	Specialist – Finance
11.5	Disposal of Surplus	Specialist – Finance
12	CAR LOANS AND LEASED CARS	Specialist – Finance
13	BUILDINGS, LAND AND PROPERTY	
13.1	Asset Register	Commercial Property, Land and Development Manager
13.2	Buildings, Land and Property Transactions	Lead Specialist – Finance / Commercial Property, Land and Development Manager
13.3	Condition Surveys	Commercial Property, Land and Development Manager

13.4	Asset Management Plans	Commercial Property, Land and Development Manager
13.5	Custody of Deeds	Lead Specialist - Legal
13.6	Security	Director Commercial Services and Income Generation
14	LOANS POLICY	Lead Specialist – Finance
15	EXTERNAL ARRANGEMENTS	
15.1	Partnerships	Lead Specialist – Finance
15.2	External Funding	Lead Specialist – Finance
15.3	Grants to Outside Bodies	Lead Specialist – Finance
16	BREACHES OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS	Section 151 Officer or Assistant Director-SWAP



Change to the Constitution - Updating of the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations

Executive Portfolio Holder: Peter Gubbins, Chairman of Standards Committee
Strategic Director: Nicola Hix, Support Services
Lead Officer: Richard Ward, Monitoring Officer
Contact Details: Richard.ward@southsomerset.gov.uk or 01935 462183

Purpose of the Report

1. There is a need for the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations to be brought up to date in order to offer guidance to Members and Officers in their dealings with one another and to help ensure the maintenance of high ethical standards.

Public Interest

2. It is in the Public Interest for there to be mutual respect between Councillors and Staff and for them to appreciate the different roles each play in the efficient and effective running of the Council and for there to be an appropriate mechanisms for areas of tension and misunderstanding to be resolved

Recommendation

3. That Full Council approve that the changes set out in the Protocol on Member/Officer Relations (Appendix A to this report) be made to the Council's constitution.

Introduction

4. Whilst the Council's Constitution currently contains a protocol providing guidance on the working relationships between Councillors and Officers of the Council it does not at the present time provide a mechanism by which disputes and areas of misunderstanding can be resolved. The Councils Monitoring Officer therefore recommends that the additional wording set out in Appendix A is added to the existing protocol to provide for such resolution
5. This report was considered and endorsed by the Standards Committee at their meeting on 23 July 2020.

Report

6. There is a need for a mechanism to be provided to resolve the tensions that can sometimes arise in the relationship between Councillors and Officers as they carry out their respective roles in the service of the residents of South Somerset.
7. The wording set out in Appendix A sets out both informal and formal procedures which aim to enable areas of conflict or misunderstanding to be resolved without rancour and for



Financial Implications

8. There are no financial implications directly arising from this proposal.

Legal Implications

9. None.

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

10. There are no specific environmental implications arising from the subject matter of this report

Equalities and Diversity Impact

11. There are no specific equality or diversity implications arising from the subject matter of this report

Background Papers

12. Council Constitution-Protocol on Member/Officer Relations (Pages 249-250)

Proposed Revisions to the “Protocol on Member/Officer Relations” (pages 249-250) of the Council’s Constitution (Part 5 – Codes and Protocols).

Add to the existing Protocol after paragraph 15 the following:-

16. Complaints by Councillors against Members of Staff

Procedure

In the event that a Councillor wishes to raise either an informal or formal complaint regarding the conduct or behaviour of an employee or group of employees, the following process should be followed:-

Informal approach

- 16.1 A Councillor should raise the matter in the first instance with the relevant Lead Specialist/Leadership People Manager, or Director who should seek to resolve the matter with the employee(s) concerned. The Councillor must not engage directly with the employee, nor make any attempt to reprimand or discipline the employee nor make any public criticism of the employee (which for the avoidance of doubts includes social media) including at Council, committee meeting of the Local Authority.
- 16.2 If the matter is about the conduct of a Lead Specialist/Leadership People Manager, or Director, the Councillor should raise their concerns with the Chief Executive
- 16.3 The Lead Specialist/Leadership People Manager/Director/Chief Executive will seek to resolve the matter through discussions with the employee concerned and will report on the outcome to the Councillor concerned within 10 working days. If such timescale is not possible the Councillor will be informed within 5 working days of receipt of the complaint as to when an outcome notification will be received.

Formal approach

- 16.4 If the Councillor is unhappy with the outcome of the informal approach or considers from the outset that the complaint is of a serious nature they should raise the matter with the relevant Director (or Chief Executive if the complaint is against a Director) and will if a member of a political group make their group leader aware of their complaint.
- 16.5 The Director (or Chief Executive) will ensure the matter is investigated according to the relevant Council procedures consulting, where appropriate with the People Team, the Section 151 Officer (in respect of financial matters) and the Monitoring Officer (in respect of lawfulness and probity)
- 16.6 Again at this stage the Councillor must not engage directly with the employee, nor make any attempt to reprimand or discipline the employee nor make any public criticism (including via social media) of the employee including at Council or any committee meeting of the Local Authority
- 16.7 The Director (or Chief Executive) will write to the Councillor and Group Leader advising of the outcome. If changes in practice or procedures are required these will be detailed in writing and advised to the employee, the complainant and the Group Leader. A check



South Somerset District Council

will be made at six months (or such other pre-specified time as is considered appropriate) that the required changes have been implemented and that the complainant is content.

16.8 The Employee will be informed of the outcome of the complaint in accordance with relevant Council Procedures.

17. Complaints by members of staff against Councillors

Important Note –This Protocol does not preclude an employee, at any time, if they think it appropriate to make a formal complaint under the South Somerset District Councils Code of Conduct complaints regime applicable to elected and co-opted Members.

Procedure

17.1 If an employee wishes to make either an informal or formal complaint under this protocol relating to the conduct or behaviour of a Councillor, the appropriate support must be provided by their line manager and the following procedure should be followed

Informal approach.

17.2 An employee should in the first instance raise the issue of concern with their relevant Lead Specialist/Leadership People Manager or Director (or the Chief Executive in the case of a complaint by a Director). The employee must not engage directly with the Councillor on the matter. If appropriate the Lead Specialist/Leadership People Manager or Director (or Chief Executive) may involve the group leader.

17.3 The Lead Specialist/Leadership People Manager/Director will seek to resolve the matter through discussions with the councillor concerned and will report the outcome to the employee, Chief Executive and Group Leader if applicable.

Formal approach

17.4 If the Employee is unhappy with the outcome of the informal approach or considers their complaint to be of a serious nature they may wish to consult with their trade union representative (if applicable) prior to raising the matter formally with the relevant Lead Specialist/Leadership People Manager or Director (or Chief Executive in the case of a complaint by a Director). The Employee and their TU representative may also raise the matter directly with the Senior Human Resource Employee in the Council.

17.5 The Lead Specialist/Leadership People Manager/Director will ensure the matter is investigated under the appropriate Council investigatory procedure.

17.6 The Councillor and Group Leader will be advised of any complaint and should provide full assistance and cooperation with any investigation.

17.7 If the Lead Specialist/Leadership People Manager/ Director employee considers the case is sufficiently serious they should advise the Chief Executive that the matter should be formally raised with the Group Leader.

17.8 The Outcome of the investigation may require that no further action be required or that a written or verbal apology is given to the employee. An undertaking should be sought that any wrong doing will not be repeated.

17.9 In appropriate cases (which will normally be where a clear breach of the Code of Conduct has occurred) the Standards Committee will be informed of the outcome of the case.



Change to the Constitution – Review of Delegation of Decision Making

Executive Portfolio Holder: Val Keitch, Leader of Council
Strategic Director: Alex Parmley, Chief Executive
Lead Officer: Richard Ward, Interim Monitoring Officer
Contact Details: richard.ward@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462183

Purpose of the Report

1. To review the decision of Council taken on 19th March 2020 relating to the delegation of decision making to the Chief Executive (and Directors if the Chief Executive is not available) to have sufficient powers to allow the business of the Council to continue to function during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Public Interest

2. Part 3 of the Council's Constitution sets out who within the Council has the power to do what, sets out any associated limitations and, in particular, sets out which decisions can be taken by committees and which can be taken by officers.
3. The District Executive and Full Council have previously agreed to allocate certain executive and non-executive matters to others, and it is important that these changes are made clear on the face of the Constitution.
4. This report is to review the previous Council decision taken on 19th March 2020 to delegate decision making to the Chief Executive and to approve the necessary constitutional changes to ensure the Council's decision-making processes continue to operate and are transparent and the Constitution is kept up-to-date.

Recommendations

5. The Council agree to continue the following changes to the Council's Constitution:
 - a) To amend Part 3, Responsibility for Functions, Sections 3 and 4 of the Council's Constitution to allow delegated authority to the Chief Executive, and to the relevant Director in the Chief Executive's absence where not already delegated, to take Executive and Quasi-Judicial decisions in consultation with the Leader of the Council (or Deputy) and the relevant Portfolio Holder, Ward Member and Committee Member if practicable, if meetings of the relevant committee are unable to be held;
 - b) Continue to enable Councillors to make decisions by remote, virtual meetings using available technology.
 - c) Continue the delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer and Chief Executive to amend the Constitution to reflect any further changes that are required as a direct result



South Somerset District Council

of Government Legislation /Guidance resulting from the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation.

- d) These changes in procedure will cease when the Government announces that the coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis is over and when normal meetings can resume.

Background

6. Members will recall that as the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic were felt, SSDC held a socially distanced meeting and an urgent report was presented to allow decision making to continue through delegation to the Chief Executive as in-person meetings and indeed any public gatherings were no longer allowed to prevent the spread of infection.
7. At the meeting, it was also agreed that the delegated powers be reviewed within 3 months.

Report

8. Shortly after Council agreed the delegated powers the Government issued The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 which allowed local authorities to hold meetings by electronic, digital or virtual locations such as internet locations, web addresses or conference call telephone numbers.
9. Initially, whilst Members were familiarizing themselves with the virtual meeting technology, they were able to indicate their wishes at informal virtual meetings and these wishes were subsequently reflected in the formal decision made by the Chief Executive. One decision (a planning application) was referred back to the Regulation Committee and members made the formal decision on the basis of further advice received.
10. Since 7th May 2020 Committees have been made formal decisions at virtual on-line meetings in accordance with the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.
11. The Chief Executive made the following decisions using the power granted at the Council meeting on 19th March 2020:-
 - Community grant application – 1
 - Houses in Multiple Occupation – extension to area – 1
 - Area Chapter outturn report - 3
 - Planning applications - 11
12. It is the view of the Monitoring Officer that the powers are still needed to cover possible future issues e.g Local Lockdowns caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Financial Implications

13. There have been budget savings in travel allowances to attend meetings. The amount varies from month to month but is in the region of £1,000 to £1,400 per month.

Legal Implications



South Somerset District Council

14. These are set out and/or referred to in the body of the report.

Council Plan Implications

15. To ensure a modern, efficient and effective council that delivers for its communities, we will:
- Deliver a high quality, effective and timely service to our customers and communities

Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

16. The use of Zoom software to hold virtual meetings has reduced the need to travel to attend Council meetings and therefore resulted in reduced carbon emissions from vehicles across the district.

Equality and Diversity Implications

17. There are no specific equality or diversity implications arising from the subject matter of this report.

Background Papers

Council Constitution - Part 3
Agenda and minutes of Council meeting – 19 March 2020



Report of Executive Decisions

Executive Portfolio Holder: Val Keitch, Leader of Council, Strategy and Housing
Director: Kirsty Larkins, Director (Strategy & Commissioning)
Lead Officer: Angela Cox, Democratic Services Specialist
Contact Details: angela.cox@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462148

Purpose of the Report

This report is submitted for information and summarises decisions to be taken by the District Executive at their meeting on 6th August 2020.

Members are invited to ask any questions of the Portfolio Holders.

Background Papers

All Published

Val Keitch, Leader of the Council
Angela Cox, Democratic Services Specialist
angela.cox@southsomerset.gov.uk or (01935) 462148

Appendix A – Report of Executive Decisions taken

Portfolio	Subject	Decision	Taken By	Date
Finance and Legal Services and, Protecting Core Services	Update Report on the Impact of Covid-19 on the Council	That District Executive:- 1. noted the impact on Covid-19 on Council Services and Finances. 2. noted the additional services the Council is having to provide in response to the pandemic.	District Executive	06/08/2020
Finance and Legal Services	Financial Strategy 2020/21 - Revised	That the District Executive: 1. note the updated Medium Term Financial Plan estimates. 2. note and support the updated Financial Strategy as a result of updated forecasts of estimated available resources. 3. note the anticipated need for the use of earmarked reserves to mitigate temporary falls in income. 4. note the intention to revisit the funding of the regeneration schemes and report back to District Executive with revised forecasts and recommendations.	District Executive	06/08/2020
Finance and Legal Services	Capital Outturn Report for 2019/20	That the District Executive agreed to: - a) note the content of the report including the total spend of £65.482m on capital schemes during 2019/20; and small variance of £13k underspent across 57 completed schemes. b) approve the revised Capital Programme spend as detailed in paragraph 10.	District Executive	06/08/2020

Finance and Legal Services	Revenue Outturn Report for 2019/20	<p>The Executive agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Note the net spending for the year of £16,357,133, an underspend of £834,349 (4.85%) compared to final budget, and explanations of variances from budget holders for the 2019/20 financial year as shown in paragraphs 7-10; (b) Approve budget carry forwards of £340,670 into the 2020/21 budget (as shown in Appendix B); (c) Approve individual service overspends are funded from general balances and the net underspend of £493,679 after carry forwards is returned to general balances; (d) Approve the budget virements in paragraph 38, table 7; (e) Note the virements in Appendix E; (f) Note the use of the specific reserves in paragraph 31 and the transfers to and from balances outlined in the General Fund table paragraph 32, table 5; (g) Note the position of the Area Committee balances in paragraph 35. 	District Executive	06/08/2020
Finance and Legal Services	2020/21 Capital Budget Monitoring Report for the Period Ending 30th June 2020	<p>That the District Executive agreed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Note the content of the report; b. Approve the revised Capital Programme spend profile as detailed in paragraph 7, Table 1. c. Approve the projects listed on Appendix B remain in the capital programme. 	District Executive	06/08/2020

Finance and Legal Services	2020/21 Revenue Budget Monitoring Report for the Period Ending 30th June 2020	That the District Executive: a. Noted the current 2020/21 financial position of the Council; b. Noted the predicted variance to approved Directorate Budgets as detailed in paragraph 9, Table 1; c. Noted the transfers made to and from reserves outlined in paragraph 28 Table 3, the Area Reserves as detailed in Appendix B, and the Corporate Reserves as detailed in Appendix C.	District Executive	06/08/2020
Strategy and Housing	SSDC Annual Achievements Report 2019-20	This report appears elsewhere on the Agenda	District Executive	06/08/2020

Agenda Item 12

Audit Committee

This report summarises the items considered by the Audit Committee since the last report to Council in mid March 2020. Since the last report, the Audit Committee has met on 14 May, 25 June and 30 July (the March meeting was cancelled due to the start of the pandemic lockdown restrictions).

Below are the items that have been considered – for more information about the items please refer to the reports and minutes viewable on the website at:

<http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=135&Year=0>

14 May

- External Audit Plan for 2019/20
- Informing the Audit Risk Assessment 2019/20
- Internal Audit Plan and Charter 2020-21
- Civil Contingencies & Whistleblowing Update
- Health & Safety Update
- Financial Procedure Rules (was deferred to the July meeting)

25 June

- Internal Audit Outturn Report 2019/20
- Internal Audit Annual Report and Opinion 2019/20
- 2019/20 Treasury Management Activity Report

30 July – the most recent meeting (draft minutes will be available shortly after this full Council agenda is published), members considered the following items:

- Internal Audit Annual Activity Report 2020/21, and noted the progress made in delivery of the plan. Members also requested an additional meeting of Audit Committee be arranged for 10 September to receive an update report regarding the impact of Covid.
- SWAP Independent External Assessment Report 2020, and noted the report.
- Review of Effectiveness of Internal Audit 2019/20, and noted the findings of the review and opinions of the S.151 Officer and Deputy S.151 Officer.
- Financial Procedure Rules, and recommended they be approved by full Council and also that they be reviewed at least annually.

The next meeting of the Audit Committee is scheduled for 2.00pm on 10 September 2020.

Martin Carnell
Chairman of Audit Committee

Agenda Item 13

Scrutiny Committee

This report summarises the work of the Scrutiny Committee since the last report to Council in mid March.

Since the last report, the committee have met on 2 June, 30 June and 4 August (the April and May meetings were cancelled due to the pandemic lockdown restrictions). Minutes of the meetings can be viewed on the website at:

<http://modgov.southsomerset.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=141&Year=0>

The Committee have continued to consider the reports going before District Executive and providing 'critical friend' challenge. Due to the pandemic situation, several of the scheduled reports due to Scrutiny Committee, and Task & Finish work, have been temporarily suspended to enable staff to focus on essential priorities. One of the Task and Finish groups has reconvened (in mid-July) to consider the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2021 / 2022.

In addition to the committee meetings, members have also met twice informally:

- May - to discuss questions that Scrutiny members wished to forward to District Executive and Senior Leadership Team regarding the impact of Covid-19 to the community and the Council in terms of risks, service delivery, priorities, expenditure and performance etc. Many of the points raised were addressed in the 'Impact of Covid-19 on the Council' report and Powerpoint presentation provided by the Chief Executive at the District Executive meeting in June.
- Mid-July – to discuss questions and observations that Scrutiny members wished to forward to District Executive and the Senior Leadership Team regarding the SSDC response to the SCC One Somerset Business Case. Many of the points raised by Scrutiny members were also voiced by District Executive members at their meeting.

Crispin Raikes
Scrutiny Committee Chairman



Questions under Procedure Rule 10

The following questions have been submitted by Councillor Martin Wale:

Due to the continuing adverse publicity, both in the local and national media in relation to our planning service and its performance, I request that a VERBAL answer be given to Council on the following-

- (A) The establishment for the Planning Service.
- (B) The current number of Planners, not including agency.
- (C) In the last year how many Planners have resigned/retired.
- (D) What exit enquiries are made of resigning Officers.
- (E) Approximately, the current caseload of each Planner.

Supplementary question - what steps are being taken in relation to any shortage and overloading of Officers re casework and what is the Council's position in relation to being taken into 'special measure'.
