

Public Document Pack

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Date: 21 July 2023

Dear Sir or Madam

The Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel – Monday, 31 July 2023, 10.00 am – Kenn Room - Town Hall

A meeting of the Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel will take place as indicated above.

The agenda is set out overleaf.

Yours faithfully

Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer

To: Members of the Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Councillors:

John Crockford-Hawley (Chairperson), Ashley Cartman, Peter Crew, Ciaran Cronnelly, Patrick Keating, Bridget Petty, Marcia Pepperall, Luke Smith, Timothy Snaden, Helen Thornton, Joe Tristram and Martin Williams.

This document and associated papers can be made available in a different format on request.

Agenda

1. **Election of the Vice-Chairperson for the 2023/24 Municipal Year**
2. **Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes**
3. **Addresses by Members of the Public (SSO 9)**

To receive and hear any person who wishes to address the Panel on matters which affect the District and fall within the remit of the Panel. The Chairman will select the order of the matters to be heard. Members of the Panel may ask questions of the member of the public and a dialogue between the parties can be undertaken. Requests to speak must be submitted in writing to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, or the officer mentioned at the top of this agenda letter, by noon on the day before.

4. **Declaration of disclosable pecuniary interest (Standing Order 37)**

A Member must declare any disclosable pecuniary interest where it relates to any matter being considered at the meeting. A declaration of a disclosable pecuniary interest should indicate the interest and the agenda item to which it relates. A Member is not permitted to participate in this agenda item by law and should immediately leave the meeting before the start of any debate. If the Member leaves the Chamber in respect of a declaration, he or she should ensure that the Chairman is aware of this before he or she leaves to enable their exit from the meeting to be recorded in the minutes in accordance with Standing Order 37.

5. **Minutes** (Pages 5 - 10)

Minutes of the Panel meeting held on 8 March 2023 – to approve as a correct record.

6. **Matters referred by Council, the Executive, other Committees and Panels (if any)**

7. **Role, Remit and Work Plan of the Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel** (Pages 11 - 20)

Report of the Policy and Scrutiny Senior Officer.

8. **North Somerset Local Plan: progress update** (Pages 21 - 28)

Report of the Planning Policy Manager.

9. **UK Shared Prosperity Fund Year 3 Allocation** (Pages 29 - 74)

Report of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme Manager.

10. **Place Finance Update** (Pages 75 - 86)

Report of the Principal Accountant (Place) and the Finance Business Partner (Place).

Exempt Items

Should the Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel wish to consider a matter as an Exempt Item, the following resolution should be passed

-

“(1) That the press, public, and officers not required by the Members, the Chief Executive or the Director, to remain during the exempt session, be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the ground that its consideration will involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972.”

Also, if appropriate, the following resolution should be passed –

“(2) That members of the Council who are not members of the Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel be invited to remain.”

Mobile phones and other mobile devices

All persons attending the meeting are requested to ensure that these devices are switched to silent mode. The chairman may approve an exception to this request in special circumstances.

Filming and recording of meetings

The proceedings of this meeting may be recorded for broadcasting purposes.

Anyone wishing to film part or all of the proceedings may do so unless the press and public are excluded for that part of the meeting or there is good reason not to do so, as directed by the Chairman. Any filming must be done as unobtrusively as possible from a single fixed position without the use of any additional lighting, focusing only on those actively participating in the meeting and having regard to the wishes of any members of the public present who may not wish to be filmed. As a matter of courtesy, anyone wishing to film proceedings is asked to advise the Chairman or the Assistant Director Legal & Governance and Monitoring Officer's representative before the start of the meeting so that all those present may be made aware that it is happening.

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

Emergency Evacuation Procedure

On hearing the alarm – (a continuous two tone siren)

Leave the room by the nearest exit door. Ensure that windows are closed.

Last person out to close the door.

Do not stop to collect personal belongings.

Do not use the lifts.

Follow the green and white exit signs and make your way to the assembly point.

Do not re-enter the building until authorised to do so by the Fire Authority.

Go to Assembly Point C – Outside the offices formerly occupied by Stephen & Co

Minutes

of the Meeting of

The Place Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday, 8 March 2023

New Council Chamber - Town Hall

Meeting Commenced: 14.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 16:06 pm

Councillors:

John Crockford-Hawley (Chairman)

Mike Bird
John Cato
Sarah Codling
Patrick Keating
Phil Neve
James Tonkin

Apologies: Councillors: Gill Bute, Peter Crew, Richard Westwood.

Absent: Councillor James Clayton.

Others in attendance: Councillor Ann Harley (substitute for Peter Crew).

Officers in attendance: Carl Nicholson, Jenny Ford, John Flannigan, Esther Coffin-Smith, Colin Russell, Lizzie Shepherd (Place); Emma Diakou, Liz Godfrey-Day, Brent Cross (Corporate Services).

PLA Public Discussion (Standing Order SSO 9)

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None.

PLA Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Standing Order 37)

25

None.

PLA Minutes

26

Minutes of the Panel meeting held on 23 November 2022 – to approve as a correct record.

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting of 23 November 2022 be approved as a correct record.

PLA 27 Matters referred by Council, the Executive, other Committees and Panels (if any)

None.

Change to agenda order: Item 10 to be heard before item 6

PLA 28 WESTlink Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) (agenda item 10)

The Integrated Transport Unit manager presented on the WESTlink demand responsive transport service, which was to begin operating on 3 April 2023. The service would use 30 vehicles across the region, and the zone in North Somerset would cover 50 square miles of no fixed route, no timetable service. It was stressed that the service was not door-to-door transport, but would use the 900 existing bus stops in the District. The use of electric buses had been investigated, but due to the short notice of obtaining the funding and the long lead-in times for purchase of these (with funding only available for two years initially) it was decided to use buses with internal combustion engines. This did not prevent a shift to alternatively powered engines in the future.

Fares would be aligned to bus fares across the region, and a single journey anywhere within a zone would cost £2 initially (concessions such as Diamond Travelcards would also be taken). Similar services had been run successfully in Milton Keynes and the West Midlands. ViaVan was the contracted partner to provide the service and was an industry leader worldwide. Driver recruitment was on target, and a PSV (Professional Service Vehicle) license was required for drivers. Journeys could be booked with a mobile app (due to launch 14 March) as well as over the telephone. The Service Level Agreement for the telephone service was contracted to WeDRT.

When arriving at a stop, drivers would have to wait for a minimum of 60 seconds to collect passengers. If the journey had been booked using the telephone service, there was facility for the driver to have personalised notes for the passenger (for example whether they needed assistance). If the service was unable to meet the guaranteed one hour pick-up time, the contractor would pay a fine.

Members discussed how the zones had been defined, as well as the long-term viability of the service. Members of the public were urged to use the service as the initial funding would be for two years.

Concluded: that the report be received and that Members' comments be forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

PLA 29 Levelling Up Fund update (agenda item 6)

The Head of Placemaking and Development updated the Panel on the £19.9 million funding received from national government, which had been match funded with £3 million from North Somerset Council. Funding had been obtained for the three themes outlined in the report and needed to be spent by March 2025. Stakeholder and member engagement would occur with each project.

In discussion, the following points were raised:

- That the funding bid had allocated the monies to specific projects, which could not now be changed;
- That the Panel would prefer this to be a standing item on the agenda instead of the 6-monthly reports outlined in the report to better facilitate scrutiny and policy;
- That one of the conditions of the funding was to have specific measurable outcomes. Money had been included in the bid for establishing a baseline and evaluating progress;
- Whether there would be future opportunities for areas in North Somerset outside Weston to obtain levelling up funding.

In response to the last point, officers highlighted that a report explaining the rationale for focusing on Weston had been considered and agreed by Full Council in July 2021. The reason was that the government criteria for Levelling Up focused on metrics relating to deprivation and Weston was the only area of North Somerset with socio-economic statistics meeting the criteria.

However there was already other funding being spent across the whole of North Somerset, including the UKSPF programme and service-specific projects such as the recent play park improvements.

The council has access to a Grantfinder service, which provides alerts on a wide range of funding sources available to the public sector and community organisations. A summary of the funding opportunities was regularly included in bulletins to members; if they thought one was suitable for a project in their area, they should contact the relevant service.

In addition, officers highlighted that Town and Parish Councils received 15% of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) income from developments in their area, which could be used to fund local improvements. Nailsea and Portishead in particular had received large sums in recent years.

The recent work to agree placemaking strategies and priorities for towns outside of Weston would be helpful in relation to future funding bids.

Concluded: that

- 1) the report be received and that Members' comments be forwarded to officers in the form of minutes; and that
- 2) a report updating the Panel on the work associated with the Levelling Up Funding be a standing item on Panel agendas until the funding expired in March 2025.

PLA 30 Proposal to implement a pilot scheme for delivering Biodiversity Net Gain, required from development, on North Somerset Council's open space (Agenda item 7)

The Head of Open Space, Natural Environment and Leisure presented the report on the proposal to implement a pilot scheme to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain on North Somerset Council-owned open spaces. This followed on from

DEFRA's requirement that new development should include a 10% biodiversity net gain for a minimum of 30 years, and that trade in biodiversity units (as defined by DEFRA's metric) was to be introduced when the Environment Act 2021 would come into force in autumn 2023.

It was emphasised that the sites listed in the report were provisional and were open to discussion.

The following points were raised in discussion:

- That developers would have a choice of sites / biodiversity providers in an open market;
- North Somerset Council expectations that developers provide biodiversity would remain;
- That the biodiversity net gain market should be encouraged across North Somerset as both an income stream and a way to increase biodiversity for farmers and landowners.

Concluded: that the report be received and that Members' comments be forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

PLA 31 Ash dieback update (Agenda item 8)

The Natural Environment Manager presented an update on the ASH dieback programme. In the first year, 1,000 trees were felled. The funding for this was from the North Somerset Council budget, as there had been no central government funding to assist the programme. Funding was to be £620,000 in 2023-24 to cover the 20 schemes planned – although these would be confirmed after a re-survey of ash trees was carried out in May.

Members then discussed the following (officer responses in italics):

- Was there any value in the timber left after felling? *Roadside trees were not shaped as timber trees and sometimes contained inclusions of metal; some trees were chipped on site, but the felled trees were also left in situ as valuable habitats;*
- That the policy remained felling along highways where a risk was present, but not to fell in isolated areas where there was no risk to the general public or property;
- That younger trees were less resistant to ash dieback disease.

Concluded: that the report be received, and the Members' comments forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

PLA 32 Recycling and Waste Strategy Annual update (Agenda item 9)

The Waste Minimisation Team Leader presented the report, which gave an overview and the key performance indicators of the progress made in the first year towards the eight targets in the strategy.

The baseline figures used when creating the Strategy were from before the Covid lockdowns, which explained the increases in household waste. While most targets were on track, it was felt that Target 3, to divert all non-recyclable, kerbside collected household waste away from landfill by end of 2022, had not

been achieved due to planned annual maintenance shutdowns of the Energy from Waste plant. It was suggested that this target in the Waste Strategy could be amended to 'to maximise diversion of all non-recyclable, kerbside collected household waste away from landfill and showing year on year improvements'.

In discussion, the following topics and points were raised:

- Whether compost bins should be standard in new developments, and that the circular economy should not only be limited to compost but included other areas such as reuse;
- That there were still some roads that were difficult for recycling lorries to access (waste trucks with rear wheel steering were able to get around tighter corners). Meetings with planning colleagues were to be held to ensure that future developments would not have the same issues with provision of services.
- That it was difficult to separate the metric for the reduction in garden waste caused by the introduction of charging from the overall recycling rate, as it was hard to measure what people kept at home;
- Whether there had been an increase in the fly tipping of garden waste;
- That the recycling percentage should also show the figure minus garden waste;
- That the initial target for Target 3 was not achievable under the current contract, which is what prompted the request for the change in the wording;
- The many methods that could be used to report littering and fly tipping.

Concluded: that the report be received, and the Members' comments forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

PLA 33 Q3 Performance and Risk update for 2022 to 2023 (Agenda item 11)

The Head of Business Insight, Policy and Partnerships presented the report, which updated the Panel on the progress against the organisation-wide Annual Directorate Statements, Key Corporate Performance Indicators and the Strategic Risk Register.

In discussion, assurance was sought that nuance had not been lost when compiling the statistics, with particular reference to the overall satisfaction of those using Adult Social Care services for care and support. These statistics had been gathered confidentially by NHS Digital and results showed that North Somerset scored higher than our statistical neighbours.

Concluded: that the report be received, and the Members' comments forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

PLA 34 Place Finance update (Agenda item 12)

Members received the report of the Finance Business Partner (Place), which gave the forecast against budget for the Place directorate.

Concluded: that the report be received.

PLA 35 The Panel's Work Plan (Agenda item 13)

The Policy and Scrutiny Senior Officer discussed the Panel's work plan and invited discussion with Members for additional items to add to it, as well as picking up any actions from the meeting.

Concluded: that the work plan be updated.

Chairman

North Somerset Council

Report to the Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy & Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting: 31 July 2023

Subject of Report: Role, Remit and Work Plan of the Placemaking, Economy and Planning (PEP) Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Brent Cross, Policy and Scrutiny Senior Officer

Key Decision: NO

Reason: It does not meet the criteria for a key decision.

Recommendations

That the Panel:

1. Receives the contents of the report and information provided on policy and scrutiny.
2. Develop and agrees the Panel's Work Plan.

1. Summary of Report

- 1.1 The details of the role, remit and work plan of the Panel are discussed below.
- 1.2 Members will have an opportunity to shape the Work Plan of the Panel to decide how best to fulfil this role.

2. Policy

- 2.1 A copy of the Corporate Plan 2020-24 can be found by following this link: <https://n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-03/corporate%20plan%202020-24.pdf>
This sets out the priorities and vision of North Somerset Council. Most reviews undertaken by this Panel contribute towards the council's corporate aims of being an open and enabling organisation, and being a council which empowers and cares about people.

3. Details

- 3.1 Members are referred to **Appendix 1** for an overview of the policy and scrutiny function and how it currently operates at North Somerset Council. At the panel meeting, Members will develop and agree the Panel's work plan. Effective work planning will lay the foundations for targeted, incisive, and timely work on issues of local importance, where scrutiny can add value. Members are referred to **Appendix**

2 for a reminder of the Panel's remit and guidance on developing the work plan. **Appendix 3** is the Panel's current work plan.

- 3.2 The remit of the Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel is:
- To scrutinise the regeneration of Places and communities in North Somerset
 - To scrutinise Town and Country Planning
 - To scrutinise parking strategy and car parks
 - To scrutinise decision on Tourism and Economic Development
 - To scrutinise decisions on Heritage
 - To scrutinise Place directorate finance and performance
- 3.3 The Panel's Work Plan summarises the activity that the Panel has undertaken to consider issues of significant public concern, areas of poor performance and areas where Members think the Council could provide better value for money. This is a "live" document and is subject to change as priorities or circumstances change. The Panel only meets formally three times a year, which necessitates most of the work of the Panel being done in informal sessions, such as working groups and briefings. The Panel's remit has changed along with the renaming from the Place Panel, but the previous working groups that fit with the new remit are set out below as an example:
- 3.3.1 The Local Plan working group – this met to enable Member engagement with Local Plan (LP) development, providing meaningful engagement with, and hence assurance around, the development of the Plan.
- 3.3.2 The Directorate Statement 2023/24 Working Group – for Members to engage with officers on development of the 2023/24 Directorate Statement.
- 3.3.3 The Place Panel also did a lot of work in informal briefings on issues such as the Castlewood redevelopment, the Winterstoke Road bridge replacement, Local List nominations, among others that have now been moved as within the remit of the Transport, Climate and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Panel.
- 3.4 The Panel may wish to set up new working groups or continue with the work undertaken previously.
- 3.5 The Work Plan is reviewed at the end of every formal meeting, and Members are invited to provide input into updating it.
- 3.5.1 Although this item is at the start of this meeting's agenda, Members will have an opportunity to add to the Work Plan at the end of the meeting once any issues requiring informal working have been identified.

4. Consultation

Members will agree the Panel's work plan, taking into account any views that local constituents have expressed to them. Officers are encouraged to contribute their ideas, and the Panel is cognisant of the work being undertaken by the relevant Executive Members.

5. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. In undertaking future work, the Panel may make recommendations that have financial implications for the council.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

N/A

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

N/A

8. Risk Management

Risk assessments would be undertaken in respect of any future work.

9. Equality Implications

The work of the Panel is based on the council's commitment to ensure that the consideration of equality and diversity becomes a day-to-day part of decision-making to bring about positive changes that are felt by services users and employees.

10. Corporate Implications

Corporate implications would be dependent on the outcome of individual reviews.

11. Options Considered

N/A

Author:

Brent Cross

Tel: 01275 888 078

Policy and Scrutiny Senior Officer

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Policy/Overview and Scrutiny

Appendix 2: Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel remit

Appendix 3: The PEP Work Plan July 2023

Background Papers:

North Somerset Corporate Plan 2020-24 (see link above).

POLICY/OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

WHAT IS IT?

Policy and scrutiny is an essential part of ensuring that decision makers remain effective and accountable. It helps in ensuring that the Executive's decision-making process is clear and accessible to the public and that there are opportunities for the public and their representatives to influence and improve council policy and services.

Policy – examining the council's aims and priorities and considering whether or not they are being achieved. This provides a vital means of ensuring all councillors can take part in the development of council policy.

Scrutiny – questioning and challenging major decisions that are being made about delivering services in order to help drive improvement. This is the main democratic means of ensuring that the council and its partners are held to account for decisions made.

FOUR PRINCIPLES OF GOOD SCRUTINY:

1. Provides "critical friend" challenge to executives as well as external authorities and agencies.
2. Reflects the voice and concerns of the public and its communities.
3. Should take the lead and own the scrutiny process on behalf of the public.
4. Should make an impact on the delivery of public services.

[CfGS Good Scrutiny Guide]

THE CURRENT STRUCTURE OF POLICY AND SCRUTINY AT NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL:

There are currently five Policy and Scrutiny Panels. Within their terms of reference, these panels will:

- review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions
- make reports and/or recommendations to full Council and/or the Executive and/or individual Executive Member in connection with council policy
- consider Councillor Calls for Action, Petitions and any other matter affecting the area or its inhabitants
- exercise the right to call-in, for reconsideration, decisions made but not yet implemented by the Executive or individual Executive Member.

The functions of the Panels are to:

- review and engage in the development of council policy – helping shape the way council services are delivered
- review and scrutinise decisions and performance in relation to the Council's policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas – ensuring that decisions are made within policy and budget (this does not include decisions of the Planning and Regulatory Committee nor Licensing Committee)
- review finance and performance and contribute to the budget setting process
- Report to full Council on their workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate
- exercise overall responsibility for the work programme of the Officers employed to support their work

WAYS OF WORKING:

- Panel meetings – these will take place in public to review issues and make recommendations to Council, the Executive, and Executive Members;
- Task and Finish Groups (Working Groups) – much of the scrutiny work will be done in these informal, member-led, non-public meetings. Meetings involve small groups of councillors (and other co-opted individuals) who have been appointed by the Panel to investigate a given issue before reporting back to the Panel with recommendations for improvement or value for money. Topics are agreed and prioritised with the Chairman, taking account of officer resource to ensure capacity;
- Steering Groups – ongoing monitoring and policy development. These can be organised and progressed by identified lead members in direct consultation with the relevant directorate officer/team;
- Site visits / public consultation;
- Workshops – usually one-off informal sessions to receive information on a service or issue of concern to Members;
- Call-in – a formal challenge of a decision made by the Executive or Executive Member, undertaken at a panel meeting where the decision will be examined and recommendations sent back to the Executive or Executive Member;
- Informal briefings or information sent to Members – can be done at any time in order to ensure that Members are aware of changes to services and are best placed to undertake meaningful debate and make informed recommendations to Council and the Executive.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REFERRED TO COUNCIL AND/OR THE EXECUTIVE

All working groups should report back to a formal panel meeting with suggested recommendations which are ratified by the Panel and referred to the relevant body. If referred to Council, the Executive or an individual Executive Member, a formal response should be made at the first panel meeting after two months.

USEFUL WEBSITES:

<http://www.cfgs.org.uk/> (Centre for Governance and Scrutiny)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-levelling-up-housing-and-communities> (Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities)

<http://www.local.gov.uk/> (Local Government Association)

<https://n-somerset.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CIId=235&Year=2023>
(North Somerset Council – previous Place Policy and Scrutiny Panel meeting agendas, reports and minutes)

<https://n-somerset.moderngov.co.uk/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx?bcr=1&DM=0&DS=2&K=0&DR=&V=0>
(North Somerset Council - decisions of Executive Members)

PLACEMAKING, ECONOMY AND PLANNING POLICY AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Panel remit

- To scrutinise the regeneration of Places and communities in North Somerset
- To scrutinise Town and Country Planning
- To scrutinise parking strategy and car parks
- To scrutinise decision on Tourism and Economic Development
- To scrutinise decisions on Heritage
- To scrutinise Place directorate finance and performance

The Panel's Work Plan

The work plan is a flexible document that is updated at each meeting to reflect progress and new developments.

Scrutiny is most effective when focusing on a limited number of in-depth topics, so it is important to prioritise suggestions put forward. When identifying topics to add to the work plan, the Panel should ask the following questions:

- Have Members or Officers identified the topic as a key issue for the public?
- Is it an area of poor performance?
- Has the topic been identified as a strategic risk?
- Is there new government guidance or legislation that will require a significant change to services?
- Has the external auditor or other inspection body highlighted concerns about the issue?
- Could scrutiny lead to increased value for money?
- Is there potential for policy development?
- Will the outcome make a difference?

Once topics have been chosen, brief terms of reference should be agreed at the panel meeting to address the basic questions of:

- What does the topic include?
- Why should the Panel consider?
- How should the Panel proceed? (such as working group, workshop, site visit, informal briefing, item for agenda)
- Who should be involved? (agree appropriate Members, Officers and witnesses)
- Timescale

Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Work programme July 2023

(to be updated following each Panel meeting)

The Panel will consider issues of significant public concern, areas of poor performance and areas where Members think the Council could provide better value for money. This is a “live” document and is subject to change as priorities or circumstances change.

SECTION ONE – ACTIVE & SCHEDULED panel Projects as identified in the overarching Strategic Work Plan.

Topic	Reason for scrutiny	Method of scrutiny and reporting process	Timeline	Progress	Lead

SECTION TWO – proposed projects (listed in priority order). These must be agreed at Panel and will be referred for discussion at Chairs and Vice Chairs – for potential inclusion within the Strategic Work Plan:-

Topic	Reason for scrutiny	Proposed method of scrutiny and reporting process	Timeline	Lead

SECTION THREE planned briefings, workshops, and informal Panel meetings. Outcomes may, with Chairman’s agreement, generate Panel agenda items (for inclusion in S4 below) or, with Panel agreement, escalation to S2 above:-

Topic	Reason for scrutiny	Date	Outcome	Progress	Lead

SECTION FOUR - agenda reports to the Panel meetings as agreed by the Chairman. This section provides for the forward planning of agendas for the coming year and a record of recent panel meeting activity. Item outcomes may include proposing further work such as additional briefings or potential projects for inclusion on the STRATEGIC WORK PLAN (S2 above).

Report Title	Purpose of Report	Outcome (actions)
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Panel Meeting 31 July 2023

Role, Remit and Work Plan of the Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel	To consider and agree the Panel’s Work Plan.	
North Somerset Local Plan: progress update	To consider the proposed approach and make any recommendations in relation to the emerging content and issues to assist in the preparation of the Pre-submission document.	
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Year 3 Allocation	To advise on and endorse the contents of this report, to be presented to Executive for approval in September.	
Place Finance update	To Panel note the final out-turn position for 2022/23 against budget for Place and note the current budget and risks for 2023/24.	

Panel Meeting 22 November 2023

Panel Meeting 6 March 2024

SECTION 5 - Recommendations - Response from Executive Member

Area for investigation/ Recommendations	When were the recommendations to the Executive agreed?	Expect answer by (first panel meeting after recommendations were submitted)

SECTION 6 - Progress and follow-up on implementing Panel recommendations

Panel Recommendation	Date of Response	Actions – implementation progress

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North Somerset Council

Report to the Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting: 31 July 2023

Subject of Report: North Somerset Local Plan: progress update

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Michael Reep, Planning Policy Manager

Key Decision: Yes

Reason:

This is a key decision as the local plan will have implications for all communities within North Somerset.

Recommendations

To consider the proposed approach and make any recommendations in relation to the emerging content and issues to assist in the preparation of the Pre-submission document.

1. Summary of Report

- 1.1 The Council is preparing a new local plan to cover a 15 year period 2024-2039. Plan preparation commenced in 2020 with two initial stages of consultation and a Preferred Options document in March 2022. The next stage is the approval of the Pre-submission document which is the plan which, following consideration of the response to consultation and any updated evidence, is the version which it is intended to submit for examination.
- 1.2 It is intended that the proposed Pre-submission plan will be considered by Executive Committee in October 2023 with a view to undertaking consultation by the end of the year and submission for examination in Spring 2024.
- 1.3 At the end of 2022 the government launched a consultation on proposed reforms to the planning system which potentially had very significant implications for the local plan in relation to the calculation of the housing requirement and how constraints such as Green Belt are taken into account. The response to the government consultation is not now expected until September at the earliest.
- 1.4 It is recommended that the Pre-submission document retains the same spatial strategy, but the housing requirement is proposed to be based on a locally derived target rather than the government's standard method. This may provide some opportunity to review the proposed allocations set out in the Preferred Options draft plan and the appropriateness of using Green Belt. The updated draft plan will also take account of new data relating to flood risk as a result of future sea level rise.

2. Policy

- 2.1 The local plan sets out the overall approach to the sustainable development of the area balancing community, economic and environmental objectives. It will support and implement a wide range of corporate objectives such as in relation to climate change, net zero energy, affordable housing, environmental protection and job creation.

3. Details

- 3.1 Local Plan preparation commenced in March 2020 with two initial stages of consultation; 'Challenges for the Future' which addressed the issues facing North Somerset and the strategic priorities and 'Choices for the Future' which considered alternative approaches to the broad distribution of growth. The response to these two consultations led directly to the confirmation of the plan's strategic objectives and spatial strategy which were confirmed at Executive in April 2021 and provided the framework for the preparation of the draft plan.

- 3.2 The plan's spatial strategy was agreed as:

'Priority will be given to locating new residential and mixed-use development in or close to urban areas where there is an existing or proposed wide range of facilities, services and jobs, and there are opportunities to encourage active travel, particularly at locations which are currently, or have the potential to be, well served by public transport. Employment opportunities will be encouraged at accessible locations well-related to the urban areas and where sustainable transport opportunities can be maximised. Residential development in areas at risk of flooding will be minimised outside the towns. The amount of development at villages and in the countryside will relate to local community needs.'

- 3.3 Potential development opportunities were assessed against the plan's objectives and overall spatial strategy and a proposed set of sites and policies set out in the Preferred Options draft plan which was consulted upon in Spring 2022. The response to this was summarised in a Consultation Statement August 2022.

- 3.4 Executive Committee considered the response on 7 September 2022 and resolved that:

'...Officers proceed to develop a revised Local Plan that recognises the constrained nature of North Somerset and identifies an appropriate scale and location of development to offer greater protection to the Green Belt and other sensitive sites, and seek legal advice including advice on implications for the Local Plan timetable and anticipated national reforms, further evidence gathering, potentially including further consultation, in order to prepare the strongest possible pre-submission draft plan.'

The plan was also referred to Scrutiny for all-Member feedback. The then Place Policy and Scrutiny Panel considered the approach on 7 October 2022 to which all members were invited.

- 3.5 In December 2022, the government commenced consultation on proposed reforms to national planning policy set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill and changes to the National Planning Policy Framework. This has significant implications for North Somerset particularly in relation to the scale of the housing requirement and the approach to take to Green Belt and other constraints. A

decision was taken not to proceed to the Pre-submission plan at that stage pending clarification of the implications. Although the outcome was initially expected in 'spring' 2023, it is not now anticipated until September at the earliest.

- 3.6 The next stage of the plan making process is the consideration of the Pre-submission document at Executive which is currently timetabled for October. This is the version of the plan which, having considered all the evidence and taken account of representations received and other considerations, is the plan which the Council intends to submit for examination. Once agreed by the Executive, the plan will be subject to consultation at the end of the year with submission for examination anticipated in April 2024 and final adoption at the end of 2024.
- 3.7 The approach to the distribution of development in Preferred Options in accordance with the spatial strategy was broadly supported by the consultation response to that stage of the plan and will be taken forward into the Pre-submission version, but there are a number of areas which will be reviewed. These are identified as follows.

Plan period

- 3.8 Local plans are expected to cover a minimum of 15 years from adoption. As the expected adoption date is now a year later than originally anticipated it is necessary to amend the plan period from 2023-2038 to 2024-2039. The principal consequence of rolling forward the plan period is that the identified housing supply will reduce as there are currently insufficient new permissions coming forward to replace completions on sites such as at Weston Villages.

Housing requirement

- 3.9 The Preferred Options identified a potential capacity of 18,046 dwellings over a 15 year period although the current minimum housing requirement set out in the standard method currently stands at 20,205 dwellings. The draft plan invited views on how the shortfall should be made up. Since then, the proposed planning reforms sought to make it easier for local planning authorities to work on the basis of a locally identified requirement. The Council has engaged consultants to assess what is the appropriate housing requirement for North Somerset and it is expected that the Pre-submission plan will be based on a locally derived target. Even so, the need to accommodate the district's housing needs in a sustainable way will remain a very difficult challenge.

Green Belt

- 3.10 The government continues to attach great importance to Green Belts which should only be altered in exceptional circumstances. The proposed planning reforms indicated that the intention was to ensure that local planning authorities are not compelled to use Green Belt to meet housing targets. The use of Green Belt locations is sequentially the final step when identifying potential capacity. However, it should be recognised that there will continue to be development pressure in the Green Belt in terms of meeting the needs of Bristol which has insufficient capacity to meet its own housing requirement.
- 3.11 As the Preferred Options consultation draft was seeking to accommodate a higher housing requirement, at that stage it was considered that Green Belt sites would need to be tested. However, in the context of a reduced dwelling target and government indications that in the future local authorities would not be compelled to use Green Belt land to meet housing need, there is an opportunity to review the appropriateness of using Green Belt locations.

Flood risk

- 3.12 Local plans should apply a sequential risk based approach to the location of development, steer development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source and consider how proposed development may be affected by flood risk in the future. The approach in the local plan is to avoid development in areas at higher risk of flooding outside the towns as this would not constitute sustainable development. The existing allocations in the Preferred Options and other sites have been reviewed in relation to updated information on sea level rise to 2138 as a result of climate change and also in relation to flood risk from other sources. This includes the risk of reservoir breaches. This will result in some sites being deleted or capacities adjusted.

Climate change

- 3.13 The policies in the Preferred Options are being reviewed on the basis of new information and best practice guidance to ensure that they are as effective as possible. A net zero operational (in use) energy construction standard, incorporating renewable energy is required for all new developments. Embodied/whole lifecycle carbon accounting is required for larger scale developments.

Employment and economic development

- 3.14 The employment evidence base is being reviewed and updated on a West of England basis to establish forecast economic needs post-pandemic in terms of both the amount of land and floorspace required and the priority sectors.
- 3.15 The spatial strategy also guides the distribution of employment land across North Somerset. Sufficient sites will be provided to meet the forecast employment land requirements and to provide a range of opportunities for business and employment creation. Development management policies enable existing businesses to adapt and expand in situ and support delivery of the Council's Economic Plan. The approach to major employers, including the port and airport, will also be addressed.

Development management policies

- 3.16 The Preferred Options draft plan contained policies grouped into strategic, locational and development management policies. These are being reviewed in the light of representations received and new evidence. As part of the proposed planning reforms the government is intending to introduce National Development Management Policies. The government has indicated that this will be the subject of a future consultation, but details have yet to be announced.

Settlement boundaries

- 3.17 The new plan proposes to amend the existing approach to residential development adjacent to settlements where subject to criteria, developments of certain scales were acceptable in principle. The approach as proposed in the draft plan was to restrict new residential development to within settlement boundaries. This has involved a review of settlement boundaries taking account of representations received. The revised boundaries also bring some existing major employers such as at Yatton and Sandford within the settlement boundaries thereby providing greater flexibility with any future development proposals.

Affordable housing

- 3.18 The Preferred Options proposed that the plan should seek 40% affordable housing from developments of 10+ dwellings. Initial viability work has indicated that this is not likely to be viable and the recommendation is that the plan continues with the current approach to seek 30%.

Housing sites

3.19 The housing sites proposed in the Preferred Options draft plan are being reviewed to delete those which have either now been developed or are not now expected to come forward. This exercise will also take account of the new flood risk evidence and the approach to Green Belt locations given the government's announcements in relation to proposed changes to the NPPF. The four Green Belt allocations proposed in the Preferred Options draft plan were:

- Yanley (Woodspring golf course) – 2,500 dwellings.
- Clevedon Road, Portishead – 80 dwellings.
- East of Backwell – 500 dwellings.
- North of Colliter's Way (inside South Bristol Link) – 215 dwellings.

Nailsea/Backwell

3.20 Nailsea/Backwell was identified as a growth location in the Preferred Options, subject to the delivery of strategic highway mitigations, namely the crossing of the railway either to the west or east of the train station. A new rail crossing has significant delivery challenges and if not resolved, would significantly limit the scale of growth possible in the area. East of Backwell is a proposed allocation which could help facilitate a potential new road crossing of the railway. Without this justification it may not be appropriate to retain this allocation which is in the Green Belt.

Infrastructure

3.21 It is essential to ensure that sufficient infrastructure is provided in a timely way to support new development, including cumulative impacts. The local plan is supported by a Infrastructure Delivery Plan which will be reviewed in the light of the Pre-submission document to identify the infrastructure required and how it will be delivered.

3.22 Work is ongoing to revise the Preferred Options with a view to presenting a Pre-submission document to Executive in October for approval. At this stage this version of the plan is expected to be based on a lower housing requirement, and with less reliance on Green Belt sites and taking account of climate change forecasts in respect of flood risk.

4. Consultation

4.1 Public consultation is an integral part of plan making and there have already been three substantive consultation periods to date. The Pre-submission plan is the version of the plan which the Council intends to submit for examination. This will be consulted upon for six weeks and the responses received submitted to the Inspector to consider as part of the examination process.

4.2 The local planning authority has a duty to co-operate with neighbouring authorities and other bodies on strategic cross-boundary matters. This requires on-going and effective joint working to discuss issues such as Bristol's difficulty in accommodating its housing needs.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 Local plan preparation is funded from existing budgets.

Costs

The estimated cost of preparing the Local Plan, including the supporting evidence, is anticipated to be around £400,000 over 5 years. It should be noted that the Council must also pay the costs of the examination process including the Inspector.

Funding

The plan is progressed using existing budgets and reserves.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

6.1 The Local Plan is being progressed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and related Regulations. There is a requirement for all local planning authorities to have an adopted local plan in place.

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

7.1 The new local plan will play an important role in defining and delivering the Council's response to the climate emergency. It will set out the approach to climate change and environmental issues in terms of, for example, the location and form of development, renewable energy, minimising car use, encouraging green infrastructure and biodiversity, avoiding sensitive areas such as areas at flood risk and minimising waste.

8. Risk Management

8.1 The absence of an up-to-date development plan incurs risks related to the uncertainty of future investment decisions and speculative development proposals potentially leading to increased planning appeals and less sustainable development solutions.

9. Equality Implications

9.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is prepared at each stage of the plan.

10. Corporate Implications

10.1 The new Local Plan 2039 will help support the delivery of the Corporate Plan vision and objectives and has significant implications for a wide range of Council services in terms of, for example, the future location of population, jobs and infrastructure.

11. Options Considered

11.1 The Local Plan preparation process requires various strategic development and policy options to be considered as set out in the background papers. Not preparing a Local Plan will expose the Council to significant risks from speculative development, increased planning appeals and other potential interventions.

11.2 There are a number of options which have been considered in relation to the new local plan.

- Timing: One option would be to pause the local plan until there was more certainty around the government's planning reforms. However, it is also important to make progress to secure an up-to-date planning framework at the earliest possible opportunity. Once any changes are confirmed then the plan can be reviewed at that point.
- Housing requirement: The plan could be prepared on the basis of the standard method, but that would be extremely difficult to deliver in terms of identifying

sufficient capacity without including locations such as sites affected by flood risk, located in the Green Belt or more dispersed development at villages.

Author:

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Appendices:

None.

Background Papers:

Challenges for the future consultation document:

[North Somerset Local Plan 2038 challenges and choices part 1 \(n-somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/nslp2038-challenges-and-choices-part-1)

Challenges for the future consultation statement:

[Local Plan 2038 Consultation Statement October 2020 \(n-somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/local-plan-2038-consultation-statement-october-2020)

Choices for the future consultation document:

[North Somerset Local Plan 2038, Challenges and Choices Part 2 - Choices for the Future \(n-somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/nslp2038-choices-and-choices-part-2)

Choices for the future consultation statement:

[Microsoft Word - Choices Consultation Statement - Feb 2021 \(n-somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/microsoft-word-choices-consultation-statement-feb-2021)

Preferred Options consultation document:

[North Somerset Local Plan 2038, Consultation draft, Preferred Option \(n-somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/nslp2038-consultation-draft-preferred-option)

Preferred Options Consultation Statement:

[Preferred options consultation statement - main report august 2022 \(n-somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/preferred-options-consultation-statement-main-report-august-2022)

Place Panel meeting 7 October 2022:

[NSC Numbering \(n-somerset.gov.uk\)](https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/nsc-numbering)

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North Somerset Council

Report to the Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel (engagement in advance of Executive approval)

Date of Meeting: 31/07/2023 (in advance of Executive on 06/09/2023)

Subject of Report: UK Shared Prosperity Fund Year 3 Allocation

Town or Parish: N/A

Officer/Member Presenting: Luke Johnson and Jane Harrison

Key Decision: YES

Reason:

The decision will result in the Local Authority incurring expenditure of over £500,000.

Recommendations (Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel – 31/07/2023)

1. To advise on and endorse the contents of this report, to be presented to Executive for approval in September.

Executive Recommendations (included for reference)

1. To approve receipt of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) Year 3 allocation.
2. To authorise a corresponding increase in North Somerset Council's gross revenue budget of £1,264,873 for Financial Year 2024/25.
3. To authorise a corresponding increase in North Somerset Council's gross capital budget of £333,128 for Financial Year 2024/25.
4. To approve spend of UKSPF Year 3 allocation on the projects set out in this paper.

1. Summary of Report

Following submission of North Somerset Council's [UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#) Investment Plan in August 2022 (approved by the government in December 2022), and successful delivery of the first two years of the Fund, we seek approval to receive the allocation for UKSPF Year 3 from the government, authorise an increase in the council's gross revenue and capital budgets for Financial Year 2024/25, and gain approval to spend North Somerset's UKSPF on the projects set out in Section 5.

2. Policy

2.1 North Somerset Council Corporate Plan 2020-2024

A thriving and sustainable place

UKSPF is a key part of the government's Levelling Up agenda, aimed at reducing geographical inequalities and creating opportunity and prosperity across the UK, as well as improving people's pride in the places they live, leading to a stronger social fabric and better life chances.

Projects outlined in NSC's UKSPF Investment Plan and this report, including capital grants to businesses to take on vacant assets and local community project funding through the UKSPF Community Grants programme, are all designed to improve the local area and build people's engagement with and pride in their communities.

Furthermore, the government encourages a net-zero element to run through all UKSPF interventions where possible, and this is achieved through several projects outlined in this report. Please see Section 7 (*Climate Change and Environmental Implications*) for more detail.

A council which empowers and cares about people

Employment and skills support, including for vulnerable members of our communities such as care leavers, recovering addicts and those with learning difficulties, is a core investment priority for UKSPF and represents a large proportion of funding for Year 3.

Year 3 projects are designed to support people at all stages of finding employment, including removing barriers to employment (for example, development of interpersonal and digital skills), support accessing employment opportunities (for example, support for those with learning difficulties to find and maintain paid employment), and support to gain qualifications and skills whilst employed to support in-work development.

These projects align with the Corporate Plan's aim to develop partnerships which enhance skills, learning, and employment opportunities; and contributes towards tackling inequalities and improving outcomes for our residents.

An open and enabling organisation

A key part of UKSPF is to empower local communities to both know what their needs are, and how best to use funding to build on their strengths and deliver impactful local improvements which address those needs.

Ongoing projects in North Somerset, in particular the UKSPF Community Grants programme, are explicitly designed to put money directly into the hands of local communities and allow them to develop projects which are community-created and led. This aligns with and fulfils the Corporate Plan's aim of engaging and empowering our communities. NSC's delivery of UKSPF makes deliberate use of partnership work, aligning with the Corporate Plan's aim to collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes.

2.3 Wider Plans and Strategies

The projects outlined in this UKSPF Year 3 budget also contribute to the aims and objectives of the following North Somerset Council plans and strategies:

- North Somerset Economic Plan
- North Somerset Employment and Skills Strategy
- North Somerset Visitor Economy Action Plan
- North Somerset Corporate Parenting Strategy 2023-2026
- North Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2024
- North Somerset Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Place Annual Directorate Statement 23/24

The links between these strategies and the individual projects can be found within the table in Appendix 1.

3. Details

3.1 Context and objectives

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) was introduced by Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to replace European Structural and Investment Funding. This funding is focused on local regeneration, employment, and skills.

UKSPF focuses on activities that must support three Investment Priorities:

- Community and Place
- Supporting Local Business
- People and Skills

North Somerset's allocation of core UKSPF is £2,516,852. This is delivered over three years (April 2022 – April 2025), in line with Financial Years.

Year 3 funding will be received and ready to spend from early in FY 2024/25. The allocation for this year is £1,600,522 of which £1,264,873 is committed as revenue and £333,128 is committed as capital.

3.2 Forward funding of People & Skills interventions

When UKSPF was announced, it included a restriction on delivery of People & Skills interventions until Year 3 (2024/25 FY), except in limited circumstances. The government announced in March 2023 that this restriction had been lifted, meaning People & Skills interventions could be delivered at any point for the rest of the Fund's duration.

In order to take advantage of this situation, it is intended to start delivering the following Year 3 projects early (from ca. January 2024):

- Support for those with learning disabilities to achieve and maintain paid employment.
- *Opportunity North Somerset* – Tailored employment and skills support for local residents, in partnership with other organisations, aimed at removing employment barriers.
- Support for women returners to access employment opportunities.
- Employment interventions package – includes support for young people aged 16-24 not in employment, education or training; back-to-work support for adults; and support for residents and businesses to upskill themselves and their workforce

This allows funding gaps to be reduced or avoided for these projects, and ensures more time is available to deliver the large Year 3 allocation.

Procurement and recruitment-based Director Decisions covering funding for this early delivery will be produced and signed off, pending Executive approval of this report in September.

4. Consultation

4.1 UKSPF Investment Plan consultation

To determine the priority outcomes and intervention areas for North Somerset, as well as investment principles and the allocation of funding to the three priorities set out by Government, the council carried out an extensive consultation process with internal and external stakeholders, as well as mapping evidence and priorities from across the council's major existing strategies. A table of stakeholders and strategies consulted during investment plan development is available at Appendix 3.

The following priority areas emerged:

1. Wellbeing and Engagement

- a. Tackling social isolation (dovetailing with Health budgets)
- b. Improving mental health (in particular in relation to access to advice and guidance, access to open space and nature, and targeted support for key groups including younger people, older people, people with additional needs)
- c. Cultural programmes that support communities to participate in and access a range of cultural activities
- d. Food and food poverty interventions

2. Community Infrastructure

- a. Community infrastructure support provision (ensuring sustainable provision of leadership development, engagement, support and guidance, organising, capacity building)
- b. Access to flexible funding to deliver partnership programmes based on evolving community need and opportunities
- c. Support for strengthening partnerships and leveraging larger scale funding into community sector led programmes

3. Physical infrastructure

- a. Transport connections for communities (could include work to support communities to influence and shape wider transport spending)
- b. Assets, buildings development (including access to capital funds, and access to specialist business support, feasibility work)
- c. Public realm, high streets (dovetailing with placemaking agenda)
- d. Green infrastructure development (dovetailing with Green Infrastructure strategy)

4. Business support infrastructure

- a. Business support including universal and specialist support, and a clear focus on carbon reduction, as well as supporting community business
- b. Business grants (including Green Business Grants, and building on CRF voucher scheme)
- c. Activities to increase local footfall (including investment in cultural events, public realm, high streets, and marketing, across all of NS)

5. Employment and Skills

- a. Work experience and outreach (including enabling key providers to deliver in more locations e.g., through libraries etc; including work with business support programmes to build up work experience opportunities)
- b. Accessing employment support (including WoE Works-type provision; including NEET provision)

- c. In-work progression (including support to businesses to build better job design and workforce development)
- d. Core and technical skills offer.

4.2 Year 3 budget consultation

Preparation for Year 3 of UKSPF began in April 2023, with an initial meeting between key project managers to ascertain project designs, allocations, UKSPF interventions and outcomes, wider outcomes, and key stakeholders to engage with.

These plans were refined over the following two months, including engagement with relevant officers and external organisations and groups to identify potential delivery partners and avoid duplication of existing provision. A timetable of engagement is included at Appendix 3.

4.3 Governance and ongoing engagement

As per DP 22/23 202, the UKSPF governance structure supports ongoing engagement to ensure officers and members remain sighted on programme progress.

Project leads collectively meet monthly to discuss progress, and the UKSPF Leadership Group (the programme's strategic oversight board) meets every other month.

The North Somerset Partnership is the official 'Local Partnership Group' for UKSPF's delivery in North Somerset, which means it receives updates on delivery progress and advises on strategic direction. It is updated every six months.

The Executive Members for Spatial Planning, Placemaking and Economy; and for Children's Services, Families and Life-long Learning receive progress briefings every two months, as well as bespoke briefings for key decisions.

Corporate Leadership Team and the Executive Leadership Team receive quarterly updates.

5. Financial Implications

There will be an increase in the council's gross revenue budget of £1,264,873 and gross capital budget of £333,128 for Financial Year 2024/25.

Costs

The costs relating to this decision are both revenue and capital and will be spent during Financial Year 2024/25. A summary of the expenditure is as follows:

1. Project costs - £1,343,222
2. Core delivery staffing costs – £210,769
3. Central costs and contingency - £46,529

The breakdown of expenditure is laid out in the below tables. A more detailed summary of delivery-based projects, including descriptions, outcomes and policy context, can be found in Appendix 1.

Community and Place Investment Priority - £295,057

Item / Project	Budget Allocation	UKSPF Intervention
Improvements to local green spaces and rewilding and Park Ranger	£31,858 (revenue)	E3: Creation of and improvements to local green spaces
Delivery of a revenue and capital grants scheme for local community groups and VCSE organisations	£136,228 (revenue) £46,700 (capital)	E6: Local arts, cultural, heritage & creative activities E9: Impactful volunteering and/or social action projects E11: Capacity building and infrastructure support for local groups E12: Community engagement schemes and local regeneration E14: Relevant feasibility studies
Improvements to Public Rights of Way network	£11,375 (capital)	E7: Support for active travel enhancements in the local area
Continuation of household energy efficiency advice line	£11,375 (revenue)	E13: Community measures to reduce the cost of living
UKSPF Programme Manager	£57,521 (revenue)	E11: Capacity building and infrastructure support for local groups

Supporting Local Business Investment Priority - £508,499

Item / Project	Budget Allocation	UKSPF Intervention
Business Support and Engagement Officer	£51,446 (revenue)	E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth
Universal Business Support (<i>Business Support Unlocked</i>)	£75,000 (revenue)	E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth
West of England Growth Hub	£75,000 (revenue)	E23: Strengthening local entrepreneurial ecosystems
Visit West membership	£25,000 (revenue)	E17: Development and promotion of the Visitor Economy
Net-Zero Business Grants	£7000 (revenue) £200,053 (capital)	E29: Supporting decarbonisation whilst improving the economy
Occupancy Grants	£75,000 (capital)	E16: Open markets and town centre retail and service sector E1: Improvements to town centres and high streets

People and Skills Investment Priority - £750,437

Item / Project	Budget Allocation	UKSPF Intervention
EET Officer	£19,631 (revenue)	E33: Employment support for economically inactive people E37: Tailored support for the employed to access courses
Employment and Skills Officer	£51,446 (revenue)	E33: Employment support for economically inactive people E37: Tailored support for the employed to access courses (E30: Business support measures to drive employment growth)

<i>Opportunity North Somerset</i>	£104,330 (revenue)	<p>E33: Employment support for economically inactive people</p> <p>E35: Enrichment and volunteering activities</p> <p>E36: Increased levels of digital inclusion, and essential digital skills</p> <p>E37: Tailored support for the employed to access courses</p>
Multiple barriers employment support package	£315,030 (revenue)	<p>E33: Employment support for economically inactive people</p> <p>E34: Courses including basic, life, and career skills</p> <p>E35: Enrichment and volunteering activities</p> <p>E36: Increased levels of digital inclusion, and essential digital skills</p> <p>E37: Tailored support for the employed to access courses</p>
SEND employment support	£99,999 (revenue)	<p>E33: Employment support for economically inactive people</p> <p>E34: Courses including basic, life, and career skills</p> <p>E35: Enrichment and volunteering activities</p>
Aftercare Service	£70,000 (revenue)	<p>E33: Employment support for economically inactive people</p>
Women returners employment support	£60,000 (revenue)	<p>E33: Employment support for economically inactive people</p> <p>E34: Courses including basic, life, and career skills</p> <p>E35: Enrichment and volunteering activities</p>

		E36: Increased levels of digital inclusion, and essential digital skills
Targeted mental health employment support	£30,000 (revenue)	E33: Employment support for economically inactive people E34: Courses including basic, life, and career skills E35: Enrichment and volunteering activities E36: Increased levels of digital inclusion, and essential digital skills

Central Costs and Contingency - £46,529

Item / Project	Budget Allocation	UKSPF Intervention
Comms Officer	£23,008 (revenue)	N/A
Evaluation Partner	£21,000 (revenue)	N/A
Contingency	£2,522 (revenue)	N/A

Funding

The funding will be taken from North Somerset Council's UKSPF Year 3 allocation. This is due to be received from early in FY 2023/24.

Early delivery of People & Skills projects will be funded from council reserves, with a cost code confirmed by Finance.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

Any commissioning, procurement, or fund allocation of the UKSPF Year 3 allocation will be delivered in line with UKSPF, statutory and legal requirements.

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

A Net-Zero thread is expected to run throughout UKSPF, with interventions taking account of their impact on climate change and the environment. Multiple Year 3 projects are designed to have a positive climate and environmental impact in the district, including:

- Decarbonisation support for businesses – increasing energy efficiency and reducing carbon emissions
- Public Rights of Way improvements – increased promotion of sustainable travel
- Green space improvements – more green infrastructure and rewilding
- Energy efficiency hotline – improved household energy efficiency

Where projects are less explicitly impacting the climate, efforts are still made to ensure they adhere to Net-Zero contribution. For example, employment and skills projects will include promotion of green skills, and the *Business Support Unlocked* programme includes sustainable business courses.

In line with procurement standards, bidders for commissioned projects will be expected to demonstrate a commitment to facilitating the council’s climate ambitions through their work.

8. Risk Management

There are no ‘HIGH’ risks associated with the contents of this report. However, relevant lower-level risks and control measures are outlined below:

Risk	Inherent risk score	Residual likelihood	Residual impact	Residual risk score	Comments
Risk to receipt of Year 3 allocation if Year 2 allocation not fully delivered.	MEDHIGH	1	3	LOWMED	DLUHC have confirmed if credible plans for delivering previous years’ underspends are set out in reporting, then future allocations won’t be affected.
Risk to programme and council optics if expectations are not managed and outcomes not well communicated	MED	2	2	LOWMED	Programme Comms Officer in post, focussing on anticipation, exploitation and mitigation of programme comms opportunities and risks. Particular focus on promoting ‘good news’ and reaching as wide an audience as possible. Year 3 comms output planned.
Risk to delivery impact and outcomes if provision is unintentionally duplicated	LOWMED	1	1	LOW	As part of project planning, relevant consultation was held to ensure projects are addressing need and are not duplicating provision (unless it is to provide a version of existing regional provision more tailored to the North Somerset area).
Risk to project delivery and finances to spend Year 3 allocation in-year.	MEDHIGH	2	4	MED	Year 3 planning commenced well in advance to allow procurement and mobilisation to be completed ready for April 2023 delivery.

					Some projects will be delivered early.
Risk to long-term project sustainability if a post-UKSPF funding gap emerges	MED	2	3	LOWMED	Project sustainability built into Year 3 planning process, including possible sources of future funding and partnerships if a UKSPF successor does not emerge.
Delivery and reputational risk from not approving budget	MEDHIGH	1	5	MEDHIGH	Results of comprehensive investment plan consultation process the basis for Year 3 budget. Series of engagement undertaken for budget itself with key stakeholders. Large amount of time provided for engagement to allow concerns to be addressed without affecting ultimate approval of the budget.

9. Equality Implications

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? **Yes**

The UKSPF Investment Plan was designed to support some of the most disadvantaged residents in North Somerset, some of whom fall into a protected group. An Equality Impact Assessment was produced covering the

Although UKSPF is a targeted programme, it is open to all who need the type of support offered, so no one can be excluded on any equalities criteria. The projects are designed to provide specific positive benefits for participants, including those with disabilities, people from minority ethnic groups, women, and people aged under 25 or over 50, as they tend to be over-represented in the unemployed, low wage and/or economically inactive cohorts.

Take-up of provision has been and will be monitored, and, where relevant, information on protected characteristics will be recorded (for example, in the upcoming employment support projects outlined in this report). The programme and its associated projects are also actively promoted via partners and other stakeholders to maximise the opportunities for programme communications to reach priority groups and the district's diverse communities, including those who have been historically under-served.

In terms of delivery management, there are also UKSPF-related commitments in the council's 'anti-racist action plan'. These centre around working with providers of UKSPF

projects to ensure their interventions (business start-up support, grants programmes, and employment & skills activity) are:

- Accessible to people from all backgrounds.
- Appropriately communicated to the diverse communities of North Somerset.
- Aware of any anti-racist training which is available to support delivery.
- Feel able to challenge any inappropriate behaviour and actions through the UKSPF Programme Manager and the NSC Head of Economy.

Staff have signed up to a UKSPF 'Equality and Diversity Charter', produced with input from NSC's Inclusion Team, to facilitate delivery of these actions. Please see Appendix 2.

Impact Level	Impact type				Impact type		
	H	M	L	N	+	=	-
Disabled people		x			x		
People from different ethnic groups			x		x		
Men or women (including those who are pregnant or on maternity leave)		x			x		
Lesbian, <u>gay</u> or bisexual people			x		x		
People on a low income		x			x		
People in particular age groups		x			x		
People in particular faith groups			x		x		
People who are married or in a civil partnership			x			x	
Transgender people			x		x		
Other specific impacts, for example: carers, parents, impact on health and wellbeing, Armed Forces Community etc. Please specify: Care leavers; recovering addicts		x			x		

10. Corporate Implications

UKSPF funding and its Levelling Up objectives support the delivery of corporate strategic priorities, particularly around making North Somerset a thriving and sustainable place and being a council which empowers and cares about people.

It is recognised that additional corporate service are needed to deliver the programme:

Communications: A dedicated Comms resource is in place to promote the programme and individual projects, funded through UKSPF.

Finance: Support is in place to monitor expenditure and provide budget advice. Regular meetings are held between the UKSPF Programme Manager and a member of Finance.

Procurement: Members of Procurement have historically provided and continue to provide advice and support for UKSPF procurement exercises to ensure best practice and compliance with statutory guidance.

Legal: Legal advice is sought as required.

People: Relevant advice is sought from People Services as required.

11. Options Considered

1. **A revised and alternative allocation amount** - rejected as our allocation is fixed and was approved by DLUHC as part of the UKSPF Investment Plan.
2. **Revised and alternative project allocations** – rejected as the proposed allocations were based on the priorities which emerged from the extensive Investment Plan consultation, as well as additional engagement during planning for the Year 3 budget.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Overview of UKSPF Year 3 delivery projects

Appendix 2: UKSPF Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Charter

Appendix 3: Consultation details

Background Papers:

Year 2 revenue approvals - [22/23 DP 411](#)

Year 2 capital approvals - [22/23 DP 471](#)

Year 1 budget and SPF governance - 22/23 DP 202 (*document available upon request*)

Investment Plan submissions approvals - [22/23 DP 175](#)

[UKSPF Prospectus](#)

Appendix 1: UKSPF Year 3 delivery projects - details

Table guide:

- Column 1 shows the UKSPF project and a description of what will be delivered
- Column 2 shows the allocation (including capital and revenue split)
- Column 3 states the UKSPF outcomes (including targets) which the project is expected to contribute to over the course of the UKSPF programme
- Column 4 outlines the wider outcomes and impacts which may provisionally be achieved, measured and evaluated beyond government requirements.
- Column 5 identifies some of the evidence of need and policy context which emerged through the investment plan consultation, justifying the selection of these projects to deliver UKSPF funding.

Project	Allocation	UKSPF outcomes	Wider outcomes	Evidence of need and corporate priorities
Community and Place				
<p><u>Community Grants</u></p> <p>A community programme providing capital and revenue grants of up to £10k for individual organisations, and up to £30k for partner organisations.</p> <p>Projects can cover varying priorities based on government requirements, including capacity building and infrastructure support; social action projects; local regeneration projects; cultural, arts and heritage projects; and completion of feasibility studies.</p> <p>The following groups can apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • voluntary organisation • community group • mutual aid group • charity • parish or town council • social enterprise • non-profit organisations / businesses • individual organisation, or one of several organisations working together, that is, a partnership or collaboration applications <p>This is a continuation of the Year 2 Community Grants Programme.</p>	<p>£136,228 <i>(revenue)</i></p> <p>£46,700 <i>(capital)</i></p>	<p>Increased footfall (450)</p> <p>Improved engagement numbers (540)</p> <p>More projects enabled through feasibility studies (3)</p>	<p>Improved community collaboration</p> <p>Increased local volunteering opportunities</p> <p>Improved community organisation capacity and resilience</p> <p>Increased access to funding opportunities</p> <p>Improved awareness of community strengths, challenges, and assets across North Somerset</p> <p>Number of individuals benefitting from initiatives to improve their health, wellbeing, and skills</p>	<p>High priority for VCSE sector to improve volunteering rates and increase community cohesion</p> <p>Addressing health inequalities between communities, and lower male life expectancies vs national rate</p> <p>NS worse than national average for rates of social isolation and loneliness</p> <p>Corporate Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with and empower our communities • Collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes • Priority to focus on tackling inequalities and improving outcomes • Opportunity to tap into existing formal and informal community networks in the provision of activities and services <p>Health and Wellbeing Strategy: Thriving Communities – working with partners to support communities to thrive</p>
<p><u>Ranger (green spaces improvements)</u></p> <p>The Ranger is a fixed-term post funded jointly with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Fund. The Ranger coordinates and leads sessions for existing volunteer networks (e.g. wildlife surveying, basic</p>	<p>£31,858 <i>(revenue)</i></p>	<p>Improvement to local green spaces (400,000m²)</p>	<p>Improved perception of the natural environment</p> <p>Improved wellbeing of volunteer participants</p>	<p>Established need to protect and enhance biodiversity - support for rewilding</p>

<p>maintenance tasks, tree planting, hedge laying, creating spaces for nature) to enable and action the improvement of existing green spaces. These sessions are open to residents who have been encouraged to take up Green Social Prescribing opportunities. The Ranger is working to increase the number of volunteers who attend these sessions and particularly the inclusion of residents who have attended through GSP to maintain an involvement with their local volunteer group.</p> <p>The sessions serve the double purpose of improving health and wellbeing of participants and also improving the natural environment, and people's awareness and interactions with it. The practical tasks help to address the nature emergency by delivering projects to support biodiversity improvements.</p> <p>The Ranger liaises with existing community resources such as the Town and Parish Council Wellbeing Co-ordinators to promote events and encourage attendance. Hardly-reach communities are targeted, such as those in our deprived areas, our disabled community, and older people</p>		<p>Increased volunteer session attendance (5 per session)</p>	<p>Improved accessibility of local green spaces</p> <p>Improved partnership and engagement with town and parish councils</p> <p>Progression of the green infrastructure strategy</p> <p>Increased local volunteering opportunities</p>	<p>High priority for VCSE sector to improve volunteering rates and increase community cohesion</p> <p>Corporate Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net-zero 2030 • Tackling inequalities and improving outcomes <p>Health and Wellbeing Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in prevalence of good mental health and emotional wellbeing • Increase in self-reported access to, and use, of green spaces • Promotion of green social prescribing <p>Green Infrastructure Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and maintain a valued healthy landscape and sustainable places <p>Health and wellbeing for all</p>
<p><u>Public Rights of Way improvements</u></p> <p>Funding is utilised to improve the accessibility (and thus use) of the PROW network at 15 sites. Examples of the works undertaken include replacing stiles with gates, installation of wider gates, and resurfacing. Routes that have been highlighted by Town and Parish councils as requiring improvement are prioritised, and work is undertaken to ensure that the routes improved are as well distributed across the district as possible.</p>	<p>£11,375 <i>(capital)</i></p>	<p>Increased use of improved paths on the network (150)</p>	<p>Improved accessibility of the PROW network</p> <p>Increased awareness of the PROW network</p> <p>Improved partnership and engagement with town and parish councils</p>	<p>Need to continue increase in % of adults meeting Chief Medical Officer recommendations for physical activity</p> <p>Reduce health inequalities (i.e. better access to routes) in NS</p> <p>Corporate Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A transport network that promotes active, accessible and low carbon travel

<p>A portion of the funding (revenue) from previous years of UKSPF is being used to promote the improvements to the PROW network and focus on working with communities to encourage use of the PROW.</p> <p>Counters are used to monitor footfall before and after the improvements, and these will be utilised for many years to come to help improve monitoring of PROW use and provide an ongoing evidence base to target future initiatives.</p>				<p>Health and Wellbeing Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of physical activity to improve health outcomes <p>Reduction in % of adults who are inactive</p>
<p><u>Household energy efficiency support hotline</u></p> <p>The Centre for Sustainable Energy is continuing the provision of a free helpline for North Somerset residents. Call operators provide free advice to improve energy efficiency and reduce energy bills – providing wide-ranging advice and support, for example helping with energy bill bureaucracy, referral to the WHAM caseworker service, negotiating with energy suppliers on customers' behalf, identifying if people may be entitled to more benefits. Part of their energy efficiency referral service also involves highlighting grants to enable people to purchase such measures.</p> <p>The customer advice line is a crucial first step in a web of support which CSE offers. The project enables a tangible energy efficiency increase for several local households, whilst simultaneously facilitating vital cost-of-living help for residents.</p>	<p>£11,375 (revenue)</p>	<p>Increased take up of energy efficiency measures (100)</p>	<p>Decreased energy bills and reduced usage by households</p> <p>Other measures taken up beyond energy efficiency as a result of the hotline</p> <p>Improved home comfort</p> <p>Reduced risk of health issues from cold homes</p> <p>Greater awareness raising for residents around energy efficiency</p>	<p>Government target for average NS household energy efficiency rating to be C by 2027</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase in % homes with good energy insulation <p>Corporate Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Become a carbon neutral area by 2030 <p>Collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes</p>

Supporting Local Business

Project	Allocation	UKSPF outcomes	Wider outcomes	Evidence of need and corporate priorities
<p><u>Business Support Unlocked</u></p> <p>A commissioned service to enable the continued delivery of high-quality, free at the point of access universal pre-start, early growth, and business resilience support, delivered in business-convenient and socially inclusive settings. It continues funding which ran out in April 2023.</p> <p>https://hivebusinesssupport.org/</p>	<p>£75,000 <i>(revenue)</i></p>	<p>Jobs created (105) New businesses created (105)</p>	<p>Improved sustainability of supported businesses</p> <p>Jobs safeguarded within supported businesses</p> <p>Improved productivity of regional economy</p> <p>More under-represented groups in businesses</p> <p>Reduced climate / environmental impact of local businesses</p>	<p>90% businesses fewer than 10 employees; need to exploit opportunities to support businesses, innovate, grow, become more resilient and better employers</p> <p>Economic Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission a universal pre-start, early growth and business resilience service <p>Corporate Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An attractive and vibrant place for business investment and sustainable growth • Collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes <p>Employment and Skills Strategy: Creating the conditions which enable businesses to attract and keep the talent they need</p>
<p><u>Business Support and Engagement Officer</u></p> <p>This post provides key capacity to enable business support within North Somerset, including direct support, contract management, outreach events, and bidding support and readiness.</p> <p>Activities include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Universal Business Support (UBS) set-up and contract management Growth Hub and Visit West contract management 	<p>£51,446 <i>(revenue)</i></p>	<p>Increase in number of businesses support (40 p/a)</p> <p><i>Post also enables completion of outcomes from projects they are contract managing</i></p>	<p>Growth in the number of business networks</p> <p>Increased funding for business support</p> <p>Increased awareness of local, regional, and national business support offer</p>	<p>90% businesses fewer than 10 employees; need to exploit opportunities to support businesses, innovate, grow, become more resilient and better employers</p> <p>Desire to increase engagement between the council and local businesses</p> <p>Economic Plan:</p>

<p>c) 1:1 business support and advice to North Somerset's business community who engage with the council. This includes supporting businesses to navigate council services, identify funding and growth opportunities, fill recruitment and skills gaps and engage with wider networks and peer to peer support.</p> <p>d) Rural England Prosperity Fund capital business grants support (there is no Management & Administration funding provided with REPF)</p> <p>e) Occupancy Grants contract management Organisation and delivery of <i>Explore North Somerset</i> events – providing networking, business advice, and signposting to support organisations for businesses engaged in the visitor economy</p>			<p>Reduced barriers to business growth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted support to improve and diversify the visitor economy • Deliver sustainable economic activity to benefit local employment, businesses, and communities <p>Corporate Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An attractive and vibrant place for business investment and sustainable growth • Collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes
<p><u>Business decarbonisation support</u></p> <p>The project is distributing a minimum of 8 grants to local enterprises, to enable them to reduce the amount of CO2 they emit.</p> <p>Expressions of Interest (EOI) forms are completed by relevant businesses in the area. These are reviewed for suitability and successful businesses receive a free decarbonisation study (provided by Future Leap). These surveys verify what decarbonisation works would be best suited to them and have the most impact on emissions.</p> <p>Capital grants (up to a value of £30,000 each depending on the results of the decarbonisation study) are distributed to action the results of these studies. This results in reduced emissions for the businesses and increase their sustainability including aiding the businesses with the cost of living.</p>	<p>£7,000 (revenue)</p> <p>£200,053 (capital)</p>	<p>Reduction in CO2e emissions from supported businesses (120 tonnes CO2e over the course of the programme)</p>	<p>Reduced energy costs for supported businesses</p> <p>Increased business growth and sustainability from reduced costs</p>	<p>Corporate Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a carbon neutral council and area by 2030 <p>Economic Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy efficiency and carbon reductions in buildings <p>Climate Emergency Action Plan: Support NS businesses to reduce carbon emissions</p>

<p><u>Occupancy Grants</u></p> <p>A grant programme with associated business support for organisations operating from or wanting to operate from our town centres. The town centre occupancy grants and support project will be a blend of targeted retail business support and grants.</p> <p>The objective of the programme is to utilise targeted business support and capital grants to support existing town centre organisations to remain in their units and encourage new occupiers into vacant units.</p>	<p>£75,000 (<i>capital</i>)</p>	<p>Vacant units filled (TBC)</p> <p>Improved business sustainability (TBC)</p>	<p><i>Wider outcomes to be confirmed</i></p>	<p>Vacancy rates inequality – WSM (20%) and Nailsea (15%) the highest (as of Q3 2022/23)</p> <p>Corporate Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An attractive and vibrant place for business investment and sustainable growth <p>Economic Plan: Encourage our town centres to become thriving places</p>
<p><u>Growth Hub</u></p> <p>Buy-in to the West of England Growth Hub core service. This service is the region’s dedicated business support service, providing tailored support, expert guidance and access to finance, and support programmes to small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) across all the four unitary authorities.</p> <p>Services include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> full access to the core triage and diagnostics service with referrals through to national, regional and local support opportunities. Business Advisory Boards Good Employment Charter Workforce for the Future Intellectual Property IAG Thrive West 	<p>£75,000 (<i>revenue</i>)</p>	<p>Increased number of businesses with improved productivity (50 p/a)</p> <p>Improved business resilience</p>	<p>Increased awareness and access to business support offer at local, regional, and national level</p> <p>Improved business resilience</p>	<p>90% businesses fewer than 10 employees; need to exploit opportunities to support businesses, innovate, grow, become more resilient and better employers</p> <p>Corporate Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An attractive and vibrant place for business investment and sustainable growth Collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes <p>Economic Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional partnerships to ensure maximum economic benefits <p>Employment and Skills Strategy: Creating the conditions which enable businesses to attract and keep the talent they need</p>
<p><u>Visitor Economy Support</u></p>	<p>£25,000 (<i>revenue</i>)</p>	<p>Increase in number of local attractions</p>	<p>Increased visitor numbers to members</p>	<p>Visitor Economy Action Plan:</p>

<p>Continued buy-in to the Visit West LVEP, promoting North Somerset as a destination. It ensures North Somerset businesses benefit from other improvements to our visitor economy (LUF projects, pier to pier etc) and visitor economy investments are promoted and marketed at the regional, national and international level.</p> <p>Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Business support to existing members of Visit West b) Recruitment of new members in North Somerset c) Local business input into Business Strategy workshop d) Workshops and events for members and non-members on visitor economy industry themes <p>Attendance and delivery of themed sessions at <i>Explore North Somerset</i> events</p>		<p>perceived favourably (20 p/a)</p>	<p>Increased income for members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase visibility of North Somerset as a destination and what it has to offer • Increase value of the visitor economy sector in North Somerset <p>Corporate Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A great place for people to live, work and visit <p>An attractive and vibrant place for business investment and sustainable growth</p>
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People and Skills				
Project	Allocation	UKSPF outcomes	Wider outcomes	Evidence of need and corporate priorities
<p><u>EET Participation Officer (Care Leaver Support)</u></p> <p>Support for young people who are Care Leavers into sustainable education, employment, and training (EET). Providing advice and guidance on all aspects of education, employment and training for Care Leavers working within a referral-based system and producing Assessment of Needs and thorough EET Progression Plans.</p> <p>The postholder develops strong links with partner organisations including Job Centre Plus Colleges, Training Providers, other relevant agencies and local businesses.</p> <p>They are supported by the UKSPF Employment & Skills Officer, who delivers face to face outreach to businesses and employment organisations to ensure opportunities are generated.</p>	<p>£19,631 (revenue)</p>	<p>Increased employability for residents through the development of interpersonal skills (200 – wider programme target)</p>	<p>Care leavers supported into employment</p>	<p>NS worse than national average for care leavers accessing EET opportunities.</p> <p>Corporate Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An approach which enables young people and adults to lead independent and fulfilling lives • A focus on tackling inequalities, improving outcomes • Collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes <p>Employment & Skills Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower young people to achieve their potential • Into work support for those with barriers to employment and reducing inequalities <p>Corporate Parenting Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure young care leavers are supported through education and employment <p>Support care leavers to transition to independent living</p>
<p><u>Employment and Skills Officer</u></p> <p>This post has a number of functions within UKSPF:</p> <p>a) Vital link between the EET Officer's care leaver support work and the local business community to facilitate employment and training opportunities for care leavers. This</p>	<p>£51,446 (revenue)</p>	<p>Increased employability for residents through the development of interpersonal skills (200 – wider programme target)</p>	<p>Jobs created by supported businesses</p> <p>Increased business sustainability</p>	<p>NS worse than national average for those over 16 wanting a job yet unemployed/ economically inactive</p> <p>Corporate Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An approach which enables young people and adults to

<p>includes promotion and support of the scheme and working directly with businesses to advise and enable them to take on care leavers in a meaningful and sustainable way, to increase the businesses' capacity and to make positive contributions to the wider community.</p> <p>b) Additional work providing advice and guidance to local organisations and businesses to enable them to take on non-care leavers into employment and signposting them to local employment and skills advice and support tailored to their needs.</p> <p>c) Contract management of Broadway Lodge's <i>Aftercare Service</i></p> <p>d) Planning, preparation and contract management for commissioned Year 3 People and Skills projects (outlined below)</p> <p>e) Set up, mobilisation, and support for in-house Year 3 People & Skills projects</p> <p>f) Overall employment and skills engagement and relationship building with the local community</p>		<p>Residents gaining qualifications, licences and skills (80 – wider programme target)</p>	<p>Increased funding for employment and skills opportunities</p> <p>Local businesses have more awareness of local support offer</p>	<p>lead independent and fulfilling lives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A focus on tackling inequalities, improving outcomes • Collaborate with partners to deliver the best outcomes • Engage with and empower our communities <p>Employment & Skills Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Into work support for those with barriers to employment and reducing inequalities <p>Create the conditions which enable businesses to attract and keep the talent they need</p>
<p><u>Opportunity North Somerset</u></p> <p>Aligning with the WECA Skills Connect Initiative to create a “shop window” for employment and skills support and advice available to residents and businesses in North Somerset, Opportunity North Somerset helps residents to access the skills ecosystem. It will help residents to identify clear pathways of support, and increasing engagement onto employment and skills programmes.</p> <p>ONS will provide a one front door impartial approach and help people navigate to the best</p>	<p>£104,330 (revenue)</p>	<p>Increased employability for residents through the development of interpersonal skills (200 – wider programme target)</p> <p>Reduced structural barriers into employment and skills provision (50 programme target)</p>	<p>Greater numbers engaging with the skills system</p> <p>Greater numbers engaging with the education system</p> <p>Increased levels of digital inclusion</p>	<p>NS worse than national average for those over 16 wanting a job yet unemployed/ economically inactive</p> <p>Corporate Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships which enhance skills, learning and employment opportunities <p>Employment and Skills Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address under-employment and low pay, and facilitate progression pathways

<p>support possible. The support will be delivered in the heart of communities using community locations to ensure support is accessible to all and is supported by DWP and our Job Centre's</p> <p>Opportunity North Somerset will be a multi-partnership delivery model that builds on existing strengths and relationships and uses partners' expertise in specific areas to enhance local employment and skills offer.</p>		<p>Residents completing skills courses following support (50 – wider programme target)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop the workforce skills for jobs in emerging sectors and fill skills gaps <p>Economic Plan: Create work opportunities, training and upskilling support</p>
<p><u>Employment support for those with multiple barriers</u></p> <p>This commissioned contract will comprise three elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NEET Employment Support: High intensity employment support for young people aged 16 – 24 who are not in employment, education, or training. Back to work support for all adults: We have identified that the loss of the West of England Works programme is impacting on those who need high intensity and often 1/1 support. Historically this programme delivered by Team North Somerset has delivered strong outcomes for our region in our region. A collaboration with key partners will collaboration those furthest away from the labour market to progress and achieve employment, training, or a volunteering outcome. In-work progression: Work with residents and employers to identify clear progression routes and the support available to enable people to increase their working hours and increased earnings. This provision will also work closely with employers to understand 	<p>£315,030 (revenue)</p>	<p>Increased employability for residents through the development of interpersonal skills (200 – wider programme target)</p> <p>Reduced structural barriers into employment and skills provision (50 - wider programme target)</p> <p>Residents gaining qualifications, licences and skills (80 – wider programme target)</p> <p>Residents completing skills courses following support (50 – wider programme target)</p>	<p>Increased levels of digital inclusion</p> <p>Improved employee wellbeing</p> <p>Increased business and organisational sustainability, inclusivity and productivity</p> <p>Reduction in pay gap for Equality Act groups</p> <p>Increase in green skills courses uptake</p>	<p>NS full-time employee median wage under 70% of national figure</p> <p>Geographical inequalities for earnings</p> <p>Corporate Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships which enhance skills, learning and employment opportunities <p>Employment and Skills Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address under-employment and low pay, and facilitate progression pathways Develop the workforce skills for jobs in emerging sectors and fill skills gaps <p>Economic Plan: Create work opportunities, training and upskilling support</p>

<p>opportunities for increasing skills in the workforce which will increase productivity and growth.</p>				
<p><u>Commissioned employment support packages</u></p> <p>There will be a series of commissioned employment support packages. These include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Employment support for SEND residents b) Targeted mental health employment support c) Employment support for women returners d) Continuation of Broadway Lodge's <i>Aftercare Service</i> – supporting recovering addicts to develop employment skills <p>This work acts as a means of continuing various support packages previously provided in North Somerset through the West of England Works Programme, which impacted on those needing high-intensity and 1-1 support.</p> <p>We are aiming to continue existing provision where possible (ensuring collaboration with key partners) and avoid duplication or provide an enhanced local offer of existing regional schemes.</p> <p>All services will be required to have Green Skills as a cross cutting theme throughout IAG and delivery, raising the awareness of both existing training opportunities and the skills required for forthcoming opportunities.</p>	<p>£259,999 (revenue)</p>	<p>Increased employability for residents through the development of interpersonal skills (200 – wider programme target)</p> <p>No. of people experiencing reduced structural barriers into employment and skills (50 – wider programme target)</p> <p>Reduced structural barriers into employment and skills provision (50 programme target)</p> <p>Residents gaining qualifications, licences and skills (80 – wider programme target)</p>	<p>Increased levels of digital inclusion</p> <p>Increased business and organisational sustainability, inclusivity and productivity</p> <p>Reduction in employment and pay gap for Equality Act groups</p>	<p>NS worse than national average for those over 16 wanting a job yet unemployed/ economically inactive</p> <p>NS worse than national average for gender pay gap.</p> <p>Geographical inequalities for earnings</p> <p>Corporate Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnerships which enhance skills, learning and employment opportunities <p>Employment and Skills Strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address under-employment and low pay, and facilitate progression pathways • Develop the workforce skills for jobs in emerging sectors and fill skills gaps • Empower young people to achieve their potential <p>Economic Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create work opportunities, training and upskilling support <p>Grow the green economy and work with residents to access skills to support the sector</p>

Appendix 2 – UKSPF EDI Charter

UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Charter

Introduction

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a central part of the government's mission to level up the entire United Kingdom, including overcoming deep-seated inequalities.

North Somerset Council (NSC) is the Lead Local Authority for delivery of UKSPF in North Somerset. As a public body, we are subject to the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) and the [Equality Act 2010](#) in all our decision-making and are required to ensure we meet these obligations when taking decisions on UKSPF. As Lead Local Authority, this also means we hold responsibility for ensuring our UKSPF delivery partners and contractors uphold these standards.

This UKSPF EDI Charter outlines our commitments to ensuring everyone has an equal chance to benefit from relevant UKSPF projects and support, and all those involved in UKSPF delivery feel able to work free from prejudice, discrimination, bullying, intimidation, and harassment.

Commitments

We commit to:

1. Develop and deliver a programme which strives to meet the diverse needs of our residents and is accessible to people from all backgrounds.
2. Ensure that no resident eligible for participation in a UKSPF project is turned away or receives an inferior service on the basis of age, disability, race or racial group, religion, sex, gender identity, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, or sexual orientation.
3. Procure goods and services only from organisations which are actively aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act and apply it to their work, and ensure they continue to meet these responsibilities when delivering UKSPF projects.
4. Recruit UKSPF delivery staff in line with the Equality Act and go beyond standard EDI statements in job adverts to encourage the recruitment of people with a genuine appreciation and commitment to putting equality, diversity, and inclusion into practice.
5. Ensure our UKSPF publicity and communications can reach as wide an eligible audience as possible and do not knowingly exclude members of our diverse communities.
6. Actively pursue relevant training opportunities to help us deliver UKSPF in a way which is accessible to all.
7. Maintain a working environment which promotes dignity and respect for all, and which does not tolerate prejudice, discrimination, bullying, intimidation, and harassment.
8. Support and encourage each other to fulfil our commitments in this Charter.

Monitoring

To ensure continued adherence to the commitments in this Charter, the UKSPF Programme Manager will incorporate EDI considerations into any desk audits undertaken. Furthermore, the evaluation of the programme will include a focus on how well the programme has promoted EDI and what improvements can be taken forward to future programmes.

Processes for reporting EDI violations

North Somerset Council Staff

1. In the first instance, if you feel the principles and commitments of this Charter are being violated, concerns should be raised to the **UKSPF Programme Manager**.
2. If the UKSPF Programme Manager thinks these matters should be escalated, or if you do not feel comfortable approaching them in the first instance, then concerns should be raised to **NSC's Head of Economy**.
3. If you or another member of staff feels prejudiced or discriminated against, or harassed, please refer to NSC's [Grievance Procedure](#).

External Delivery Partners

1. If external partners feel the principles and commitments of this Charter are being violated, or if they want to raise a concern about a member of staff from NSC, you should tell them to approach the **UKSPF Programme Manager** in the first instance. If the UKSPF Programme Manager thinks these matters should be escalated, or if they do not feel comfortable approaching them in the first instance, then concerns should be raised to **NSC's Head of Economy**.
2. If a member of an organisation's staff feels prejudiced or discriminated against, or harassed, they should refer to their own organisation's policies and procedures.

UKSPF Programme Manager - Luke Johnson (luke.johnson@n-somerset.gov.uk)

NSC Head of Economy – Jane Harrison (jane.harrison@n-somerset.gov.uk)

Relevant documentation

[Public Sector Equality Duty](#)

[Equality Act 2010](#)

[North Somerset Council Equality Policy](#)

[Equality Act Guidance](#)

[North Somerset Council Grievance Procedure](#)

Available training

CPD: Fair For All

CPD: Inclusive Leadership Development – Focus on Race Equality

Appendix 3 – Consultation details

The first table outlines the organisations consulted during the development of the UKSPF Investment Plan in 2022.

Council	Boards / Groups	External	Strategies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Elected Members Libraries Community & Environment Placemaking & Development Economic Development Policy & Partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Somerset Partnership Board NSC Economic Steering Group NSC Employment & Skills Taskforce North Somerset Wellbeing Collective Board CRF Community Hubs delivery partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weston College Voluntary Action North Somerset (VANS) North Somerset Enterprise Agency (<i>the hive</i>) Citizens Advice Bureau The Stables Culture Weston Age Diversity Forum CURO Group Department for Work and Pensions Local MPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Strategy Economic Plan Health & Wellbeing Strategy Employment & Skills Strategy Empowering Communities Strategy Green Infrastructure Plan Placemaking Strategy Inward Investment Vision J21 Vision Creative Industries Plan Visitor Economic Action Plan

The second table outlines the consultation process for the Year 3 budget, as covered by this Executive Report:

Engagement	With whom?	Date
UKSPF programme recap and discussion of Year 3 budget plans	Executive Member for Spatial Planning, Placemaking and Economy	24/05/2023
UKSPF programme recap and discussion of Year 3 budget plans	Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Children's Services, Families, and Life-long Learning	01/06/2023
Discussion of proposed Year 3 budget	Corporate Leadership Team	07/06/2023
UKSPF programme recap and discussion of proposed Year 3 budget	North Somerset Economic Steering Group	15/06/2023
UKSPF programme recap and discussion of proposed Year 3 budget	Informal CLT/Exec	22/06/2023
Discussion of proposed Year 3 budget	UKSPF Leadership Group	06/07/2023
Year 3 budget content presentation and feedback	North Somerset Partnership	18/07/2023
Executive Report (including Year 3 budget) review and sign-off	Finance Business Partner (Place)	WC 24/07/2023

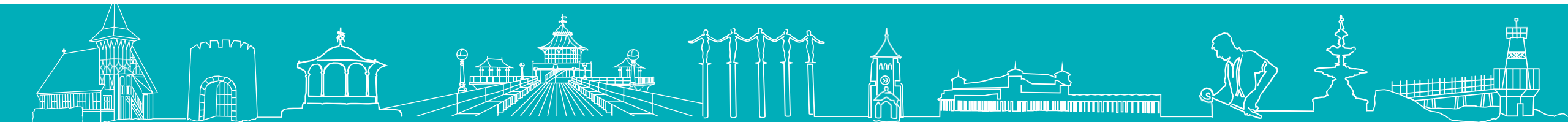
Executive Report (including Year 3 budget) engagement and feedback	Formal Place Scrutiny Panel	31/07/2023
Executive Report (including Year 3 budget) review and sign-off	Director of Place	WC 31/07/2023
Executive Report (including Year 3 budget) review and sign-off	Executive Member for Spatial Planning, Placemaking and Economy	WC 31/07/2023
Executive Report (including Year 3 budget) review and sign-off	S151 Officer	10/08/2023
Executive Report (including Year 3 budget) review and sign-off	Formal CLT/Exec	17/08/2023
Executive Report (including Year 3 budget) review and sign-off	Executive	06/09/2023

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UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Year 3 budget

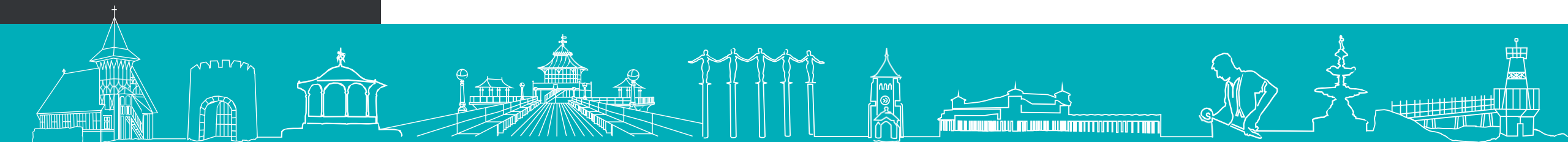
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Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy and Scrutiny Panel – 31/07/2023



Contents

- **UKSPF Summary**
- **Year 3 overview**
- **Planning and engagement process**
- **Year 3 budget**
- **Lifted restrictions and early delivery of select projects**
- **Risk management**
- **Questions and comments**



UKSPF Summary

- Government fund contributing to the Levelling Up agenda
 - £2,959,469 provided to North Somerset
 - Spent between April 2022 and April 2025
- Programme managed by the Economy Team
Executive Members covering the fund are Cllrs Canniford and Gibbons
- Investment Plan developed through extensive consultation in 2022 - forms basis of projects
 - Currently in second quarter of Year 2

Year 3 Overview and Executive Report

- £1,600,522 of total funding, with indicative split:
- *Community and Place: £295,057*
- *Supporting Local Business: £508,499*
- *People and Skills: £750,437*
- *Central costs and contingency: £46,529*

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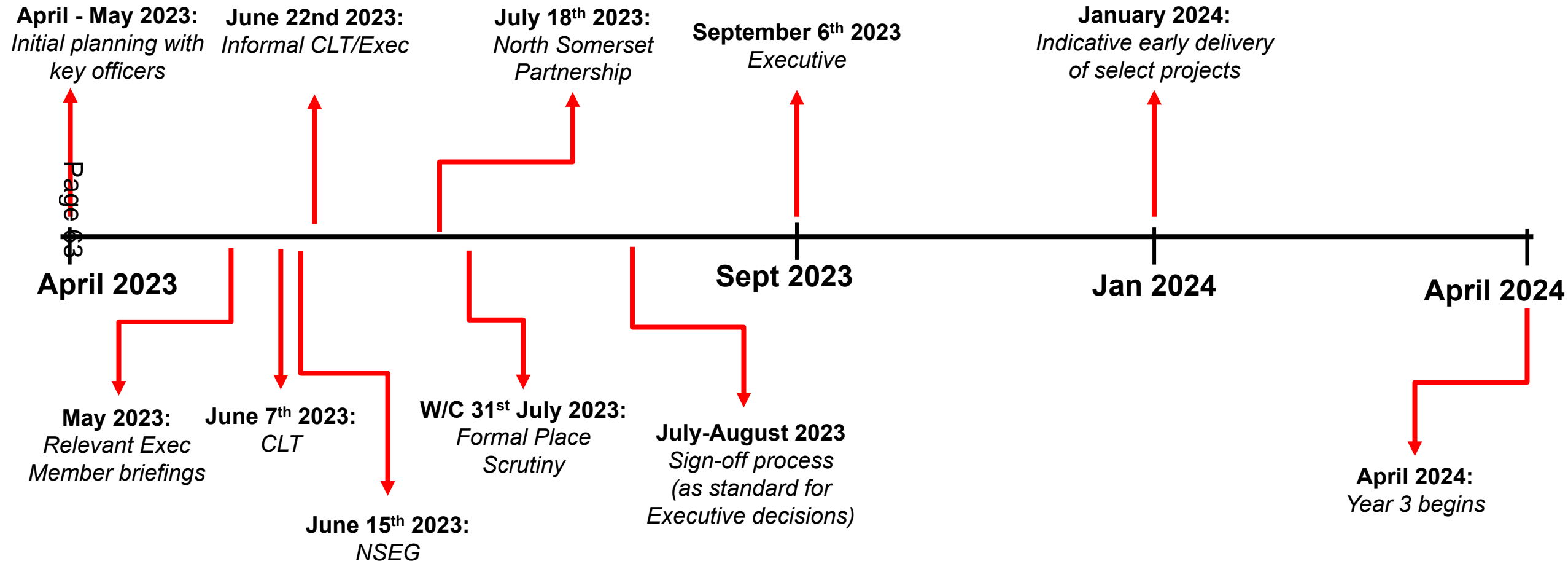
Our ask of the Scrutiny Panel:

1. Advise on and endorse the contents of the report, in advance of final presentation to Executive in September

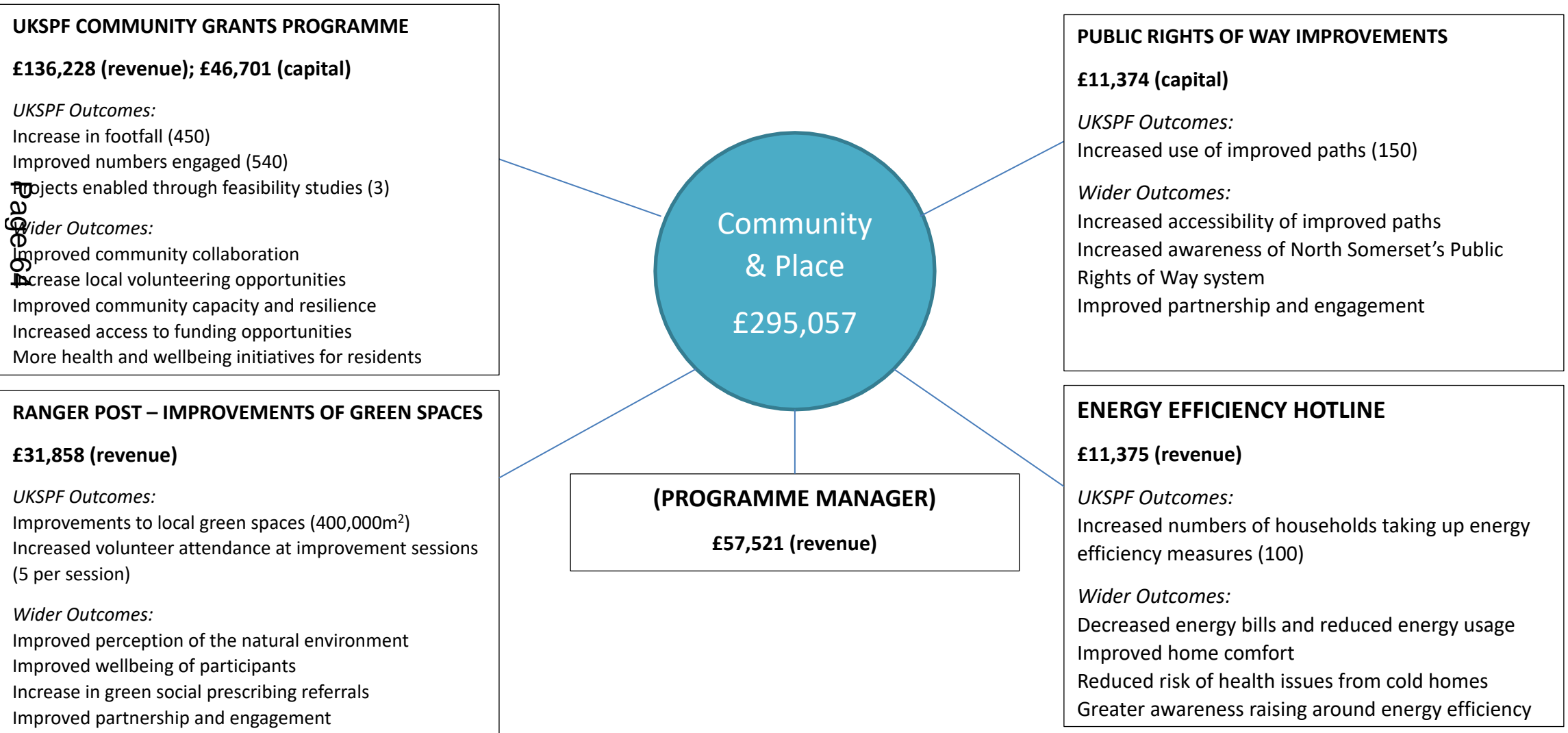
Our recommendations to Executive:

1. Approve receipt of UKSPF Year 3 allocation from the government
2. Authorise increase in gross revenue budget (FY 2024/25) of **£1,264,873**
3. Authorise increase in gross capital budget (FY 2024/25) of **£333,128**
4. Approve committed spend of Year 3 projects as outlined in the report

Planning and engagement process



Year 3 planning – Community and Place



Year 3 planning – Supporting Local Business (in-house)

BUSINESS SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT OFFICER

1.0 FTE

£51,446 (revenue)

UKSPF Outcomes:

Increase in number of businesses supported (40 p/a)

Wider Outcomes:

Growth in number of business networks

Increased funding for business support

Increased awareness raising of business support offer

Reduced barriers to business growth

Supporting
Local Business

£508,499

BUSINESS DECARBONISATION SUPPORT

£7,000 (revenue); £200,053 (capital)

UKSPF Outcomes:

Reduction in CO2e emissions by businesses (400 tonnes CO2e)

Wider Outcomes:

Reduced business energy costs

Business growth and sustainability from reduced costs

Year 3 planning – Supporting Local Business

GROWTH HUB (WECA)

£75,000 (revenue)

UKSPF Outcomes:

Increase in number of businesses with improved productivity (50 p/a)

Wider Outcomes:

Increased awareness of business support
Improved business resilience

Supporting Local Business

£508,499

BUSINESS SUPPORT UNLOCKED

£75,000 (revenue)

UKSPF Outcomes:

Jobs created (105)
New businesses created (105)

Wider Outcomes:

Improved sustainability of supported businesses
Jobs safeguarded within supported businesses
Improved productivity of regional economy
More under-represented groups in business
Reduced business environmental impact

VISITOR ECONOMY SUPPORT (VISIT WEST)

£25,000 (revenue)

UKSPF Outcomes:

Number of attractions perceived favourably (20 p/a)

Wider Outcomes:

Increased visitor numbers
Increased income

OCCUPANCY GRANTS

£75,000 (capital)

UKSPF Outcomes:

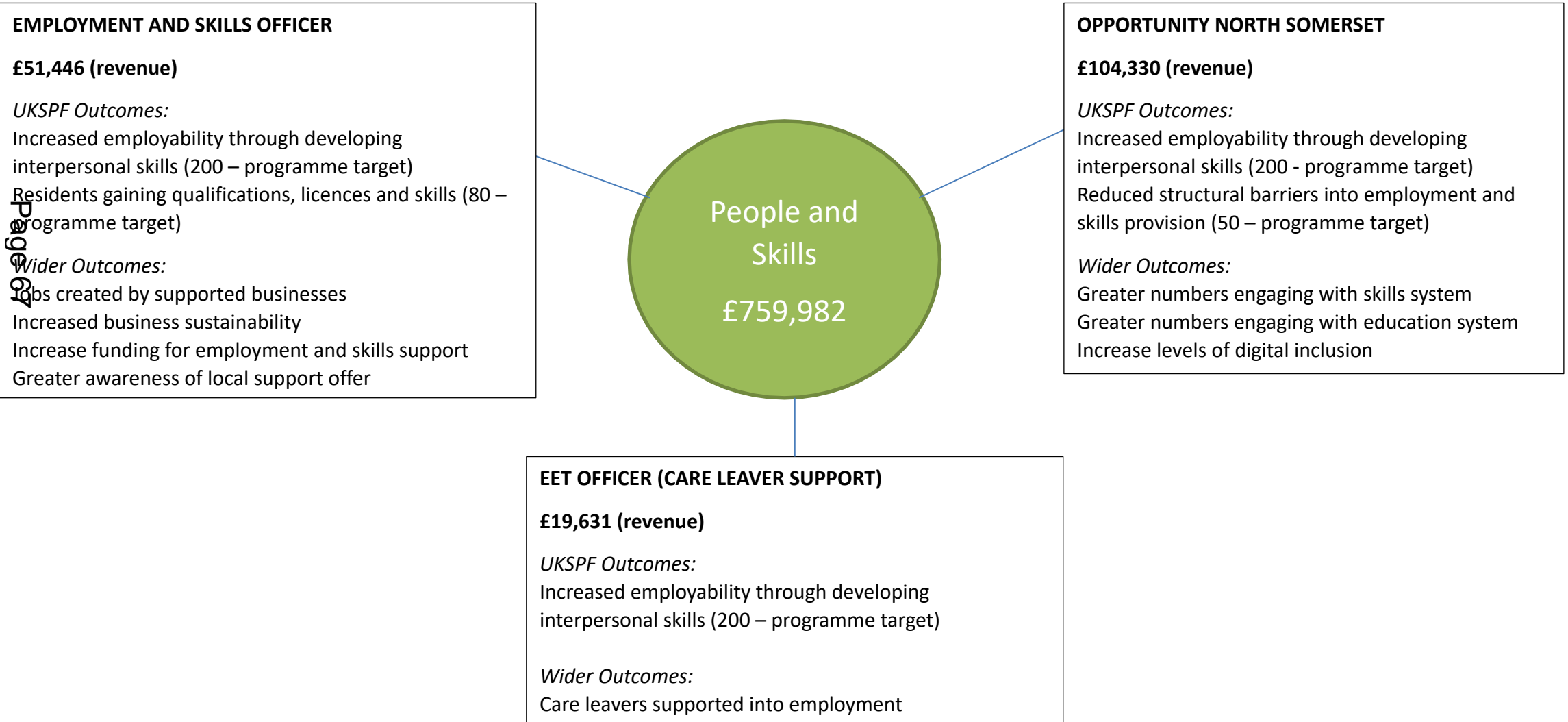
Vacant units filled (TBC)
Improved business sustainability (TBC)

Wider Outcomes:

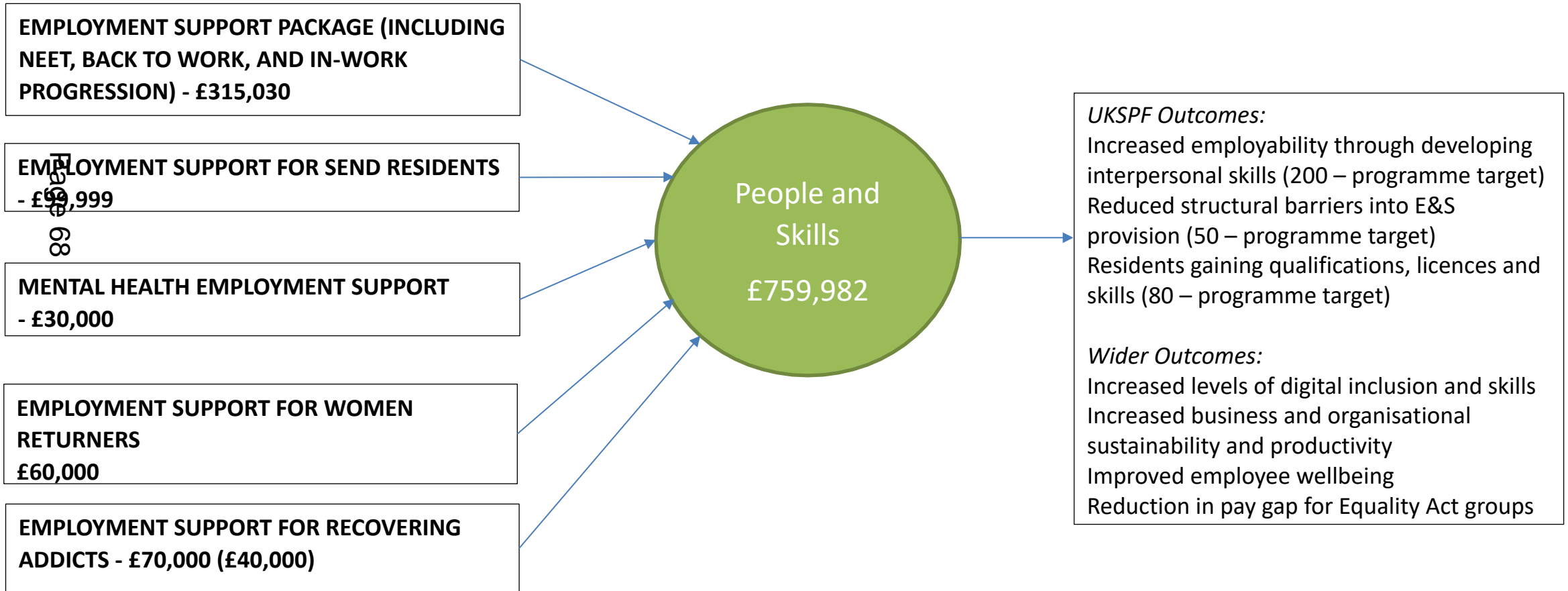
Improved town centre footfall

Procurement documentation being finalised – targets and wider outcomes TBC

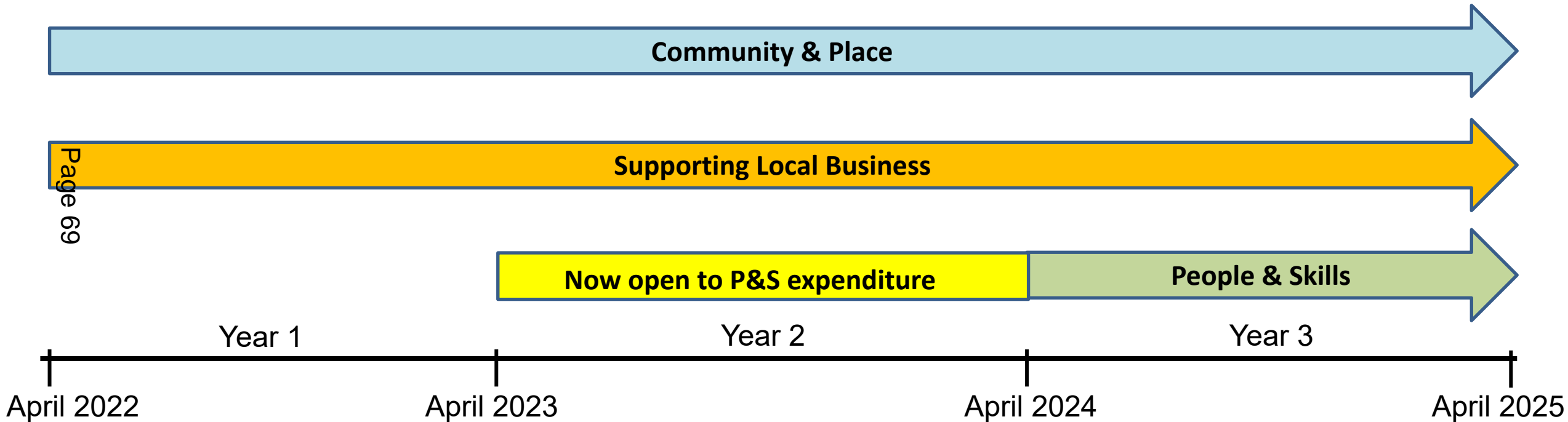
Year 3 planning – People and Skills (in-house)



Year 3 planning – People and Skills (commissioned)



People & Skills: Lifted Restrictions and early delivery



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Begin delivering Year 3 P&S projects ca. January 2024 early via council funding, to be re-paid from the Year 3 allocation.

Risk Management

Risk	Inherent risk score	Residual likelihood	Residual impact	Residual risk score	Comments
Risk to receipt of Year 3 allocation if Year 2 allocation not fully delivered.	MEDHIGH	1	3	LOWMED	DLUHC have confirmed if credible plans for delivering previous years' underspends are set out in reporting, then future allocations won't be affected.
Risk to programme and council optics if expectations are not managed and outcomes not well communicated	MED	2	2	LOWMED	Programme Comms Officer in post, focussing on anticipation, exploitation and mitigation of programme comms opportunities and risks. <u>Particular focus on promoting 'good news' and reaching as wide an audience as possible.</u> Year 3 comms output planned.

Risk Management

<p>Risk to delivery impact and outcomes if provision is unintentionally duplicated</p>	<p>LOWMED</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>LOW</p>	<p>As part of project planning, relevant consultation was held to ensure projects are addressing need and are not duplicating provision (unless it is to provide a version of existing regional provision more tailored to the North Somerset area).</p>
<p>Risk to project delivery and finances to spend Year 3 allocation in-year.</p>	<p>MEDHIGH</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>MED</p>	<p>Year 3 planning commenced well in advance to allow procurement and mobilisation to be completed ready for April 2023 delivery. Some projects will be delivered early.</p>

Risk Management

Risk to long-term project sustainability if a post-UKSPF funding gap emerges	MED	2	3	LOWMED	Project sustainability built into Year 3 planning process, including possible sources of future funding and partnerships if a UKSPF successor does not emerge.
Delivery and reputational risk from not approving budget	MEDHIGH	1	5	MEDHIGH	Results of comprehensive investment plan consultation process the basis for Year 3 budget. Series of engagement undertaken for budget itself with key stakeholders. Large amount of time provided for engagement to allow concerns to be addressed without affecting ultimate approval of the budget.

Questions and Comments

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North Somerset Council

Report to the Placemaking, Economy and Planning Policy & Scrutiny Panel

Date of Meeting: 31 July 2023

Subject of Report: Place Finance Update

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Jo Jones

Key Decision: No

Reason:

To update the Placemaking, Economy and Scrutiny Panel of the 2022/23 final out-turn position for the Place directorate

Recommendations:

That the Panel notes the final out-turn position for 2022/23 against budget for Place and notes the current budget and risks for 2023/24.

1. Summary of Report

- 1.1 This report summarises and discusses the final out-turn position for 2022/23 against budget for Place.
- 1.2 The final year end position for Place was £1.272m overspend against a net budget of £31.269m.
- 1.3 There were a number of material issues that contributed towards the overspend in 2022/23, these include inflation on contracts, pressures on home to school transport budgets and income shortfalls which continue as risks into 2023/24.
- 1.4 The 2022/23 net budget included savings of £1.275m of which the majority were achieved in the financial year.
- 1.5 The net budget for 2023/24 is £38.4m which includes an additional £2.69m of savings to be achieved for the Place Directorate.

2. Policy

The council's budget monitoring is an integral feature of its overall financial processes, ensuring that resources are planned, aligned and managed effectively to achieve successful delivery of its aims and objectives.

3. Details

3.1 Final 2022/23 out-turn position for Place

The overall final position for the Place directorate was a net over spend of £1.272m.

The table below shows the net position variance by service within the directorate:

PLACE DIRECTORATE	2022-23 Net Budget £	Final Out-turn £	Net Variance £
Environment and Safer Communities	11,991,528	11,881,201	(110,326)
Highway & Parking Operations	3,789,651	3,466,883	(322,768)
Highway Technical Services	(11,222)	(165,657)	(154,434)
Libraries & Community	2,197,554	2,343,175	145,621
Open Space, Natural Environment & Leisure	3,635,338	4,051,708	416,370
Regulatory Services	(554,440)	(633,345)	(78,905)
Transport Planning	7,900,764	9,020,774	1,120,011
Neighbourhoods & Transport	28,949,173	29,964,740	1,015,567
Property Asset & Projects	90,209	253,399	163,191
Economy	416,236	399,247	(16,989)
Major Infrastructure Projects	0	15	15
Major Projects	(165,348)	(173,794)	(8,445)
Placemaking & Development	811,175	835,252	24,077
Planning Service	523,049	469,733	(53,316)
Placemaking & Growth	1,675,321	1,783,853	108,533
Place Directorate Management	561,699	708,566	146,867
Place Central Recharges	13,675	14,925	1,250
Directorate Overheads	575,374	723,491	148,117
Special Expenses	69,410	69,410	0
PLACE DIRECTORATE TOTAL	31,269,277	32,541,494	1,272,217

A more detailed financial overview of the final 2022/23 for the Place directorate is included in Appendix 1.

Key variances within this final position:

- Home to Schools Transport demand and market costs £1.581m, it should be noted that this figure is net of -£463k S106 income and one-off use of reserves of -£286k.
- Waste Contracts inflationary and other cost pressures £989k
- Libraries & Community Buildings income shortfall £173k
- Planning & Building Control income shortfall £254k

Mitigations offsetting the overall position:

- Surplus recycling materials income -£685k
- Use of Waste contract reserve -£159k
- One-off reduction in composting scheme costs in 22/23 -£210k
- Concessionary fares underspend due to patronage -£260k
- Road closure income -£205k
- Street Works Permit scheme – eligible staff overhead -£214k

Areas of particular note are explained in more detail below.

3.1.1 Home to school transport costs

The Home to School Transport service was the most significant cost pressure for the Place Directorate in 2022/23. This was as a result of a growth in demand specifically for SEND transport and market factors driving increases in contract prices.

Whilst the service continues to do everything possible to contain the costs, ultimately providing the transport is a statutory service.

The 2023-24 budget includes £2.37m of net growth which is hoped to provide a more robust and realistic budget for the current year, however until the route contracts commissioning process is completed ahead of the new academic year in September, it is difficult to quantify the position at this early stage of the financial year.

Following recommendations on the recent internal audit report, two new posts (SEN Link Officer and Transport Planning Officer) have been approved and are being recruited to, part of the focus of these posts will be working closely with Children & Education services to enable the team to plan and identify service efficiencies ahead of the new academic year.

3.1.2 Waste Contracts pressures

There are a number of large contracts within Place which the council is contractually obliged to pay inflation based on a range of indices that are relevant to the specific area. The NSEC waste contract is one of these contracts.

Contract inflation is funded through the medium term financial plan however due to the current economic situation the actual inflation we incurred significantly outweighed the amount provided for within the 2022/23 budget.

The base budget for the NSEC contract was £10.33m however the final value ended up at £10.8m, the largest variation being the pay award, the original assumption was 2% however was recalculated at 8% in December 2022 following the local government pay award. There was also a financial impact from the National Insurance Legislative change.

The other significant contract cost pressure were fuel inflation which was originally based at 7% however the actual contractual inflation for fuel for 2022/23 was 21% based on prices in February & March 2022.

The Waste service were able to off-set these additional costs with surplus recycling materials income of £685k, however the market prices and demand reduced

considerably from October 2022 in conjunction with the energy price rise meaning that this figure was much lower than anticipated at the start of the year.

3.2 2022/23 Place success stories & medium term financial plan – savings delivery

Despite the final 2022/23 out-turn position for Place, there were £1.275m of savings to deliver, which the directorate successfully achieved £1.138m.

A full list of the 2022/23 MTFP budget savings has been included in Appendix 2.

As well as delivering the majority of the MTFP savings, Place officers are currently delivering a range of projects across the directorate on top of the business as usual, one of which is the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). THE BSIP funding allocation was not confirmed until the end of November 2022, delivery on the first bus priority scheme was completed at Long Ashton in April 2023. This scheme was the first to be delivered nationally.

Working jointly with WECA the first fares package has been launched and a second fares package will be launched shortly, demand responsive transport costing £1.5m has been mobilised and enhanced services of £3.8m over two-years have been procured.

Another example of one of the major projects currently being delivered is the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), the UKSPF was introduced by the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to replace European Structural and investment funding which the UK continues to participate in until 2023. North Somerset's £2.5m funding allocation is focused on local regeneration, employment and skills and will deliver priorities and investment principles up to the end of March 2025.

3.3 2023/24 Net revenue budget

The current year net revenue budget for the Place Directorate is £38.4m, this includes £2.69m of MTFP savings to deliver.

The table below shows how this is split between service areas and across expenditure and income budgets.

PLACE DIRECTORATE	2023-24 Budget			
	Expenditure £	Income £	Reserves £	Net £
Environment and Safer Communities	21,914,952	(7,148,383)	0	14,766,569
Highway & Parking Operations	10,571,303	(5,799,804)	(80,359)	4,691,140
Highway Technical Services	2,177,203	(2,014,705)	(80,220)	82,278
Libraries & Community	4,054,702	(1,602,993)	0	2,451,709
Open Space, Natural Environment & Leisure	6,452,908	(1,670,553)	(454,620)	4,327,736
Regulatory Services	25,140	(626,700)	0	(601,560)
Transport Planning	20,316,679	(10,177,953)	(93,234)	10,045,492
Neighbourhoods & Transport	65,512,886	(29,041,090)	(708,432)	35,763,364
Property Asset & Projects	1,813,348	(1,333,364)	0	479,984
Economy	1,955,941	(1,309,670)	(255,089)	391,181
Major Projects	1,354,027	(1,553,032)	0	(199,005)
Placemaking & Development	1,337,906	(300,099)	(387,773)	650,034
Planning Service	2,871,770	(2,515,394)	32,218	388,594
Placemaking & Growth	9,332,992	(7,011,559)	(610,644)	1,710,788
Place Directorate Management	1,127,773	(288,018)	0	839,755
Place Central Recharges	10,000	0	0	10,000
Directorate Overheads	1,137,773	(288,018)	0	849,755
Special Expenses	177,370	(107,960)	0	69,410
Overall Total	76,161,021	(36,448,627)	(1,319,076)	38,393,317

Appendix 3 includes a pie chart which shows the gross expenditure budget by type of spend, for example, salary costs and payments to external contractors and a pie chart which shows the income budget by the different income streams, for example grants and sales, fees and charges.

3.4 2023/24 MTFP delivery plans and budget risks

The most significant risks for the Place Directorate are a continuation from last year's financial pressures being the sustained high level of inflation and the demand on the Home to School Transport service budget, which at this early stage in the financial year are not quantifiable yet.

Other significant risks present are within the Waste service, specifically as the net budget includes a £900k MTFP saving for the income from sale of recycling materials. As referenced above, the market in terms of demand for and price of the materials considerably dipped from October 2022 in conjunction with the energy price rise, so far to date this has not increased to pre-October levels.

Other Waste service risks identified are for the Waste disposal service, which is as a combination of contract inflationary pressures, demand (housing growth) and new legislation for disposal of some pollutants.

The Place directorate has £2.686m of additional MTFP savings to deliver in the current year. The Directorate Leadership Team are working closely within individual

service heads to ensure delivery plans are progressing, identifying where there are any delivery challenges and any mitigations to reduce or compensate these risks.

Appendix 4 includes the detailed list of the current year MTFP savings.

4. Consultation

Not applicable.

5. Financial Implications

Financial implications are contained throughout the report.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

The Local Government Act 1972 lays down the fundamental principle by providing that every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs, although further details and requirements are contained within related legislation. The setting of the council's budget for the forthcoming year, and the ongoing arrangements for monitoring all aspects of this, is an integral part of the financial administration process.

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

There are no direct or specific climate change and environmental implications associated with the recommendations within this report although they remain an important factor in many areas of the council's revenue and capital budgets and are considered and integrated where appropriate.

8. Risk Management

See paragraph 3.4.

9. Equality Implications

There are no specific equality implications with regard to the recommendations contained within this report. Individual savings proposals incorporated into the revenue budget are supported by an Equality Impact Assessment.

10. Corporate Implications

With continuing financial pressures and demands for services, it is essential that the councils' limited resources continue to be prioritised and allocated in line with the identified priorities.

11. Options Considered

Not applicable

Author:

Deborah Booth, Principal Accountant (Place)

Joanne Jones, Finance Business Partner (Place), Jo.jones@n-somerset.gov.uk

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Detailed financial overview of 2022/23 final position for Place

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW OF THE PLACE DIRECTORATE AS AT 31 MARCH 2023					
Directorate Summary					
	Original Budget 2022/23 £000	Virements £000	Revised Budget 2022/23 £000	Provisional Out-turn 2022/23 £000	Provisional Out-turn Variance £000
- Gross Expenditure	56,727	8,901	65,628	68,495	2,866
- Income	(23,124)	(6,248)	(29,372)	(30,188)	(815)
- Transfers to / from Reserves	(3,614)	(1,373)	(4,987)	(5,765)	(779)
= Directorate Totals	29,989	1,280	31,269	32,541	1,272
Provisional Out-turn Variance					4.07%
- Neighbourhoods & Transport	27,909	1,040	28,949	29,965	1,016
- Placemaking & Growth	1,433	243	1,675	1,784	109
- Directorate Overheads	578	(3)	575	723	148
- Special Expenses	69	0	69	69	0
= Directorate Totals	29,989	1,280	31,269	32,541	1,272
Provisional Out-turn Variance					4.07%
Extract showing material variances compared to the revised budget					
Service area and Provisional budget variance			Revised Budget 2022/23 £000	Provisional Out-turn 2022/23 £000	Provisional Out-turn Variance £000
Environment and Safer Communities					
<u>Environmental Services & Enforcement:</u>					
NSEC - Surplus on recycling materials (income)			(1,599)	(2,283)	(684)
NSEC - Main contract (expenditure) - Inflationary increase			10,327	11,017	690
NSEC - Waste Receptacles			142	270	128
NSEC - Use of reserves to fund in-year contract change notices			0	(159)	(159)
NSEC - Waste material disposal costs			666	570	(96)
Waste Disposal Contract (net) - inflationary & tonnage increases			6,292	6,448	156
Garden Waste Charging Scheme (income) - shortfall on income target			(2,195)	(1,809)	386
Garden Waste Charging Scheme - use of compensation reserve			0	(350)	(350)
Garden Waste Charging Scheme - increase in operational costs			197	301	104
Garden Waste Charging Scheme - reduction in composting scheme costs			235	25	(210)
Commercial Waste (net) increased income projections			(89)	(185)	(96)
Waste Contract Procurement and Mobilisation costs			0	110	110
Waste Contract Procurement and Mobilisation costs - use of Implementation Reserve			0	(33)	(33)
Litter enforcement - short-fall in contract income			(30)	2	32
<u>Safer Community Services: - CCTV</u>					
Use of Town Council receipt			266	326	60
			0	(40)	(40)
Highway & Parking Operations					
Highway Electrical & ITS - Inflationary increases on 'materials' costs and staffing			1,989	1,886	(103)
Highway Network & Traffic Management - Road closures income above target			(82)	(287)	(205)
Highways Operations - Highways maintenance and staffing			3,086	3,256	170
Highways Maintenance Contract - future service delivery mobilisation costs			0	80	80
Street Work Permit Scheme - released direct staff overhead as eligible scheme spend			0	(214)	(214)
Materials testing Lab - expected shortfall on fee income			(321)	(192)	129
Parking services - net position for Off and On Street and Civil Parking Enforcement			(1,335)	(1,472)	(137)
Local Transport Plan (stage 6 & 7)			0	88	88
Funded by Strategic Projects (Local Plan) reserve			0	(88)	(88)
Open Space, Natural Environment & Leisure					
<u>Leisure:</u>					
Loss of income - Profit share on Leisure Contracts			(439)	(349)	90
Agreed mitigation: planned use of reserves			0	(90)	(90)
Financial support for Leisure Providers (DP189)			175	175	0
Funded by Covid Reserve			(175)	(175)	0
<u>Parks & Seafront:</u>					
Bay Cafe:					
Income losses (some operations moved during SEE Monster - incl underlying pressure)			(418)	(13)	405
Provisional turnover share from temporary operator			0	(61)	(61)
Saving on expenditure budgets relating to mainly catering provisions & equipment			280	127	(153)
Saving on staffing costs whilst outsourced			199	48	(151)

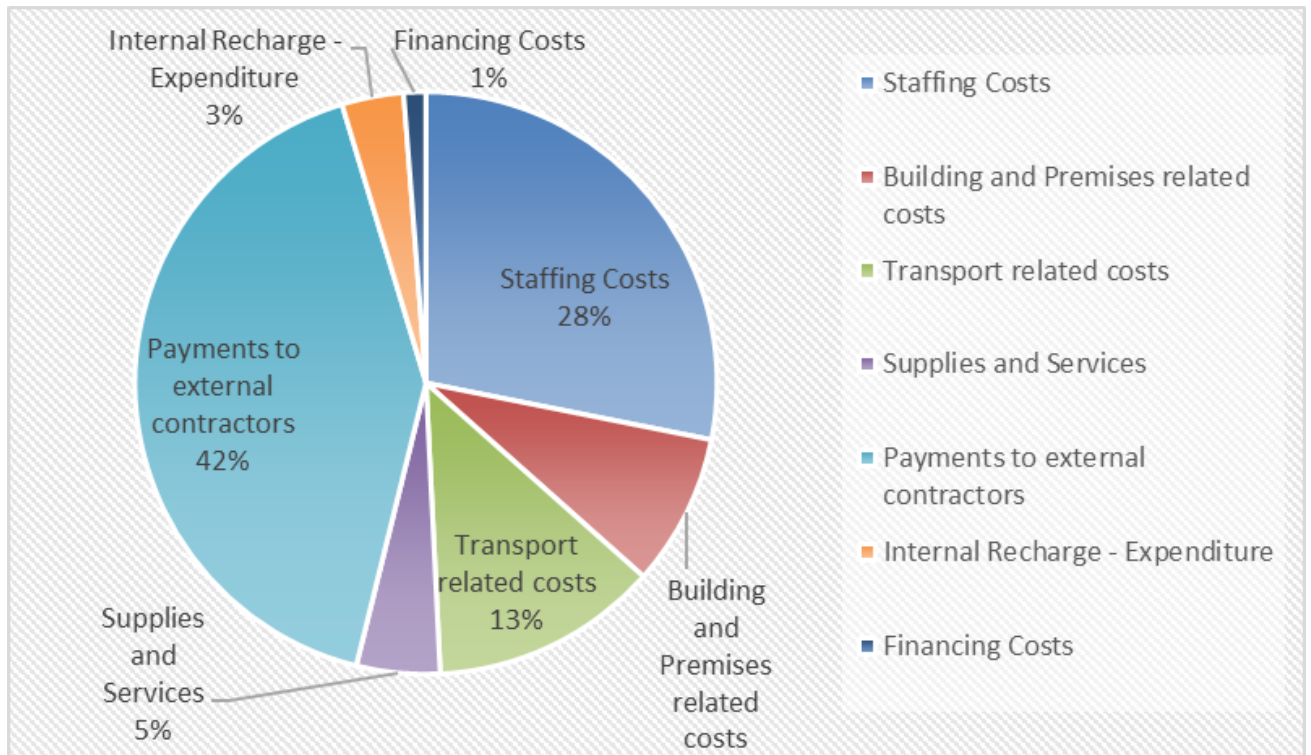
Extract showing material variances compared to the revised budget (contd)			
Service area and Provisional budget variance	Revised Budget 2022/23 £000	Provisional Out-turn 2022/23 £000	Provisional Out-turn Variance £000
The Bay & Seafront Events (limited events due to SEE Monster):			
Gross expenditure budget (excluding staffing)	139	149	10
Income budget	(312)	(176)	136
Saving on staffing costs whilst events not running	85	36	(49)
Mitigated by loss of income compensation from new Substance	0	(76)	(76)
Parks & Street Scene Contract:			
Glendale contract - Inflationary pressure on extended contract	2,246	2,369	123
S106 funding draw-down shortfall	(345)	(274)	71
Transport Planning			
Home to Schools Transport (HTST):			
Home to School Transport - Baseline position re increased demand and costs	4,763	7,035	2,272
Draw down of S106 funding	(150)	(463)	(313)
Extended Rights to Free Travel Grant 2022/23	(97)	(210)	(113)
Home to School Transport - Q Routes software	0	24	24
Use of Corporate risk reserve to fund new inflationary pressures	0	(286)	(286)
Public Transport			
Concessionary fares scheme - reduced cost due to lower patronage	1,560	1,300	(260)
Ticketing income under-achieved as a result of lower patronage levels	(308)	(178)	130
Internal recharge of services to Home to Schools Transport for use of Public Transport	0	(46)	(46)
Bus Service Support Grant (extended to 31/03/2023)	(67)	(132)	(65)
Bus Lane Enforcement PCN income	(51)	(401)	(350)
Bus Lane Enforcement PCN income ring-fenced in reserves for Highways & Transport	0	170	170
Libraries & Community			
Campus expenditure budgets	523	540	17
Shortfall in Campus income	(359)	(277)	82
Somerset Hall expenditure budgets	107	119	12
Shortfall in Somerset Hall income	(121)	(74)	47
Placemaking & Development			
Economy Team staffing - Employer of Choice / Graduate posts	75	177	102
Funded by use of ear-marked reserves	(75)	(177)	(102)
Weston Business Quarter consultancy costs	0	221	221
New Weston Town Centre Development sites	70	83	13
Place making - Portishead	0	84	84
Weston General Stores	0	176	176
Funded by Driving Growth reserves	(70)	(564)	(494)
Birnbeck Pier - consultancy commissioned to date	0	150	150
Funding due from Historic England and RNLi Lifeboat Institute	0	(147)	(147)
Planning & Building Control salary costs - savings due to vacancies	2,311	2,034	(277)
Planning Income (Applications and advice, net of refunds)	(1,561)	(1,429)	132
Building Control Income - short-fall in fees	(470)	(349)	121
Planning - Planning Appeal consultancy and barrister costs to date	0	77	77
Funded by Major Planning Appeal Reserve	0	(77)	(77)
Planned mitigations to improve directorate position			
Budgeted contribution to Strategic Projects reserve - agreed hold in 2022/23	103	0	(103)
Maximise use of Enabling fee income against Housing development team cost	0	(40)	(40)
Capital Delivery Team (excl Bus Service Improvement Plan)			
Capital projects delivery team salary costs - savings due to vacant posts	2,921	2,203	(718)
Shortfall on salary recharges to the capital programme (partially mitigated by vacancies v	(3,000)	(2,191)	809
Sub total - material budget variances			1,220
Other minor variations to the budget			52
= Directorate Total			1,272

Appendix 2 – 2022/23 MTFP savings delivery

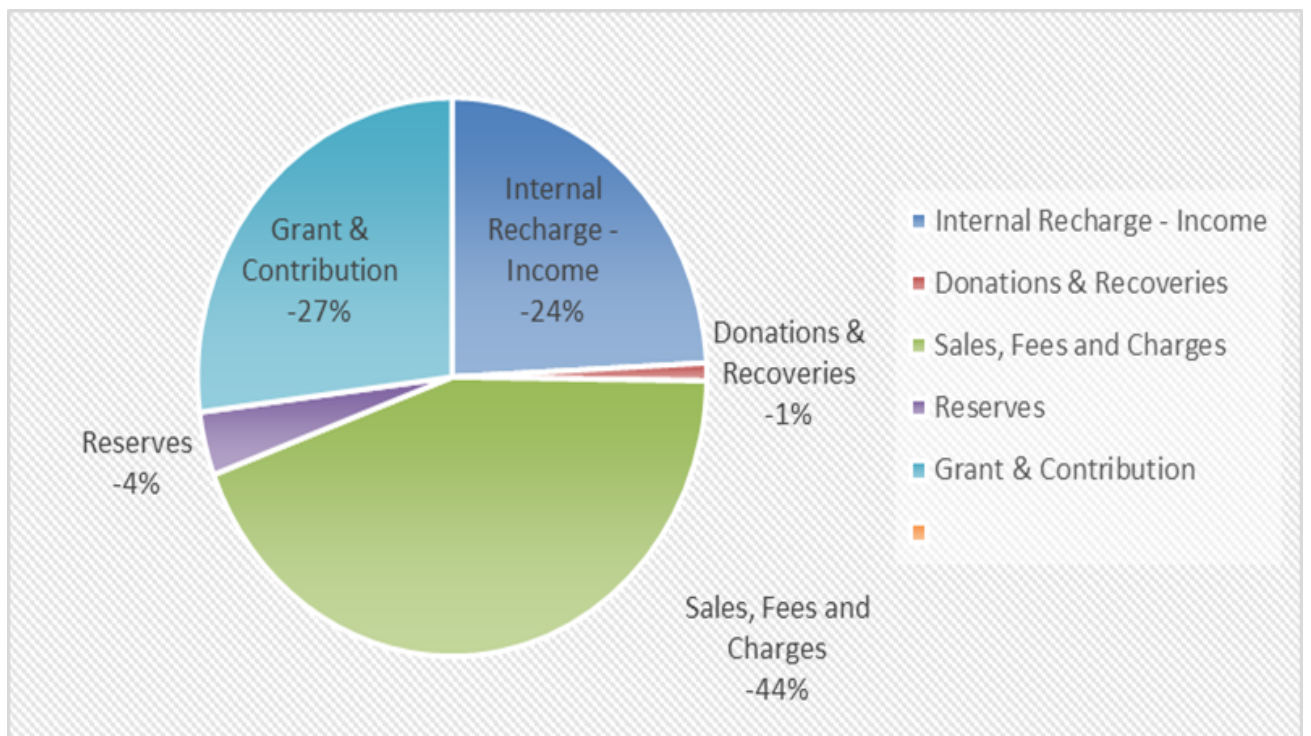
MTFP SAVINGS PROPOSALS REFLECTED WITHIN THE 2022/23 REVENUE BUDGET					
Dir Ref	Dir	Theme	MTFP Savings Proposals	Saving £000	RAG Rating
PD S1	Place	Income Generation	Increase of recycling materials income	-500	G
PD S2	Place	Income Generation	Re-base garden waste income budget to align to actual levels	-230	G
PD S4	Place	Income Generation	Use income from Permit Scheme to fund existing staff	-50	G
PD S7	Place	Efficiency / Change	Revisit safe Home To Schools Transport routes	-100	R
PD S8	Place	Efficiency / Change	Safer roads initiatives (additional sites meeting relevant criteria)	-30	G
PD S9	Place	Efficiency / Change	Events programme to become cost neutral or minimal support	-65	G
PD S10	Place	Income Generation	Introduce break-even policy for Building Control	-20	R
PD S13	Place	Income Generation	Parking income	-150	G
PD S14	Place	Review provision	Reduction in Concessionary Fares costs - aligned to lower levels of demand for the service	-50	G
PD S15	Place	Efficiency / Change	Reduction in staff travel costs - to reflect the new ways of working	-25	A
PD S16	Place	Efficiency / Change	Reduction in street lighting energy costs - aligned to roll-out of LED investment programme	-40	G
PD S17	Place	Income Generation	Increase in income levels, e.g. public conveniences	-15	R
DIRECTORATE TOTAL				-1,275	

Appendix 3

2023/24 Gross expenditure budget by type of spend



2023/24 Income budget by source



Appendix 4 – MTFP savings 2023/24 – 2025/26

Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total Proposals
PD1	Increase recycling materials income target	900	0	0	900
PD2	Review recycling provision and initiatives across the district	0	200	0	200
PD3	Garden Waste inflationary increase	150	0	0	150
PD4	Garden waste optimisation of rounds (Garden Waste collected on a different day to other collections)	50	100	0	150
PD5	Find efficiency savings within the Waste Contract - This could include campaigns to improve the sorting of recycling by residents	150	150	0	300
PD6	Refresh and embed a policy to minimise replacement/additional bins/containers	50	50	0	100
PD7	Campaigns to increase recycling and reduce disposal costs	50	0	0	50
PD9	Income from public surveillance cameras & private CCTV monitoring	10	0	0	10
PD10	Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) revenue for Anti-Social-Behaviour & CCTV used to issue FPNs for Highways and Public Protection Order and review funding models for Community Response	50	85	0	135
PD11	Realign income budgets for leisure centres to current usage levels	15	0	0	15
PD12	Make permanent the existing closure of Churchill Sports Centre	117	0	0	117
PD13	Seafront staff review	40	0	0	40
PD14	Review the commercial model for the following buildings: Somerset Hall Playhouse Theatre Tropicana The Bay Cafe	248	0	0	248
PD15	Realign the budget for Curatorial Service	5	0	0	5
PD17	Establishment of a single, council-wide transport function and improved commissioning	50	0	0	50
PD18	Revisit safe walking routes to school	100	0	0	100
PD20	Moving traffic violations - Adopt new powers available to Highways Authorities to improve safety and reduce congestion by enforcing traffic contraventions	100	100	0	200
PD21	Bus lane enforcement	100	0	0	100
PD22	Realign budget for structure repairs to reflect actual spending	25	0	0	25
PD23	Reduce external spend and increase internal spend on the Capital Programme	200	0	0	200

Appendix 4 continued

Ref	Description	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total Proposals
PD24	Realign budget for affordable housing income	28	0	0	28
PD25	Deletion of vacant officer post within Development Team	36	0	0	36
PD26	Estimated increase in national planning application fees	16	0	0	16
PD27	Delete vacant Access Officer post	19	0	0	19
PD28	Economy team additional income	16	0	0	16
PD30	Expand commercial waste service	0	50	0	50
PD32	Review residents parking zones	0	50	50	100
PD33	Biodiversity Net Gain	0	25	0	25
PD34	Progress the libraries strategy by investigating alternative funding opportunities, models and partnerships	0	135	0	135
PD35	Review Placemaking & Growth services	0	93	0	93
PD36	Annual uplift to fees and charges to cover inflationary cost of services - Place	124	122	122	368
PD37	Increase scope of LED rollout programme to include Port Marine lanterns and Non-LED zebra floodlights to reduce energy consumption	70	0	0	70
PD38	Realign income budget for Land Charges & Street Numbering to reflect an increase in fees to offset the cost of providing the service	19	0	0	19
PD39	Increase the vacancy management target within Place staffing budgets	70	0	0	70